

NIPEC2024/13

(replacing NIPEC/23/05)



**NORTHERN IRELAND PRACTICE AND EDUCATION
COUNCIL FOR NURSING AND MIDWIFERY**

Health and Safety Policy

June 2024

Any request for the document in another format or language will be considered

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Health and Safety at work Order (NI) 1978 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (NI) 1992 requires employers to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of employees and others who may be affected by its operations.

NIPEC attaches great importance to the health, safety and welfare of its employees. It is NIPEC's responsibility to provide a safe and healthy working environment and to take all reasonable steps to prevent personal injury to employees from foreseeable workplace hazards. NIPEC recognises its statutory obligations to ensure that all employees (in accordance with NIPEC's Occupational Health Scheme) are able to carry out their respective duties in a healthy, safe and risk-free environment.

1.1 Policy Statement

NIPEC are committed to ensuring the health and safety of its employees.

NIPEC will:

- provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from its activities;
- provide and maintain safe equipment;
- ensure safe handling and use of substances;
- take steps to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health;
- maintain safe and healthy working conditions;
- provide information, instruction and supervision for employees;
- ensure that all employees are competent to perform their tasks and to give them adequate training;
- consult with employees on matters affecting their health and safety;
- review and revise this policy one year following its approval.

1.2 Policy Aims

The key aims of the policy are to:

- promote a health and safety culture across NIPEC;
- minimise the risk of adverse health and safety outcomes arising from NIPEC activities.

This policy affects:

- Employees;
- NIPEC Council members;
- Visitors and members of the public;
- Agency staff;
- Associate staff;
- Contractors and James House facilities/support staff.

2.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 NIPEC Council /Audit and Risk Committee

The overall responsibility for health and safety resides with NIPEC Council who have a collective role in providing leadership throughout NIPEC. The Council recognises its role in engaging the active participation of its employees and other stakeholders in improving health and safety and ensures it is kept informed of and alerted to any health and safety risk management issues.

The effectiveness of the management of principal risks is delegated by Council to the Audit and Risk Committee. The Committee should ensure that that the requirements of current health and safety legislation are met within NIPEC premises and that assurances are provided regularly to NIPEC Council on the effectiveness of the system of internal controls in the operation of NIPEC.

2.2 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for health and safety in NIPEC and is accountable to NIPEC Council for overall implementation, monitoring and revision of this policy. The operational responsibilities for the implementation of this policy are delegated to the Head of Corporate Services (HCS).

2.3 Head of Corporate Services (HCS)

The HCS will have responsibility for the implementation of this policy and to ensure that the overall requirements of the policy are met.

Key responsibilities include:

- that health and safety measures and practices within NIPEC premises are maintained;
- seeking assurance from the Health and Fire Safety Committee that effective control measures are in place;
- provide regular assurance updates to Audit and Risk Committee on health and safety matters;
- to ensure that NIPEC staff understand the importance of health and safety in the workplace and adhere to the requirements of this policy and any recommendations to improve health and safety in NIPEC premises;
- ensuring that sufficiently competent personnel with appropriate resources are available to implement the policy and that all staff have access to the level of training appropriate to their role.

2.4 Business Support Manager

The Business Support Manager, supported by the Corporate Services Officer, is responsible for the implementation and co-ordination of NIPEC's Health and Safety agenda.

Responsibilities include chairing NIPEC's Health and Fire Safety Committee and taking the lead in the co-ordination and implementation of its health and fire safety work plan.

2.5 Health and Fire Safety Committee

NIPEC's Health and Fire Safety Committee is responsible for coordinating health and safety arrangements including fire safety within NIPEC's premises. The Committee reports directly to Business Team and meets at least three times a year and its membership consists of:

- Business Manager
- Two Senior Professional Officers
- Corporate Services Officer

Key responsibilities as outlined in the Terms of Reference include:

- To act as a consultative forum, normally meeting a minimum of three times each financial year, for the consideration and discussion of health and fire safety issues;
- To act on behalf of and to advise Business Team / NIPEC Council on matters of health and fire safety policy, structure and communications; and to recommend any action necessary to ensure the health and safety of staff and members of the public (including contractors and visitors to premises);
- To keep under review the legal and statutory obligations with regard to health and fire safety and environmental regulation compliance, and to identify through regular monitoring and reporting to the Business Team areas where compliance is at risk or not being achieved;
- To receive reports on health and fire safety, including fire risk assessments, routine statutory audits (e.g. fire drills/alarm testing, portable appliance and emergency appliance/light testing) and incident / accident reports and to make recommendations to the Business Team of any corrective action required;
- To receive updates on changing health and fire safety legislation, and to review and assist in the development of policies and procedures to meet all statutory requirements;
- To ensure all staff are aware of their safety and environmental obligations through the receipt of regular monitoring reports to ensure these obligations are being discharged appropriately;
- To monitor staff awareness and training as they relate to health and fire safety and environmental issues to ensure appropriate training is provided to enable staff to safely discharge their duties;
- To receive reports and review personal safety for staff and visitors on the premises, particularly where it could impact on health and fire safety;
- To receive reports on the progress of the relevant Assurance Checklist Action Plan;
- To report quarterly on safety and environmental activities to the Business Team and annually to the NIPEC Council with the information required to discharge their duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1997) and other related legislation.

2.6 All Staff

Employees should recognise that the final level of responsibility for health, safety and welfare is that of each and every individual and applies to both internal and external facilities.

Employees therefore have a responsibility to:

- adhere to NIPEC policy and procedures for the maintenance of a safe place of work and a safe environment for staff and visitors;
- report at once all accidents, whether major or minor, to their line manager and complete an entry in the Accident Book which is maintained by the Business Support Manager;
- report at once to their Line Manager or another manager in the premises any matter they believe could cause danger to others;
- assist in the investigation of accidents or incidents with the objective of the introduction of measures to prevent recurrence;
- use and take care of any protective equipment provided;
- Staff should ensure that they risk assess their personal safety in regard to all visits to facilities outside of the HSC.

3.0 NIPEC WORKPLACE

NIPEC is also required to maintain the workplace according to various standards, including the following.

3.1 Environment:

- maintain the temperature of the offices at a comfortable temperature;
- keep the workplace clean;
- ensure that offices do not become overcrowded, and are well ventilated and adequately lit;
- ensure that floors, stairwells, steps, gangways, passages and ladders are well constructed and maintained, and not obstructed;
- maintain office fixtures and fittings;
- conduct regular risk assessments throughout the organisation, which are recorded, and reviewed on a regular basis, each time there is a change in task or activity or following any accident within the workplace.

3.2 Facilities:

- ensure that employees have a copy of NIPEC's Moving and Handling Guidance and do not have to lift objects that are so heavy they may cause injury;
- guard securely all dangerous parts of machinery;
- ensure washing and toilet facilities provided by the landlord are maintained;
- supply drinking water;
- take proper precautions to prevent employees being exposed to substances which may damage their health;
- take precautions against danger from electrical equipment and radiation.

3.3 Training:

- ensure that employees are properly trained, or work under adequate supervision, before using equipment and machinery;
- provide further training in related areas, such as moving and handling;
- develop an awareness that health and safety is everyone's responsibility to promote and protect;
- develop an awareness that training is an important way of achieving competence and helps ensure safe working practices.

Health and Safety, Fire Safety and Manual Handling awareness training are provided via regionally agreed e-learning programmes. It is mandatory that all staff complete these programmes in line with NIPEC'S training schedule and training records are maintained by the organisation and reported to Business Team and through the Assurance Action Maps to Audit and Risk Committee.

Fire Warden training and Evacuation chair training is provided to all NIPEC staff through Business Services Organisation.

Training needs are reviewed on a regular basis and will determine the level of training needed for particular tasks. As such additional training will be provided as and when required in order to ensure all employees have appropriate knowledge and skills in relation to health and safety.

3.4 Display Screen Equipment

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations (NI) 1992 and Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 state that an employer has the responsibility to:

- carry out a suitable and sufficient analysis of employee workstations on appointment, transfer to a new workstation or when new equipment or technology is introduced;
- assess and evaluate the risk associated with DSE use;
- reduce the risk as far as is reasonably practicable;
- implement control measures;
- review as necessary;
- make provision for eye examination/eyesight tests.

3.5 Lone Working

Where possible NIPEC will discourage staff working in the office alone however, under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, NIPEC must manage any Health and Safety risks for those staff who may be working alone in the office. This also includes anyone contracted to work for NIPEC including agency staff, associates or work-related placements.

NIPEC and line managers are obligated to:

- Train, supervise and monitor staff who may be working alone;

- Know where lone workers are with agreed intervals of regular contact using phone, video call or email;
- Put procedures in place for staff who have medical conditions whilst working alone;
- Keep in touch with them and respond to any incident.

4.0 FIRST AID

Under the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations (NI) 1982, NIPEC has a duty to provide adequate facilities and equipment to enable the appropriate provision of first aid.

A First Aid kit is located in the staff kitchen. Nominated members of NIPEC staff have received full first aid training from an approved training organisation and should be the first point of contact in an emergency situation. If this member of staff is unavailable, staff should contact James House Facilities Management staff to locate a trained member of staff within James House. All contacts are displayed in the staff kitchen/rest room.

(Note: a record of any incident which can be attributed to an accident within NIPEC premises must be made in accordance with NIPEC's Adverse Incident Reporting Policy).

5.0 FIRE SAFETY AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

All staff should read and make themselves aware of their responsibilities outlined within NIPEC's Fire Management Policy.

It is the Line Manager's responsibility to ensure that staff are aware of precautions to be taken to prevent fire and also the action to be taken in case of fire. It is also the responsibility of managers to ensure all new employees are provided at their induction with the Evacuation Procedures for James House (see Appendix 1) which will be displayed in communal areas of NIPEC's accommodation including the kitchen and meeting room.

Any member of staff chairing/facilitating a meeting/workshop within NIPEC's offices has a responsibility to advise visitors of these evacuation procedures at the start of their meeting. Evacuation procedures are displayed within NIPEC's meeting room and guidance should be given to all visitors.

In the event of the building having to be evacuated due to a fire alert during the working day, staff and visitors should leave by the **nearest** and **safest** exit, as directed by the Fire Warden present.

At no time should the lifts be used during the evacuation of the building.

The assembly point for NIPEC staff in James House is **the space in front of the Gasworks Hotel.**

6.0 SMOKING

In accordance with The Smoking (Northern Ireland) Order 2006, smoking is not permitted anywhere in the building. Signs have been displayed in the workplace advising staff, public and visitors that it is an offence to smoke in the premises.

7.0 ADVERSE INCIDENTS/ACCIDENTS

NIPEC will ensure a robust system of reporting of adverse incidents/accidents is in place. Definitions are as follows:

- **An accident:** “An unplanned event that causes injury to persons, damage to property or a combination of both and may be minor/ major/ fatal. Injury or harm to staff or other person, caused by an event.”
- **Adverse Incident** – “Any event or circumstances that could have been or did lead to harm, loss or damage to people, property, environment or reputation which includes an event that has, or may have, impacted upon the delivery of service or health improvement”.

NIPEC’s Adverse Incident Reporting Policy outlines the procedure for staff for the reporting and recording of same.

All Adverse Incidents/Accidents must be reported using the Incident Reporting Form found within the policy and available on NIPEC’s server or from the Business Support Manager.

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) require NIPEC to notify the Health and Safety Executive NI, as the enforcing authority for RIDDOR in NI, of dangerous occurrences that ‘arise out of or in connection with work’. Such occurrences include the following:

- The death of any person, whether at the time of an incident or later;
- Incidents which result in an employee suffering a ‘specified’ injury or being absent from work/unable to do their normal duties for more than 3 days.

These reports enable the enforcing authorities to identify where and how risks arise and to investigate serious accidents. It is the responsibility of the Business Support Manager to inform the Health and Safety Executive NI, in some instances without delay (e.g. by telephone), of the details of the incident. This must be followed up within ten days with a completed RIDDOR report form (NI2508). Further information can be found on the HSENI website www.hseni.gov.uk

8.0 VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

NIPEC has a responsibility to ensure that their employees work in a safe environment and the risks from violent and verbal abuse are minimal. If any such attack should occur, the injured party will be requested to report the incident to their Line Manager and the Business Support Manager.

The following information will be required:

- date, time and location of the incident;
- whether the attack was verbal or physical;
- the grade and discipline of all staff involved in the incident;
- whether the incident resulted in absence from work.

The Business Support Manager will complete returns to the Department of Health to enable them to monitor the level of incidents or violence against members of staff.

9.0 STRESS AT WORK

NIPEC as an employer and individual employees have a responsibility to recognise stress and employ suitable methods of coping with stress.

The Management Standards for work-related Stress, developed by the Health and Safety Executive, aim to reduce the levels of work-related stress. NIPEC recognises its duty to ensure that all staff have a safe and healthy place of work. Health and Safety legislation is concerned with both the mental and physical well being of employees. The risk of workplace stress must be assessed and measures taken to prevent it.

NIPEC will endeavour to:

- ensure that causes of organisational stress are identified;
- introduce changes in structure and procedures which are identified as causing stress;
- review and develop support systems for staff needing guidance and help;
- intervene at an early stage to prevent problems and where problems exist, to prevent them escalating;
- support stressed employees on a confidential basis;
- when required, establish stress awareness and stress management programmes within the exigencies of the service;
- Liaise with BSO HR where necessary.

10.0 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

The Occupational Health Service can be accessed through the Business Services Organisation's Human Resources Department. The aims and functions of the Occupational Health Service are to support the creation of a healthy working environment by:

- helping in the risk assessment process;
- providing pre-employment health screening;
- supporting health promotion and education in the workplace;
- supporting line managers with health surveillance of employees when looking for signs of ill health caused by hazards at work;
- when required, supporting the manager to assess the health requirements of particular jobs through knowledge of the workplace and health hazards/risks;
- Supporting with Health and Wellbeing in the workplace;

- providing guidance to management in cases of ill health and absence to enable action to be taken to prevent similar problems arising again;
- supporting the management of the rehabilitation process;
- supporting / providing information in ill-health retirement applications.

11.0 CONCLUSION

Ensuring a safe and healthy environment for all staff is an important management task and as such is considered a high priority for NIPEC. It is therefore, important that NIPEC complies fully with its statutory obligations and ensures that best practice is being followed throughout the organisation.

With the implementation of this policy, NIPEC's Health and Safety Action Plan and all relevant Health and Safety legislation, NIPEC is committed to ensuring that all staff are able to carry out their day-to-day activities in a risk-free, healthy working environment.

12.0 EQUALITY SCREENING

This policy has been screened for equality implications as required by Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

The screening has identified specific equality impacts and outlines the way that these will be addressed. No significant equality implications have been identified therefore the policy will not be subject to an equality impact assessment.

The equality screening has been published and can be accessed here

<https://bso.hscni.net/directorates/people-and-place/655-2/equality-and-human-rights-screening/equality-screening/>

13.0 MONITORING AND REVIEW

We are committed to ensuring that all policies and procedures are kept under review to ensure they remain compliant with relevant legislation and guidance.

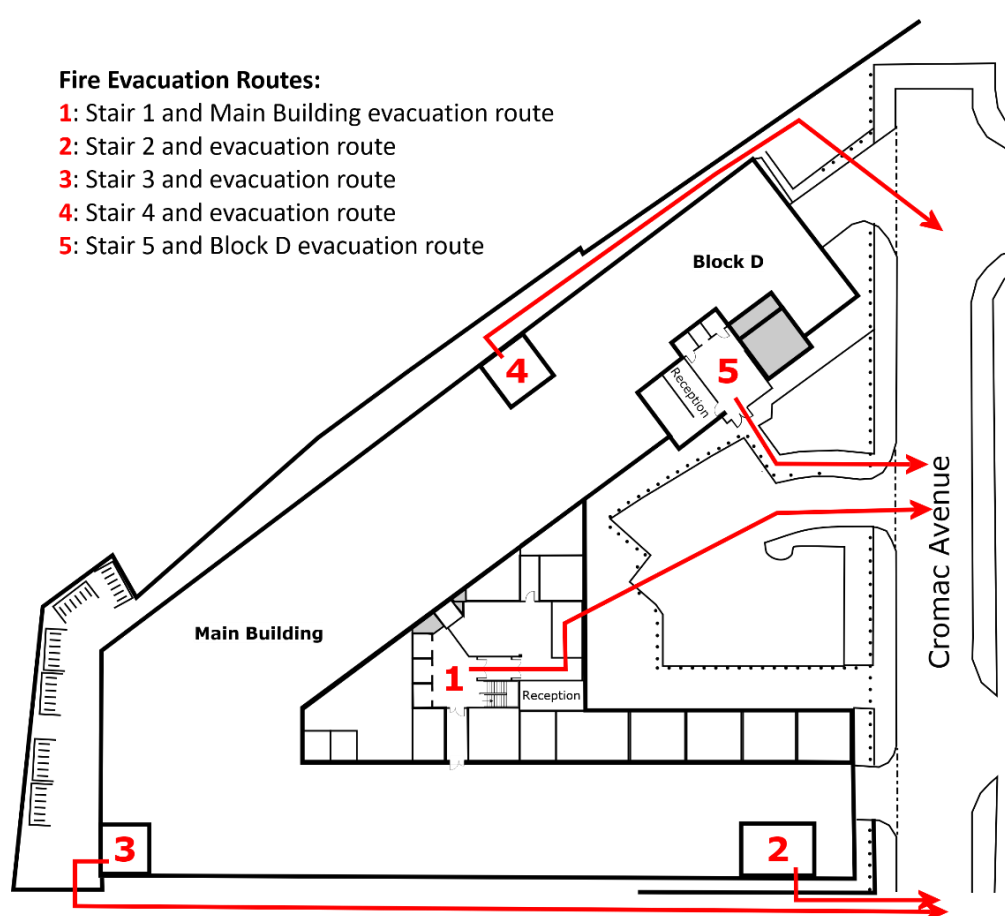
This policy will be reviewed by NIPEC in May 2027, or sooner if revised or updates to legislation are issued.

NIPEC JAMES HOUSE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ALL STAFF

Evacuation Routes

Fire escapes routes and emergency evacuation procedures are sign-posted throughout the building.



Evacuation Procedures: Fire Action

On discovering a fire staff should:

- Shout “Fire” and operate the nearest Fire Alarm ‘Break Glass’ / Manual Call Point (the fire alarm signal will operate within a few seconds).
- The fire alarm signal is a siren.
- Call the Fire and Rescue Service by dialling **999** from a place of safety outside the building.

When the fire alarm is activated, staff should leave the building in an orderly manner via the nearest exit. Staff should assist their visitors and report to the building's assembly point.

The buildings assembly point will be in **the space in front of the Gasworks Hotel**.

During an evacuation staff **must not**:

- **Stop to collect personal belongings**
- **Run within the building**
- **Use the lifts**
- **Re-enter the building until advised it is safe to do so**

Some evacuations may require staff to use an alternative route to that usually taken, so staff should familiarise themselves with the layout of building and the safety mechanism for exiting the building.

Staff who have Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) may wish to wait at the Refuge Point until the stairway is less busy and/or to wait for their designated assistance. This is **not** intended as a waiting area for NI Fire & Rescue Service.

Tenants are responsible for ensuring that any equipment required to safely evacuate their staff, or visitors, is available and safe to operate. You may wish to secure evacuation chairs within your designated area.

All staff and visitors should make their way to the assembly point and wait there for further instructions.