

A guide to

# Risk Assessments and Safety Statements



# Our Vision

healthy, safe and  
productive lives



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# Introduction

Managing safety and health is good for business, good for employees and good for employers.

No matter what size your business is, you need to manage safety and health. In fact you are legally responsible for the safety of yourself, your employees, and any other person that may be affected by your work activities. You are also legally obliged to prepare a safety statement and carry out risk assessments for your business.

A safety statement is a written document that explains how you will protect the safety and health of your employees and others who may be affected by your work. It includes your risk assessments and a written commitment to managing safety and health in your workplace.

Preparing a safety statement will not in itself prevent accidents and ill health at work. But by making a commitment to promoting health and safety and specifying the arrangements you have put in place, the safety statement plays a vital part in maintaining a safe, healthy and productive workplace.

## How will this guide help me?

This guide will help employers and others who have responsibilities under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. It will give clear answers to the following questions:

- What is a risk assessment?
- What is a safety statement?
- Why are they important?
- How do I prepare them?

The information contained here will help an employer or self-employed person to manage safety and health in their workplace(s) by preparing risk assessments and a safety statement.



# The Basics

## What is a risk assessment?

A risk assessment is a written document that records a three-step process:

- 1 Identifying the hazards in the workplace(s) under your control.
- 2 Assessing the risks presented by these hazards.
- 3 Putting control measures in place to reduce the risk of these hazards causing harm.



There are five important terms you need to understand when doing a risk assessment:

### Hazard:

Anything with the potential to cause injury or ill health, for example chemical substances, dangerous moving machinery, or threats of violence from others.

### Risk:

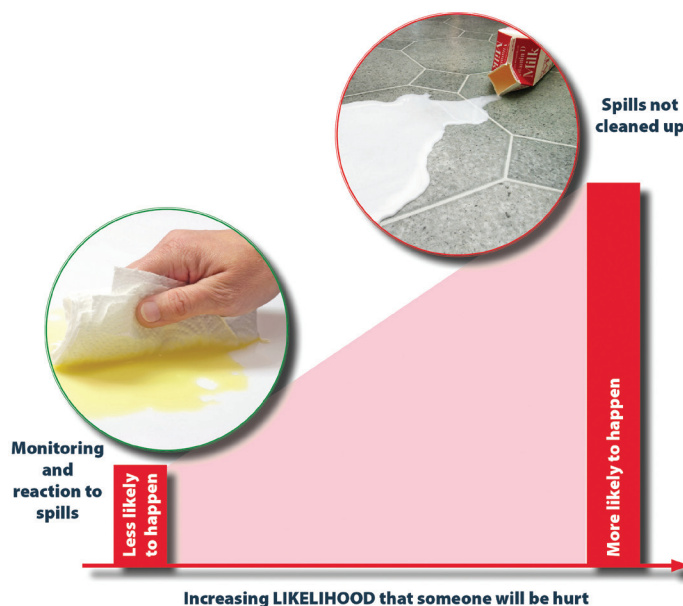
Risk is the chance that someone will be harmed by the hazard. It also takes account of how severe the harm or ill health could be and how many people could be affected.

Because risk is a combination of chance (or likelihood) and severity, it is worthwhile considering both of these terms.

### Chance (or likelihood):

Chance is a measure of how likely it is that an accident could happen. When people are working safely there is less chance that an accident will occur.

The following diagram shows how working unsafely increases the chance that someone will be harmed.

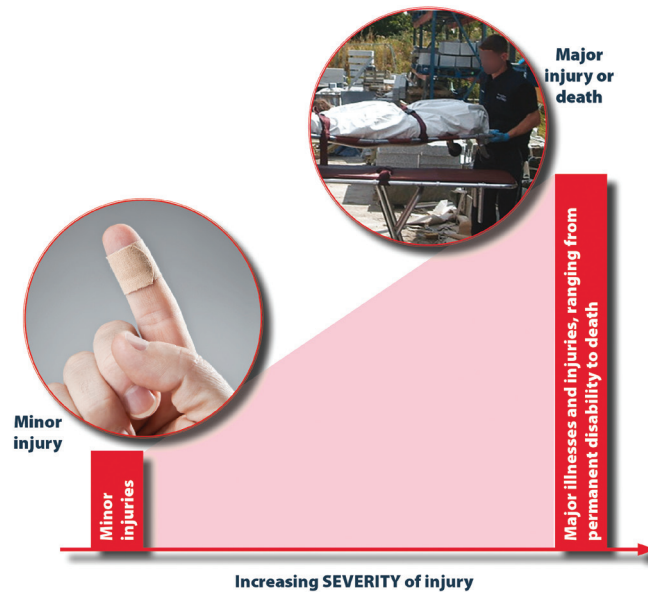


## Severity:

Severity is a measure of how serious an injury or health effect could be, as a consequence of unsafe working or of an accident. The severity can be influenced by the following:

- the environment,
- the number of people at risk, and
- the steps already taken to control the hazard.

The following diagram shows the range of severity, from minor injuries to major injuries, illnesses or fatalities.



## Control Measures:

Control measures are simply what steps you are going to take to remove the hazards, or at least reduce the risk of them causing harm to as low a level as possible.

## What is a safety statement?

A safety statement is your written commitment to managing safety and health in your business and how you are going to do this. It should include:

- your health and safety policy;
- the results of your risk assessments;
- the names and job titles of those appointed to be responsible for any safety and health matters;
- the duties of employers and employees, including the co-operation required from employees on safety and health matters;
- your commitment to employee consultation and participation, including arrangements for appointing safety representatives;
- your welfare arrangements;
- your plans and procedures for dealing with emergencies;
- your arrangements to ensure the safety of young persons, pregnant employees and visitors to the workplace or anyone else who may be affected by your work activities;
- your personal protective equipment policy and register of equipment;

- your first aid and fire safety procedures, and details about the equipment and facilities available;
- your procedures for accident reporting and investigation; and
- your training records.

Your safety statement (including the risk assessments) should be brought to the attention of all employees and others at the workplace that may be exposed to any risks. This should be done at least once a year, and whenever it is changed or updated. New employees should also be made aware of your safety statement, especially the sections that may affect them directly. The statement must be in a form and language that is likely to be understood. Ready access to an electronic copy is also acceptable.

This guide will explain how to do a risk assessment and how to prepare a safety statement, and the appendix contains examples and templates you can use in your workplace.

## Why should I prepare risk assessments and a safety statement?

### 1. It's the law

Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005 an employer is required to carry out risk assessments, prepare a safety statement and implement what it contains.

Health and Safety Authority inspectors visiting workplaces will want to know how safety and health is being managed. If they investigate an accident, they will scrutinise the risk assessments, safety statement, and the procedures as well as the work practices.

### 2. It's good for business

A safe and healthy workplace contributes to an efficient business. The costs associated with accidents and ill health in the workplace can be significant. They may include:

- salary costs for replacement staff or overtime payments,
- lost productivity,
- compensation payouts,
- retraining costs, and
- increased insurance payments.

Thousands of work related accidents, resulting in more than three days off work, are reported to the Health and Safety Authority each year. Work related diseases and ill health result in more than one million days lost at work each year. These cases are due to failures in workplace safety and health management, and can be extremely costly to a business and to the economy.

### 3. It's the right thing to do

The personal pain and loss caused by workplace accidents should never be forgotten. The consequences of a workplace injury or illness can be long lasting and devastating. This can be true not only for the victim, but also for their family and loved ones.

Employers have an ethical duty to do their best to prevent this. Everyone is entitled to a safe working environment and to return home unharmed at the end of each working day.

# BeSMART.ie – Safety Statements Made Simple

There is no reason why you the business owner cannot prepare the Safety Statement. You can do this online, free of charge, at BeSMART.ie. Or you can get a competent person to help you where needed.

BeSMART.ie is a free online tool that will guide you through the entire risk assessment process using simple language and easy-to-follow instructions. On completion you will have a workplace-specific safety statement that can be downloaded, edited, printed and implemented in your workplace.

BeSMART.ie will help you:

- improve safety,
- save money,
- save time, and
- reduce paperwork.

Using BeSMART.ie is the easiest, most effective way for you to prepare your own safety statement.

## Who can use BeSMART.ie?

BeSMART.ie covers hundreds of different business types across a wide range of sectors including retail, manufacturing, services, hospitality, construction and agribusiness. Go to [www.BeSMART.ie](http://www.BeSMART.ie) now to see the full list of the business types covered.

## How does it work?

Completing your safety statement on BeSMART.ie is simple and straightforward. You will be guided through a four-step process, starting with searching for your business type and ending with printing off your safety statement. BeSMART.ie does all the hard work for you, simply register, select your business type and then work your way through a series of questions about the hazards in your workplace, answering 'yes', 'no' or 'not applicable'.

You then need to walk around your workplace, consult with your employees and make sure that no hazards have been missed (a blank template will allow you to risk assess any hazards specific to your workplace that have not been covered and you can search for additional hazards at the end of the process). When you have finished you can download, edit and print your safety statement.

It really is that simple, as thousands of businesses have already discovered. So visit [www.BeSMART.ie](http://www.BeSMART.ie) to find out if you can benefit too.





# How to Do a Risk Assessment

Section 19 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 requires every employer, the self-employed, and those who control workplaces to any extent, to identify the hazards in the workplace under their control and to assess the risks presented by those hazards.

Risk assessment does not need to be complicated. In most small firms the hazards are few, and the risks they present can be controlled by taking simple, common sense steps.

There are three basic steps to completing a risk assessment:

- Look at the hazards.
- Assess the risks.
- Decide on the control measures and implement them.

The findings of the risk assessment process must be recorded in your safety statement. You should consult with and involve your employees, along with any safety representatives, in this process. Let's look at each of the risk assessment steps in more detail.

## Step 1: Look at the hazards

The first step is to identify all the hazards in the workplace. A hazard is anything with the potential to cause injury or ill health. Within your workplace there may be several different types of hazard:



**Physical hazards**, such as manual handling, slip or trip hazards, poor housekeeping, fire, working at height, working with hot items, working in cold environments, driving for work or using poorly maintained equipment.



**Health hazards**, such as noise, vibration, unsuitable light levels, harmful dusts or stress.



**Chemical hazards**, such as working with common everyday products from cleaning agents, glues and correction fluids to industrial solvents, dyes, pesticides or acids.



**Human factor hazards**, such as bullying by or violence from other employees or members of the public.

Some hazards are obvious, such as unguarded moving parts of machinery, dangerous fumes, electricity, working at heights, moving vehicles or moving heavy loads. Less obvious, but at the root of many accidents, are hazards presented by untidy workplaces and poor maintenance. In the case of other hazards, such as excessive noise or exposure to chemicals, it may take months or even years before ill health materialises.

Once you have identified the hazards, you can start to assess the risks.

## Step 2: Assess the risks

Risk means the likelihood that someone will be harmed by a hazard, together with the severity of the harm suffered. Risk also depends on the number of people who might be exposed to the hazard.

In assessing the risk, you should estimate:

- how likely it is that a hazard will cause harm,
- how serious that harm is likely to be, and
- how often and how many workers are exposed.

There are various methods for carrying out risk assessment which comply with the legal requirements. Choose one which best suits your organisation. For example the Authority has developed the BeSMART.ie online risk assessment tool which can be used, provided your business sector is covered. The Authority has also provided a chemicals risk assessment template on its website, while blank risk assessment forms and examples of risk assessments are provided in the Appendix of this guidance.

The simplest way to quantify the risk is low, medium or high:



**Low risk:** This is where the likelihood of an accident occurring is low and the severity is low. For example, intermittent work on a computer where the workstation is well laid out is unlikely to result in any harm to the user.



**Medium risk:** As the level of likelihood and severity increases, a hazard may be assessed as a medium risk. For example, manual handling of heavy loads without mechanical aids. You should use control measures to reduce these hazards to low risk.



**High risk:** You should focus on high risk hazards first, as there is a likelihood that an accident could occur and if it does then there could be serious injuries, ill health or death. For example, vehicles reversing where pedestrians / members of the public are walking.

When assessing the risk, it is important to consider who may be exposed to a specific hazard. Apart from direct employees, think about the people who may not be in the workplace all the time, for example:

- cleaners,
- visitors,
- other employers' workers such as outside contractors, and
- outside maintenance personnel.

Where the public access your premises as part of the services you supply, you will need to assess the hazards that they are exposed to. Hazards could vary from slips, trips and falls to unauthorised entry to dangerous areas.

You may also need to consider vulnerable groups for which you may need to put in place additional control measures. These vulnerable groups may include:

- young people, who may be more at risk due to their inexperience and lack of training;
- elderly people;
- pregnant, post-natal and breastfeeding employees;
- night and shift workers;
- people with language disabilities or for whom English is not a first language;
- people with different abilities or disabilities; and
- people who are handling money or dealing with the public.

Once you have looked at the hazards in your workplace and identified the level of risk, you are ready to start the final step of the process: deciding the control measures.

### Step 3: Decide on the control measures

Common sense tells us that life cannot be totally risk free. However, employers are required to do all that is reasonably practicable to minimise the risk of injury. Employers will have done all that is reasonably practicable if they have:

- identified the hazards and risks relating to the place of work, and
- put in place appropriate control measures such that it would be grossly disproportionate to do more.

When deciding on the appropriate control measures to put in place, employers need to ask themselves:

- Can I get rid of the hazard altogether?
- Can I change the way the job is done so as to make it safer?
- If not, what safety precautions are necessary to control this risk?

Your first approach should be to eliminate the hazard from your workplace. Clearly if you get rid of a hazard, then you are making it safer for you and your employees. If you cannot eliminate a hazard then the next step is to try a safer approach.

**An example:** if you are using a compactor to manage your waste, then it may not be possible to do away with the compactor. On the other hand, you can make sure that the compactor is maintained in good working order, that workers are trained in its safe use, and that the compactor can only be used by authorised personnel.

This example applies the general principles of prevention - which are a simple hierarchy of controls, with reliance on personal protective equipment being the last option. The Appendix to this guidance provides more details on the general principles of prevention.

Here are more examples of common control measures:

- Ensuring a clean and tidy workplace to prevent slips, trips and falls
- Adapting the work to the individual, for example, providing adjustable height tables or chairs to reduce muscle injuries
- Switching off and isolating machines before carrying out repairs or alterations
- Safeguarding machinery, for example providing interlocked guards that switch off the machine if someone tries to gain entry to dangerous parts of it
- Establishing emergency procedures, including first aid
- Providing adequate training to and supervision of workers
- Containing the hazard at source, for example providing local exhaust ventilation or a fume cupboard with extraction
- Ventilating the whole area of the workplace where extraction at source is not possible
- Providing protective equipment, clothing or signs (These should be used only as a last resort after all other ways of controlling the hazard have been fully explored)
- Setting up adequate health-surveillance programmes including pre-placement or regular health checks where appropriate
- Having appropriate policies in place, for example to eradicate bullying

## Record the findings of your risk assessments and talk to staff

You need to record the findings of the risk assessment process. The law does not specify exactly how a risk assessment should be written, but the Appendix to this guidance includes examples that would be considered good practice, as well as a blank risk assessment template for you to use.

You also need to tell your employees about the control measures you have put in place. By communicating with staff about your risk assessments you can also ensure that:

- employees fully understand what is expected of them in working safely;
- employees know who is responsible for implementing any additional controls and by what date; and
- employees are encouraged to monitor the effectiveness of the control measures in place, and communicate with management if they feel additional control measures are required.

To make things simpler, the safety statement can refer to specific procedures contained in other documents or databases which are known to the workers and are easily accessible. These documents might include:

- quality manuals,
- operating instructions,
- company rules,
- safety data sheets,
- manufacturers' instructions, and
- company safety and health procedures.

These may already list hazards and precautions. These may already list hazards and precautions, in which case there is no need to repeat it all. It is up to the employer whether to combine all the documents or keep them separate. But the employer must make sure employees are made aware of these risks and precautions.



# How to Prepare a Safety Statement

Section 20 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 requires all employers to prepare a safety statement, specifying how the safety, health and welfare of employees is to be secured and managed. It is the cornerstone document for safety management in any workplace. It must contain all your workplace-specific risk assessments, but should also include more general information, policies and commitments about how you are going to ensure your employees' safety and health on a day-to-day basis.

We recommend you break your safety statement into four sections:

- Section 1: Health and safety policy
- Section 2: Safety arrangements and information
- Section 3: Forms and records
- Section 4: Risk assessments and action list

## Section 1: Health and safety policy

The Safety Statement should begin with a declaration, signed at senior management level on the employer's behalf. The declaration should give a commitment to ensuring that a workplace is as safe and healthy as reasonably practicable and that all relevant statutory requirements will be complied with. This declaration should spell out the policy in relation to overall safety and health performance, provide a framework for managing safety and health, and list relevant objectives.

We also recommend you include a page in this section that provides information relating to the business name, address and relevant contact details.

The Appendix to this guidance contains an example of a health and safety policy.

## Section 2: Safety arrangements and information

This section should outline your approach and commitment in relation to different aspects of safety and health management. As opposed to hazard-specific risk assessments, it should summarise your general policies and ongoing commitments in areas such as:

- the provision of welfare facilities,
- staff competence and training requirements,
- the protection of people visiting the workplace,
- the provision and use of personal protective equipment,
- the protection of pregnant employees and young people in the workplace, and
- the promotion of dignity in the workplace and control of work related stress.

This section should also provide information about:

- those with roles and responsibilities in relation to safety and health,
- contractors' responsibilities,
- accident reporting and investigation, and
- emergency procedures, including first aid and fire.

It is also important that your safety arrangements provide for consultation between you and your employees about workplace safety and health. This is an important part of any safety and health management system, as it promotes communication and co-operation to prevent accidents and ill health. The legal requirements around employee consultation, participation and representation are covered in sections 25 and 26 of the 2005 Act. For more information see *Safety Representatives and Safety Consultation Guidelines*, available for free download at [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).

Remember: the information above is non-exhaustive. You need to consider your own workplace to ensure all the key safety arrangements are in place and recorded in your safety statement.

## Examples

Here are two examples of safety arrangements that may be found in a safety statement:

### Example 1: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

#### Key Action

I/we will ensure that all our employees are adequately protected and where it is not reasonably practicable to reduce or eliminate the risk, then as a last resort will provide PPE appropriate to the task/work environment.

As required, I/we will ensure:

- The provision of adequate and suitable PPE.
- That PPE is used, maintained and replaced in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- That I/we record information to include supply of and training in the use of PPE as appropriate.
- PPE is provided free of charge to employees.

On receipt of appropriate PPE, I/we expect our employees to:

- Use PPE correctly and whenever it is required.
- Report any defects in or damage to their PPE immediately.
- Participate in any training or instruction I/we provide on the fitting, use and inspection of PPE.
- Inform me/us of any medical conditions they have that may affect the correct use of the PPE provided to them.
- Look after any PPE provided to them.





## Example 2: Visitors

### Definition:

A visitor is a person other than an employee or contractor.

### Key Actions

Visitors may not be aware of the potential hazards associated with my/our place of work. To minimise the risk of injury to our visitors I/we will:

- Practice good housekeeping including:
  - Keeping walkways clear.
  - Cleaning up spills immediately.
- Restrict access to hazardous areas.
- Prevent visitors from using equipment or machinery.
- Ensure appropriate safety signs and notices are displayed.
- Ensure safe walkways and access routes are maintained.
- Put procedures in place to ensure visitors are evacuated in a safe and timely manner in the event of an emergency.

Visitors are required to:

- Conduct themselves in a safe manner at all times.
- Observe the fire policy and, in the event of an emergency, to identify themselves to an employee and be escorted to the designated assembly point.

## Section 3: Forms and records

It is useful to keep all the relevant forms and registers in one place within your safety statement. This may include:

- a responsible person register,
- emergency contact information and emergency service contact details,
- induction register and topic checklist,
- a training register,
- a personal protective equipment register,
- accident investigation forms, and
- any relevant chemical safety data sheets.

The Appendix to this guidance contains an example of an emergency contact information form.

## Section 4: Risk assessments and action list

The safety statement must contain the list of hazards you have identified and assessed in your workplace, and the relevant control measures. The Appendix to this guidance contains examples and templates of hazard-specific risk assessments.

## Monitoring and Review

It is important that you make sure the information and practices contained in the safety statement are being followed and are effective. The control measures you have put in place to protect your employees should be monitored to ensure that they are working and changes need to be made if they are not.

Workplaces constantly change and your safety statement needs to be updated when new risks or procedures are introduced. It is recommended that you also review it at least annually and make sure you tell your employees about any changes.

Such changes may include changes in work being carried out, organisational structure changes such as downsizing or bringing in new employees, changes in equipment or chemicals used, when new technical knowledge becomes available, or when new legislation or standards are brought in.

You do not need to amend the safety statement for every trivial change, or for each new job, but if a new job introduces significant new hazards, you need to assess the risks, implement the necessary control measures, and update your safety statement accordingly.



# FAQs

In this section we will try to answer some of the common questions about safety statements and risk assessments. For more guidance and a comprehensive list of FAQs on this subject visit [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).

## Who needs to read the risk assessments and safety statement?

The risk assessments and safety statement should be brought to the attention of all employees and others in the workplace that may be exposed to any risks covered by the safety statement.

New employees are particularly at risk when starting a new job, and must be made aware of the safety statement when they start work. Other people may be exposed to a specific risk and the relevant contents of the statement should be brought to their attention. These people could include:

- outside contractors who do cleaning, maintenance or building work, or where part of the operations has been sub-contracted to another employer;
- temporary workers who are not aware of your work;
- delivery people come into contact with activities on your premises; and
- self-employed people who provide a service to the employer.

## Do I need to give a copy of the safety statement to every employee?

No, but the safety statement must be accessible to all employees. More importantly, the sections of the safety statement relevant to particular employees must be brought to their attention, with specific regard to the hazards, risks and prevention measures concerning their job.

## How often should my safety statement be reviewed?

Your safety statement must be relevant at all times. Therefore, it should be reviewed at least annually, or more frequently if:

- your business changes and your employees are exposed to new hazards, for example the introduction of new machinery or new work practices; or
- there is reason to believe that the information it contains is no longer adequate, for example changes to health and safety arrangements and resources, or a review of policy following an incident.

## Does my safety statement need to be on display in the workplace?

No. There is no legal requirement to display your safety statement in the workplace. However, it must be accessible to your employees and you must bring to their attention the information and procedures it contains.

## Does the HSA need to pre-approve my safety statement?

No. It is your responsibility to ensure it is fit for the organisation under your control. The HSA does not pre-approve safety statements, but an Authority inspector may review your safety statement during an inspection of your workplace. If the inspector finds that it is inadequate, they can direct you to revise it within 30 days.

## What if I share a workplace?

Employers must co-operate with each other in relation to safety and health. If you share a workplace, tell the other employers and self-employed people there about any risks they might face and what precautions they should take. Also, think about the risks to your workforce from those who share the workplace. The need for the various risk-control methods will vary according to the needs of your workplace.

## Does the safety representative or safety committee have a legal responsibility to ensure safety and health in my workplace?

No. Under the 2005 Act a safety representative has functions but not duties (other than those that apply to employees generally). This means that a safety representative who accepts a management proposal to deal with a safety and health issue could not be held legally accountable for putting the proposal into effect.

## Is anyone exempt from carrying out a risk assessment and preparing a safety statement?

Risk Assessments and a safety statement must always be prepared for a place of work. However, if three or fewer people are employed and a Code of Practice relating to Safety Statements, prepared by the Authority, exists for a sector or work activity, then compliance with that code is sufficient. Codes of Practice have been prepared for several sectors including Construction, Agriculture and Fishing. Please see the Publications section of the HSA website for details.

# Further Information

The guidance below is available for free download at [www.hsa.ie](http://www.hsa.ie).

## ***Guide to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005***

This Guide is aimed at safety and health practitioners, employers, managers, employees, safety representatives and others. It provides general guidance aimed at the prevention of occupational accidents or ill health. Also available is *A Short Guide to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005*, which gives a brief overview of the duties contained in the 2005 Act.

## ***Maintaining Best Practices in Health and Safety***

This guidance is aimed at helping employers and those who control work activities develop and maintain their health and safety management programmes. It stresses the importance of preparing a safety statement and having adequate safety consultation and representation procedures in place. This guidance will help duty holders ensure their health and safety management systems comply with the best practices which are available.

## ***Safety Representatives and Safety Consultation Guidelines***

These guidelines give detailed guidance on the legislation surrounding employee consultation, safety representatives and safety committees. They will help employers promote co-operation and employee participation in relation to safety in the workplace.

# Appendix

## Sample Risk Assessment Form

<b>Step 1:</b> Identify Hazards	<b>Step 2:</b> Assessing the Risks			<b>Step 3:</b> Additional Control Measures (further actions needed)		
<b>What are the hazards?</b>	<b>Who is at risk?</b>	<b>Current Controls</b> (What are you already doing?)	<b>Level of risk?</b> (Your estimate of the remaining risk level, based on the current controls. For example High, Medium, or Low)	<b>Additional Controls needed</b> (Further action to reduce the remaining risk level to as low as possible)	<b>Action by whom and by when?</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>

Risk Assessment Completed By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Sample Risk Assessment No.1 – Slips, trips and falls

<b>Step 1:</b> Identify Hazards		<b>Step 2:</b> Assessing the Risks		<b>Step 3:</b> Additional Control Measures (further actions needed)		
<b>What are the hazards?</b>	<b>Who is at risk?</b>	<b>Current Controls</b> (What are you already doing?)	<b>Level of risk?</b> (Your estimate of the remaining risk level, based on the current controls. For example High, Medium, or Low)	<b>Additional Controls needed</b> (Further action to reduce the remaining risk level to as low as possible)	<b>Action by whom and by when?</b>	<b>Date Completed</b>
<p><b>Slips, Trips and Falls</b> Can cause serious injuries For example fractures, head injuries</p>	<p>Everyone – employees and visitors</p>	<p>Clear, unobstructed, slip-resistant pedestrian routes (Including entrances and exits) are provided and maintained</p> <p>Adequate lighting is provided and is appropriate for the work being carried out</p> <p>Absorbent materials and warning signage are available for dealing with spills</p> <p>Spills are cleaned up immediately</p> <p>Mats are properly located, fitted and secured</p> <p>Good house-keeping practices are in place and are maintained</p> <p>Slip resistant footwear is provided and worn by kitchen staff</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Changes in levels are avoided if possible or are adequately highlighted where necessary - steps outside the side entrance are dark and hard to see</p> <p>Trailing cables and leads are re-routed, removed or secured – not done in the main office</p>	<p>John Smith by August 2018</p> <p>John Smith by 30th June 2018</p>	

Risk Assessment Completed By: Joe Bloggs

Date: 28th June 2018

# Sample Risk Assessment No.2 – Chemicals

Step 1: Identify Hazards		Step 2: Assessing the Risks		Step 3: Additional Control Measures (further actions needed)		
What are the hazards?	Who is at risk?	Current Controls (What are you already doing?)	Level of risk? (Your estimate of the remaining risk level, based on the current controls. For example High, Medium, or Low)	Additional Controls needed (Further action to reduce the remaining risk level to as low as possible)	Action by whom and by when?	Date Completed
<p><b>Chemicals</b> - can cause fires, explosions, skin and eye irritation, cancer, ill health and other serious injuries</p>	<p>Employees visitors</p>	<p>Chemical labels and Safety Data Sheets are available for each chemical and the associated hazards of each chemical has been identified</p> <p>The number of employees and the exposure to chemicals is assessed and minimised</p> <p>Employees are trained in the safe use of chemicals</p> <p>Adequate ventilation is provided</p> <p>A wash hand basin, soap and disposable towels / hand dryer are available</p> <p>All chemicals are used, stored and disposed of in accordance with the Safety Data Sheet or supplier recommendations</p> <p>Eye, skin and respiratory protection is provided and worn where appropriate and in accordance with the safety data sheet</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>A list (inventory) of all chemicals used in the workplace has been prepared</p> <p>Less hazardous chemicals are used where possible – look in to alternatives we can use</p>	<p>John Smith by July 2018</p> <p>John Smith by November 2018</p>	

Risk Assessment Completed By: Joe Bloggs

Date: 28th June 2018

## Example of a health and safety policy

I/We of \_\_\_\_\_ am/are committed to working in accordance with the provisions of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and other associated legislation. I/we are fulfilling our statutory obligations to manage and co-ordinate workplace safety and health and, as far as is reasonably practicable, commit myself/ourselves to ensuring that:

- Work activities are managed to ensure the safety, health and welfare of my/our employees.
- My/our Safety Statement is maintained and updated, and written risk assessments are carried out and reviewed as required and brought to the attention of employees at least annually.
- Identified protective and preventive measures are implemented and maintained.
- Improper conduct likely to put an employee's safety and health at risk is prevented.
- A safe place of work is provided that is adequately designed and maintained.
- A safe means of access and egress is provided.
- Safe plant and equipment are provided.
- Safe systems of work are provided.
- Risks to health from any article or substance are prevented.
- Appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision are provided.
- Where hazards cannot be eliminated suitable protective clothing and equipment are provided.
- Emergency plans are prepared and revised.
- Welfare facilities are provided and adequately maintained.
- Competent personnel who can advise and assist in securing the safety, health and welfare of my/our employees are employed when required.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

**Managing Director/Owner**

# Example of an emergency information form

## Form – Emergency Information

### Assembly Point

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### Emergency Information Sheet

Occupational First Aider	
Location of First Aid Box	
Nearest Hospital/A&E	
Local Doctor	
Emergency Services	
• Ambulance	<b>112</b>
• Fire Brigade	
Garda Station	
ESB Networks	<b>1850 372 999</b>
Bord Gáis	<b>1850 205 050</b>
Eircom	<b>1901</b>
Health & Safety Authority	<b>1890 289 389</b>



# General principles of prevention and the hierarchy of controls

When deciding on the controls, you should consider the general principles of prevention. These are a hierarchy of controls that set out how to manage hazards. The focus should be to get rid of the hazard, so that people are protected. If this is not possible then you should work through the principles until you have made it as safe as reasonably practicable.

Your reliance on personal protective equipment (PPE) should be one of the last steps in the process (not the first).

The general principles of prevention are outlined in Health and Safety Legislation (first schedule of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005) and are summarised below:

**Avoid the risk:** if you can get rid of the hazard then people are not exposed to the risks. You should apply this principle first!

**Evaluate unavoidable risks:** this requires you to undertake risk assessments. If you can't get rid of a hazard, you must assess it!

**Combat the risks at source:** here you are trying to deal with the hazard at its root. For example if you have a noisy machine in your workplace, giving employees hearing protection is not dealing with the root of the problem. If you enclose the machine so that it is not noisy or if you replace the machine with a quieter one, then you are combating the risk at source.

**Adapt the work to the individual:** this is the principle of arranging the workplace and tasks to take into account your employees and to reduce the effect of work on health.

**Adapt your work place in line with technical progress:** safer systems of work are always being developed. You should keep up to date with new systems, so that you can put them into use in your workplace. The HSA, trade associations, industrial bodies and trade unions will have information on safe systems of work that will help you.

**Replace dangerous systems with safer alternatives:** this applies to dangerous articles, substances or systems of work. For example, if you are using a solvent that may be toxic, then you should consider if there is a non-solvent alternative that is safer. Basic approach - if you can take steps to make it safer, then do it!

**Develop a prevention policy:** this is where you would set out how you are going to protect your employees and other people from the hazards in your workplace. This would form part of your safety statement.

**Give priority to collective protective measures:** here it is better to put controls in place that protect everyone, rather than just handing out PPE to employees.

**Give training and instruction:** once you have assessed the risks and decided on your controls in line with the principles above, you will need to tell your employees about them and to make sure that they are competent to comply with them.









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