

WHITESTONE CHAMBERS

Barristers

Whitestone
Chambers

Chambers of Lawrence Power
1 Middle Temple

London

EC4Y 9AA

HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

(May 2023)

Health and Safety Policy Statement

Whitestone Chambers (henceforth “Chambers”) and its members fully accept the obligations placed upon it by Acts of Parliament covering health and safety. Chambers requires its Head of Chambers to ensure that the following policy is implemented and to report annually on its effectiveness.

This policy has been prepared and published under the requirements of Health and Safety at Work legislation.

The purpose of this policy is to establish general standards for health and safety at work and to distribute responsibility for their achievement to all members of Chambers through normal management processes.

Management Responsibilities

Head of Chambers

Head of Chambers has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Chambers’ policy. This individual is responsible for ensuring that the policy is widely communicated and that its effectiveness is monitored.

Safety Officer

The Safety Officer is a nominated member of Chambers responsible for co-ordinating effective health and safety policies and controls across the set.

The Safety Officer is responsible for:

- the production, maintenance and application of the Chambers’ policy;
- monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of the policy;
- the provision of general advice about the implication of the law; and
- the identification of health and safety training needs.

Health and Safety Management Process

Chambers believes that consideration of the health, safety and welfare of staff is an integral part of the management process. The provision of the Health and Safety at Work Act, associated Codes of Practice and EU Directives will be adopted as required standards within Chambers.

Chambers requires those responsible for the Policy to approach health and safety in a systematic way, by identifying hazards and problems, planning improvements, taking executive action and monitoring results so that most of health and safety needs will be met as

part of day-to-day management, although many health and safety problems can be rectified at little additional cost.

For major additional expenditure, cases of need will be submitted by members to Head of Chambers.

If unpredictable health and safety issues arise during the year, Head of Chambers must assess the degree of risk, in deciding the necessary resources and actions to commit to addressing these issues.

Health, Safety and Welfare Guidelines

It is Chambers' policy to require the Safety Officer to produce appropriate health and safety policies or guidelines, which should embody the minimum standards for health and safety.

It shall be the responsibility of Head of Chambers to bring to the attention of all members the provisions of the guidelines, and to consult with appropriate Health and Safety Representatives about the updating of these guidelines. The model contents of a guideline are:

- regulations governing the work of the Chambers;
- clear reference to safe methods of working;
- information about immediate matters of health and safety concern, such as fire drills, fire exits, first aid;
- the role and identity of the Safety Officer;
- accident reporting procedures;
- departmental safety rules;
- fire procedures; and
- policies agreed by the Chambers.

Identification of Health and Safety Hazards – Annual Audit and Regular Risk Assessments

It is Chambers policy of the Company to require a thorough annual examination of health and safety performance. The technique to be adopted for such examinations will be the 'Safety Audit'. The Audit requires review of:

- standards laid down in the policy;
- relevant regulations;
- environmental factors;
- methods of work;
- contingency plans; and

- recording and provision of information about accidents and hazards and the assessment of risk.

The information obtained by the Audit will be used to form the basis of the plan for the Chambers for the following year.

The responsibility for ensuring that audit activity is carried out as part of this policy rests with the Head of Chambers and will be carried out by the Safety Officer.

It is the Chambers' responsibility to ensure that any deficiencies highlighted in the Audit are dealt with as speedily as possible.

Chambers has a continual responsibility for the elimination of hazards to maintain a safe working environment and will also be expected to carry out regular risk assessments in line with the Health and Safety Executive Guidelines. That is, by following these 5 steps:

- identify the hazards;
- decide who might be harmed and how;
- evaluate the risks and decide on precautions;
- record the findings and implement the precautions [See Appendix 1]; and
- review the assessment and update when necessary.

Training

Health and Safety training shall be incorporated within annual training programmes, as part of the development of a systematic training plan to ensure the competency of all members of Chambers. Health and Safety training needs will, therefore, be identified and planned for in the same manner as other training needs.

Areas to be given special priority are:

- training for Head of Chambers and the Safety Officer, to equip them with an understanding of their responsibilities under this policy;
- training for all members of Chambers to acquaint them with the main provisions of the law and its practical implication, the main features of this policy and key safety rules; and
- induction and in-service training for staff at all levels to acquaint them fully with new requirements and hazards.

Location of Equipment

Chambers will display its Health and Safety law poster in the premises.

The first-aid box and accident box are located in an easily accessible place.

Records, Statistics and Monitoring

Chambers will operate systems for recording, analysis and presentation of information about accidents, hazard situations and untoward occurrences.

Advice on systems will be provided by the Safety Officer, in conjunction, where appropriate, with specialist advisory bodies, for example local Environmental Health Departments.

Information obtained from the analysis of accident statistics must be acted upon and, where necessary, bids for additional expenditure made to Head of Chambers.

Reports to the Health and Safety Executive

The responsibility for meeting the requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1985 to the Health and Safety Executive, shall rest with Head of Chambers as delegated to the Safety Officer.

Specialist Advisory Bodies

Certain bodies and the individual members of those bodies, have always had a Health and Safety role, most notably, the Health & Safety Executive, or local Environmental Health Departments. If further specialist advice is required, this may be obtained by Managers from expert individuals or bodies outside of Chambers.

First Aid

It is the policy of the Company to make provision for First Aid and the training of 'First Aiders' in accordance with the First Aid Regulations (1982). The Safety Officer is responsible for ensuring the Regulations are implemented and for identifying training needs.

Fire

Training

The Head of Chambers is responsible for ensuring that the staff receive adequate fire training, and that nominated fire officers are designated in all Chambers' premises.

Fire Officer

In addition, Chambers will nominate a Fire Officer (this may be the Safety Officer or someone external to the Company) to:

- report and advise on the standard of fire safety in Chambers' premises and the standard of fire training of its members;
- undertake overall responsibility for fire training.
- assist in the investigation of all fires in the Chambers' premises and to submit reports of such incidents.

Procedure

The following procedures are in place to ensure high standards of fire safety.

- Fire risk assessments have been undertaken and are reviewed regularly. However, other reviews will occur if there are changes that will impact on them. These may include alterations to the premises or new work processes.
- Fire risk assessments are carried out by the Safety Officer.
- The fire evacuation procedure will be practised at least twice per year. A record will be kept of the date and the time taken to evacuate the buildings
- Training will be provided, as necessary, to members of Chambers.
- All new members of staff and temporary employees will be given induction training on how to raise the alarm and the available escape routes. Regular members of Chambers will be given annual refresher training.
- All escape routes shall be clearly signed and kept free from obstructions at all times.
- Fire extinguishers will be serviced and maintained annually by a suitable Contractor. If any member of Chambers notices defective or missing equipment they must report it to the Safety Officer.
- Alarms are checked every 6 months by a suitable contractor and tested regularly.
- All visitors must be logged into the Visitors Book in the admin offices on arrival on site.

Emergency Evacuation Plan

If you discover a fire:

- raise the alarm immediately by activating the nearest Fire Alarm Call Point
- evacuate immediately using the nearest available fire exit.
- do not stop to pick up any personal possessions.
- the last person out of a room should ensure that the door is shut.
- once outside, inform the Safety Officer as to the location of the fire and call the Fire Brigade.
- the assembly point is Across the road from Chambers on the other side of Essex Street.

If you hear the fire alarm:

- leave the building immediately using the nearest available fire exit.
- report to the assembly point. If you are with a visitor, ensure they accompany you.

Lifting and Handling

The Safety Officer is responsible for informing staff of safe lifting techniques and will identify specific training needs.

Computer Installations and Visual Display Units

All new computer installations must adhere to the British Standard Specifications and comply with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992.

Health and Safety and the Individual Member of Chambers

The Health and Safety at Work Act requires each member of Chambers “to take reasonable care for the Health and Safety of himself and of other persons who may be affected by their acts and omissions” and co-operate with management to enable management to carry out their responsibilities under the Act. All members of Chambers have equal responsibility with the Company for Health and Safety at Work.

The refusal of any member of Chambers to meet their obligations will be regarded as a matter to be dealt with by Head of Chambers. In normal circumstances counselling of a member of Chambers should be sufficient. With a continuing problem, or where a member of Chambers the Chambers’ Disciplinary Procedure.

Third Party Individuals Working on Chambers’ Premises

Persons working in Chambers’ premises who are employed by other organisations are expected to follow Chambers’ Health and Safety Policies with regards to their own personal safety (and that of other parties such as the public if appropriate) and their method of work. This responsibility will be included in contracts or working arrangements. Similarly, seconded Chambers’ employees working in other host premises will be expected to follow the host employers Health and Safety Policy.

Visitors and Members of the Public

Chambers wishes to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable, the Health, Safety and Welfare of visitors to Chambers establishments will be of the highest standard.

Any member of Chambers who notices persons acting in a way which would endanger other members, should normally inform Head of Chambers or the Safety Officer. If the danger is immediate, common sense must be used to give warning, call for assistance or give aid as necessary. It is equally important not to over-react to a situation.

Contractors

Chambers wishes to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable, the Health, Safety and Welfare of Contractors working in Chambers’ establishments will be of the highest standards. In addition, Contractors and their employees have an obligation so far as is reasonably practicable to ensure that all equipment, materials and premises under their control are safe and without risks to health.

Contractors must also observe Chambers’ Fire Safety Procedures set out above. These obligations will be drawn to the attention of the Contractors in the contract document issued to them. In addition, Head of Chambers will be identified in the contract as having authority to stop the work of Contractors who are placing themselves, other members, or visitors at risk. Any member of Chambers who judges there is a risk where contractors are working, should inform Head of Chambers immediately.

In tendering, Contractors will be asked to confirm they have a written Health, Safety and Welfare Policy. Head of Chambers will be responsible for monitoring the Health and Safety performance of the Contractor and the Contractor's performance will be a factor in deciding whether to invite the Contractor to tender again.

This policy will be reviewed by May 2025

WHITESTONE CHAMBERS