

# Health & Safety Policy

## 1. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to comply with the requirements of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, a healthy and safe environment for all people who work, use or visit Widgit's premises.

## 2. Policy Statement

Widgit accepts in full its responsibilities under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and will act positively to minimise the incidence of all workplace risks via our commitment to taking all reasonably practicable steps to protect the health and safety of our staff, service users and others who may be affected by our activities.

## 3. Responsibilities

Each and every person at Widgit has a responsibility to ensure we are all working in a safe environment.

Widgit's responsibilities will be:

- to provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities
- to consult with staff on matters affecting their health and safety
- to provide and maintain safe equipment
- to ensure safe handling and use of substances
- to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health
- to maintain safe and healthy working conditions; and
- to review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals

### 3.1 Office Manager responsibilities

The Office Manager is responsible for:

- day to day actions and activities concerning health & safety
- maintaining an accident reporting system and investigating all health and safety accidents and "near misses" in conjunction with Line Managers
- inducting new staff (whether permanent, temporary, full or part time), and third party contractors on health and safety arrangements
- ensuring sufficient staff with training in First Aid and Fire Safety are based at Widgit premises
- ensuring maintenance arrangements are in place for equipment, systems and facilities (e.g. emergency lighting, fire extinguishers, portable electrical equipment (PAT) testing, signage etc) and appropriate records are kept

### 3.2 Line Manager responsibilities

Line Managers are responsible for:

- ensuring all staff under their direction are aware of all relevant health and safety procedure
- cooperating with the Office Manager to ensure that appropriate risk assessments are carried out for any activities undertaken by their staff in carrying out the duties of their role
- where staff are working flexibly, outside normal office hours, (including travel arrangements when working off-site) ensuring that all risks have been discussed and considered with staff and minimised as far as practicable
- ensuring that work carried out by their teams is to a satisfactory standard of safety, resulting in minimal risk to people, equipment and materials
- ensuring that all accidents and “near misses” are reported to the Office Manager.

### 3.3 Staff responsibilities

All staff at Widgit, whether full or part time, temporary or permanent, or contract workers will take all reasonable steps to identify and reduce hazards to a minimum and will:

- take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others and co-operating fully with the arrangements in place for Widgit to meet its legal responsibilities for health and safety
- report to the Office Manager or their Line Manager, any health and safety hazards or unsafe practices; any building and/or equipment defects; any shortfalls in cleanliness or issues and concerns which could be detrimental to themselves and others
- comply with health and safety policy and related procedures. Any wilful breach will be considered a disciplinary matter and may in some cases lead to dismissal
- not attempt to repair any item of electrical equipment (unless properly authorised to do so) but to report any faults to the Office Manager or their Line Manager
- keep a tidy workstation ensuring that passageways are kept clear and that cables are not allowed to trail across open floor spaces
- not attempt to lift heavy, awkward or dangerous loads. The Property Manager should be contacted to arrange for removal of loose items or to organise any heavy lifting
- bring to the attention of their Line Manager any work related activities (e.g. driving, flexible working, travelling arrangements) in order that any potential risks can be identified and ways agreed to minimise them
- ensure that all accidents and “near misses” are reported to the Office Manager.

## 4. Accident reporting and investigation

Widgit’s policy is to use preventative measures to stop accidents occurring. On the occasion of accidents, incidents, near misses (a “near miss” is an event which under slightly different circumstances could have resulted in an accident) and occupational ill-health, the circumstances are to be reported and investigated promptly. When the underlying causes have been identified action is to be taken to prevent recurrence.

### 4.1 Reporting responsibilities

It is the responsibility of:

- all staff to ensure that all accidents, incidents, near misses and instances of occupational ill-

health are reported

- all staff must fill the accident reporting form. The form should be sent to your Line Manager or Office Manager
- Line Managers, in conjunction with the Office Manager, to ensure that instances are adequately investigated and remedial action taken.

## 5. First Aid

First aid boxes are located in the main kitchen area. With a sufficient quantity of first aid material. Please do let the Office Manager know if supplies are running low.

- Current First Aider is James Attree & Vicky Andrew
- Current Mental Health First Aiders are: James Attree, Vicky Andrew and Brad Storey

### **The nearest Accident & Emergency is at:**

Warwick Hospital, Lakin Road, Warwick, CV34 5BW Tel: 01926 495 321 ext. 4032 (open 24 hours a day).

### **The nearest NHS Walk-in Centres are:**

Urgent Care Walk In Centre, George Eliot Hospital, Eliot Way, Nuneaton, Warwickshire, CV10 7DJ  
Tel: 02476 351351 or dial 111 (open 08.00-20.00, 7 days a week)

City of Coventry Health Centre, Stoney Stanton Rd, Coventry CV1 4FS Tel: 02476 961 402 or dial 111 (open 08.00-22.00, 7 days a week)

## 6. Fire, emergency evacuation and emergency lighting

It is Widgit's policy that its premises will be subject to a fire risk assessment to determine the level of fire precautions.

- all staff should be aware of the office evacuation procedures in the event of a fire
- risk assessments are carried out annually to ensure that, as far as is reasonably practicable, all fire hazards and/or risks are minimised
- all escape routes are easily identified and kept clear of obstructions at all times. Emergency lighting, fire alarms and fire fighting equipment is suitably maintained and tested at regular intervals
- fire alarm are tested on a weekly basis (usually on a Friday morning) The alarm is serviced twice a year (usually April and October).
- Fire extinguishers in communal areas are serviced annually (usually in January)
- designated fire assembly points are in place in the rear car park for Bishops House and the adjacent Nicholls House.
- Emergency lights are tested monthly and service annually.

## 7. Manual handling

Widgit's policy in respect of manual handling is to identify and minimise risks in compliance with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992. Staff should:

- never attempt to lift heavy, awkward or dangerous loads. Always ask for help or get suitable equipment to lift load
- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others.
- inform their Line Manager when they believe that there is a risk of injury.

## 8. Display screen equipment (DSE)

Widgit's policy is to provide safe working conditions in compliance with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992, the objective being to minimise the risk of occupational ill health.

- the majority of staff are dependent on the daily and prolonged use of DSE and are classed as essential users under the guidelines. Widgit will ensure that risk assessments are carried out as and when required to identify and minimise any workstation hazards and risks that the user may be exposed to
- risk assessments will cover the whole working environment including IT equipment, workstations, work patterns, and lighting
- health & safety guidance recommends that anyone working regularly at a computer screen, keyboard and mouse should take regular breaks. It is recommended that you have a five-to-ten-minute break approximately every hour rather than sit at the keyboard and screen for several hours without a break. Short frequent breaks are more effective than long infrequent breaks
- staff should report any health issues associated with the use of display screen equipment immediately to their Line Manager or Office Manager.

## 9. Eye tests for staff

As an employer, Widgit has a responsibility to ensure that all staff look after their eye health, therefore all staff are encouraged to get their eyes tested when convenient. Widgit will reimburse the cost of the eye test once a year.

All eye tests can be claimed back as we have a duty of care to staff irrespective of whether glasses are prescribed.

In the meantime, you can minimise the effects of VDU's by:

- Taking frequent breaks away from the screen
- Ensure your screen is at least 35-60cm from your eyes
- Minimise screen glare – keep it clean and adjust the brightness and contrast

Please refer the staff handbook for more details.

## 10. Portable electrical equipment

All portable electrical appliances will be inspected and tested (PAT) annually by a competent person and appropriate records kept.

## 11. Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH)

As a matter of policy, Widgit does not use strong chemicals and hazardous substances as part of day to day activities. For example, materials such as washing up liquid, handwash and air fresheners are normal household products. Our cleaning company use their own products and some maybe of industrial strength therefore please refrain from using them. However, whenever a potentially hazardous substance must be used a risk assessment will be undertaken to minimise any risk

## 12. Hygiene and waste disposal

Facilities for the disposal of waste materials must be kept in a clean and hygienic condition. Waste must be disposed of in an appropriate manner and in accordance with any special instructions relating to the material concerned.

## 13. Food Hygiene

When handling or preparing food there are specific hygiene requirements:

- clean as you go. Keep all equipment and surfaces clean
- keep food covered and either refrigerated or put away in a cupboard
- ensure waste food is disposed of properly. Keep the lid on rubbish bin and wash your hands after putting waste in it
- inform the Office Manager if you find any defects or concerns regarding the facilities – e.g. uncleanliness, refrigeration, and microwave malfunction etc.

## 14. Pregnant workers and new mothers

- on receipt of the formal notification of pregnancy, Widgit shall arrange for a risk assessment relevant to that persons work to be completed
- for any potential risks that are identified and which could represent an additional risk, efforts will be made by Widgit to eliminate or minimise them
- staff should report any changes in their health, and/or specific advice given by a medical practitioner during the course of their pregnancy immediately to their Line Manager.

## 15. Bullying and harassment

Widgit as an employer is under a legal obligation of a duty of care to provide both a safe place and safe system of work. Please refer to the separate Bullying and Harassment Policy for further details.

## 16. Stress

- Widgit recognises the potential dangers of work-related stress and seeks to offer support should you suffer from stress. Should you suffer work-related stress please discuss this matter with your Line Manager. Depending on the severity of the stress, your Line Manager may need to consider reducing workloads, a change of job role, job rotation, or a period of part time employment
- staff are encouraged to report, in confidence, any concerns about colleagues to their Line Manager so that any problems can be addressed and if possible prevented
- if you feel you need support, you can talk to our Mental Health First Aiders
- staff may also seek support through our private health care provided by BUPA. They can offer services that are designed to help with a wide variety of work and non-work related problems. This service is completely confidential and you can contact BUPA directly without needing a GP referral.

## 17. Working environment: office and/or homeworking

Staff have a duty of care to take reasonable care of their own health and safety whilst working. However, Widgit will ensure that staff work in a safe environment whether working from the office or from home. You must talk to your line manager if you feel your working environment doesn't feel safe or needs adjusting in anyway. A risk assessment can be arranged if necessary.

When working from home, your line manager must consider how you will keep in touch with them, what work activity you will be doing, can it be done safely and if any control measures need to be put in place to protect you.

## 18. Lone working

Staff who work alone face the same hazards in their daily work as other workers. However, for lone workers the potential for harm is often greater. It is essential that the risks of lone working are taken into account. Hazards which lone workers may face include:

- accidents or emergencies arising and lack of immediate access to first aid equipment or assistance
- fire
- abuse from members of public
- intruders
- manual handling incidents
- sudden illness

There is no general legal prohibition on working alone. However, under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Widgit as an employer has the legal duty to assess all risks to health and safety, including the risk of lone working.

## 19. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed every **3 years**, or sooner if changes in legislation occur or new best practice evidence becomes available.

<b>Document Control</b>	
Version Number	2.0
Date Ratified	22.09.2021
Date Issued	22.09.2021
Next Review Date	22.09.2024