

Statutory Requirements

Staying Safe



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Introduction

Everyone attending your organisations activities has the right to expect that:

- *The activity will do them no harm*
- *Reasonable steps have been taken to minimise harm*
- *The activity has been planned and is supervised by people with the right qualifications and skills for the activity*

If your community group organises and delivers community activities and events without considering risk and an accident occurs members may incur personal liabilities even if your group is incorporated.

There are things your organisation must think about to stay safe and protect your members:

- *Health and Safety and Risk Assessment*
- *Safeguarding children young people and vulnerable adults*

Making activities safe and suitable

If you organise an activity or event it is your responsibility to ensure people taking part are safe and that damage to individuals or property is avoided.

Your organisation will have a “common law duty of care” to staff volunteers and the people who use your organisation’s services. This means that if your organisation does not act reasonably and sensibly and another person suffers injury as a result then he or she has a right to seek compensation. If your organisation is unincorporated the injured person will sue the individual members of your group not the group itself.

It is because of this duty of care that your community organisations can take out public liability insurance covering your liability to other people. If you have staff you are required by law to hold Employer’s Liability Insurance and appoint a Health and Safety Officer. If you supervise and use volunteers you are also recommended to seek Employer’s Liability Insurance.

Health and safety is important because your organisation is required

This factsheet will help you understand why and how you must look after the people who take part in the activities you organise.

You may also wish to read:

[Safeguarding](#)
[Getting Started](#)

Quick links

[Risk assessment](#)

[First Aid](#)

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operate within a framework of law governed by Health and Safety at Work Acts. These laws apply to your community organisation in the same way as it applies to commercial organisations.

Risk Assessment

A risk assessment is a tool which to help your organisation understand the possible dangers that people might encounter when taking part in activities run by your group. The risk assessment should include any use of equipment or the hazards of a particular space or venue that is used by or looked after by your group. The risk assessment should also include the actions or steps people need to take to stay safe and what actions to take if there is an accident. Your risk assessment should be shared with everyone running activities for your group and they should do what it says.

In most cases a risk assessment is a simple activity. A risk assessment should be done by person who

- Understands the activity your group is offering or knows the space you are using
- Understands how to do a proper risk assessment

If your organisation does not have the skills, confidence or training to understand risk there are lots of organisations like 4CT or MACC who can help.

For small groups or community groups with less than 5 people employed the law does not require written Risk Assessments. However there needs to be a record that risk has been assessed and a record that people have been informed of the risks and actions needed to stay safe. Your organisation's Public Liability or Employers'

Liability Insurance may require more detailed and written risk assessments. Failure to keep your records may result in insurers refusing to pay a claim for injury. Remember, there is no point just having a risk assessment to cover insurance needs. A risk assessment should be used to keep everyone safe. There is also no point in having a risk assessment that states "activities might be hazardous". Risky activities such as adventure playgrounds and climbing and sports can be great fun for the community if there is a risk the risk assessment must say how to minimise risk and what to do if accidents happen.

Fire

If your organisation organises a public event or activity or hires space or manages a building or office it will need to plan for possible fire. Your organisation will need to nominate a named 'responsible person' and carry out a fire risk assessment. The risk assessment should ensure that all necessary fire safety procedures and fire prevention measures in place and all fire



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equipment or evacuation routes are working properly.

Your organisations nominated fire safety officer should

- Contact the emergency services and provide them with any relevant information about any dangerous substances at the event
- Ensure that events do not exceed the fire safety numbers for the premises used
- Ensure that the premises and any equipment provided in connection with fire-fighting, fire detection and warning, or emergency routes and exits are working and well maintained by a professional

If your organisation hires or leases a space or leases temporary structures and marquees the fire safety responsibilities of your organisation and those of the organisation or person you are leasing from need to be established as part of the contract of hire.

The Fire Risk Assessment should be part of your overall Risk Assessment for the activity or event and a record kept.

First aid

You must have first-aid arrangements if your group organise events and activities. If you employ staff you are responsible for making sure that your employees receive immediate attention if they are taken ill or are injured at work.

The arrangements you will need to make will depend on the particular circumstances and activities you organise and you need to assess what your first aid needs are.

- *As a minimum, you must have:*
- *a suitably stocked first-aid box;*
- *an appointed person to take charge of first-aid arrangements;*
- *information for all people attending your event giving details of first-aid arrangements.*

You might decide that you need a first-aider. This is someone who has been trained by an approved organisation and holds a qualification in first aid at work or emergency first aid at work. A first aider at an event does not have to be a volunteer or member of your community group. The Red Cross and St. Johns Ambulance provide qualified first aiders for event at a cost. It may be cheaper to train members of your group in first aid.

