

Advice and Information

Health and Safety

An Introduction

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Introduction

The Health and Safety Act 1974 sets out general duties that employers have towards employees. It also requires employers to protect people other than those at work, such as their volunteers, service users and members of the public from risks to their health and safety arising out of, or in connection with, their work.

Legislation

The **Health and Safety at Work Act (HaSaWA) 1974** requires employers to, so far as reasonably practicable, not expose others to risk to their health and safety, and to give them information about risks which may affect them.

There are other Acts and Regulations which apply to key areas of all community transport operators (ct's) business.

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The Act

The Act places duties on employers to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all employees, service users, volunteers and members of the public. In particular:

- Safe plant and systems of work.
- Safe use, handling, transport and storage of substances and articles.
- Provision of information, instruction, training and supervision specific to the job with consideration to health and safety.
- Safe place of work, access and exit.
- Safe working environment with adequate welfare facilities such as toilets, hand washing facilities, adequate heating and lighting etc.
- A written safety policy together with organisational and other arrangements.
- Consult with staff safety representatives or formation of safety committee where there are recognised trade unions.

As a basic guide, community transport organisations should:

Display your health and safety policy

This must be a written document if you employ five or more staff. The CTA advises that volunteers should be included in this count of five or more people. You should also provide internal training to ensure all staff are aware of the commitment and the processes contained in it. While the policy and all health and safety matters are the responsibility of trustees and senior management, it is important to have a nominated health and safety person who will take responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the policy. For help on how to complete a health and safety policy, see the Health and Safety Executive website www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/write.htm or for more guidance see the CTA advice leaflet: [Health and Safety - Policy](#).

Appropriate employers' liability Insurance

The **Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969** states that you must have at least a minimum level of cover against claims from employees or former employees against liability for injury or disease arising out of their employment. Community transport operators are encouraged to check to see if their insurance covers volunteers in the policy. For more guidance, see the CTA advice leaflet: [Insurance - Organisational](#).

Duty to report

Ensure senior management and staff are made aware of duties to report incidences under the **Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995** (RIDDOR) and **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002** (COSHH) to the Health and Safety Executive (or HSENI in Northern Ireland).

Display your Health and Safety Law poster

This should be suitable for the country in which you are operating -this poster should state the name and contact details of your nominated health and safety person. See www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/lawposter.htm for the different posters relevant to each country.

Accident / Incident book

Make your accident/incident book readily available and encourage all to complete it when necessary. An organisation with a good health and safety culture will encourage reporting of incidents and near misses. The accident/incident book provides a mechanism for everyone to record details and for senior management to take action on identified issues. Trustees should also review the records to ensure they are managing risks appropriately.

Complete an organisational risk audit

This is a simple record taken of hazards that you can identify through a walk around your workplace (including vehicles). The audit will provide a general identification of hazards that can then be assessed through the risk assessment process.

Complete risk assessments

Effective risk assessment is achieved when the task or activity is reviewed by both the risk assessor or nominated organisation health and safety officer and the person who is completing the job/task. A partnership approach ensures staff are aware of hazards and know management are actively working to improve systems to reduce risks to their and others' health and safety. Complete and update risk assessments regularly, if something changes, such as you purchase new equipment, or if a passenger advises you they have a new wheelchair. Organisations with five or more employees must have written risk assessments. Risk assessments can be quite a daunting task, however, the CTA recommends a simple process to help you to identify what needs to be assessed. For more guidance, see the CTA advice leaflet: [Health and Safety - Risk Assessments](#).

Complete a fire assessment

Organisations should ensure safety equipment is appropriate and clearly signposted in both offices and vehicles. They should provide regular fire drills and ensure all escape routes in offices and vehicles are free from obstacles. Senior managers should consider providing specific training for driving staff and passenger assistants such as the CTA's 5 Steps to Safety course, for more information see the Training section of www.ctauk.org.

Review

You should review your health and safety systems regularly to ensure they are still effective. The CTA suggests your policy is reviewed every two years and risk assessments are reviewed at least annually.

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Failure to comply

Failing to meet the health and safety standards has a number of consequences and the penalties for non-compliance range depending on the severity of the breach.

Health and Safety Executive inspectors have powers to access and inspect your operation. If your organisation is prosecuted by the HSE (or the Procurator Fiscal in Scotland) it will be a criminal law case and you could face fines of up to £20,000 with senior management team members facing imprisonment. If a member of staff takes a civil case against your organisation you could face a compensation claim of many thousands of pounds.

If your organisation is prosecuted or has a civil claim against it for failing to meet health and safety standards there are other considerations such as loss of your ability to deliver your services, sick pay, increased insurance premiums, loss of reputation, loss of staff and possible insolvency.

Health and safety is everyone's responsibility. An organisation committed to health and safety benefits from reduced absence, increased morale, a good reputation and better service delivery in the community.

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About the Community Transport Association

The Community Transport Association is a national charity that represents and supports providers of community transport: thousands of other local charities and community groups across the UK that all provide transport services that fulfil a social purpose and community benefit. We are for, and about, accessible and inclusive transport.

We help our members remain relevant and responsive to key areas of public policy and to make a big difference for the people and families in the communities in which they work. Our vision is of a world where people can shape and create their own accessible and inclusive transport solutions and our mission is to achieve this through championing accessible and inclusive transport, connecting people and ideas and by strengthening our members and raising standards.

Keep up to date with CTA via our website or by signing up to our monthly [News Brief](#).

About CTA's Advice Service

The CTA's Advice Service is available to CTA members, community and other voluntary groups, local authorities and other statutory bodies. It offers information and support on any aspect of non-profit transport operations. The CTA's Advice Service covers the whole of the UK and is supported by national governments. We will only ever explain the most accurate and commonly accepted interpretation of regulations and best practice. We do this by providing support and information on a wide range of community transport related topics such as permits and licensing regulations and by signposting to other agencies. The Advice Service does not exist to provide legal advice on any topics. If you are still unsure you will need to seek [legal advice](#).

For more information, contact

advice@ctauk.org | 0345 130 6195 | www.ctauk.org

This leaflet has been primarily produced for members of the CTA. If your organisation has benefited from using it but isn't a member please consider joining us, for more details please see: <https://ctauk.org/why-become-a-cta-member>.

Disclaimer:

The Community Transport Association has made every effort to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this leaflet, but it should be noted that this is only a guide, and should be treated as such.