

Health and Safety Policy – Peer Support Plus®



Purpose of Policy

Peer Support Plus takes health and safety issues seriously and is committed to protecting the health and safety of everyone engaged in managing, delivering and supporting its charitable activities including those attending its meetings and events.

Peer Support Plus's *Health and Safety Policy*¹ is intended to help achieve this purpose by clarifying who is responsible for health and safety matters and what those responsibilities are.

This document is a statement of health and safety policy only and does not form part of a contract of employment.

Peer Support Plus in its absolute discretion may amend its policies at any time. The Board of Trustees will review this *Health and Safety Policy*¹ as necessary but at least bi-annually to ensure it is achieving its aims effectively.

Non-compliance with Health and Safety Policy and Rules

Any breach of health and safety rules or failure to comply with this *Health and Safety Policy*¹ will be taken very seriously. It is likely to result in actions that accord with other Peer Support Plus policies, including immediate suspension from participation in any Peer Support activity and may result in the ending of our relationship with you.

Who is responsible for workplace health and safety?

Achieving a healthy and safe workplace is a collective task shared between everyone who engages with Peer Support Plus.

This policy and the rules contained in this *Health and Safety Policy*¹ apply to all those who manage and deliver Peer Support Plus activities, irrespective of their seniority, tenure and working hours, including all trustees and officers, volunteers, employees, fixed-term staff, casual or agency staff, homeworkers and trainees [collectively referred to below as "staff"]. It also applies to Peers [beneficiaries of the charity], external consultants, contractors and visitors.

Specific responsibilities are set out in the section headed "Specific Responsibilities" below.

Peer Support Plus is responsible for:

- a. Taking reasonable steps to safeguard the health and safety of staff, people affected by Peer Support Plus activities and people participating in our activities and events.
- b. Identifying health and safety risks and finding ways to manage or overcome them.
- c. Providing a safe and healthy place of work and safe entry and exit arrangements for everyone, including during an emergency situation.

- d. Providing and maintaining safe working areas, equipment and systems and, where necessary, appropriate protective clothing.
- e. Providing safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances.
- f. Providing adequate information, instruction, training and supervision to enable everyone to work safely, to avoid hazards and to contribute positively to their own health and safety. Peer Support Plus will give you the opportunity to ask questions and advise who best to contact in respect of those questions if you are unsure about how to safely carry out your work or participate in our meetings or events.
- g. Ensuring any health and safety representatives receive appropriate training to carry out their functions effectively.
- h. Providing a health and safety induction and safety training appropriate to each individual's role.
- i. Promoting effective communication and consultation between Peer Support Plus and staff concerning health and safety matters and will consult with staff directly relating to health and safety.
- j. If an epidemic or pandemic alert is issued, providing instructions, arrangements and advice to staff as to the organisation of business operations and steps to be taken to minimise the risk of infection.
- k. Regularly monitoring and reviewing the management of health and safety at work, making any necessary changes and bringing those to the attention of all staff.

Specific responsibilities

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for health and safety and has appointed our Chair of Trustees as the Principal Health and Safety Officer² with day-to-day responsibility for health and safety matters.

Any concerns about health and safety matters should be notified to the Principal Health and Safety Officer².

General responsibilities

Everyone, when engaged in a Peer Support Plus activity, must:

- a. Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
- b. Co-operate with the Principal Health and Safety Officer² and Peer Support Plus generally to enable compliance with health and safety duties and requirements.

- c. Comply with any health and safety instructions and rules, including instructions on the safe use of equipment.
- d. Keep health and safety issues in the front of their minds and take personal responsibility for the health and safety implications of their own acts and omissions.
- e. Keep the workplace tidy and hazard-free.
- f. Report all health and safety concerns to the Principal Health and Safety Officer² promptly, including any potential risk, hazard or malfunction of equipment, however minor or trivial it may seem.
- g. Co-operate in Peer Support Plus's investigation of any incident or accident which either has led to injury or which could have led to injury, in Peer Support Plus's opinion.

Responsibilities relating to equipment

Everyone, when engaged in Peer Support Plus activity, must:

- a. Use equipment as directed by any instructions given by representatives of Peer Support Plus, or contained in any written operating manual or instructions for use and any relevant training.
- b. Report any fault with, damage to or concern about any equipment (including health and safety equipment) or its use to the Principal Health and Safety Officer², who is responsible for maintenance and safety of equipment.
- c. Ensure that health and safety equipment is not interfered with.
- d. Not attempt to repair equipment unless suitably trained and authorised.

Responsibilities relating to accidents and first aid

The Principal Health and Safety Officer² is responsible for investigating any injuries or work-related disease, preparing and keeping accident records, and for submitting reports under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR), where required.

Everyone, when engaged in Peer Support Plus activity, must:

- a. Promptly report any accident involving personal injury, however trivial, to the Principal Health and Safety Officer² so that details can be recorded in the Accident Book, and cooperate in any associated investigation.

- b. Familiarise themselves with the details of first aid facilities and trained first aiders, which are displayed on a notice board at the workplace, meeting or event venue or on our website peersupportplus.org or are available from the Principal Health and Safety Officer².
- c. If an accident occurs, contact the duty first aider, giving your name, location and brief details of the problem. If the problem appears potentially life threatening (or potentially serious and the duty first aider is not immediately available) do not hesitate – call Emergency Services immediately by dialling 999 or 112 and ask for an Ambulance.

Responsibilities relating to emergency evacuation and fire

The Principal Health and Safety Officer² is responsible for:

- Ensuring fire risk assessments exist at all offices and venues used by Peer Support Plus and that changes are made where required.
- Making sure there are regular checks of fire extinguishers, fire alarms, escape routes, signage and emergency lighting.
- Ensuring that fire drills will be held at least once every 12 months.

Everyone, when engaged in Peer Support Plus activity, must:

- a. Familiarise themselves with the instructions about what to do if there is a fire which are displayed on notice boards at the venues used by Peer Support Plus and are available from the Principal Health and Safety Officer².
- b. Ensure they are aware of the location of fire extinguishers; fire exits and alternative ways of leaving the building in an emergency.
- c. Comply with the instructions of fire wardens if there is a fire, suspected fire or fire alarm (or a practice drill for any of these scenarios).
- d. Co-operate in fire drills and take them seriously.
- e. Ensure that fire exits or fire notices or emergency exit signs are not obstructed or hidden at any time.
- f. Notify the Principal Health and Safety Officer² immediately of any circumstances (for example, impaired mobility) which might hinder or delay your evacuation in a fire. This will allow the Principal Health and Safety Officer to discuss a personal evacuation plan for you, which will be shared with the fire wardens and colleagues working near to you.

On discovering a fire:

- g. Immediately trigger the nearest fire alarm and once you have evacuated to a place of safety, if there is any doubt that the Emergency Services have been alerted call Emergency Services immediately by dialling 999 or 112 and ask for Fire. When time permits, call the Principal Health and Safety Officer² and notify the location of the fire.
- h. Attempt to tackle the fire ONLY if you have been trained or otherwise feel competent to do so and the Emergency Services have been or are being summoned. Nominated members of staff at venues used by Peer Support Plus will be trained in the use of fire extinguishers.

On hearing the fire alarm, everyone must:

- i. Remain calm and immediately evacuate the building, walking quickly without running, following any instructions given by fire wardens, and
 - o Leave without stopping to collect personal belongings.
 - o Stay out of any lifts
 - o Remain out of the building until notified by a fire warden that it is safe to re-enter.

Responsibilities relating to risk assessments, hazardous substances, display screen equipment and manual handling

The Principal Health and Safety Officer² is responsible for workplace risk assessments and any measures to control risks. Line managers must ensure that any necessary risk assessments take place and the resulting recommendations are implemented.

Risk assessments are simply a careful examination of what in the workplace could cause harm to people. Peer Support Plus will assess any risks and consider measures to best minimise any risk. Peer Support Plus will carry out general workplace risk assessments when required or as reasonably requested.

The use of hazardous substances at work must be avoided where possible and less hazardous alternatives will be used where available. Training on the control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) will be provided where required.

Everyone who uses a computer for prolonged periods of time should try, where possible, to organise short breaks every few hours away from the computer screen. You may request a workstation assessment and/or an eye test by an optician by contacting the Principal Health and Safety

Officer². The Principal Health and Safety Officer² will then provide you with more details and make arrangements if you would like to proceed. Guidance on the use of display screen equipment can also be obtained from the Principal Health and Safety Officer.

Everyone must try to minimise or avoid the need for manual handling where there is a risk of injury. Guidance on manual handling (for example, lifting and carrying heavy objects) can be obtained from the Principal Health and Safety Officer² and where necessary training will be provided by Peer Support Plus.

Responsibilities relating to Coronavirus (Covid-19)

We expect everyone, when engaged in Peer Support Plus activity, to follow the guidelines below to maximise personal safety and minimise the risk of spreading infection.

We will review these guidelines regularly to ensure they are kept up-to-date with UK Government guidance.

- a. Ensure you familiarise yourself with the guidelines provided here alongside the UK Government guidance.
- b. Everyone must engage from home where possible.
- c. If your role is considered a critical role, as defined by UK Government guidance, you will be informed of such and we will make arrangements for you to engage at specific location(s) either at or away from home.

Social distancing

- d. Where you are required to engage at a specific location away from home, you will be required to maintain social distancing wherever possible. To achieve this, you must stay 2 metres away from other individuals, while engaged and when travelling between locations.
- e. Social distancing must be followed at all times, including in common areas, break rooms, canteens, meeting rooms and reception areas. If individuals are found to not be following social distancing rules or if the space does not allow for social distancing, we will implement staggered breaks or other measures to maintain social distancing.
- f. We may change your arrival and departure times in the work location to reduce crowding into and out of the workplace and will ensure that we discuss this with you first to accommodate your needs as far as possible.

- g. We will take into account the impact of any measures on individuals with protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, namely sex, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation. This means we will ensure our measures do not adversely affect one group over another.
- h. We may also implement seating or workstation arrangements to maintain social distancing. We will ensure that workstations are assigned to an individual and are not shared. We may use floor tape, paint or signs to mark areas to help you keep a 2-metre distance.
- i. Where social distancing guidelines cannot be followed in full in relation to a particular activity, we will consider whether that activity needs to continue.
- j. In the event of an accident or emergency, you are not expected to follow social distancing rules if it would be unsafe to do so. You will be given instructions on what you should do in the event of an emergency.

Travelling to and from work

- k. We recommend that everyone should minimise travel. If you must travel, we urge you to avoid using public transport where possible. We also recommend that the number of people travelling together in any one vehicle is restricted to only those necessary.

Hygiene practices at work

- l. You must follow all hygiene measures which we implement, and may include increased frequency of hand washing, wearing protective clothing and sanitising workstations.
- m. We will provide adequate handwashing facilities (or hand sanitiser where not possible) at entry/exit points and expect everyone to use these facilities frequently whenever entering and exiting the workplace.
- n. We encourage you to bring your own food if required and to use your own utensils and drinking containers.
- o. We expect you to apply good hygiene practices generally, such as covering your mouth or face when coughing or sneezing, not shaking hands or touching other people and to dispose of any waste, such as used tissues or hand wipes, responsibly.

- p. You are expected to wipe down surfaces at your assigned workstation regularly. We will provide adequate cleaning equipment to enable you to clean the surfaces that you have touched, such as desktops, keyboards, computer screens and telephones, and we will make sure there are adequate disposal arrangements.

Meeting rooms

- q. Where possible, you are expected to stay 2 metres apart in meetings and to not face directly opposite other people.
- r. Meetings should be restricted to a maximum of 2 participants, or only those who are strictly necessary.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and face coverings

- s. Where you are already using PPE in your work activity to protect against non-Coronavirus (COVID-19) risks, you should continue to do so.
- t. In line with UK Government guidance, we recommend against the precautionary use of extra PPE to protect against Coronavirus (COVID-19) outside clinical settings, or when responding to a suspected or confirmed case of Coronavirus (COVID-19).
- u. Unless you are exempt under UK Government guidance, we may require you to wear a face covering as a precautionary measure to protect others. If you do wear a face covering, it must cover your mouth and nose. A face covering is not a substitute or replacement for general hygiene practices.
- v. When you wear a face covering, we encourage you to:
 - o Wash your hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitiser before putting the face cover on and after removing it.
 - o Avoid touching your face or face covering to prevent contamination.
 - o Change and wash your face covering daily if it is washable, or dispose of it responsibly.

Mental health whilst working during Coronavirus (COVID-19)

- w. We take seriously the mental health and wellbeing of all those who engage with Peer Support Plus. Whether you are engaging from home or at a work location, we strongly encourage you to speak to your line manager, or the Community Trustee regarding any concerns or issues you may have.

- x. Whether you are engaging from home or at a work location, we encourage you to:
- Connect with others for informal chats or video calls.
 - Get regular exercise and sunlight outdoors.
 - Take regular breaks away from your workstation.
 - Ensure they are drinking sufficient water and eating properly.

Notes

¹ available on our website peersupportplus.org

² Principal Health and Safety Officer:

Lisa Bamford, Principal Health and Safety Officer, Peer Support Plus
c/o 1 Elmete Close, Leeds, LS8 2LD [our registered address]

Email chair@peersupportplus.org

Telephone 07811 126491

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