

# **Business Health and Safety Regulations**

## **Introduction**

As an employer you have a general duty under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to protect the health and safety of anyone who may be affected by your business and work activities, such as employees, customers and members of the public. You also have to comply with a range of more detailed regulations that set out specific duties covering every aspect of workplace health, safety and welfare.

In this guide, we'll cover key health and safety regulations and we'll explain what you must do to comply with them.

## **Employers' health and safety duties**

### **Risk assessments**

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, you must carry out health and safety risk assessments and take action to minimise any risks that you find. If you have five or more employees, you must keep records of your health and safety risk assessment.

### **Working environment**

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 require you to provide a safe place of work and make sure that there is secure access to and exit from that workplace. You must also provide 'adequate welfare facilities' for your employees. This includes, for example, toilet and washing facilities, adequate lighting, and a reasonable room temperature.

### **Providing information and training**

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 requires you to provide health and safety training to new employees, as well as refresher training to employees who need it. People changing jobs or taking on new responsibilities will need to know about any additional health and safety implications.

### **Reporting accidents and ill-health**

Under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013, you must report all work-related deaths, serious injuries, occupational diseases and 'dangerous

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occurrences' to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as fast as possible. You must also keep the records for three years after the incident.

### **Fire safety**

You must make sure that your business premises comply with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Anyone who controls business premises, or some part of them, is legally responsible for protecting users of the premises from fire.

### **First-aid**

Under the Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981, you must provide adequate first-aid equipment and appoint at least one staff member to take charge of first-aid arrangements, so that first-aid can be given when it's needed. You must also make sure that all your employees know about first-aid arrangements in their workplace

### **Hazardous substances**

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 require you to control any exposure to hazardous substances, such as chemicals that employees work with on a day-to-day basis, and carry out an assessment of the risks involved with using these substances.

### **Work equipment**

Under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998, the work equipment that you provide for your employees must be suitable for its intended use. You must also make sure that it is inspected regularly, kept in good repair and only used by employees who have received adequate information about how to use it safely.

Access to dangerous parts of machinery must be restricted, and electrical equipment must be regularly checked for safety, for example by portable appliance testing (PAT testing). The electrical supply must be safe and well maintained.

### **Protective equipment**

Under the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992, you must provide suitable personal protective equipment to employees who may be exposed to a risk to health and safety at work. This is not required if you can adequately control the risk in other ways that are just as effective.

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## **Manual handling**

Under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, you should avoid hazardous manual handling operations (such as lifting and carrying) in the workplace if at all possible. If manual handling can't be avoided, you must properly assess the risks involved and take steps to reduce the risks as far as possible.

## **Working at height**

The Work at Height Regulations 2005 require you to make sure that employees only work at height when completely necessary. You must make sure that any employees working at height are competent and adequately trained, or supervised by competent people. You must also provide suitable work equipment and put safety measures in place to prevent falls.

## **Noise**

Under the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005, you must take steps to minimise exposure to workplace noise and reduce the risk of damage to employees' hearing.

## **Computers and display screens**

Under the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992, you must make sure that the workstations of employees who regularly use display screen equipment (such as computers, laptops or point-of-sale touch screens) meet minimum standards so that they can work safely and without discomfort.

You must also plan their work so that they can take regular breaks and provide a free eye test if they ask for one.

## **Exemptions for certain self-employed people**

Self-employed people usually have to comply with health and safety regulations even if they don't have any employees. This is because their work activities might put other people at risk, such as customers and members of the public.

However, there are some self-employed people whose work doesn't present any potential risk to others. Under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (General Duties of Self-Employed Persons) (Prescribed Undertakings) Regulations 2015, these self-employed people don't usually have to comply with health and safety law.

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For more information about whether this exemption applies to your work activities, go to [www.hse.gov.uk/self-employed](http://www.hse.gov.uk/self-employed).

### **Enforcement and penalties**

Health and Safety regulations are enforced by the [Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#) in partnership with local authorities. Failure to comply with your health and safety obligations could lead to unlimited fines and a prison sentence.

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