

Volunteering Health and Safety Policy

Introduction

At Redbridge Foodbank, we recognise our duties under Health and Safety legislation, including meeting the requirements of this legislation and supporting guidance to maintain a safe and healthy volunteering environment.

We will provide you with the information, instruction, and training needed to ensure that you are competent to carry out your volunteering tasks. We will go through our volunteer health and safety checklist as part of your induction.

Organisational Responsibilities

Leadership Team

The Board of Trustees holds ultimate responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of all within our food bank. The Senior Leadership Team provides leadership and promotes a responsible attitude towards health and safety.

Health, Safety, and Facilities Lead¹

The Health, Safety, and Facilities Lead is responsible for ensuring that all health and safety matters, as detailed in our food bank Health and Safety policy, are managed appropriately and as far as is reasonably practicable.

Managers²

Managers will ensure that you maintain a high level of health and safety and encourage you to actively promote good practice including reporting any issues or concerns. If accidents occur, it is the manager's responsibility to ensure these are recorded appropriately.

Volunteers

You are expected to follow our health and safety practices as guided by this policy. You should only use equipment for which you have been properly trained and should report any faults to your manager Charlene Butler (charlene@redbridgefoodbank.org). You should maintain a good level of housekeeping including a shared responsibility of common areas. You are also responsible for ensuring that fire escape routes are kept clear and accessible. If you have any health and safety concerns, you should raise these with your manager.

¹ Health, Safety, and Facilities Lead (i.e. Project Manager)

² Managers (i.e. Coordinator or Admin Officer)

General Safety Arrangements

It is impossible for us to foresee every eventuality that may occur. However, by having a robust and easy to follow policy, we can ensure that we, as far as is reasonably practicable, prevent and control any risks that arise. The following procedures should be adhered to by all volunteers.

Risk assessment

Where there are specific risks relating to a particular role or area, a risk assessment will be carried out by the manager to ensure you are confident to undertake your volunteering tasks. We update our risk assessments on a regular basis.

Fire safety

Fire safety is managed in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. All volunteers will be made aware of the fire arrangements for their building, including assembly point locations.

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

We encourage all those doing computer-based tasks to:

- be set up at a desk or table, with enough space to sit comfortably
- avoid discomfort by taking breaks regularly and changing position
- avoid eye fatigue by taking regular breaks from their screen.

Lone volunteering

Please see our [Lone Volunteering Policy](#) for further details. Your manager will ensure that appropriate safety measures are put in place.

Manual handling and volunteering at height

Manual handling means transporting or supporting a load by hand or bodily force. It includes lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving loads. For some, this will be an everyday occurrence, for others, it will be occasional, if at all. In either case, it is imperative that manual handling is addressed correctly. Appropriate training will be provided, and suitable equipment must be used when required.

New and expectant mothers

Should you become a new or expectant mother, we will take steps to ensure your continued health and safety at the food bank and reduce any volunteer-related hazards. You should inform your manager as soon as reasonably possible.

First aid

Details of qualified first aiders can be found on notice boards. The location of first aid kits will be shown to on-site volunteers as part of your induction.

Accident and near miss reporting

An accident is an event that causes injury or ill health. For example, injuring your back lifting boxes or scalding yourself with hot water. A near miss is an event that has the potential to cause harm but does not actually result in injury or ill health. For example, trailing cables that have caused you to trip but not fall. Any accident or near miss that happens during your volunteering must be reported to your manager within 24 hours. This includes occurrences while volunteering at home or while driving as a volunteer.

Equipment and fault reporting

All equipment we use on-site, including furniture, will be maintained in good condition and serviced according to manufacturer’s guidelines where required. If faulty equipment or furniture is discovered, please report this as quickly as possible to your manager.

Personal Protective Equipment

Where there is a requirement for you to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) as part of your role, this will be supplied by us at our expense. You are responsible for the day-to-day care of the PPE issued to you. Should replacements be required, please contact your manager.

Welfare facilities

We will provide adequate welfare facilities. This includes toilets, washing facilities and access to drinking water. Should you feel that any of these factors are not being met, please inform your manager.

Smoking and Vaping

We operate a no smoking and vaping policy in all our premises.

Driving

Please see our [Driving Policy for Foodbank Vehicles](#) and [Own Vehicles](#).

Hygiene

Where spillages occur, it must be cleared up quickly and not left to attract rodents or pests.

Visitors

All visitors to the food bank must be provided with fire, evacuation, and safety information as appropriate. We will ensure that safe procedures are in place for any disabled visitors.

Personal Safety and Violence

Violence at the food bank is unacceptable. This includes physical acts of violence, threats of violence, and abusive or aggressive behaviour. Any incidents of violence should be reported to your manager and recorded through our accident reporting procedure.

Review at the same time as Health & Safety Policy

Signed by:  _____
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Position: Chair of Trustees

Date: 4/16/2025