



## HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

### Equality

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, we will make any reasonable adjustment necessary to assist those with a protected characteristic or disability to engage fully with the Commission. If you require any assistance with this document please let us know.

We are also a member of Happy to Translate (HTT) and can provide language assistance with this document or make it available in alternative formats if required upon request.



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### 1.0 General Policy

1.1 The Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission (“the Commission”) accepts fully its legal responsibilities as an employer in meeting the duties imposed upon it by the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and other relevant statutory provisions. The Commission also recognises the importance of maintaining high standards in health and safety as part of its overall business management strategy.

1.2 A good health and safety performance contributes significantly to the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Commission’s work and to the welfare of Commission staff. To support this key objective, and to protect the health, safety and welfare of all employees, members and visitors to the Commission’s premises, the Commission will:

- provide and maintain a healthy and safe working environment and will ensure that all that is reasonably practicable is done to protect the health, safety and welfare of the staff and members of and visitors to the Commission, by providing and maintaining plant, premises and safe systems of work, by providing where necessary safety devices and personal protective equipment, and by providing where necessary adequate information, instruction, training and supervision;
- respond swiftly and effectively to mitigate any threat to employees in the workplace by complying with all health guidance issued by the Scottish Government;
- make available adequate financial and physical resources to develop and maintain a comprehensive safety management system;

- incorporate responsibility for health and safety into job descriptions, where applicable, to ensure appropriate accountability for health and safety matters;
- ensure that management and staff are aware of and accept their individual and collective legal responsibility in respect of the health and safety of themselves and others;
- prohibit smoking in the Commission's offices and take positive steps to assist and encourage those staff who wish to do so, to give up smoking;
- ensure that all statutory requirements in relation to health and safety are observed and are treated as the minimum standards to be applied;
- conduct appropriate risk assessments annually or more frequently if required and will record the results of such risk assessments;
- encourage staff to participate in health and safety arrangements and submit ideas and suggestions for improving standards.

## **2.0 Roles and Responsibilities**

- 2.1 The Board of the Commission, collectively, has ultimate responsibility for the Commission's health and safety management system. Responsibility has been assigned to the Chief Executive to ensure that the health and safety management system is developed, maintained and reviewed. The Chief Executive has appointed Stephen Lynn as the Commission's health and safety officer and as the "competent person" (as required by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999) who will undertake the tasks relating to the development and maintenance of the Commission's health and safety management system, and will report direct to the Chief Executive on such matters.
- 2.2 Health and safety is included as a standard agenda item for regular staff meetings, at which any issues, concerns or suggestions regarding health and safety can be raised.
- 2.3 The Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Services and the Commission's health and safety officer will hold bi-annual meetings to discuss health and safety issues. Trade union representatives will be invited to attend the bi-annual meetings. The Chief Executive will report to the Board annually on health and safety matters.

## **3.0 Employee Obligations**

- 3.1 Under Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, all employees MUST take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions. They must also cooperate with their employer so far as is necessary to enable the employer to fulfill its obligations under the Act and other legislation. Section 8 of the Act provides that it is an offence for anyone to intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare.
- 3.2 The Commission acknowledges that it is primarily the duty of management to see that everything reasonably practicable is done to maintain the health and safety of its employees and to prevent personal injury and risks to the health of its employees. However, the

Commission considers it vital for there to be cooperation from its employees in order that the measures contained within this Health and Safety Policy can be successfully implemented.

- 3.3 Any suggestions to improve Health and Safety should be brought to the attention of the health and safety officer or the Director of Corporate Services or should be raised at staff meetings.
- 3.4 This health and safety policy document will form part of the Commission's procedures deskbook for staff.

#### **4.0 Disciplinary Offences**

- 4.1 Behaviour by an employee that is contrary to the Commission's Health and Safety policy, and this includes any failure to comply, will result in disciplinary procedure and even dismissal for serious breaches that have endangered others.

#### **5.0 Hazardous Substances**

- 5.1 In the event that staff are involved in using any hazardous substance (e.g. photocopier toner, cleaning products etc) the manufacturer's instructions should be followed and the relevant risk assessment document should be consulted. Risk assessments relating to cleaning products used by cleaning staff are stored in a ring-binder in the cleaners' cupboard on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. Risk assessments relating to other hazardous substances are kept in a green ring-binder in the library.

#### **6.0 Accidents and Sickness**

- 6.1 In the event of an accident in the Commission's premises, the member(s) of staff involved or, if this is not possible due to the nature of the accident, another member of staff, should in the first instance report to one of the Commission's first aid officers for assistance and/or treatment.
- 6.2 The first aid officer should, as soon as possible, report the matter to the Commission's health and safety officer or in her absence the Director of Corporate Services.
- 6.3 Where the accident involves a hazardous substance found in the office (such as bleach) the appropriate risk assessment should be consulted for guidance as to how the affected individual should be treated.
- 6.4 The health and safety officer or in her absence the Director of Corporate Services will complete the relevant entry relating to the accident in the accident book and will report the matter to the Health and Safety executive if appropriate, in line with statutory requirements, and will report the matter to the Chief Executive with recommendations, if applicable, to prevent such an accident recurring.
- 6.5 If a member of staff becomes sick while in the Commission's premises the same procedures as above should be followed. The health and safety officer will attempt to determine whether the sickness is a result of a health and safety issue and, if so, will make the relevant entries in the accident book and will report the matter to the Health and Safety executive if appropriate.

6.6 The accident book is kept in a desk drawer in the health and safety officer's room.

## 7.0 First Aid

7.1 The first aid officers are Conlin McShane and Fiona Govan.

7.2 The first aid box is located in the left hand cupboard at reception.

## 8.0 Housekeeping

8.1 The Commission will maintain its offices in a good state of repair, cleanliness and decoration. Checks will be conducted by the health and safety officer on the general state of the office prior to the quarterly meetings (as mentioned above). Repairs will be dealt with immediately. It is the responsibility of each member of staff to ensure that any faults in relation to the general state of the office are reported immediately to the health and safety officer or in her absence the Director of Corporate Services.

8.2 High standards will be maintained in relation to lighting, ventilation, temperature, room dimensions and workspace, workstations, seating and hygiene. Experts in these areas will be consulted for advice and recommendations for improvements, if applicable.

8.3 Employees should take care to note the following specific points:

- Electrical heaters and other appliances must be switched off when a room is to be unattended for any significant length of time.
- The air filter in the Boardroom should be switched on for meetings.
- Immediately report any problems with electrical sockets, plugs and appliances to the health and safety officer or in her absence the Director of Corporate Services.
- Filing cabinets drawers are to be closed when not in use.
- Keep the office clean and tidy. Keep floors clear of any objects likely to cause accidents. Any spillage must be cleared up. Washrooms and kitchen areas must be kept clean and tidy with particular attention to hygiene.
- Hand gel and PPE are available for staff and visitors.
- Dispose of waste in the bins provided.
- Do not run in the offices or corridor space.
- Always take care when lifting manually – lift with a straight back using your legs to take the load. Further guidance on handling is given below.

## **9.0 Visitors**

- 9.1 An entry should be made in the visitors' log for all visitors to the Commission's premises, recording their arrival and departure. Generally, visitors should be accompanied by a member of the Commission's staff while they are in the Commission's premises. Where a member of staff is aware that a visitor to the Commission has any mobility or other impairment that might make it difficult for that person to evacuate the premises in an emergency, the member of staff should advise the health and safety officer or a fire steward of this, in accordance with the fire policy document.

## **10.0 Fire**

- 10.1 In consultation with the Commission's Landlord, the Commission will co-operate and consult, where necessary, with the local fire authority and take adequate steps for fire prevention.
- 10.2 All staff will be made aware of the fire escape routes and the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire.
- 10.3 The fire alarm system for the Commission's premises is checked on a weekly basis by the Landlord. The Commission's health and safety officer will consult with the Landlord in relation to regular fire drills. The health and safety officer is also the Commission's fire steward.
- 10.4 The Commission's fire policy document is annexed hereto. All staff should ensure that they are familiar with its terms.

## **11.0 Eye Tests**

- 11.1 The Commission's procedure in relation to eye tests is contained in the procedures deskbook for staff.

## **12.0 Work Related Stress**

- 12.1 The Commission's stress policy is contained at section 2.17 of the Staff Handbook.

## **13.0 Repetitive Strain Injury**

- 13.1 To assist in the prevention of any member of staff having repetitive strain injury, all members of staff should ensure that they take regular breaks from keyboard work.

## **14.0 Smoking**

- 14.1 The Commission recognises the right of non-smokers to breathe smoke free air and is conscious of its responsibilities under both common law and statute to provide a clean, healthy and safe working environment. Smoking in the Commission's premises is therefore strictly forbidden. Non-observance of these rules will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

## 15.0 Manual Handling

15.1 Staff must ensure that they take care to avoid injury when handling objects. The following are some points to consider:

- If moving small loose objects enclose them in a box to stabilise the load.
- Don't presume using a carrying handle is the best way to lift an object, it often isn't.
- Try removing a box from a heavy object, not the reverse!
- Don't presume a closed box is an empty box!
- Report any pain experienced whilst lifting or handling to the first aid officer (if treatment may be required) and to the health and safety officer.
- Handling injuries are not usually caused by movement but by lack of it!

15.2 When handling loads, the following are some points to consider:

- Consult the risk assessments and/or the health and safety officer or in her absence the Director of Corporate Services prior to carrying out any lifting.
- Advise the health and safety officer or Director of Corporate Services of any reason which affects your ability to lift.
- Can you avoid moving the load altogether or use mechanical aids? In particular, the Commission has a trolley for moving heavy loads – use it!
- Assess any difficulties before handling – weight is not necessarily the biggest problem. Check to see if the load is slippery, unstable, hot, cold or difficult to grasp.
- Consider the route to be taken – plan around any hazards you may encounter e.g. a wet or uneven floor, self-closing doors etc.
- Know your own capabilities and don't exceed them! Take adequate rest periods.
- If the assessment shows or the health and safety officer suggests that lifting should be done by a team, know the abilities and training of the other team members. Ensure only one person gives instructions and supervises the lift.
- If the load to be lifted is situated on a shelf above head height, use the foot stool which is stored in the file room to bring yourself closer to the load in order to assess it and to lift it more safely.

15.3 When lifting, the following are some points to consider:

- Provide yourself with a stable base by spacing your feet hip width apart one foot slightly in front of the other – ideally over the object to be lifted. Unlock your knees and relax your shoulders.

- Test the weight of the object by raising one corner.
- Try to determine the centre of gravity prior to the lift.
- Whenever possible use the roots of the fingers or palm of your hand ideally under the object to provide better control. Hooking the end of your fingers under the object increases fatigue.
- Keep the load close to your body, elbows tucked in.
- Raise your head when starting to lift to align your spine into the correct position. Straighten your legs to bring your body (and load) up into the upright position. Reverse the procedure when putting a load down, lowering your chin last.
- Try to achieve a smooth, continuous forward motion throughout the lifting manoeuvre to use the body's natural momentum.

REMEMBER THE THREE MAJOR COMPONENTS OF THE LIFT:

**KNEES – FEET – HEAD.**

## **16.0 Pregnant Workers**

16.1 Any member of staff who is pregnant or who thinks she might be pregnant should take extra precautions in all aspects of her work, in particular in relation to manual handling. The Commission will not require any such person to carry out any heavy or awkward lifting or any other such physical activities.

## **17.0 Occupational Driving**

17.1 The Commission's policy document in respect of managing road risk is annexed hereto. All staff who drive on Commission business must be authorised to do so and must comply with the terms of the policy.

## **18.0 Personal Safety**

18.1 The Commission's policy document in respect of personal safety is annexed hereto. All staff must ensure that they are familiar and compliant with its terms.

## **19.0 Staff Induction Guidelines**

19.1 All new employees will be given a copy of this health and safety policy and of the fire policy and personal safety policy, which they will be expected to read and to ensure they understand. Any questions should in the first instance be directed to the health and safety officer.

## 20.0 Useful Information

20.1 Health and Safety Officer and fire steward – Fiona Govan

20.2 First Aiders – Conlin McShane and Fiona Govan

20.3 The first aid box is located in the left hand cupboard at reception.

## 20.0 Policy Review

20.1 The Health & Safety Policy will be formally reviewed on a three year cycle in accordance with the Commission's Policy Review Schedule.

Date approved:	September 2003
Date of review:	November 2022
Date of next review:	November 2025