

The Tree of Life Centre (Formerly UCHM)

Counselling, College and Room Hire

Cedar Tree Counselling Service BACP Accredited Service, affiliated with ACC and works according to BACP Ethical Framework for Counselling Professions and ACC code of Ethics and Practice

Trinity Training College CPCAB Approved Centre delivering CPCAB Accredited and ACC recognised courses

The Elms Sports Hall and Room Hire



"The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations" Rev 22:2

Health & Safety Policy

12 September 2024

Contents

General Statement of Policy	2
Responsibilities	2
Workers	2
General	2
Personal safety	4
Office Safety and Security	4
Visitors	5
Contractors	5
Hirers	5
General Arrangements	5
First Aid	5
Accident/hazard Reporting	6
The procedure for reporting an accident	6
Emergency Services Are As Follows: -	6
COSHH control of substances hazardous to health	7
Fire Safety	7
What to do if you discover a fire:.....	7
What to do if you hear the alarm:.....	7

Tel: 01484 461098 **E-mail:** office@thetlc.org.uk **Website:** www.thetlc.org.uk

Registered Office: The Tree of Life Centre Colne Valley, Beth Shalom, 78 New Street, Milnsbridge, Huddersfield, HD3 4LD
Registered Charity 1097753, Company Registered in England and Wales 04614787



Affiliated Counselling and Training Organisation (UK based)
Affiliate No. A00031



General Statement of Policy

It is the policy of TLC to provide and maintain safe and healthy conditions for:

1. All employees and volunteers, and to provide such information, equipment, training, systems for work and supervision as they may need for this purpose.
2. Groups and individuals using our services and provide them with the information necessary to comply with this policy.
3. Members of the public calling into our premises or otherwise affected by our activities.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements which we will make to implement them are set out overleaf.

The policy will be kept up to date particularly as TLC changes in nature and size. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has been operated will be reviewed annually.

Signed.....

Date.....

Responsibilities

Overall and final responsibility for the health and safety within TLC is that of the CEO, Val Haigh.

The Health and Safety Officer, Lee Crossland, shall be responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the policy and shall liaise with the CEO on health and safety matters. The Health and Safety Officer will also conduct regular inspections of the premises and keep appropriate records.

Workers

General

The Health and Safety Act 1974 has laid down certain duties for all volunteers and employees. The duties are to take care of their own safety and that of other volunteers and workers and to cooperate with the organisation and its officers to enable it to carry out its responsibilities. Please ensure you read those guidelines and please raise any questions you have with your line manager or supervisor. In particular workers have a duty to:

- Work safely, efficiently and without endangering the health and safety of themselves, their colleagues, their clients, the general public or any other person who has a right of access to the premises at any time.

- Adhere to the safety procedures as laid down by the organisation and to conform to all instructions given by those with a responsibility for health and safety.
- Report all accidents, near miss occurrences and hazardous situations to appropriate persons.
- Meet their other statutory safety obligations including that laid down in Section 8 of the Act, which states 'no person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare in pursuance of any relevant statutory provisions'.

The following general points will contribute significantly to overall health and safety:

- Floors, steps, stairs, passages and fire exits should be kept clear of obstruction at all times.
- Wires to telephones, electrical equipment etc., should not be placed so that someone could fall or put their chair on it.
- Office layout should be such that employees and others can use it safely- e.g., filing cabinets should not open into passages or across doorways.

All workers paid and voluntary have a responsibility to co-operate in the implementation of the health and safety policy and to take reasonable care of themselves and others whilst on our premises.

Managers need to be responsible for the work of their team and address any issues accordingly, either directly, or by informing either their line manager or the Health and Safety Officer.

Workers will be given information on the following procedures provided they are relevant to their job role:

- Computer and Visual Display Equipment Usage
- Manual Handling
- Handling Stress in the Workplace
- Managing Violent Incidents

Whenever an employee, volunteer or manager notices a health and safety problem which they are not able to put right, they must immediately inform either the Health and Safety Officer or an appropriate member of staff.

Counsellors will be expected to escort their clients from the premises, should the alarm be raised during a session, provided it is safe for them to do so. Trainers will be expected to escort students from the premises should the alarm be raised during a training session. Workers will be responsible for evacuating other visitors from the centre whilst there is no risk to themselves.

Information will be given to all new members of staff on relevant Health and Safety issues, and to all staff when procedures are altered. Consultation on Health and Safety issues between management and employee/volunteer is provided by the CEO.

Personal safety

TLC is concerned for the personal safety of all its volunteers and employees.

In order to reduce the element of risk, TLC is committed to the development of policies and procedures for identifying and eliminating risk and training all employees dealing directly with the public, in assessing risk and in preventing violent incidents.

If employees or volunteers are concerned in any way about their personal safety, they should discuss the matter with their colleagues and line manager immediately. On no account should employees put themselves at risk. Ask for assistance from any manager available if your line manager is not immediately available.

Office Safety and Security

The importance of office security to TLC cannot be overstated. The reception areas are particularly vulnerable since they are open to the public. In general terms volunteers and employees should remember the following points.

- TLC does not condone lone working, however, should it occur that you are in the building on your own, always make sure that the door into the building is locked.
- Take care of your TLC keys - if you do lose a key, report it immediately to the General Manager. All keys must be signed for in.
- Take great care of your personal belongings; particularly handbags, purses etc, TLC cannot accept responsibility for these items, so make sure you do not leave them lying around.
- All volunteers and members of staff leaving the building – even for five minutes - must inform their colleagues.
- If you see a stranger wandering around the building, do not assume that he or she has the right to be there; ask who they are, who they wish to see, whether you can help.
- Ask for identity cards of people claiming to be engineers, gas/electricity/water board officials, etc. They all carry such cards and do not object to producing them for inspection.
- Ensure that the building is safe and secure when you leave it at night (e.g. make sure windows are shut, locks secure where necessary, and that all lights, heaters etc., are switched off)

Visitors

Notices shall be provided to inform visitors of the actions to take regarding fire and health and safety and copies of this Health and Safety policy shall be made available to them. Regular visitors will also be given a copy of the 'Health and Safety Information' leaflet, while one off visitors will have the relevant information given to them.

Contractors

TLC will appoint a contact to liaise with contractors regarding Health and Safety matters, who will be a point of contact for any problems and queries that a contractor may encounter.

Contractors need to ensure they adhere to the health and safety policy of the centre as well as their own, or their company's own health and safety policy. It will be their responsibility to ensure any equipment they bring is safe for them to use. They will also need to supply TLC with a copy of their Health and Safety Policy and undertake a risk assessment prior to starting work.

The contractors shall be responsible for accounting for all their staff should the fire alarm be raised.

The contractor shall be responsible for ensuring the competence of, and supervising, any sub-contractors that they use.

Hirers

TLC shall provide the responsible person for external events held on our premises with the necessary information regarding health and safety. It will be their responsibility to ensure all their group are made aware of this information and to evacuate and account for their group should the fire alarm be raised.

The hirer will be responsible to ensure any electrical equipment they bring is safe for them to use, and that electrical sockets are not overloaded.

Accidents and incidents should be reported to TLC as soon as possible so they can be entered into the accident book.

General Arrangements

First Aid

TLC has nominated people who are responsible for first aid. The names of these can be found on the notices on the noticeboard and with the first aid boxes.

First aid boxes can be found in Emmaus and on the desk in the front office. The accident report book is found on the noticeboard in the front office, and TLC is to nominate a person to be responsible for ensuring that the first aid box is fully stocked at all times.

Workers are advised to seek treatment for every injury, no matter how small, as any injury, if left untreated, may become serious.

Accident/hazard Reporting

It is essential that all accidents that happen at work, again no matter how small, are properly reported. This should be done, even if no apparent injury was received. In addition to reporting an actual accident it is equally important that workers report a `near mis` or potential hazard, so that the organisation can deal with it and help prevent employees or volunteers from suffering an injury. This comes under reporting of injuries, diseases, dangerous occurrences reporting (RIDDOR).

The procedure for reporting an accident

As soon as possible report the accident to the Health & Safety Officer. Preferably you should do this but if it is not possible, get someone else to do it for you. The details which you should give are:

- where it occurred, giving the time and place
- what happened
- if known, how it happened
- You should also prepare a brief written statement confirming these details and submit it to the Health and Safety Officer who maintains the official accident book.
- In order to help prevent a recurrence of the accident you and any witness to it may be asked to discuss it with the person responsible for safety issues. It would be helpful to you, therefore, to keep full notes of what happened.

The procedure for reporting a `near mis` or hazard is exactly the same.

Emergency Services are as Follows: -

Ambulance - Dial 999 and ask for Ambulance

**NHS Direct - for advice,
(please use 999 for emergencies)** - Dial 111

Huddersfield Royal Infirmary - (01484) 422191
Acre Street
Lindley
Huddersfield
HD3 3HE

COSHH control of substances hazardous to health

The TLC holds cleaning products in the kitchen area and in a cupboard at the top of the stairs. These products are normal everyday products that can be purchased at any local store. Exposure to these products is limited and none of them have the hazardous symbol making exposure a hazard, meaning the risk is low.

Fire Safety

It is important to remember to sign in and out each day (staff to sign in the office on staff sheet and visitors in the visitor's book on reception), and to notify a member of staff if you are leaving the premises, even if just for a few minutes, so you can be accounted for should the alarm go off.

The fire alarm will be tested weekly (usually Wednesday morning), where reasonably practical, and warning signs shall be put up beforehand. If the alarm sounds for more than 30 seconds, then it is a genuine alarm. TLC will hold fire drills, where reasonably practical, at regular intervals to ensure staff are familiar with the evacuation procedure.

The fire extinguishers are maintained on an annual service contract, and their locations are on the building plans at the back of this policy or on the noticeboards.

Fire alarm manual call points are situated in various locations as shown on the building plans, which activate the alarm system. Emergency lighting is also in place on escape routes in case of power failure.

The role of Fire Officer shall be carried out by the Health and Safety Officer, Lee Crossland, whilst on duty, or the evening or stand in receptionist in his absence.

We take fire safety risk seriously and have various management systems in place to manage fire safety, but the risk of fire may still be present, it is therefore important that you are aware of what to do if you discover a fire.

What to do if you discover a fire:

- Raise the alarm. This is done by activating the nearest break glass point.
- If possible, inform a member of staff and evacuate to the assembly point.

What to do if you hear the alarm:

- Leave the building immediately by the nearest available exit, quickly but calmly
- Make your way to the assembly point, the garden area across the road, where a responsible person can account for the occupants.

Stay at the assembly point and do not re-enter the building until you are told to do so.

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Document Revisions

Health & Safety Policy			
Version	Description of Change	Date	Review Date
1.0	Existing H & S Policy reviewed, updated to include reference to RIDDOR & COSHH	27/08/2021	
1.1	Reviewed document, amended location of first aid boxes and contact numbers using the phone system, added section missed off under Fire Safety and other minor alterations	21/11/2022	
1.2	Changes associated with the renaming of UCHM to The Tree of Life Centre	18/09/2023	
1.3	Fire safety – added visitor/staff sign in and day the alarm is tested	26/09/2023	Sept 2024
1.4	Amended telephone procedure and reviewed document	12/09/2024	Sept 2025