

Health and Safety Policy

General Statement

Lincoln South Methodist Circuit (LSMC) recognises and accepts its responsibilities for providing a safe and healthy environment with a view to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all those who use the Circuit premises which consists of both churches and manses.

Those who use the premises are reminded that they are responsible for their own safety and the safety of others using the premises.

Undertaking

The Circuit leadership team, Circuit Stewards & Church Stewards will take all the necessary steps within their power and in so far as is reasonably practical to provide a safe and healthy environment. They will also require the Church Councils and Stewards of the Churches in the circuit to do likewise as they manage the premises from which they operate on a day-to-day basis. This will include, among other arrangements, the following:-

- Maintaining the circuit premises in a condition that is safe and without risk to health, and provide and maintain means of access to and egress from the premises;
- Providing and maintaining furnishings and equipment in a safe condition and without risk to health;
- Assessing the risk to the health and safety of those who use the circuit premises with particular attention to vulnerable groups.
- Providing guidance on safe lone working (See Appendix Two)
- Ensuring safety and absence of risks to health and safety in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances.
- Providing such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the health and safety of those who use the circuit premises.
- Complying fully with the Methodist Church Safeguarding Policy.
- Entering into service contracts to ensure all gas and electrical installations and appliances, and fire extinguishers are examined and maintained on an annual basis.
- LSMC will follow the recommended guidelines on health and safety for workers (See Policy Statement, Appendix One to this policy)

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Responsibilities of Leaders and Those Using the Premises

Employees, leaders, helpers, volunteers and those using the circuit premises also have a duty to cooperate with Circuit leadership team, Circuit Stewards & Church Stewards to ensure that this policy is effective. The Circuit leadership team, Circuit Stewards & Church Stewards require all using the premises to take reasonable care for their own safety and for the safety of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions whilst on the premises, and to neither intentionally nor recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions.

Legal Proceedings

In the event of legal proceedings being taken against an official of the Circuit in connection with any alleged breach of Health and Safety legislation the Circuit leadership team, Circuit Stewards and Church Stewards will provide that individual with support and assistance in obtaining legal advice.

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Appendix One - Policy Statement

This statement is issued in conformity with Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 as a statement of the general policy of the Employer with respect to the health and safety at work of the employees of the Employer and of others

1. Statutory Duty of the Employer

The Employer has a duty to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees and, in particular to:

- 1.1 Provide and maintain equipment and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health;
- 1.2 Arrange for ensuring safety and absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
- 1.3 Provide such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the health and safety at work of the employee;
- 1.4 Maintain any place of work under the Employer's control in a condition that is safe and without risk to health and provide and maintain means of access to and egress from it that are safe and without risk;
- 1.5 Provide and maintain a working environment for the employees that is safe, without risk to health, and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work.

2. Statutory Duty of the Employees

Every employee has, while at work, the duty to:

- 2.1 Take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself or herself and of other persons who may be affected by his or her acts or omissions at work;
- 2.2 Co-operate with the Employer so far as is necessary to enable any duty or requirement imposed on the Employer or upon any other person by or under any relevant statutory provision to be performed or complied with.

3. Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Employer to promote the health and safety at work of the staff and of all visitors to the premises of the Employer and to that intent to:

- 3.1 Take all reasonably practicable steps to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the staff and of visitors to the Employer's premises.

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3.2 Provide adequate working conditions for employees with proper facilities to safeguard their health and safety and to ensure that any work which is undertaken produces no unnecessary risk to health or safety.

3.3 Encourage employees to co-operate with the Employer in all safety matters in the identification of hazards which may exist and in the reporting of any condition which may appear dangerous or unsatisfactory.

3.4 Encourage each employee to accept his or her own responsibility not to endanger himself or herself or others and actively to assist in fulfilling the requirements and spirit of the legislation.

4. Health and Safety Rules

All employees must exercise ordinary care to avoid accidents in their activities at work and comply with the following general rules and any specific rules which the Employer may publish from time to time.

5. Accident Book

Any injury suffered by an employee in the course of his or her employment, however slight, must be recorded together with such other particulars as are a requirement by statutory regulations in the accident book maintained by the Employer.

6. Fire Procedures

All employees must familiarise themselves with fire escape routes and procedures and follow the directions of the Employer in relation to fire.

7. Equipment and Appliances

No equipment or appliance may be used other than as provided by or specifically authorised by or on behalf of the Employer and any directions for the use of such must be followed precisely.

8. Safety Clearways

Corridors and doorways must be kept free of obstructions and properly lit.

9. Working at Heights

No employee of the Church may undertake work above six feet from floor level, [or ground level if working outside], without having been fully trained in the use of any equipment needed to reach the working area required. If you are required to use a ladder, and the work you are required to do necessitates your being at a height where your feet are more than six feet above ground level, this work should only be carried out with a colleague aiding and assisting you. As general rule, any work required to the outside of the buildings should be undertaken by properly qualified and equipped outside contractors who will have the full range of equipment needed.

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10. Maintenance

Defective equipment, furniture and structures must be reported as such without delay.

11. Hygiene and Waste Disposal

Facilities for the disposal of waste materials must be kept in a clean and hygienic condition. Waste must be disposed of in an appropriate manner and in accordance with any special instructions relating to the material concerned.

12. Drink and Drugs

The use of intoxicants at your place of work is forbidden. No employee may undertake his or her duties if under the influence of drink or drugs, except in the case of drugs when he or she is under medical supervision.

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Appendix Two - Guidance on Lone Working

A risk assessment should be undertaken of:

- the working practices for a lone worker
- the working environment provided by the employer for an employee

The risk assessment is part of the Health and Safety at Work Policy of Lincoln South Methodist Circuit.

Working practices for a lone worker

Lone workers include those who:

- work away from an office base (e.g. visiting)
- work outside normal working hours (e.g. cleaners)
- are the only person on the premises (e.g. administrator; caretaker)
- work in the same building as colleagues but in a space on their own (e.g. receptionists)

At times, many church employees will be in situations where they are a 'lone worker'. The recommendations below try to be realistic about what can and cannot be put in place. Whilst it must be recognised that the Church, as an employer, does not have the structure associated with a large business, it aims to be a good employer who is concerned about the safety of its employees.

Many lay employees work on a part-time basis, from their own home and so it is equally important to have a system in place to account for their safety too.

Responsibilities of the employer

- To assess the 'reasonably foreseeable risks' (e.g. Is there glass in the office door so that all callers can be seen before the door is opened? Does the Church Youth Club finish at the same time as the local pub? Does the cleaner work late at night and needs to use an un-lit passageway to get home?)
- To ensure that a system is in place for calling for help if there is a problem on the premises.
- To keep on file the employee and their next-of-kin contact phone numbers [and registration details if this is used for work purposes].

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- To keep records of any health issues that may affect the employee whilst working alone.
- To ensure that a system is in place so that the employer knows that an employee is safe when working on their own either on or off the premises. (E.g.: via phone calls and location visits)
- To provide all employees making home visits a mobile phone or reimbursement of costs incurred for work-related calls made. [Consider whether other employees would benefit from the provision of a mobile phone].
- To ensure that the employee receives a Health and Safety Induction
- To ensure that the Certificate of Employers Liability is displayed in the premises.
- Check that insurance cover adequately covers the work to be undertaken
- Ensure an accident book is kept up to date

In relation to a lone worker risk assessment, consideration should also be given to

- the remoteness of the work place
- potential communication problem
- potential for verbal and physical abuse
- Vulnerability of lone workers to feeling of isolation, stress and depression
- Whether or not all the equipment, materials etc. can be handled safely by one person
- Whether or not the person is medically fit and able to work alone
- How the lone worker will be supervised
- How the lone worker will obtain help in an emergency such as assault, vehicle breakdown, accident or fire
- Whether or not there is adequate first aid cover

Responsibilities of the employee

- To take reasonable care for your own safety
- To report any incidents of violence or aggressive behaviour
- To arrange to meet unknown individuals in a public place and preferably with another person present
- If making a home visit, to make sure that someone knows where you are going and that you have a mobile phone with you turned on.

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The Methodist Church

Lincoln South Circuit

www.lincolnsouthmethodistcircuit.org

Registered Charity No: 1131196

- If practical, on leaving your work base tell someone where you are going and when you hope to be back
- If practical, to leave a note stating who and where you are visiting and how you will get there
- To consider a 'buddy system' when you let a colleague or friend know that you have arrived at a visit/premises and when leaving a visit/ premises
- To consider carrying a Personal Shriek Alarm
- To always be 'streetwise' and vigilant, taking note of what is going on around you

Helpful resources:

Health and Safety in churches and other places of worship downloadable from Methodist Insurance's website: Please refer to www.methodistinsurance.co.uk

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