

Health and Safety

General guidance

Health and safety made simple - The basics for your printing business

If you think health and safety has to be complicated – it doesn't. The BPIF will make it easier for you to comply with the law and manage health and safety in your business.

For many businesses, all that's required is a basic series of tasks. The BPIF will take you through the steps and help you make sure you have done what you need to do.

How can the BPIF help you?

The BPIF can help by advising and providing the information for what you must do to make sure your business complies with health and safety law.

In general, the laws apply to all businesses, no matter how small. As an employer, or a self-employed person, **you** are responsible for health and safety in your business. You need to take the right precautions to reduce the risks of workplace dangers and provide a safe working environment.

There are health and safety laws to protect you, your employees and the public from workplace dangers. For some work activities there may be extra things you need to do to make sure you are complying with the law.

Decide who will help you with your duties

As an employer, you must appoint someone competent to help you meet your health and safety duties. A competent person is someone with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to manage health and safety.

You could appoint (one or a combination of):

- yourself;
- one or more of your workers;
- someone from outside your business.

You probably manage most aspects of your business yourself, or with the help of your staff. But if you are not confident of your ability to manage all health and safety in-house, you may need some external help or advice. Deciding what help you need is very important. Your BPIF Adviser will point you in the right direction.

Write a health and safety policy for your business

Describing how you will manage health and safety in your business will let your staff and others know about your commitment to health and safety. This will be your health and safety policy. It should clearly say who does what, when and how. A policy will only be effective if you and your staff follow it and review it regularly.

If you have five or more employees, you must have a written policy. The policy does not need to be complicated or time-consuming. To help you, we have created a template that you can download and adapt for your company.

[BPIF H&S policy download](#)

Manage the risks in your business

You must manage the health and safety risks in your workplace. To do this you need to think about what, in your business, might cause harm to people and decide whether you are doing enough to prevent that harm. This is known as a risk assessment.

A risk assessment is not about creating huge amounts of paperwork, but rather about identifying sensible measures to control the risks in your workplace. The law does not expect you to remove all risks, but to protect people by putting in place measures to control those risks. You are probably already taking steps to protect your employees, but your risk assessment will tell you whether you should be doing more.

How do I assess the risks in my workplace?

A good starting point is to walk around your workplace and look for any hazards – a **hazard** is anything that has the potential to cause harm. Then think about the risks – a **risk** is the chance, high or low, of somebody being harmed by the hazard, and how serious the harm could be. Think about how accidents could happen and who might be harmed. Ask your employees what they think the hazards are, as they may notice things that are not obvious to you and may have some good ideas on how to control the risks.

Concentrate on the real risks – those that are most likely to cause harm. Consider the measures you are already taking to control the risks and ask if there is anything you should do to make your workplace safer. Once you have identified the risks and what you need to do to control them, you should put the appropriate measures in place.

Then record your findings. If you have fewer than five employees you don't have to write anything down but it is good practice to keep a record. An easy way to record your findings is to use the risk assessment template.

Few workplaces stay the same and sooner or later you will bring in new equipment, substances or procedures that could lead to new hazards. It makes sense to review your risk assessment on a regular basis. If anything significant changes, check your risk assessment and update it.

[A template for your risk assessment is available to download.](#)

Don't forget to consider everyone who could be harmed

Some workers may have particular requirements, for example new and young workers, new or expectant mothers, and people with disabilities. Think about homeworkers, and people who might not be in the workplace all the time, such as visitors, contractors and maintenance workers.

Take members of the public into account, if they could be hurt by your work activities.

If you share a workplace with another business, you will need to consider how your work affects others and how their work affects you and your staff. Talk to each other and work together to make sure controls are in place.

Special risk assessment templates are available from [the website](#) and your BPIF Adviser.

Specific risks

For some risks there are particular control measures that are required by law. The BPIF website Health & Safety pages have information on topics specific to the printing industry to help you decide what you need to do about many common types of risk.

A few examples of activities that carry a recognised risk of harm are working at height, working with chemicals, machinery, gas, electricity and asbestos.

If you carry out a high-risk activity, check whether you need to obtain a licence or notify someone before you start work.

Specific risk assessment templates are available from the BPIF website and your BPIF Adviser.

Consult your employees

You have to consult all your employees on health and safety. This does not need to be complicated. You can do this by listening and talking to them about:

- health and safety and the work they do;
- how risks are controlled;
- the best ways of providing information and training.

Consultation is a two-way process, allowing staff to raise concerns and influence decisions on the management of health and safety. Your employees are often the best people to understand risks in the workplace and involving them in making decisions shows them that you take their health and safety seriously.

In a very small business, you might choose to consult your employees directly. Alternatively, you might consult through a health and safety representative, chosen by your employees or selected by a trade union. As an employer, you cannot decide who will be the representative.

Provide training and information

Everyone who works for you needs to know how to work safely and without risks to health. You must provide clear instructions, information and adequate training for your employees.

Don't forget contractors and self-employed people who may be working for you and make sure everyone has information on:

- hazards and risks they may face;
- measures in place to deal with those hazards and risks;
- how to follow any emergency procedures.

Ask your employees what they think about training to make sure it's relevant and effective. Keeping training records will help you to identify when refresher training might be needed. The information and training you provide should be in a form that is easy to understand. Everyone working for you should know what they are expected to do.

Health and safety training should take place during working hours and it must not be paid for by employees. There are many external trainers who will be able to help you with your training needs but effective training can often be done 'in-house'.

Some of your staff may have particular training needs, for example:

- new recruits;
- people changing jobs or taking on extra responsibilities;
- young employees, who are particularly vulnerable to accidents;
- health and safety representatives.

Remember that staff will need extra training if you get new equipment or working practices change.

Provide the right workplace facilities

You must protect the safety and health of everyone in your workplace, including people with disabilities, and provide welfare facilities for your employees.

For your employees' well-being you need to provide:

- toilets and hand basins, with soap and towels or a hand-dryer;
- drinking water;
- a place to store clothing (and somewhere to change if special clothing is worn for work);
- somewhere to rest and eat meals.

Health issues

To have a healthy working environment, make sure there is:

- good ventilation – a supply of fresh, clean air drawn from outside or a ventilation system;
- a reasonable working temperature (usually at least 16°C, or 13°C for strenuous work, unless other laws require lower temperatures);
- lighting suitable for the work being carried out;
- enough room space and suitable workstations and seating;
- a clean workplace with appropriate waste containers

Safety issues

To keep your workplace safe you must:

- properly maintain your premises and work equipment;
- keep floors and traffic routes free from obstruction;
- have windows that can be opened and also cleaned safely;
- make sure that any transparent (e.g. glass) doors or walls are protected or made of safety material.

Make arrangements for first aid, accidents and ill health

First aid

You must have first-aid arrangements in your workplace. You are responsible for making sure your employees receive immediate attention if they are taken ill or are injured at work. Accidents and illness can happen at any time and first aid can save lives and prevent minor injuries from becoming major ones.

Your arrangements will depend on the particular circumstances in your workplace and you need to assess what your first-aid needs are. As a minimum, you must have:

- a suitably stocked first-aid box;
- an appointed person to take charge of first-aid arrangements;
- information for all employees giving details of first-aid arrangements.

You might decide that you need a first-aider. This is someone who has been trained by an approved organisation and holds a qualification in first aid at work or emergency first aid at work.

Accidents and ill health

Under health and safety law, you must report and keep a record of certain injuries, incidents and cases of work-related disease. Keeping records will help you to identify patterns of accidents and injuries, and will help when completing your risk assessment. Your insurance company may also want to see your records if there is a work-related claim.

Make sure you protect people's personal details by storing records confidentially in a secure place.

If you have more than 10 employees, or own or occupy a factory, you must keep an accident book under social security law. You can buy an accident book from HSE Books (<http://books.hse.gov.uk>) or record the details in your own record system.

Display the health and safety law poster

If you employ anyone, you must display the health and safety law poster, or provide each worker with a copy of the equivalent pocket card. You must display the poster where your workers can easily read it. The poster outlines British health and safety laws and includes a straightforward list that tells workers what they and their employers need to do.

You can also add details of any employee safety representatives or health and safety contacts if you wish to do so. You can get copies of the poster and pocket card from HSE Books (www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/lawposter.htm).

The new version of the health and safety law poster was published in 2009. If you have a copy of the 1999 version, you can continue to display it or give workers the equivalent leaflet until 5 April 2014, as long as it is readable and contains up-to-date contact details. After this date, you must use the new versions.

Get insurance for your business

Contact the BPIF to discuss your insurance requirements, we will quote for industry-specific cover. If your business has employees you will probably need employers' liability insurance. If an employee is injured or becomes ill as a result of the work they do for you, they may claim compensation from you. Employers' liability insurance will enable you to meet the cost of any compensation for your employees' injuries or illness.

Only a few businesses are not required to have employers' liability insurance. If you have no employees, or are a family business and all employees are closely related to you, you may not need it. For further details see HSE leaflet *Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969: A guide for employers* (www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hse40.pdf).

How do you get employers' liability insurance?

You can buy employers' liability insurance through the BPIF. Your policy must be with an authorised insurer and the Financial Services Authority (FSA) has a list of these. More information is available on the BPIF Insurance web pages.

<http://www.bpifinsurance.co.uk/>

Keep your business up to date

Following news and events in the industry will help you keep your health and safety policies and risk assessments up to date. Our E-newsletter BPIF Online is distributed to all members at regular intervals and informs our members about all industry news, legal updates and issues of the day, and how the BPIF is influencing government on relevant matters, including our Invision video newscast.

<http://www.britishprint.com/page.asp?node=47668&sec=Invision>

BPIF H&S Healthcheck Report

The aim of the BPIF Health & Safety Healthcheck Report is to tell you how you compare with current UK health and safety legislation and how you compare with good practice within the industry.

The Healthcheck provides a good basic platform for future improvements and can help you assess how well you are performing, however the healthcheck is based purely on the answers given during the BPIF visit; no attempt is made to verify the answers which were given, similarly no assessment is made of the quality of the material. So for example the healthcheck simply records whether risk assessments have been performed or not, it will not make comment on the extent or adequacy of the risk assessment.

The report is divided into discrete sections and in addition, you will be provided with a list of recommended actions, in descending order of priority.

Prices

Platinum members - FREE

Gold / Silver members - £550 per check

Non members - £825

BPIF H&S Seal of Excellence - Practical steps to achieve legal compliance and best practice in Health & Safety

All printers want to pride themselves in their health & safety management, but few measure themselves objectively and even fewer carry out independent reviews of their health & safety. The BPIF H&S Audit is a quick, easy and (for Platinum members) free, current practice on topics such as: Arrangements and Management of Health & Safety, Control of Machinery and Equipment Working at Height, auditing related documents. The areas for these topics are based on the HSE legal requirements and best practice for the printing industry.

The Audit is delivered in half a day and a detailed report spelling out issues that need addressing if required.

Members who achieve a Seal of Excellence will automatically be entered into the BPIF Excellence Awards. Members who achieve the Seal of Excellence in three topic areas (H&S, Environmental, HR or Customer Services) will be entered into the Company of the Year Award. Companies will need to provide further information in line with the Excellence Awards criteria and will also be able to decline to enter.

[Click here for more information.](#)

How can the BPIF help?

We've organised our website www.britishprint.com by topic to help you with your specific needs.

Or contact your regional BPIF Adviser directly by phone or email.

http://www.britishprint.com/page.asp?node=582&sec=Contact_Health_Safety

Disclaimer Remember, this guidance document is intended as a useful tool in any health and safety matters, and not stand-alone advice. The information and any commentary in the law contained in these documents is provided for information purposes only. Every reasonable effort is made to make the information and commentary accurate and up to date, but no responsibility for its accuracy and correctness, or for any consequences of relying on it, is assumed by the BPIF.

Contact the BPIF Health and Safety Team
Making print safer for everyone