Health & Safety Policy

Policy Created: April 2023

Last Reviewed: February 2026

Next Review: February 2027 (or sooner if significant changes in legislation, guidance, or organisational activities occur)

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Responsible Officer: CEO

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Approved by: CEO

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1. Introduction and Commitment

Pathways Associates CIC is a disabled-led organisation dedicated to enabling people with learning disabilities, autistic people, and their families to live the lives they choose as equals in their local communities.

We take health, safety, and wellbeing seriously, creating safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for everyone we engage with — including colleagues, associates, volunteers, Experts by Experience, partners, and participants. This policy addresses both physical and mental wellbeing, reflecting our flexible, mostly remote and event-based working model.

Our approach aligns with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance for small, low-risk organisations, using the PLAN, DO, CHECK, ACT framework to manage risks proportionately. It supports our values:

- **Led by lived experience** — Involving disabled people and families in shaping safe, accessible practices
- **Partnership** — Collaborating with stakeholders to promote safety and wellbeing
- **Diversity and respect** — Ensuring measures are inclusive, culturally sensitive, and non-discriminatory
- **Innovation** — Seeking creative solutions to health and safety challenges
- **Integrity** — Acting transparently and accountably in all safety matters

We commit to complying with (and where possible exceeding) relevant legislation, including the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. This policy should be read alongside our Equality and Diversity Policy, Safeguarding Policy, and Corporate Responsibility Policy.

2. Statement of General Policy

Pathways Associates CIC will:

- Prevent accidents and work-related ill health by managing risks effectively

- Provide clear instructions, information, and adequate training to ensure safety competence
- Consult with colleagues, associates, and stakeholders on health and safety matters
- Maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment, and systems
- Review and revise this policy annually or following significant changes

3. Organisation and Responsibilities

Health and safety is everyone's responsibility, but specific roles ensure effective management:

- **CEO (Chief Executive)**
  - Overall accountability for health and safety compliance
  - Appoint competent persons and ensure resources for implementation
  - Lead risk assessments and policy reviews
  - Report to the Board on performance
- **Managers and Event Leads**
  - Implement policy in daily operations and events
  - Conduct and review risk assessments for activities
  - Ensure team members receive training and support
  - Monitor compliance and report incidents
- **All Colleagues, Associates, Volunteers, and Experts by Experience**
  - Take reasonable care of their own and others' health and safety
  - Report hazards, incidents, or concerns promptly
  - Cooperate with safety measures and use equipment correctly
  - Participate in training and consultations
- **Board of Directors**
  - Oversee strategic health and safety governance
  - Review annual performance and incident reports

We appoint the CEO as the competent person under Regulation 7 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, with external advice sought as needed.

4. Arrangements for Health and Safety

We use the HSE's PLAN, DO, CHECK, ACT approach:

- **Plan**
  - Identify hazards through regular risk assessments (e.g., home working, events, travel)
  - Prioritise controls based on risk level
- **Do**
  - Implement safe systems: Safe handling/lifting training, ergonomic advice for remote work
  - Provide PPE where needed (e.g., for events)
  - Ensure first aid kits and trained first aiders at events
- **Check**
  - Monitor through inspections, audits, and feedback
  - Record and investigate accidents/near-misses under RIDDOR where applicable
- **Act**
  - Review performance annually and act on lessons learned
  - Update arrangements following incidents or changes

Specific arrangements include:

- **Risk Assessments** — Conducted for all activities, reviewed annually or after changes; include mental health risks
- **Remote/Home Working** — Guidance on workstation setup, breaks, and mental wellbeing checks
- **Events and Training** — Venue checks for fire safety, accessibility, and emergency procedures
- **Fire Safety** — Risk assessments for venues; evacuation plans inclusive of disabled people
- **First Aid** — Appointed persons; kits available at events
- **Mental Wellbeing** — Promote support (e.g., EAP if available), stress risk assessments, open conversations
- **Consultation** — Regular team meetings and feedback from Experts by Experience
- **Training** — Induction and role-specific H&S training, including mental health awareness

- **Contractors and Visitors** — Check contractor policies; brief visitors on safety

5. Incident Reporting and Investigation

- Report all incidents, accidents, or near-misses to the CEO immediately
- Investigate to identify causes and prevent recurrence
- Comply with RIDDOR for reportable incidents
- Support affected individuals with compassion

6. Monitoring, Review, and Continuous Improvement

- This policy is reviewed annually or following incidents/legislative changes
- Performance is monitored via risk registers, incident logs, and audits
- Learning is shared co-produced with stakeholders
- Feedback is welcomed to ensure effectiveness and inclusivity

7. The Law

This policy complies with:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013
- Other relevant HSE guidance

For further information, refer to HSE website: www.hse.gov.uk