

Health and Safety Matters

in the Not for Profit Sector

Everyone has the right to work in a healthy, safe environment.

Unite offers the latest training, information and advice to representatives, members and employers to ensure that best practice is followed, creating healthier, safer working environments for everyone.



Unite is committed to improving health & safety in all workplaces. Union organised workplaces are safer than non-union organised workplaces.

Your Unite Safety rep is:



Employers have a general duty of care for the health, safety and welfare of their employees.

This includes providing:

- a safe and healthy workplace where risks are suitably and adequately controlled
- safe work equipment, properly maintained and used, suitable for purpose and safe systems of work
- adequate welfare facilities
- Information, training and supervision necessary for health and safety.

Key health and safety issues include

- Stress
- Bullying and Harassment
- Long hours/shift work
- Sleepovers
- Rest breaks
- Dignity and respect
- Manual handling
- Lone working
- Rotas
- Anti social hours
- Working short staffed
- Risk assessments
- Challenging behaviour
- Secure storage for medication
- Occupational health
- Slips trips and falls



Safety Reps Rights

Unite safety reps are a key part of providing better health and safety for Unite members at work.

Unite expects safety reps to be involved in all aspects of a company's health and safety arrangements. "Worker involvement is fundamental to good health and safety performance and therefore also good for business." One of the HSE Board's key aims is on worker involvement in health and safety.

Accredited safety reps have specific legal rights set out in 'The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977', which enable them to:

- Inspect the workplace regularly
- Investigate employee complaints concerning health and safety issues at work.
- Investigate accidents, dangerous occurrences and potential hazards.
- Represent workers on health, safety and welfare matters to their employer.
- Inspect health and safety documents.
- Receive information from HSE Inspectors.
- Establish joint union/management Safety committee.
- Time off to carry out functions.

Employers are required to consult safety reps, especially about:

- Measures introduced at a workplace that may substantially affect health and safety.
- Arrangements for appointing health & safety competent persons and emergencies.
- Health & safety information required to be provided to employees.
- Health & safety training arrangements for the workforce, such as induction training.
- New technology introduced and planned, regarding consequences to health & safety.

Employers are legally required to provide safety reps with resources to carry out their role. ACAS suggest:

- Room with desk and chairs at work, for carrying out interviews and meetings.
- Secure facilities for storing documents.
- Access to internal and external telephones.
- Access to word processor now IT facilities.
- Access to duplicating facilities.
- Notice board.

Other facilities should include copies of relevant statutes, regulations, approved codes of practice and HSE guidance, copies of safety journals, and legal and international standards that are relevant to the workplace.

Unite has thousands of safety reps who are supported by branches regions and national staff and resources. Safety reps deal with issues locally supported by their senior workplace reps.

To find your regional office visit the web site: <http://www.unitetheunion.org>

Unite Health & Safety Unit

Unite has a dedicated Health and Safety Unit consisting of several Health and Safety Advisers and Researchers dealing with national issues around specific sectors and specialist topics. The Unite Health and Safety web pages are full of information, resources and downloadable publications to support reps.

For enquires contact:

Unite Health and Safety Unit

healthandsafety@unitetheunion.org

Other sources of information

Health and Safety Executive:

www.hse.gov.uk

HSE info line Tel: 0845 345 0055

TUC:

www.tuc.org.uk

Greater Manchester Hazards Centre:

www.gmhazards.org.uk

Hazards magazine: www.hazards.org

Labour Research Department:

www.lrd.org.uk

