

Health and Safety Policy

Part 1 – Policy and organisation

1.	Scope
1.1	The Health and Safety policy applies to all employees of the Information Commissioner's Office and any agency staff, secondees, contractors or visitors to ICO premises.
1.2	The policy applies to all ICO workplaces. This includes regional offices, though it is recognised that some variances in procedures may be required in regional offices to reflect local practice.
1.3	The Health and Safety policy also applies to staff who are working from home or remotely from the office.
2.	Purpose
2.1	The purpose of this policy is to inform staff and others of the arrangements for managing health and safety at the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)
2.2	The ICO recognises its responsibilities regarding health, safety and welfare at work in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, all other relevant Health and Safety legislation and the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations. The policy sets out how the ICO will comply with these laws and regulations.
3.	Message from the Commissioner
3.1	<p>I have statutory responsibilities the health and safety of us all at the ICO.</p> <p>Health and safety is an important issue for everyone. We must all play our part in making sure that our work place and the activities we perform are as safe as possible. We all have a duty of care to look after others and ourselves while we are at work, and this is essential if we are to minimise risks and eliminate hazards that can cause harm.</p> <p>It can be easy to become complacent about health and safety, particularly given our relatively 'low risk' work environment. However, we should not underestimate the risks to our health and safety that can arise where we work and ensure that we all act responsibly and in the best interests of one another.</p> <p>The health and safety procedures of the ICO are set out in the 'Arrangements' and 'Organisation' sections of the policy. You should read them so that you are aware of your responsibilities as well as those of key health and safety personnel.</p> <p>Elizabeth Denham Information Commissioner</p>

4. Health and Safety Policy Statement

It is the objective of the Information Commissioner's Office that employees and others be protected, so far as is reasonably practicable, from risks to health and safety arising from work activities.

This will be achieved by adopting a safety management strategy that will include the provision of safe working systems and appropriate procedures to cater for all significant risks.

This policy will be supported by the issue of general procedures that detail responsibilities of staff and management. These will each be subject to review and revision by management, in conjunction with the recognised trade unions and the Health and Safety Committee as necessary.

The responsibility for achieving and adhering to acceptable safety standards rests not only with the Commissioner but also with employees, contractors and suppliers of materials to be used at work.

Employers are required by law to publish a safety policy. It is the duty of all employees not only to read this document carefully but to take an active interest in achieving safety at work, and I encourage all members of staff to familiarise themselves with the current health and safety procedures.

The successful implementation of this policy is dependent upon the whole-hearted co-operation of all levels of staff and management.

This statement of policy will be reviewed and revised as appropriate to take account of changes in circumstances or in legal requirements.

Elizabeth Denham
Information Commissioner

5. Responsibilities

5.1 The Information Commissioner

- i) Will ensure that the ICO has a clear Health and Safety policy.
- ii) Will ensure that the relevant organisational arrangements and resources are made available to enable the policy to be implemented and monitored.

5.2 Members of the Executive Team

- i) Will ensure that Health and Safety issues are incorporated into the planning of operational activity, through liaison with a competent person. This will ensure effective risk management as an integral part of business strategy.
- ii) Will monitor the effectiveness of the Health and Safety Policy.

5.3 **The Chair of the Health and Safety Committee**

- i) Will ensure that there is a clear health and safety procedure which is available to all staff and that the policy is implemented and reviewed at appropriate intervals.
- ii) Will ensure that staff are adequately trained to perform their jobs in a safe manner.
- iii) Will ensure that adequate numbers of staff with appropriate safety training are available within the ICO.
- iv) Will ensure that the trade union appointed health and safety representatives are kept fully informed of any issues relating to health and safety.
- v) Will ensure that incidents, accidents or ill health involving ICO staff are adequately investigated and, where necessary, that the appropriate enforcing authority is informed.
- vi) Will ensure that adequate risk assessments have been conducted into work activities and that they are reviewed periodically.
- vii) Will chair the Health and Safety Committee.

5.4 **The Facilities Manager**

- i) Will ensure that all contractors are appropriately qualified for the work they will undertake.
- ii) Will ensure that health and safety matters are considered when contracts are being tendered.
- iii) Will ensure that contractors provide the ICO with method statements for work undertaken that is likely to pose significant risk to ICO employees or the contractors themselves.
- iv) Will ensure that office health and safety inspections take place every month and record findings.
- v) Will monitor Health and Safety matters within the premises under their management on a daily basis, and take corrective action in a timely manner when issues arise which may impact on the health, safety and welfare of staff.
- vi) Will conduct work station audits, escalating for specialist advice where appropriate, and arrange for the purchase of necessary equipment.
- vii) Will attend meetings of the Health and Safety Committee.

5.5 **The First Aid Co-ordinator**

- i) Will liaise with the Chair of the H&S Committee to ensure that the organisation has adequate numbers of suitably trained first aid staff.
- ii) Will liaise with Learning and Development to arrange training for first aiders.
- iii) Will receive and securely store accident reports, providing copies to HR as appropriate.
- iv) Will attend the Health and Safety Committee, raising first aid issues, feedback from first aiders and reporting accidents and incidents for consideration. Will ensure that the content of first aid kits is regularly monitored.

5.6 **The Fire Warden Co-ordinator**

- i) Will liaise with the Chair of the H&S Committee to ensure that the organisation has adequate numbers of suitably trained fire wardens.
- ii) Will liaise with Learning and Development to arrange training for fire wardens.
- iii) Will attend the Health and Safety Committee, raising fire issues, feedback from fire wardens and reporting incidents for consideration.

5.7 **Line managers**

- i) Will ensure that members of their team follow health and safety procedures.
- ii) Will ensure that their staff are competent for their role, and have adequate information, instruction, training and equipment to enable them to undertake their work activities.
- iii) Will ensure that any health and safety duties delegated to team members are clearly identified, and performed to a high standard.
- iv) Will ensure that risks to members of the public are minimised, and that premises present a safe environment for them to visit.

5.8 **Staff** (including all employees, agency workers, contractors, secondees, trainees and work experience students)

- i) Must conform to ICO Health and Safety procedures and to those regulations and Codes of Practice that apply, and actively participate in maintaining a safe working environment.
- ii) Must familiarise themselves with any ICO guidelines regarding safe working practices, and any other information distributed which concerns safety matters.
- iii) Must report all accidents or incidents that have led or may lead to injury.
- iv) Must refrain from doing anything that constitutes a danger to themselves or others.
- v) Must refrain from misusing any equipment provided for health and safety purposes.
- vi) Must alert their line manager to any potential hazards or risks they have identified in their working environment.
- vii) Must wear personal protective equipment and use safety devices provided for the safe performance of specified tasks.
- viii) Must ensure that members of the public visiting our premises do not act in a manner likely to cause risk to themselves or others.

5.9 **Health and Safety Representatives**

- i) Will communicate policy on all health and safety matters within their work area.
- ii) Will attend Health and Safety Committee meetings.
- iii) Will inform management of any unsafe practices, premises or arrangements that they are informed about.