

HARLOW COUNCIL

Addendum to Health and Safety Policy

Risk Assessment

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Introduction

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places specific duties on employers to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees as well as the health and safety of other persons who may be affected by their work activities.

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 employers must assess significant risks to the health and safety of both employees and other persons who may be affected by their work activities.

Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy is a disciplinary offence, which in serious cases could lead to dismissal.

General Statement

Harlow Council accepts that some of its operations may, unless properly controlled, create risks to members of staff, and other persons, and will take all reasonably practicable measures to reduce these risks to an acceptable level.

It is the responsibility of each Head of Service to ensure that risk assessments are carried out, and that they detail the range of hazards associated with all work operations together with any necessary remedial action.

The purpose of an assessment is to identify hazards in the workplace and to determine which of them pose a significant risk to people either at work or affected by work activities. Once a significant risk has been identified the assessment process will enable Harlow Council, or the Service concerned, to determine what control measures need to be implemented to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

Specific consideration must be given, when carrying out a new assessment or reviewing an existing assessment, to the risk to the health and safety of: pregnant women, people with disabilities, young persons and casual staff.

All risk assessments must be reviewed on a periodic basis. This will normally be annually, but more frequently if there have been significant changes which may affect the accuracy of the assessment e.g. new work practices, changeover of staff etc.

Procedure

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations requires employers with five or more employees to keep records of all assessments, including details of any significant findings associated with the assessments.

It is recommended that wherever possible assessments should be carried out by a small team which will include both line management and staff, and that safety representatives are fully involved in this process.

It is necessary regardless of whatever procedure is used that the recorded information includes:

- Details of the area or work activity being assessed
- The hazards
- The people who may be at risk
- The risk to those people from the hazards identified i.e. likelihood and severity of any injury

- Existing control measures, including any training provided
- Action proposed as a result of the assessment

Existing service and/or corporate safe working procedures etc. should be included as part of the risk assessment process.

Suggested Risk Assessment Format

As there is no specific statutory procedure for undertaking a risk assessment Harlow Council has devised a series of templates, which are both straightforward to use and contain explanation/guidance information. The forms are available to use on line and to download as hard copies.

Each risk assessment template gives potential hazards and risks of the activity, rated as Low, Medium or High. The corrective action considered and implemented should then attempt to reduce the level of risk from the initial rating. Following some assessments the risk rating may remain the same, however, activity should not be carried out if risks remain high, and if this is not possible, ensure preventative measures are in place and applied.

Monitoring and Review

All risk assessments must be reviewed on a periodic basis.

Part of the review procedure should be for each Service to consider the assessments for any changes. This should be set for an annual agenda item at for example a staff meeting/briefing with the Team.

When reviewing an assessment it is necessary to consider whether all significant hazards have been identified and whether appropriate corrective action has been implemented.

The ongoing Health and Safety Review Programme, undertaken by the Safety Team, will help determine whether all relevant work activities etc. have been included in a Services or Departments risk assessment arrangements.

Information

All staff must have access to risk assessments that are relevant to their area of work.

Where a risk assessment identifies significant risks then these must be brought to the attention of all relevant staff, along with details of any corrective action that is to be implemented.

Training

The Health and Safety Team will provide support to any Service on the process of carrying out risk assessments.

When defining control measures, as part of the risk assessment process, consideration must be given to the need for additional or supplementary training.

Summary

Each Service must ensure that risk assessments are carried out for all work activities.

The main considerations when carrying out risk assessments are:

- All significant hazards are identified
- The risk from each hazard is assessed (likelihood/severity of injury)
- Appropriate control measures are defined and implemented
- The risk assessment process is well documented
- All staff are made aware of the risk assessments
- Assessments are reviewed on a periodic basis

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Revision History

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|---------------|------------------------|---|----------------|
| | None | Original Draft document | |
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