



YMCA Ireland - Health and Safety Policy 2019-20

Health and Safety Statement

It is the policy of YMCA Ireland to comply with the terms of the Health and Safety at Work Act, 2005 and subsequent legislation, and to provide and maintain a healthy and safe working environment. The objective of YMCA Ireland's health and safety is to minimise the number of instances of occupational accidents and illnesses and ultimately to achieve an accident-free working environment.

All employees will be provided with such equipment, information, instruction training and supervision as is necessary to implement the policy and achieve the stated objective.

The Executive Committee of YMCA Ireland recognises and accepts their duty to protect the health and safety of all persons working with or participating in activities organized by the Association, including members, volunteers, staff and temporary staff, as well as any members of the public who might be affected by our operations.

While the Executive Committee of YMCA Ireland will do all that is within its powers to ensure the health and safety of its employees and members, it is recognised that health and safety is the responsibility of each and every individual associated with the Association. It is the duty of each individual to take reasonable care of their own and other people's welfare and to report any situation which may pose a threat to the well being of any other person.

The YMCA Ireland Health and Safety Policy will be continually monitored and updated, particularly when changes in the scale and nature of our operations occur. The policy will be reviewed every twelve months.



Roles and Responsibilities

Monaghan YMCA has a responsibility:

- To provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions - taking account of any statutory requirements
- To provide training and instruction to enable employees to perform their work safely and efficiently
- To make available all necessary safety devices and protective equipment and to supervise their use
- To maintain a constant and continuing interest in health and safety matters applicable to YMCA activities, in particular, by consulting and involving staff or their representatives wherever possible.
- Carry out an assessment of risks to all staff whilst at work
- Provide adequate resources

Employees have a duty to co-operate in the operation of this policy:

- By working safely and efficiently
- By using the protective equipment provided, and by meeting statutory obligations
- By reporting incidents that had led or may lead to injury or damage
- By adhering to YMCA Ireland procedure, jointly agreed on their behalf, for securing a safe workplace
- By assisting in the investigation of accidents with the object of introducing measures to prevent a recurrence.
- YMCA Ireland will have regard to the need to maintain good working conditions and will comply with such official guidance as may be issued from time to time.

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety policy at YMCA Ireland is with the Executive Committee. As part of the Internal Monitoring of Health and Safety, the General Secretary will provide evidence to the appointed Internal Audit Sub Committee, on a quarterly basis by way of risk assessments and reports, that the policy is being implemented.

The Health and Safety Officer will be responsible for overseeing and monitoring the policy.

Health and Safety Officers:

YMCA Ireland has direct responsibility for several premises. Each with their own designated Health and Safety officer.

Principles of Best Practice / Arrangements



The Executive Committee of YMCA Ireland will provide employees and members with the necessary training, to enable them to carry out their tasks safely. However, if an employee or member is unsure how to perform a certain task or feels it would be dangerous to perform a specific job then it is the individual's duty to report this to the General Secretary or the most senior member of staff on duty/present at the time. An effective health and safety programme requires continuous communication between workers at all levels. It is therefore every one's responsibility to immediately report any situation that could jeopardise the well being of himself or herself or any other person.

All injuries, incidents or near misses, however small, must be reported to the General Secretary through the appropriate procedure. Accident, incident or near miss records are crucial to the effective monitoring and revision of the policy and must therefore be accurate and comprehensive.

a) Associated Policies

Other policies which are associated with the YMCA Ireland Health and Safety Policy, and as such need to be consulted in tandem with this policy are:

YMCA Ireland Child Protection Policy
YMCA Ireland Personnel Policy
YMCA Ireland Staff Manual

b) Employers Liability Insurance

YMCA Ireland will display a copy of its Employer Liability Insurance in all its premises in accordance with Health and Safety Legislation.

c) Communication and training

The Executive Committee of YMCA Ireland will endeavor to communicate to staff their commitment to safety and to ensure that employees and members are familiar with the contents of the health and safety policy. This will be communicated to staff and members orally, in the form of directions and statements, in writing, in the form of directives and this policy statement, as well as the staff manual.

Employees will be informed of the Health and Safety policy and any revisions made throughout the course of their employment.

YMCA Ireland will also inform staff about any risks to their Health and Safety identified by assessment and the subsequent protective and preventive measures applied.

d) Staff Handbook/ Manual

The Staff Handbook will contain details of the Health and Safety Policy – General Statement and Responsibilities. Mention will be made of where any General Arrangements and information is kept.



YMCA Ireland will take care to ensure that all staff are aware of any disciplinary action that could be taken if they are in breach of any aspect of policy or procedures.

e) Consultation

The Executive Committee of YMCA Ireland recognizes that communication between employees and members at all levels as an essential part of effective health and safety management. Consultation will be facilitated by means of structured meetings held as often as is deemed necessary.

The purpose of including safety at these meetings is to provide a forum in which information may be conveyed and questions on health and safety issues answered. In addition these meetings will provide an opportunity to assess the continuing effectiveness of the policy.

f) Safety Training

Safety training is regarded as an indispensable ingredient of an effective health and safety programme. It is essential that every member of staff in the Association be trained to perform their job effectively and safely. It is the opinion of the Executive Committee that if a job is not done safely then it is not done effectively.

All staff and members will be trained in safe working practices and procedures prior to being allocated any new role. Training will include advice on the use and maintenance of personal protective equipment appropriate to the task concerned and the formulation of emergency contingency plans. Training sessions will be held as often as is deemed necessary and will provide another opportunity for staff to express any fears or concerns they might have about their jobs.

Procedures

a) Accident Investigation and Reporting

It is the policy of YMCA Ireland to comply with the Health and Safety Authority of Ireland.

YMCA Ireland sees accident investigation as a valuable tool in the prevention of future incidents. In the event of an accident resulting in injury a report will be drawn up by the member of staff in charge at the time detailing:

- the circumstances of the accident including photographs and diagrams wherever possible;
- the nature and severity of the injury sustained;



- the identity of any eyewitnesses;
- the time, date and location of the incident;
- the date of the report.

All eyewitness accounts will be collected as near to the time of the accident as is reasonably practicable.

The completed report will then be submitted to the General Secretary who will attempt to discover why the accident occurred and what action should be taken to avoid a recurrence of the problem. Where appropriate a follow-up report will be completed after a reasonable period of time examining the effectiveness of any new measures adopted.

All reports will be submitted to the General Secretary who may, at his discretion, bring them to the attention of the Advisory Committee and in turn the National General Secretary and or the National Executive Committee.

b) Reporting Procedures

Staff are required to report all accidents and near misses, whether resulting in injury or not, to management. Under the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act, employers must report certain occurrences to the Health & Safety Authority and ensure records are kept on site for a period of 10 years.

The following details are required:

- Date, Time and Place of the incident.
- Name, Address, Occupation and Age of the injured person.
- Circumstances, including cause and nature of the injury and the arrangements made for its treatment.

All accidents will be investigated by a member of management and a written report prepared. Corrective action will be taken where necessary to avoid a recurrence. Accidents involving persons who are not members of staff but are visiting or working on the premises must also be reported. The **Child Protection Policy contains the accident form** that must be completed in the event of an accident.

c) Home Working

YMCA Ireland will apply the Health and Safety legislation to home workers in very much the same way as workers employed at their own premises. This regard will be given to:
The workers overall health and safety

The provision of proper health and safety information
The necessity for the home worker to take reasonable care for his/her health and safety and that of other people likely to be affected by his/her activities



d) Use of External Venues/Centres

When activities organized by YMCA Ireland necessitate the use of external venues, the Health and Safety Policy of that venue will be adopted and adhered to.

By way of Good Practice all off-site venues should be visited beforehand to ensure they have adequate provision for the activity, and that they are covered by adequate insurance.

e) First Aid

It is the policy of YMCA Ireland that there should be a qualified first aider within the staff team. Under normal circumstances staff present who hold a current First Aid Certificate will apply first aid if needed.

First Aid boxes are located at designated locations at headquarters and should also be available at all local associations. All First Aid stations should be clearly marked and are easily accessible by all personnel at all material times. In addition a basic kit should be carried when activities are conducted out of reasonable reach of these locations.

A list of emergency telephone numbers of doctors and hospitals should be maintained at each local association.

f) Fire Safety

All new staff as part of their induction will be shown the position of the Fire Exits; Fire Extinguishers and how to operate them; Fire Alarm points and how to activate them; The assembly point and what to do on discovering a fire; as well as the Fire Exit Routes.

All staff should be clear of what action to take in the event of a fire and such information will be displayed on a Health and Safety Notice Board, as well as in the Staff Manual.

The Health and Safety Officer for the building will ensure that fire evacuation drills take place once a quarter and that fire alarms and emergency lighting are checked at regular intervals.

In addition, Health and Safety Officer will ensure that:

- Fire exits are kept clear at all times
- Fire extinguishers are kept in their designated positions
- Fire extinguishers are checked weekly
- All fire notices are displayed

A record will be kept of the date and time of all fire drills and alarm tests.



YMCA Ireland's fire safety policy and procedures take account of special fire hazards in specific areas of the workplace.

All personnel have a duty to conduct their operations in such a way as to minimise the risk of fire. This involves keeping combustible materials separate from sources of ignition and avoiding unnecessary accumulation of combustible materials. The individual associations will be responsible for the facilities used by them; headquarters will be the responsibility of the General Secretary. All personnel are responsible for keeping their operating areas safe from fire, ensuring that their staff/members are trained in proper fire prevention practices and emergency procedures.

Staff or members should only tackle a fire themselves if it would pose no threat to their personal safety to do so. All situations where fire, smoke or fumes are detected are potentially dangerous and the alarm should be raised and the building evacuated.

g) Emergency Evacuation Procedure

In the event of the fire alarm being activated or in any other emergency situation (such as a bomb scare), all persons present must leave the building by the nearest available exit and assemble at the designated assembly point.

Staff/members working with groups must complete an attendance sheet on the arrival of the group and use it to do a roll call at the assembly point. If anyone is found to be unaccounted for, this must be reported to the Officer in charge of the Fire Brigade on his or her arrival.

No one should re-enter the building until the Fire Brigade has declared it safe.

Practice fire drills will be conducted periodically to ensure employee familiarity with emergency evacuation procedures.

h) Smoking, alcohol and drugs

It is not permissible to attend work under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs. Smoking is prohibited in YMCA Ireland facilities, reflecting the current legislation.

Smoking can take place outside the company building at least 3 metres away from door entrances and windows.

This smoking policy forms part of the overall Health & Safety Policy and any breach will be dealt with under disciplinary procedures.

Visitors, contractors and temporary members of staff are expected to abide by the terms of this policy.

i) Work Equipment



As such, YMCA Ireland will endeavour to ensure that all equipment used throughout the organisation, is safe and suitable for the purpose for which it is used.

Everyone will be provided with adequate information, instruction and training to enable them to use work equipment safely.

The use of any work equipment that could pose a risk to the well being of persons in or around the workplace will be restricted to authorised persons.

All work equipment will be maintained in good working order and repair and appropriate records will be kept.

All personnel will be provided with such protection as is adequate to protect them from dangers occasioned by the use of work equipment.

All work equipment will be clearly marked with health and safety warnings where appropriate.

All equipment will undergo annual electrical inspections, by a qualified Electrician

j) Display Screen/VDU Equipment

As part of their duties some employees spend long periods of time using visual display screens. Any necessary adjustments will be made to avoid RSI, eyestrain and other ailments associated with work on screens, which must be adjustable for height, tilt and brightness. No employee will be asked or expected to work any computer which is not in proper working condition, or does not meet the highest specifications.

Employees working continuously on-screen should alternate tasks so that at least 10 minutes during each 60 minutes of work is spent doing off-screen type of work. This work is to be undertaken away from the screen, but does not constitute a break.

Employees who habitually use VDU's have the right to an eyesight test, the cost of which will be met or reimbursed by the company.

k) Manual Handling

Manual Handling is defined as the “transporting of a load by one or more employees and includes lifting, putting down, pushing, carrying or moving a load, which by reason of its characteristics or of unfavourable ergonomic conditions involves risks, particularly of back injury to employees”.

This is a priority issue because it is a major cause of accidents in the workplace. It is the YMCA's policy to minimise the need for manual handling of loads and so therefore should be avoided as far as is reasonably practicable.

Employees must check the weight of the load before attempting to lift it and if the load is too heavy get help. **When lifting, follow the following basic principles.**

1. Relax the knees. Lowering movements should start at the knees not the head.



2. Get close to the object to be lifted. Get a good balance by keeping the feet apart. One foot will automatically be ahead of the other.
3. When in position, bend the knees and lift with the strong muscles in the legs.
4. Lift gradually, smoothly and without jerking, keeping the object close to the body and the back straight.

l) New or Expectant Mothers

It is the policy of YMCA Ireland to comply with the European Directive on Pregnant Workers. In addition to the general risk assessment, a further assessment of risk to new or expectant mothers will be conducted. Where a risk to new or expectant mothers is identified, working conditions and/or working hours will be adjusted so as to avoid the risk.

m) Risk Assessment

YMCA Ireland will as part of its Health and Safety General Arrangements and procedures undertake assessment of risks at all its premises. This will be the responsibility of the Health and Safety Officer, and any significant findings will be recorded and brought to the attention of the Executive Committee. Any preventative and protective measures which arise out of the assessment will be periodically monitored and reviewed.

An example of the kinds of risks to be aware of and the proforma used can be found in the Risk Assessment Documentation.

In Summary:

All employees should be aware of, respect and adhere to the rules and procedures contained in this policy statement, and immediately report any unsafe practices or conditions to the Health and Safety Officer.

Signed: Andy Hamilton, Chairperson

Signed : John Peacock, National Secretary

Date th November 2019

Next Review Date – November, 2020