

<b>Title of Document</b>	<b>Fire Policy</b>
<b>Name of Department</b>	<b>Property</b>

<b>What type of document is this?</b>	<b>Policy</b>	This sets out instructions for how a particular procedure in Helping Hands is to be routinely carried out	
<b>Which Helping Hands POL/SOP/W.I does this document relate to?</b>	NA	<b>Reference number of POL/SOP/W.I</b>	NA

<b>Which Operational Priority/Priorities does this document link to?</b>	Governance Framework	Facilities & Sustainability	People, Performance & Culture	

<b>Custodian of document</b>	Head of Property	<b>Committee/Group responsible for this document</b>	
<b>Approval date and committee chairperson signature</b>		<b>When is its next scheduled review?</b>	

<b>Who does it apply to?</b>	All staff working within the Facility					
	<b>Does it apply to bank workers?</b>	Yes	<b>Does it apply to agency staff?</b>	Yes	<b>Does it apply to third party contractors?</b>	Yes

<b>Purpose of the Policy</b>	To confirm and clarify Helping Hands approach to minimising the risk of harm as a result of fire.
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## Key Fire Policy Requirements

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibility
<b>Head of Property</b>	<p>To ensure that the policy is effectively implemented and monitored in line with The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To support line managers in the day-to-day provision of Fire safety management across the organisation.</li> <li>To ensure places of work are designed and maintained in line with RRFSO 2005 &amp; this policy</li> <li>To ensure that Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) are in place for Helping Hands sites</li> <li>To ensure Fire Risk Assessments are reviewed as appropriate</li> <li>To ensure requirements of the Building Safety Act 2022 are met, including the Golden Thread principal and working with other responsible persons.</li> <li>To reduce property related risks so far as reasonably practicable</li> </ul>
<b>Health &amp; Safety Business Partner</b>	<p>To support the Head of Property in;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewing fire risk assessments</li> <li>Highlighting risks and proposing reasonably practicable risk reduction</li> <li>Ensuring Helping Hands policy &amp; process remains up to date with current legislation and applicable standards.</li> <li>To ensure training provision meets the requirements of RRFSO 2005 and the Health &amp; Safety at Work act.</li> </ul>
<b>Directors/Managers</b>	<p>To ensure full implementation and adherence of the policy to all teams within their direct management line;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any issues raised with managers regarding Fire provision to be escalated to the Head of Property.</li> <li>To reduce behavioural risks so far as reasonably practicable through performance management</li> <li>To address misconduct or gross misconduct appropriately where applicable</li> </ul>
<b>Chief Executive Officer</b>	<p>The CEO is accountable for the overall compliance with statutory duties and obligations in relation to all fire safety legislation. To make available resources where required to minimise risk so far as reasonably practicable in line with RRFSO 2005 &amp; Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.</p>
<b>Facilities/Property</b>	<p>To arrange maintenance of fire safety equipment</p>
<b>All staff</b>	<p>All staff to adhere to the Fire policy and to report any issues to their direct line manager. All staff to participate in Fire drills where required.</p>

### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The policy supports the strategy for Fire risk management and minimises the potential for harm to occur as a result of fire and by making employees aware of the hazards to reduce fires occurring and how to minimise the impact of a fire should it occur.



- 1.2 Our aim always is to ensure that outbreaks of fire do not occur. It is our intention should a fire occur that it is detected quickly and a safe evacuation is made by all persons.
- 1.3 Additionally, fire will be contained effectively through compartmentation and other passive fire protections, and if possible extinguished if safe to do so.
- 1.4 This policy intention is to meet as far as reasonably practicable, the requirements of the following legislation and guidance:
  - The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
  - Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations
  - The Health and Safety at work Act 1974 Policy
  - Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
  - Building safety act 2022
  - Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

## **2.0 Scope**

- 2.1 This Policy is applicable to all Helping Hands employees, premises, sites and facilities and will be made available to all contractors.
  - 2.1.1 To outline Helping Hands approach to minimising the potential for harm as a result of a fire
  - 2.1.2 To outline Helping Hands approach to minimising the likelihood of a fire occurring in a premises for which Helping Hands hold a position of the legally defined “responsible persons”.
- 2.2 The policy alone is not a substitute for training, supervision, or management of safety provisions.

## **3.0 Employee Responsibilities**

- 3.1 Every Helping Hands employee has a legal and moral responsibility to;
  - 3.1.1 Take reasonable care for the safety of themselves and others
  - 3.1.2 Co-operate with Helping Hands in enabling safety related duties such as following processes and policies, identifying hazards, and supervising processes (for managers) are performed or complied with
  - 3.1.3 Inform persons of relevant seniority of hazards identified or perceived lack in fire safety provision – this may be line manager, Head of Property, or referring to the Whistleblowing policy.
  - 3.1.4 Failure to follow safety processes and recommendations from a Fire Risk Assessment will be addressed by the line manager as performance management and / or misconduct (See HHH-POL-013 Disciplinary Policy & Procedure)

## **4.0 Training**

- 4.1 It is our intention that all staff receive effective statutory basic instruction in fire precautions. The training will include understanding the effects of fire and the action to be taken if a fire occurs.
- 4.2 Staff delivering Care will receive suitable training considering the typical risks of working in a customers home and unfamiliar premises.



- 4.3 Where determined through Risk Assessment, sufficient Fire Marshals / Wardens will be appointed and receive additional relevant training.
- 4.4 Fire Drills will be conducted twice annually across all Helping Hands offices / premises to ensure team are familiar with the evacuation process.
- 4.5 All members of staff will receive a thorough induction including fire safety measures and evacuation procedure for the premises.
- 4.6 All visitors will receive a housekeeping induction explaining the evacuation procedure, noting any planned fire drills or tests for that day.

## 5.0 Evacuation

- 5.1 Each site will have a documented and bespoke Fire Strategy and Evacuation plan, which all team will be made aware of, including escape routes, provision of fire safety equipment, register of training and fire marshals where applicable.
- 5.2 Where premises do not fall under the RRFSO such as a customers private home, or are primarily managed by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party such as a customers landlord, or a serviced office provider, Helping Hands will still review and document the emergency evacuation plan for our staff.
- 5.3 This should be recorded in the branch Health & Safety folder for an office, or in the Customers support plan for a customer home. Guidance for this can be found in HHH-W.I-087- Risk Assessing Evacuation in a Customer's Home.
- 5.4 Vulnerable people will be accounted for when assessing risk and managing an evacuation, such as;
  - 5.4.1 Visitors – May be unfamiliar with the building, may speak English as a second language. Visitors will be escorted / guided where applicable. Signs will confirm to BS5499 to ensure consistency.
  - 5.4.2 Individuals with Disabilities – May have mobility or sensory issues. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan will be in place and relevant persons aware of the requirements.

## 6.0 Fire Safety Equipment

- 6.1 Design
  - 6.1.1 Helping Hands premises will be designed to Building Regulations Approved Document B and relevant BSI British Standards publications.
  - 6.1.2 Helping Hands regional offices vary in safe maximum capacity due to space restrictions, which will be adhered to at all times.
  - 6.1.3 Where design does not meet current standards, adjustments will be made on a risk assessed basis over prescriptive standards.
  - 6.1.4 Except where specified, our offices are designed assuming the following uses;
    - Office work
    - Training, assessment & interviews
    - Tea point / Staff room – basic kitchen equipment such as microwave and toaster. Other cooking devices or suchlike are not permitted such as fryers, portable grills, slow cookers.
  - 6.1.5 Offices will be equipped with sufficient heating where practicable. Where this is not possible portable oil filled heaters may be used temporarily but



should be kept clear of people, electrical equipment, and combustible items to reduce risk of fire.

## 6.2 Testing of equipment

6.2.1 It is the responsibility of the Branch Care Manager to ensure equipment is tested in regional offices, typically delegated through the local team.

### 6.2.2 Routine Testing schedule (Internal)

- Emergency Exit doors & escape routes - Daily
- Fire alarm system / smoke detectors - Weekly
- Emergency Lighting – Monthly
- Fire Extinguisher visual inspection – Monthly
- Fire door visual inspection – Monthly

## 6.3 Maintenance

### 6.3.1 Planned Preventative Maintenance Schedule (External)

- Fire Alarm servicing – 6-monthly
- Emergency Lights testing – 1 hour test – 6-monthly
- Fire Extinguisher – Annually
- Fire Doors – As per Fire Risk Assessment review.

6.3.2 Contractors are managed as per the “Control of Contractors” policy.

6.3.3 Hot works are managed as per the “Hot Works” policy.

6.3.4 Only approved contractors are permitted to work on helping hands fire safety equipment.

6.3.5 As a minimum, approved contractors will be certified as;

- BAFE Fire safety Register – BAFE SP203-1 (Fire detection & alarm systems)
- FIRAS Register – Certified to FIRAS standards for fire protection (Compartmentation)
- NICEIC (latest version) – Certified to complete electrical works

6.3.6 Faulty fire safety equipment will be addressed as a priority, and risks managed appropriately during the interim.

6.3.7 Approved contractors may isolate parts of the fire alarm system to complete works with minimal disruption. This circumstance will be described in the Permit to work and RAMS, and full service reinstated as soon as possible.

6.3.8 Any breaches in compartmentation created as part of unrelated works must be reinstated to FIRAS standards using appropriate materials to maintain the integrity of the compartment.

## 7.0 Fire Risk Assessment (FRA)

7.1 All sites leased to Helping Hands will subject to an initial Fire Risk Assessment. Including sites where a communal Fire Risk Assessment is the responsibility of the landlord/owner such as serviced offices / shared premises.

7.2 All occupants will be made aware of the risks highlighted in the FRA during induction and following any review.

7.3 Fire Risk Assessment will only be completed by staff with sufficient competence as determined by industry standards.

7.4 Fire Risk Assessments will be reviewed as appropriate determined by the risk level.



7.5 Recommended actions will be completed where practicable or recorded on a risk register with justification and alternative mitigations documented.

7.6 Standard terms;

7.6.1 Risk rating table

		<u>Consequence to life / Fire Protection</u>		
		Slight	Moderate	Extreme
<u>Likelihood of fire / Fire Prevention</u>	Low	Trivial	Tolerable	Moderate
	Medium	Tolerable	Moderate	Substantial
	High	Moderate	Substantial	Intolerable

7.6.2 Likelihood –

- Low - Low for this type of occupancy. Negligible sources of ignition.
- Medium - Typical for this type of occupancy. Hazards are generally subject to controls.
- High - Lack of adequate controls applied to significant hazards, likely to increase likelihood of a fire.

7.6.3 Consequences

- Slight harm - Fire unlikely to result in serious injury or death due to strength of protection and procedures
- Moderate harm - Fire could foreseeably result in injury of one or more occupants.
- Extreme harm - Significant potential for serious injury or death of one or more occupants.

7.6.4 Risk

- Trivial - No action required
- Tolerable - Minor improvements may be made
- Moderate - Efforts must be made to reduce risk in line with the recommendations.
- Substantial - Urgent action will be taken
- Intolerable - The building will not be occupied until risk reduced

7.7 Timescales

7.7.1 Actions to resolve –

- Immediate – Within 72 hours
- Short term – 3 month
- Medium term – 6 month
- Long term – When practicable

7.7.2 Review Frequency –

- Trivial – 24 months
- Tolerable – 18 months
- Moderate – 12 months



- Substantial – 3 months
- Intolerable – 1 month

## 8.0 FAQs & Clarifications

8.1 I'm not sure how to test the fire safety equipment in my office?

*See the LMS system for training videos, and contact [Property@helpinghands.co.uk](mailto:Property@helpinghands.co.uk) who will help provide guidance*

8.2 I'm not sure who is responsible for testing the fire safety equipment?

*Consult your site-specific Fire Strategy or contact [Property@helpinghands.co.uk](mailto:Property@helpinghands.co.uk) who will help clarify*

8.3 Am I allowed to use cooking equipment such as a slow cooker, air fryer, or George Foreman grill?

*No. Our offices, training and policies are not designed to accommodate such risks*

8.4 I think my fire safety equipment is overdue for a service.

*Tell [Property@helpinghands.co.uk](mailto:Property@helpinghands.co.uk)*

8.5 I don't think our landlord is testing the communal fire alarm

*Tell [Property@helpinghands.co.uk](mailto:Property@helpinghands.co.uk)*

8.6 Do we need to fire risk assess a customers home?

*We will ensure our staff are aware of the risks, and can make a safe evacuation. See HHH-W.I-087- Risk Assessing Evacuation in a Customer's Home.*

8.7 Can I be prosecuted for not following safety procedures?

*Aswell as the employer having a legal duty to provide training, equipment, and supervision to ensure a safe work environment, every employee has a legal duty to follow process and take reasonable care of themselves and others under Section 7 of the Health & Safety at Work act – so yes, you could.*



## TRAINING

<b>Is training required?</b>	Yes
<b>Details of training</b>	Fire Training is mandatory. On-line is via the Learning Management System (LMS) which will be loaded on staff's LMS profiles as a mandatory module. Includes basic Fire Safety training for all staff, and Fire Warden Awareness training for branch teams.

## COMPLIANCE

<b>How is compliance with the POL going to be monitored</b>	Employee compliance monitored through Fire Risk Assessment & company performance through self-auditing
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## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

	Yes / No	Comments
Does the document have a positive or negative impact on one group of people over another on the basis of their:		
• age?	NA	
• disability?	Y	Positive – PEEP to be in place at the request of vulnerable person
• gender reassignment?	NA	
• pregnancy and maternity (which includes breastfeeding)?	Y	Positive – Pregnancy assessment to include safe egress in event of emergency
• marriage and civil partnership	NA	
• race (including nationality, ethnic or national origins or colour)?	NA	
• religion or belief?	NA	
• sex?	NA	
• sexual orientation?	NA	
If you have identified any potential impact (including any positive impact which may result in more favourable treatment for one particular group of people over another), are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	NA	
If the impact on one of the above groups is likely to be negative:		
• Can the impact be avoided?	NA	
• What alternatives are there to achieving the document's aim without the impact?	NA	
• Can the impact be reduced by taking different action?	NA	
• Is there an impact on staff, client or someone else's privacy?	Y	PEEP – May disclose confidential medical information

<b>What was the previous version number of this document?</b>	02
<b>Changes since previous version</b>	Responsibilities reworded and clarified. Structure consolidated. FAQs added Added stance on contractor competence Added stance on cooking equipment in tea-points Added stance on use of portable heaters Added guidance specific to non-Helping Hands premises



	<p>Added Fire Risk Assessment approach with standard risk rating criteria and timescales.</p> <p>Added clarification on testing requirements.</p> <p>Added clarification on servicing requirements, including Fire Door Inspection</p> <p>Expanded employee responsibilities to include relevance to misconduct, highlighting importance.</p> <p>Added reference to respecting maximum capacity.</p> <p>Expanded training to accommodate updated stance on Fire Marshal appointment (risk based),</p> <p>Expanded training to accommodate risks and training specific to working in customers homes.</p> <p>Added reference to “Golden Thread” and Building Safety Act, relevant to Head of Property responsibilities.</p>	
<b>Author of the document</b>	H&S Business Partner	
<b>Who was involved in developing/reviewing /amending the POL? [list titles]</b>	H&S Business Partner Property & Facilities Manager	
<b>How confidential is this document?</b>	Restricted	Can be shared freely within Helping Hands but NOT outside
<b>References</b>	<p>The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005</p> <p>Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations</p> <p>The Health and Safety at work Act 1974 Policy</p> <p>Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004</p> <p>Building safety act 2022</p> <p>Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999</p>	
<b>Associated Documents</b>	<p>Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan form</p> <p>HHH-F023 - Pregnancy Risk Assessment</p>	