



HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

DATA PROTECTION

When an individual reports suspected health and safety concerns, GPS will process any personal data collected in accordance with its Data Protection Policy. Data collected from the point at which the individual makes the report is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of dealing with the health and safety compliance.

INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

GPS is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its workers and it will, so far as is reasonably practicable, establish procedures and systems necessary to implement this commitment and to comply with its statutory obligations on health and safety. It is the responsibility of each worker to familiarise themselves and comply with the GPS's procedures and systems on health and safety.

While our management team will take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of workers, health and safety at work is actually the responsibility of each and every worker, which includes workers taking reasonable care of their own and other people's health, safety and welfare and to report any situation which may pose a serious or imminent threat to the wellbeing of themselves or of any other person.

If a worker is unsure how to perform a certain task due to insufficient training or instruction or feels it would be dangerous to perform a specific job or use specific equipment, then it is that person's duty to report this as soon as possible to their line manager, explaining their reasons. Alternatively, a worker may, if they prefer, invoke the GPS's formal grievance procedure.

Disciplinary procedures may be taken against any worker who violates the GPS health and safety rules and protocols, or who fails to perform their duties under health and safety legislation. Depending on the seriousness of the offence, it could potentially amount to gross misconduct, rendering the worker liable to summary dismissal.

Regarding health and safety, GPS will pay particular attention to:

- Maintaining the workplace in a safe condition and providing adequate facilities and arrangements for welfare at work.
- Providing a safe means of access to, and egress from the workplace.
- Ensure client providers have the provision and maintenance of equipment and systems of work that are safe.
- Arrangements for ensuring safety of workers in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of items and substances.
- The provision of such information, instructions, training, and supervision to workers as is necessary for them to perform their duties correctly, adequately and paying due regard to their safety and the safety of other persons.

GPS also recognises its duty to protect the health and safety of all visitors, including contractors and temporary workers, as well as any members of the public who might be affected by the GPS's work operations.

CLIENT PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITIES

Client providers have the overall responsibility for health and safety. The client providers manager (or nominated deputy) is the safety officer and has responsibility for overseeing, implementing and monitoring health and safety procedures and for reporting back relevant health and safety matters.

Additionally, the safety officer also has responsibility for conducting regular inspections of the workplace, maintaining safety records, and investigating and reporting on any accidents occurring at work.

WORKER TRAINING

Health and safety training is an integral part of GPS operations. It is essential that every worker is trained to perform their job comprehensively and safely. Each worker is trained in safe working practices and procedures relevant to their role. Training includes full instruction on the safe use of any necessary equipment provided.

AT-RISK WORKERS

GPS recognises that certain workers may, from time-to-time, be at increased risk of injury or ill-health resulting from work activities.

To ensure the risk to these groups is minimised as much as possible, GPS requires that workers advise their line manager if they become aware of any change in their personal circumstances which could result in their being at increased risk.

Examples of such changes could be certain medical conditions, permanent or temporary disability, taking medication or becoming pregnant. If any worker is in doubt whether a change arising in their personal circumstances could increase their exposure to risk, they should consult with their line manager as soon as they become aware of the change.

FIRST AID AND REPORTING ACCIDENTS AT WORK

First aid boxes are located at GPS premises and at client provider sites. All workers will be shown the location of the nearest first aid box to their regular workstation and will be given the names of designated first aid personnel. This information is also displayed on the GPS intranet.

Any injury sustained by a person at work, however small, must immediately be reported to their line manager or a nominated safety representative and recorded through the completion of an incident form.

Accident records are crucial to the effective monitoring of health and safety procedures and must therefore be accurate and comprehensive. The safety officer will inspect a record of incidents on a regular basis and all accidents will be investigated and a report prepared, with any necessary action being taken to prevent a repetition of the accident. If an incident occurs at the premises of a client provider, the workers manager will relay this back for broader learning and action.

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FIRE SAFETY

Client providers takes the subject of fire safety extremely seriously and has a comprehensive fire safety policy from which to manage this aspect of health and safety. The policy details those who have responsibility for fire safety and includes the arrangements for conducting regular risk assessments. GPS requests this information before deploying workers to client providers.

GENERAL SAFETY RULES

- All workers and contractors should be aware of and adhere to the GPS rules and procedures on health and safety.
- Any identified unsafe working practices or conditions must be immediately reported to the safety officer, a health and safety representative or to a manager. Activities which could potentially jeopardise the health and safety of any person are forbidden.
- Any person who cannot perform their duties due to ill-health or fatigue will not be allowed to work if this might jeopardise the health and safety of any person.
- Workers must not adjust, move or otherwise tamper with any electrical equipment or machinery in a manner not within the scope of their job duties.
- All waste materials must be disposed-of carefully in the receptacles provided and in such a way that they do not constitute a hazard to other workers (see separate Clinical Waste Policy for comprehensive information);
- No worker should undertake a job which appears to be unsafe. They must report their findings and reasons to a manager as soon as possible.
- No worker should undertake a job until they have received adequate safety instructions and they are authorised to carry out the task.
- All injuries must be reported to the line manager or to the safety officer.
- All materials must be properly and safely used and when not in use, properly and safely secured.
- Good safety practices for specific tasks should be well-planned and instructions documented to avoid injuries in the handling of heavy materials and while using equipment.
- Workers should take care to ensure that all protective guards and other safety devices are properly fitted and in good working order and must immediately report any defects to their line manager or to the safety officer.
- Suitable clothing and footwear must be always worn. Personal Protective Equipment must be worn, where appropriate.
- Workstations and work areas must be kept clean, tidy and with all spillages cleaned up immediately.
- Workers should:
 - Use handrails when ascending or descending stairs.
 - Never read while walking.
 - Close filing cabinet drawers when not in use.
 - Keep all floor areas free from obstructions.

ACCESS AND EGRESS

GPS will ensure that client providers are able to provide safe access and egress to all areas, namely:

- Access to, and egress from the building(s).
- Routes through working areas.
- Accessibility of storage areas.
- Access to and egress from an individual's workplace.

- Emergency exit routes.
- Any temporary arrangements for access.
- Limitation of access to hazardous or high security areas.
- External pathways and roadways around the workplace.
- Common parts of the building (e.g. Reception, Stairs, etc).

The client provider will also ensure that:

- The buildings and grounds are organised to ensure pedestrians and vehicles (as appropriate) can circulate in a safe manner.
- All furniture, equipment and other items do not impede safe access and egress at the workplace and that objects which may restrict safe movement within the workplace are removed immediately.
- Any access restrictions are adhered to so that suitable and safe arrangements for work in confined places and other areas of high risk are guaranteed.
- Objects are not stored in walkways or precariously on top of cabinets / shelves.
- All work equipment - when not in use - must be stored in its designated storage area.
- Waste items shall not be allowed to accumulate in walkways.
- Floor surfaces shall be of the type that can be kept sufficiently clean and will be cleaned regularly as appropriate.
- Workplace floors and traffic route surfaces are suitable for their purpose and maintained in a safe condition and suitably indicated where necessary for reasons of health and safety.
- All access equipment is regularly inspected to ensure that it is maintained in a safe condition.
- Formalised systems of work are designed and implemented in all areas of significant risk.
- Workers are encouraged to report any situation where safe access and egress is restricted or obstructed to their line manager or the health and safety officer who will arrange for appropriate action to be taken.
- The working activities of contractors are monitored so that they do not hinder safe access / egress;
- So far as reasonably practicable the client provider will take suitable and effective measures to prevent persons falling a distance likely to cause personal injury and to prevent any person being struck by a falling object.

EQUIPMENT SAFETY

The client provider takes appropriate steps to ensure the safety of all workers using equipment and the safety of others who may be affected using the equipment. In this regard the client provider will:

- Ensure the suitability of work equipment for the task.
- Ensure that measures are taken to prevent access to or stop the movement of any dangerous part of equipment before any person enters a danger zone.
- Ensure the correct guarding of the equipment and all dangerous parts and correct continual use of the guards.
- Ensure that equipment is safely and securely positioned.
- Ensure that work equipment is maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order, in good repair and inspected and tested where necessary.
- Ensure that all machinery has suitable controls which are marked and clearly identifiable.
- Ensure that where appropriate, any work equipment incorporates warnings or warning devices.

- Ensure that where possible (and appropriate), all equipment is appropriately isolated; Ensure that all persons who use machinery and all persons who supervise or manage the use of machinery are trained and have adequate health and safety information;
- Where there are residual risks the client provider will provide Personal Protective Equipment;

Persons using machinery or equipment must not wear clothing, jewellery or long hair in such a way as might pose a risk to their own or anyone else's safety.

Workers are prohibited from using any piece of equipment for any purpose other than its intended purpose.

MANUAL HANDLING

GPS is committed to educating workers on the prevention of long-term musculo-skeletal health problems by promoting an "each-and-every-time" protocol for safe lifting.

In-line with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (amended 2002) GPS adheres to the following:

- **Avoid** the need for hazardous manual handling, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- **Assess** the risk of injury from any hazardous manual handling that can't be avoided.
- **Reduce** the risk of injury from hazardous manual handling, so far as is reasonably practicable.

In adhering to the above, GPS workers follow the protocol below:

- Lifting and moving of objects should always be done by mechanical devices rather than manual handling wherever reasonably practicable. The equipment used should be appropriate for the task at hand.
- The load to be lifted or moved must be inspected for sharp edges and wet patches.
- When lifting or moving a load with sharp or splintered edges, gloves must be worn
- The route over which the load is to be lifted should be inspected to ensure it is free of obstructions.
- Workers should not attempt to lift or move a load which is too heavy to manage comfortably. Workers should ask for assistance if there is any danger of strain.
- When lifting an object off the ground, workers should assume a squatting position, keeping the back straight. The load should be lifted by straightening the knees, not the back.
- Workers should not attempt to obtain items from shelves which are beyond their reach. A ladder or stepping stool must be used. Workers should not use chairs or any makeshift device for climbing and should never climb up the shelves themselves.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Client providers are required to deal with all its waste in accordance with local and national regulations and have a specific protocol in place for the storage, handling and disposal of clinical waste, which includes details of the nominated contractor, responsible persons at the organisation, and compliance with the Hazardous Waste Regulations 2005. (See separate policy for more information).

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