

## Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Policy

### Aim

To meet our employer duties under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 to prevent employees from coming into contact with substances hazardous to health.

### Policy

Wherever possible, we will avoid the use of substances that have the risk of being hazardous to health.

We will hold on a COSHH register, COSHH Risk Assessments, and Safety data sheets or Chemical Hazard Information Packaging (CHIP) information supplied by manufacturers. This will be held for all substances and available for staff reference purposes.

We will make staff aware of any chemicals, potential hazards and treatments and risk assessments. We will ensure all staff are aware of how substances are used, the correct measures to be used, the protective clothing that might have to be worn and where it has to be stored. We will train, support and monitor staff to ensure that safe working practices are met.

### When does COSHH apply

'For the vast majority of commercial chemicals, the presence (or not) of a warning label will indicate whether COSHH is relevant. For example, there is no warning label on ordinary household washing-up liquid, so if it's used at work you do not have to worry about COSHH; but there is a warning label on bleach, and so COSHH does apply to its use in the workplace' – Health and Safety Executive.

### Procedure

We will follow the COSHH 8 Steps to assessing risks as listed in the appendix.

We will conduct a risk assessment in relation to all substances used on our premises.

We will ensure we meet the following statements:

1. The majority of substances used within the setting are of domestic standard for household use and therefore do not present any threat to health and are safe to use.
2. The setting has general hygiene measures in place, together with the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) to further ensure the safety of employees.
3. Cleaning substances are of domestic standard.
4. All substances are correctly stored in clearly labelled containers.
5. Cleaning substances are safely stored in child-safe cupboards; medications are safely stored.
6. Adequate washing facilities are available within the setting.
7. PPE Aprons and rubber gloves are provided where required.

8. All waste products, including medical waste is disposed of safely in accordance with statutory regulations.
9. A COSHH folder containing COSHH Register, Safety Data Sheets (COSHH) for cleaning products and information relating to any medications are filed in the staff handbook and are accessible to all staff.
10. All staff will be made aware of the requirements of COSHH and trained and monitored in the safe working practices required.

### **COSHH folder**

The COSHH folder contains a record of all products used within the setting:

- A setting overview on a COSHH Register
- A COSHH Risk Assessment Form and Safety Data Sheet (COSHH) for each substance
- A COSHH Risk Assessment Form and information leaflets relating to any medications.

This folder is updated by the manager and is stored in the staff handbook.

### **Further information can be obtained from:**

The Health and Safety Executive document: 'A Step by Step Guide to COSHH Assessment' and 'COSHH: A brief guide to the Regulations; What you need to know about the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)

### **Monitoring and Review**

The setting will review the risk assessments on a regular basis, or immediately if the initial assessment becomes invalid.

## Appendix

### What is a COSHH Risk Assessment Form?

This is a Risk Assessment Form that settings can complete for each substance as an overview of the information on the safety data sheet. It aims to be more accessible to staff.

### What is a safety data sheet?

HSE states: 'Safety data sheets provide information on chemical products that help users of those chemicals to make a risk assessment. They describe the hazards the chemical presents, and give information on handling, storage and emergency measures in case of accident. Safety data sheet information may lead to guidance appropriate for your task. By law suppliers of chemicals must provide an up to date safety data sheet if a substance is dangerous for supply.'

Safety Data Sheets are available from the manufacturer and contain general and technical information on the product.

### What is Chemical Hazard Information Packaging (CHIP) information?

HSE states 'CHIP helps protect people and the environment from the ill effects of chemicals by requiring suppliers to: identify the hazards (dangers) of the chemicals they supply; give information about the chemicals' hazards to their customers; and package the chemicals safely.'

This refers to the warning symbols and phrases that on the packaging of a chemical. Example symbols may be :



Example risk and safety phrases may be: Toxic by inhalation and if swallowed; Keep locked up and out of reach of children; In case of contact with eyes, rinse immediately with plenty of water and seek medical help.

CHIP is being replaced by new a new CLP EU Directive from June 2015 – 2017. This means that some of the symbols will change, but will be recognisable compared to the CHIP symbols.

## **COSHH 8 Steps**

HSE lists the 8 steps to comply with COSHH as:

**Step 1 Assess the risks:** Assess the risks to health of hazardous substances used in or created by your workplace activities.

**Step 2 Decide what precautions are needed:** You must not carry out work which could expose your employees to hazardous substances without first considering the risks and the necessary precautions, and what else you need to do to comply with COSHH.

**Step 3 Prevent or control exposure adequately:** You must prevent your employees being exposed to hazardous substances. Where preventing exposure is not reasonably practicable, then you must adequately control it.

**Step 4 Ensure that control measures are used and maintained:** Ensure that control measures are used and maintained properly and that safety and maintained procedures are followed.

**Step 5 Monitor the exposure to hazardous substances:** Monitor the exposure of employees to hazardous substances, if necessary.

**Step 6 Carry out appropriate health surveillance:** Carry out appropriate health surveillance where your assessment has shown this is necessary or where COSHH sets specific requirements.

**Step 7 Prepare plans and procedures to deal with accidents, incidents and emergencies:** Prepare plans and procedures to deal with accidents, incidents involving hazardous substances, and emergencies where necessary.

**Step 8 Ensure employees are properly informed, trained and supervise:** You should provide your employees with suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training