



Bridging the Gap (Manchester)

Health & Safety Policy

Registered Charity Number: 1170952

This policy and guidance will be reviewed annually or if there are any changes in the related legislation or when an incident dictates. This will ensure that this document is current and fit for purpose.

This policy should be read in conjunction with: -

- **Manual Handling Policy and Procedures**
- **Fire Safety Policy**
- **Lone Working Policy**
- **Infectious Diseases Policy**
- **Health & Safety Risk Assessments**
- **Workforce Driver Policy**
- **Stress in the Workplace Policy & Procedure**
- **Mental Health First Aid Policy & Procedure**
- **Menopause Support in the Workplace Policy**
- **Coronavirus (COVID-19) Policies**

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Reviewed by: Chris Copestake, Lynda Mason & Michelle McHale

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1. Purpose and Scope

This Health and Safety Policy aims to protect workers, volunteers and people who use the services of Bridging the Gap (BTG).

It is BTG's policy to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of all paid staff, volunteers and any other persons who may be directly affected by the activities of BTG, including the general public.

There are a number of pieces of legislation to ensure a safe working environment. The following are relevant: -

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

All employers have a duty to maintain a safe working environment 'so far as reasonably practicable' for their employees under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. This means that employers are expected to protect their workers against risks to their health and safety. The Act also expects that the working environment is safe and that training to ensure the health and safety of workers is carried out. These requirements are not only for office-based staff but lone workers and the environments they encounter too.

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

The regulations make it clear what employers must do under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The main requirement of which is to assess all the risks to the health and safety of their employees and, if the organisation has more than five employees, to record the outcomes of the assessment. Although BTG falls under the required number of staff for recording outcomes, it does carry out risk assessments for all its activities and records the outcomes, as well as any required improvements.

The risk assessment should identify the risks associated with lone working, outline any safety measure that can help to reduce the risk and ensure that the safety measures are put into practice and reviewed regularly to make sure they are still valid. If the risk assessment shows that the risk is too hazardous for one lone worker to manage alone, other arrangements will need to be introduced.

The regulations also expect employees to take reasonable care for their own personal safety.

Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981

The regulations require employers to provide first aid equipment so that emergency first aid can be received by employees if needed. This could include the provision of first aid equipment in the car for lone workers travelling alone in case they are involved in accidents and incidents.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999 (COSHH)

These regulations require that any substances that are hazardous, including hazardous waste and cleaning materials used, are identified and assessed for their risk to the health of all workers and that there are safety measures put in place to control these risks.

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)

These regulations place a legal duty on employers to report deaths, major injuries (or injuries that require more than three days off work) and dangerous occurrences at work. This would include accidents and incidents that happen as a result of lone working.

A full list of types of reportable injuries can be found on the HSE website: <https://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/reportable-incidents.htm>

Corporate Manslaughter and Homicide Act 2007

This legislation allows an organisation to be convicted when the death of someone has occurred to whom it owes a duty of care, e.g. a staff member or a person using the service, due to the negligence of the organisation. This can include a failure to put into place adequate risk management systems.

2. Responsibilities for Health and Safety

Overall responsibility for implementing health and safety falls with the Board of Trustees, Project Manager or the team leader for a particular activity, although everyone individually is responsible for health and safety.

The Project Manager / Health and Safety Officer will provide a regular report on BTG's health and safety performance to the Trustees and ensure the report contains proposals for the continual improvement of health and safety management as appropriate.

While volunteering for BTG, each volunteer is responsible for their own health and safety and is responsible for the wellbeing of the service users and other volunteers around them.

In the event that there is a health and safety breach the Health and Safety Officer and Project Manager will be responsible for the overseeing and execution of the protocols.

Designated Health & Safety Officer (Overall): Chris Copestake

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Project Manager (Day to Day): 07561 680009

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3. Compliance

It is **EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY** that this policy is followed.

BTG paid staff and volunteers will:

- Aim to comply with the Health and Safety At Work Act 1974 and related regulations and codes of practice.
- As far as is practical, ensure the working environment for all paid staff and volunteers and for people using the services' of BTG is safe, with minimum risk to health.
- Ensure all staff and volunteers understand they have a responsibility not to behave in any way that will endanger any other person.
- Ensure all accidents, injuries and their causes are recorded in the accident book, which **is located in the Main Office at the Wesley Centre.**
- Be made aware of where a First Aid box is kept, if one should be required (see section 9 below).
- Make sure that all objects are safely stacked and stored to prevent falling.
- Check equipment is maintained and kept in a good state of repair. If any defects are noticed, they should be reported immediately.
- Make sure the work area is kept clean, rubbish is not allowed to build up and spillages are cleaned up immediately. (See below for bodily fluid spills.)
- Make sure that any needles, blood or bodily fluids (DO NOT TOUCH) are reported to either a team leader or a person responsible who has had adequate training to deal with such spills.
- Ensure that the fire regulations are being followed. For further fire safety or details of procedure see a team leader. Staff/volunteers will be instructed on emergency procedures on induction, and all staff/volunteers need to familiarise themselves with the fire emergency procedure.

4. Working at Height

'Work at height' means work in any place where, if there were no precautions in place, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injuries.

Working at height remains one of the biggest causes of fatalities and major injuries. Common cases include falls from ladders, which is the only likely danger of injury from falling in the food bank setting.

In the main, warehouse work at BTG premises poses only low-risk situations where common sense tells you no particular precautions are necessary. However, staff and volunteers should ensure that before working at height they consider the following: -

- When working at a height, prevent falls by using the right type of equipment.
- Always use equipment that is suitable, stable and strong enough for the job, as well as it being checked regularly. For most at-a-height working in the food bank warehouses BTG provides substantial, 3-step stools for reaching the higher warehouse shelves.
- Never place step stools on an uneven surface.
- When positioning step stools in order to handle stock on the higher shelves make sure you can get safely to and from where you are working (i.e. personal protection)
- Ensure that you are not moving stock above the heads of other workers so as to provide them with protection from falling objects (i.e. collective protection).
- Don't try to carry/move too much stock at once.
- Never overreach when using step stools or ladders.
- Only use the step stools for light work of short duration (a maximum of 30 minutes at a time).

5. Manual Handling

The term manual handling covers a wide variety of activities including lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling and carrying. If any of these tasks are not carried out appropriately there is a risk of injury.

For any lifting activity staff/volunteers should always take into account: -

- **individual capability** - assess the weight to be carried and whether you can move the load safely or need any help – maybe the load can be broken down to smaller, lighter components
- **the nature of the load** - assess the size of boxes/containers and whether these are manageable to lift alone
- **environmental conditions** - check the carrying route is clear and free from obstructions

- **the amount of twisting, stooping and reaching** and reduce it as much as possible
- **the level of the container** - avoid lifting from floor level or above shoulder height, especially heavy loads
- **storage areas** and if they can be reorganised to minimise the need to carry out such movements
- **carrying distances and consider if they can be minimised**
- **the need for a lifting device or trolley** to transport items from A to B
- **your footwear** - always wear footwear that is firmly attached to your feet, preferably don't wear sandals and do wear something that protects your feet
- **the training they have received.**

For further guidance please refer to BTG's stand-alone '[Manual Handling Policy](#)' and the separate Health and Safety Executive's 'Health and Safety at Work Guide'.

6. Care of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH)

Many materials or substances used at work could harm your health. These substances could range from dust particles, gases or fumes that you breathe in, or liquids, gels or powders that may come into contact with your eyes or skin. There could also be harmful micro-organisms present that can cause infection, an allergic reaction or are toxic.

Harmful substances can be present in anything from cleaning products to flour dust, fruit and vegetables, blood or waste. Ill health caused by these substances used at work is preventable. Many substances can harm health but, used properly, they almost never do.

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) legally requires BTG to: -

- identify which harmful substances may be present in the workplace
- decide how workers might be exposed to them and be harmed
- look at what measures have to be in place to prevent this harm and decide whether BTG is doing enough
- provide information, instruction and training
- provide health surveillance, in appropriate cases

Volunteers and staff are not expected to come into prolonged contact with any substance covered within the Care of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations while working for BTG. However, should this change, BTG will ensure an appropriate risk assessment is carried out beforehand, with full training given to any person(s) expected to use them, so as to make sure of their safe use, handling, storage and transport of the substance(s) used in the provision of BTG's services.

Volunteers and staff of BTG should be aware that all domestic cleaning items that they may come into contact with will come with their own health warnings, and these should be read carefully and followed as directed. Volunteers and staff should be aware that:

- Having your hands wet for a long time or having them frequently wet during the day can irritate your skin leading to dermatitis
- Some ingredients in cleaning products can cause skin allergies and asthma
- Some cleaning products are corrosive and can cause skin burns and eye damage.

In addition, food items such as fruits, vegetables, nuts and flours donated to BTG may also cause harm such as dermatitis of the skin and allergic reactions therefore, extra care and attention is required when working around these products also.

On site there are bathroom facilities to wash and BTG provides the use of aprons, gloves and face masks to limit the likelihood of exposure and harm.

7. Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)

RIDDOR places duties on employers to report certain serious workplace accidents, occupational diseases and specified dangerous occurrences (near misses).

What must be reported?

- Deaths and injuries caused by workplace accidents
- Occupational diseases
- Carcinogens, mutagens and biological agents
- Specified injuries to workers (fractures, amputations, burns, crushes, any loss of consciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia)
- Dangerous Occurrences
- Gas incidents

BTG's Health and Safety Officer maintains responsibility for reporting any reportable injuries to RIDDOR and the Trustee Board.

8. Reporting Concerns

BTG places huge importance on the health and safety of its staff, volunteers and clients. If there are any health and safety concerns, these should be passed on

immediately to a Project Manager or the team leader supervising a session who will liaise with the Board of Trustees Health and Safety Officer to ensure concerns are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Should a complainant be unsatisfied with the outcome of their reported concern being looked into then they can write directly to the Chair of Trustees to outline their dissatisfaction and continuing concerns.

9. Training and First Aid

Training

BTG will provide information, training and supervision in all aspects relating to health and safety to both its staff and volunteers, as well as maintaining open communication with regards to all matters where there is any risk to health and safety.

BTG will ensure that all staff and volunteers have access to, and are aware of, this Health and Safety policy and procedures and guidance.

As part of volunteers' induction programme, they will all be issued with a 'Volunteer Handbook' that will draw their attention to important health and safety issues in respect of: -

- Manual handling
- First Aid
- Working at a height
- Fire safety and evacuation
- Accidents and incidents at work
- Hazardous substances
- Food hygiene

Each volunteer will be asked to sign when they have attended training on the above issues. Furthermore, the Project Manager will keep a record of all training courses that volunteers attend.

First Aid

Despite there only being guidance from the HSE that only an organisation with a workforce of 25 persons and over must have a qualified first aider on site (HSE The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations, 1981, p18-19), a category which BTG does not fall under, BTG recognises the importance of having an appropriately qualified person on site, where possible. Therefore, BTG will endeavour to have an appropriately qualified person on site as frequently as is possible.

First Aid boxes are provided by BTG and are located in the Main Office, the back-up warehouse (Room 2) and the communal kitchen at the Wesley Centre, as well as one being provided in the delivery van. These First Aid boxes will be checked regularly by the Project Manager to ensure they contain the appropriate materials.

When BTG's services are provided off-site the Project Manager/team lead will be aware of where the First Aid box is kept that is provided by the respective church organisations.

A notice will be placed prominently in BTG's warehouses informing staff and volunteers where First Aid Boxes can be located and who in the building is a qualified First Aider.

Mental Health First Aid

BTG recognises that mental and physical health should be treated as equally important. It will, therefore ensure that there is a designated Mental Health First Aider in the organisation and that this person is enabled to undertake the appropriate training to maintain a Mental Health First Aid Accreditation.

BTG will inform its employees/volunteers how they can access the help of the organisation's Mental Health First Aider.

10. Risk Assessments

As an extra step to reduce potential risks to health and safety, BTG conducts risk assessments for all activities related to working for the organisation. These risk assessments are available to all staff and volunteers and should be read in conjunction with the Health and Safety policy.

Appendix A

For Health and Safety Officers only

All incidents can be reported online but a telephone service is also provided for reporting fatal/specified incidents only - call the Incident Contact Centre on 0345 300 9923 (opening hours Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 5 pm).

Reporting online

Responsible persons should complete the appropriate online report form listed below. The form will then be submitted directly to the RIDDOR database. You will then have the option to download a copy for your records.

- [Report of an injury](#)
- [Report of a dangerous occurrence](#)
- [Report of a case of disease](#)
- [Report of flammable gas incident](#)
- [Report of a dangerous gas fitting](#)