

Cafcass Health, Safety and Security Policy

Cafcass policies are designed to safeguard children, families, staff, and the reputation of Cafcass. They derive from legislation and from what we learn from practice quality audits, significant incidents and learning reviews, feedback, and complaints. They set out what must be done. They are public documents against which we can be held accountable. If they are not adhered to, we can be subject to challenge through complaints, the Parliamentary & Health Services Ombudsman, Social Work England, or even a Judicial Review. A decision not to adhere to a policy must be supported by a compelling rationale and endorsed by a manager. Policies are, therefore, subject to monitoring for compliance – with fair and reasonable consequences for non-compliance. Key policies that are new or updated are subject to attestation by all employees or groups of staff where appropriate.

What is this policy for?

This policy sets out how Cafcass intends to manage health and safety and meet the requirements of section 2(2) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The Act requires employers to prepare a statement of general policy with respect to health and safety at work and to detail the organisation and arrangements set up to meet the policy.

This policy provides an overarching framework for managing health and safety, including fire safety, across all Cafcass premises, covering all activities. It provides supportive and informative links, both to internal and external resources, which are contained at Annex A. Please note that links to internal pages are only available on the internal Health, Safety and Security policy.

This policy will be promoted and made available in all formats, including an online version on Connect to ensure all colleagues have access and have read and understand their duties relating to health and safety and understand the duties placed upon Cafcass.

Who does it apply to?

All Cafcass staff, including bank workers, Cafcass Associates, external agencies and contractors carrying out work on behalf of Cafcass. A copy of the Policy must be provided to all contractors and/or external agencies working on behalf of Cafcass.

Why is this important for children?

This policy supports our commitment to maintaining health and safety as a key priority not only for colleagues and contractors who work for Cafcass but also the children and families that we work with. This policy outlines our responsibilities for the safety and security of the children and families that we work with, when they visit our offices, and we meet with them independently from the office and within the court environment.

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2.0 Organisation

This section outlines who is responsible for what in the organisation.

2.1 Responsibilities and accountability

- Within the UK, health and safety legislation requires both employers and employees to meet various general duties.
- Under health and safety legislation, in addition to the duties placed upon Cafcass as an employer, all managers and colleagues have a shared responsibility for their own and other people's health and safety, wherever they happen to be carrying out their duties.

2.2 Requirements of the Ministry of Justice Corporate Health and Safety Policy

- Cafcass is required to have in place a local health and safety policy signed by the Chief Executive Officer that includes the organisation and arrangements for delivering occupational health and safety within Cafcass. Management structures and responsibilities should be aligned to the MoJ's framework which includes implementing the following principles:

2.3 Accounting Officers - CMT, Directors and Senior managers

2.3.1 Ultimately responsible for:

- Local policy and its implementation within Cafcass.
- Provision of policies and/or arrangements for their business areas of responsibility.
- Appointing competent persons.
- Providing assurance to the Permanent Secretary via the annual Governance Statement providing a supplementary health and safety return to MOJ Corporate Fire and Health and Safety for corporate oversight.
- Informing employees of the health and safety policy and arrangements.
- Managing risks within their business areas.
- Discharging statutory occupational health and safety obligations.

2.4 Line Managers – all management grades

2.4.1 Ensure:

- Risks are managed effectively in line with risk assessment and trade union consultation.
- All members of their team, including themselves are adequately trained to deal with health and safety risks.
- Adequate arrangements are in place to safeguard the health and safety of employees and others.

2.5 Managers responsibilities

2.5.1 All managers are responsible for ensuring, as far as is reasonably practicable:

- ☐ Compliance with local policy and/or local arrangements on health and safety issues.
- ☐ Creation and maintenance of a positive health and safety culture, leading by example and creating an environment where all can actively participate and take ownership of appropriate health and safety standards.
- ☐ Control of risks under their business area, dealing with them sensibly, responsibly, and proportionately in accordance with risk assessment, which should involve local Trade Union Safety Representatives in the risk assessment process.
- ☐ Accidents, incidents, assaults and near misses within their business area are reported and investigated, and taking proportionate measures in accordance with risk assessment as are necessary to prevent recurrence of reported incidents.
- ☐ Staff at all levels receive the relevant and sufficient training, including induction training, to an appropriate level of competence to control health and safety risks.
- ☐ Escalation of health and safety issues they are unable to resolve locally.
- ☐ Periodic workplace health and safety inspections, proportionate to the risk, are carried out within their business area, and that Trade Union Representatives are invited to attend.
- ☐ Where appropriate, that all plant, equipment, substances, and material are safe and suitable for their intended use and are adequately maintained and controlled.
- ☐ Adequate arrangements are in place to safeguard the health, safety and well-being of colleagues and others at all times – this will include nominating and arranging training for fire marshals and first aiders for their areas of responsibility.
- ☐ All colleagues under their employed responsibility have read and understood the Health and Safety Policy.
- ☐ The identification of colleagues whose personal circumstances or duties involve particular or significant health and safety risks and ensure the required risk assessments and safe working practices are in place. If in doubt escalate to the Estates and Health and Safety Team/Health, safety and security manager.

2.5.1 Health and safety matters must be raised in all team meetings, including a sufficient opportunity for discussion; any issues arising that cannot be resolved at team meeting level should be forwarded to the appropriate senior management meeting and/or the Health Safety and Wellbeing Steering Group (HSWSG) via the Health, safety and security manager or Trade Union Health and Safety Representative.

2.6 Employees responsibilities

2.6.1 All colleagues also have a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. They have:

- a responsibility to take care of their own health and safety and that of others by ensuring that their actions or failures to act do not place themselves or others at risk of harm or injury,
- a duty to read and understand the Health and Safety Policy and escalate any questions or concerns to their line manager,
- a duty to co-operate with the reasonable requests of their manager in respect of health and safety matters, and
- a duty to notify their line manager, or other responsible person, of any shortcomings in health, safety and security arrangements.

2.7 Information, instruction, and training

- 2.7.1 A suite of e-learning courses and associated guidance documents is available within Connect and Cafcass Learning. Employees must complete each mandatory course and undertake the refresher sessions annually, or as instructed.
- 2.7.2 Safe operating procedures and standard H&S procedures will be provided where required and must be communicated to all colleagues through their line manager.

2.8 Consultation

- 2.8.1 The Health Safety and Wellbeing Steering Group (HSWSG) fulfils the role of Safety Committee as outlined within the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977, for Cafcass nationally.

3.0 Health, wellbeing and stress

This section outlines the measures and actions colleagues must take in relation to health, wellbeing and stress.

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 People are our greatest asset at Cafcass, and we are committed to creating an environment which empowers and enables colleagues to achieve and maintain positive physical and mental wellbeing. This is only possible by ensuring that the health, wellbeing and stress levels of all our colleagues remain one of our key priorities and will align with our people strategies.
- 3.1.2 The Health and Wellbeing pages on the intranet provide links to information and resources on a variety of subjects to help improve and maintain wellbeing and health.

- 3.1.3 The Health and Safety Executive defines stress as

“The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”.

- 3.1.4 Our mission at Cafcass is to continue to build a positive organisational culture that fosters a holistic approach to wellbeing, with the goal of supporting employees to achieve high attendance and maximise their capabilities to make lasting and positive differences to the children and families they work with.
- 3.1.5 To ensure we achieve this, we will develop and deploy a range of support, resources and other wellbeing interventions that will help our workforce stay healthy and well.
- 3.1.6 If a colleague feels that they are under stress, they should, in the first instance, raise this with their line manager immediately.
- 3.1.7 The Cafcass Health and Wellbeing Commitment exceeds standard organisation policies in signposting resources to help colleagues deal with both work, and non-work-related mental health issues.

- 3.1.8 Cafcass provides access to an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which includes a confidential 24/7 telephone helpline service for colleagues who feel under pressure either due to work or non-work activities.

3.2 Display Screen Equipment

- 3.2.1 The majority of Cafcass colleagues are Display Screen Equipment (DSE) users. A DSE assessment provides a standard assessment of our workstations across Cafcass, which are provided in accordance with the standards outlined in the DSE Regulations.
- 3.2.2 Colleagues new to Cafcass must undertake the online DSE e-learning package and refer to Cafcass guidance as part of induction to enable them to carry out a DSE self-assessment. Colleagues should inform their line manager if further advice or support is required.
- 3.2.3 All colleagues should carry out a self-assessment using the electronic DSE assessment module in AssessNET. This must be reviewed annually or whenever there is a substantive change that will significantly affect the initial assessment.
- 3.2.4 Colleagues working flexibly should follow the guidance outlined above when setting up a workstation at their home or other location, including completing a self-assessment of their workstation, and should inform their line manager if they are unable to meet the basic requirements for a safe workspace. Colleagues working from home should ensure that they follow good practice guidance in setting up their workstation and using their laptop.
- 3.2.5 Anyone who has a particular need identified through the completion of a DSE Assessment should raise this with their line manager in the first instance who may need to liaise with the Health, Safety and Security Manager and/or the local HR Business Partner. If unresolved the next stage will be to arrange a meeting with a third-party provider to carry out an Occupational Health Assessment. The report produced will be for the colleague and line manager to review with a copy provided to the Local Business Partner. Together an agreed action plan will be produced to hopefully resolve any issues. Where necessary and agreed by both parties, the National H&S Officer, IT and the Health and Wellbeing Team can offer additional support. The report may identify specialist equipment required for colleagues to carry out their duties. Funding for the additional equipment will be agreed and managed through the process identified within the Particular Needs Policy.

3.3 Portable DSE

- 3.3.1 Laptops are a form of DSE that attract special consideration. When working in an office the laptop should be docked into the desk monitor, which sets up the laptop as though it were a desktop.
- 3.3.2 Where laptops are used away from an office, depending on the length of time and frequency of use, a laptop riser, separate keyboard, and mouse may be required; otherwise, colleagues should maintain a good posture and have regular postural movement. Guidance on setting up a DSE workstation when working from home is available on the Cafcass intranet.

3.4 Eye tests and optical care

- 3.4.1 Reimbursement of costs for optical care is available through the BHSF Health Plan, for colleagues employed by Cafcass in a permanent or fixed term capacity and paid via our Payroll. Claims can be made up to the maximum outlined in the plan every year.
- 3.4.2 Agency colleagues and/or anyone who opts out from claiming through the BHSF Health Plan will be reimbursed up to an agreed total for an eye test and cost for basic corrective appliance lens and frames if required for DSE use. This can be claimed every two years. Your local HR Business Partner will be able to offer further advice.

3.5 First Aid

- 3.5.1 HSE guidance indicates the number and type of first aiders that an office should have. Cafcass offices are designated as low risk, however it is recommended that a number of colleagues proportionate to the size of the office should be trained as a minimum to emergency first aider level.
- 3.5.2 First Aid provisions within our offices are currently undergoing a review.
- 3.5.3 Irrespective of the type and number of first aiders are in place, Business Services Managers must ensure that each office has a readily available first aid kit in place that is routinely checked and re-stocked as and when necessary.

3.6 Provision of Reasonable Adjustments

- 3.6.1 Reasonable adjustment(s) must be provided to any colleague who is classed under the Equality Act 2010 as having a disability and for whom that disability provides a constraint to their ability to carry out their work.
- 3.6.2 HR must be informed of any colleague presenting with a disability or particular need that requires assistive equipment such as software, IT equipment or furniture, following completion of a Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessment.
- 3.6.3 A reasonable adjustment may include (this list is not exhaustive):
 - Change in working practice.
 - Provision of equipment and/or technology.
 - Change in physical environment.
 - Change in working hours. (This is over and above flexible working practices set out on the Flexible Working Policy).
- 3.6.4 Guidance on the provision of particular needs software, equipment and furniture is available on the Cafcass intranet.

3.7 New mothers and pregnant women

- 3.7.1 Cafcass has produced risk assessments for pregnant women that must be used with colleagues who have informed their line manager that they are pregnant. The risk assessment should also be utilised for colleagues returning to work after a period of maternity leave. Further advice is available from your local HR Business Partner and/or the National Health, Safety and Security Manager.

- 3.7.2 In relation to eye tests and optical care, Cafcass has produced risk assessments that must be used with colleagues who have informed their line manager that they are pregnant. The risk assessment should also be utilised for new mothers returning to work. The AssessNET self-assessment module provides a means for enabling such assessments to be carried out and managed. Further advice is available from your local HR Partner and/or the National Health, Safety and Security Manager.
- 3.7.3 Some colleagues are at increased risk of contracting infectious diseases due to factors such as lowered immune systems or being pregnant. Colleagues must inform their line manager if they have a vulnerability that may cause them to be at higher risk of contracting an infection.

3.8 Manual handling

- 3.8.1 Manual handling means transporting or supporting a load by hand or bodily force. It includes the activities of lifting, loading, pushing, pulling, moving or carrying a load. A load is a movable object, such as a box or package, a person or something being pushed or pulled such as a roll cage or a pallet truck. Managers must assess any potentially harmful manual handling risks to employees to either eliminate or reduce them to a reasonable level.
- 3.8.2 A generic manual handling risk assessment and guidance is available on the Cafcass intranet.

3.9 Chemical and physical hazards

- 3.9.1 Chemical and physical hazards comprise both substances and physical phenomenon. The physical hazards referred to here are hazards that can impact the body due to work activities. These include activities that may damage a colleague's hearing due to excessive and prolonged noise levels or high vibration levels when using certain tools could damage nerve ends. Predominantly these types of hazards are associated with construction or on occasions manufacturing environments.
- 3.9.2 Due to the nature of Cafcass' business, it is unlikely that anyone will be affected by a physical hazard, such as noise or vibration, however there is the potential to come into contact with a chemical hazard such as cleaning fluids if they are not correctly stored.
- 3.9.3 Chemical hazards will be managed to meet the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH Regs). As such Cafcass will, where required, provide COSHH risk assessments and associated Safety Data Sheets for all chemical products accessible to colleagues within Cafcass premises and ensure required controls such as the issue and use of personal protective equipment (PPE) when using certain products, and provisions of lockable storage solutions are in place to prevent accidental exposure to chemicals within the office environment.

3.10 Infectious diseases and other microbiological hazards

- 3.10.1 Microbiological hazards are organisms that have the potential to cause harm if they come into contact with the human body. As Cafcass colleagues work with members of the public and use public spaces and transport there is a general risk that colleagues may be exposed to microbiological hazards and infectious diseases, although this could occur at any time and is not confined just to periods when colleagues are at work.
- 3.10.2 Any colleague who has contracted an infectious disease or who is, likely to be, or has been, in contact with someone who has an infectious disease must report it to their line manager as soon as they become aware. Colleagues are also advised to discuss any such occurrence with their GP.

- 3.10.3 Cafcass colleagues should be alert to the risks of infectious diseases when dealing with children and families and take action when noting warning signs of potential infection.
- 3.10.4 Cafcass has an emergency plan that can be invoked where either an epidemic or pandemic occurs. Please speak to your line manager if you have any concerns or wish to understand what the plan entails.

4.0 Managing Unacceptable Behaviour

This section outlines the organisations responses to managing unacceptable behaviour.

- 4.0.1 **Cafcass will not accept or allow any form of unacceptable behaviour.** This includes behaviours such as harassment, abuse, pestering, or violence in any form, whether it occurs in person, via email, or online. Children and their families, partners and stakeholders can expect the same high standards of respectful behaviours from Cafcass Employees. Where necessary and when the behaviour is of a criminal nature Cafcass will support employees to pursue protection with the police and the courts.
- 4.0.2 Cafcass has a detailed guidance on Managing Unacceptable Behaviour and a position statement which outlines the above in more detail.
- 4.1 **Violence, aggression, harassment, and personal safety**
 - 4.1.1 At Cafcass, we are committed to providing a safe, respectful, and professional working environment for our employees, children and families and our partners.
 - 4.1.2 Cafcass will not accept violent, abusive, intimidating, or threatening behaviour towards a staff member or any other person carrying out work on behalf of Cafcass. This is set out in our Managing Unacceptable Behaviour position statement.
 - 4.1.3 Any colleague exposed to any form of abuse, violence or aggression must report it through the AssessNET incident reporting system and must also inform their line manager immediately.
 - 4.1.4 Colleagues must take any steps they feel necessary to ensure their immediate safety and discuss the incident with their line manager to enable an appropriate investigation is carried out and a comprehensive review of the current risk assessment and standard working practice. The Estates and H&S Team will be notified via the AssessNet system and will escalate and become involved where necessary.
 - 4.1.5 A risk assessment and action plan should be developed between the colleague and line manager, ensuring that all reasonable measures are taken to prevent a reoccurrence or exacerbation of the situation, the risk assessment should be signed off by the Assistant Director.
 - 4.1.6 Line managers are required to ensure their colleagues do not place themselves at significant risk from harm and should routinely discuss any concerns with colleagues on a regular basis.
 - 4.1.7 Line managers and colleagues should refer to the guidance on managing unacceptable behaviour available on the intranet that provides advice and recommendations on actions to take depending upon the level of risk. An Assistant Director is assigned the lead on managing Cafcass' response to any violent, abusive or aggressive behaviours.

- 4.1.8 The nature of Cafcass' work means that we have a number of individuals and groups who may be dissatisfied with our service. While the majority of these will not go beyond expressing dissatisfaction to their practitioner or via our complaint's procedure, a small number may take more extreme and/or direct action, such as threatening colleagues or becoming abusive. Guidance on the management of unacceptable behaviour is intended to both help colleagues to deal with any such instances and know what to do after an incident has occurred.
- 4.1.9 Cafcass is committed to providing a safe working environment for all colleagues, who carry out difficult front-line work and who need to work in an atmosphere and environment that is respectful (to and by all concerned) and free from any form of unacceptable behaviour such as harassment, abuse or violence made in person, via email and online (social media and websites). Cafcass will take the necessary steps to protect the wellbeing and safety of all colleagues who find themselves being the subject of unacceptable behaviour from parties, colleagues, or members of the public.
- 4.1.10 A contract is in place to provide personal protection support where this has been risk assessed as a necessary requirement for a colleague. Cafcass associates' team should be contacted to commission this support – for more details see the Cafcass Associates page on the intranet.
- 4.1.11 Should a colleague experience unacceptable behaviour then actions such as warning letters, or cease-and-desist letters can be considered. More information can be found in the managing unacceptable behaviour guidance.
- 4.1.12 Under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 (PFHA1997) it is a criminal offence to pursue a course of conduct that amounts to harassment of another. If any colleague feels that they are subject to harassment, they should bring it to the attention of their line manager immediately. Advice and support are also available from Cafcass Legal and HR teams. It is important for colleagues to note that contact with the police would have to be initiated by the individual affected, however line managers will support colleagues as far as they are able to. Support is also available via the critical incident support service.
- 4.1.13 With regards to any threatening material or content posted online, the Communications team can help to guide you in taking all steps possible to try to remove content that is in breach of the host's standards. However, there are limits to what can be done and attempts are not always successful. Although the Communications team can offer support and guidance, social media platforms often insist that the individual affected contact them directly.
- 4.1.14 All Cafcass colleagues, Board Members, Volunteers and Contractors have a right to undertake their lawful duties without violent, intimidating, threatening and harassing reprisal from the families (and their associates) with whom we work on behalf of the courts. Cafcass will use a range of measures to protect colleagues and contractors to ensure they feel well supported if faced with such instances.
- 4.1.15 A brief guide has been produced to provide advice to colleagues regarding their personal safety. Please see Annex A for websites and guidance on personal safety at work and home.

5.0 Lone and remote working

- 5.0.1 Line managers and colleagues should refer to Cafcass guidance for lone workers that provides advice on measures that can be used to reduce risk where there is an identified potential for harm.

- 5.0.2 There is a joint responsibility between management and colleagues to reduce risk when carrying out lone work and colleagues have a duty to follow processes, procedures and systems and management instructions provided and designed for their safety.
- 5.0.3 Managers and colleagues should also refer to the relevant AssessNET Self-Assessment templates and guidance.
- 5.0.4 HSE Guidance is available that provides advice regarding working alone.

6.0 Driving

- 6.0.1 Colleagues who are likely to be required to drive while at work should refer to the online eLearning course for more information and discuss with their line Manager on all the requirements and options available when driving for work.
- 6.0.2 Colleagues who use their own vehicle for business purposes must ensure that:
- they maintain their vehicle in good working order.
 - the vehicle is suitable for everyday use in the course of their duties.
 - their vehicle receives an annual MOT (where required), and
 - their vehicle is serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
 - the vehicle has necessary Road Fund Licence, and
 - the driver is appropriately insured to use the vehicle for business purposes, and
 - they have a full licence which permits them to drive, and
 - notify their manager of any driving sanctions and the impact on driving for work that this may have, and
 - they have completed the driver safety e-learning module.
- 6.0.3 Use of a vehicle is in accordance with road traffic legislation, compliance with which requires the driver to be familiar with and follow the Highway code.
- 6.0.4 The 'Use of own or leased vehicle for Cafcass business' document outlines Cafcass' policy regarding carrying children and adult passengers.
- 6.0.5 The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (Rospa) provides a range of resources to help everyone drive safely. The Safer motoring website also provides a wealth of guidance and advice.

7.0 Premises Safety & Welfare provision

- 7.0.1 Cafcass will ensure that all statutory estates requirements, such as electrical systems, gas installations, asbestos, water systems, lifts, fire warning and protection are managed through external competent contractors and internal routine monitoring. This will include colleague welfare facilities such as toilets, drinking water, hearing loops.

7.1 Emergency Provisions

- 7.1.1 All premises will have at least two emergency evacuation drills each year, which will provide a practical test drill of current evacuation procedures, relating to fire or other emergencies such as bomb alerts or gas escapes. Process currently under review.

7.1.2 All test drills will be recorded, with the report filed within the individual office health, safety and security folders which are managed by the Estates and Health, Safety and Security Team. These will be held within each office's electronic health and safety premises file and posted on relevant notice boards. The file will be maintained by the Business Services Manager of the premises to which it relates. Process currently under review.

7.1.3 Business Services Managers will complete and routinely review their plans for maintaining business continuity for each office.

7.1.4 Cafcass' Business Continuity Steering Group ensures that arrangements are in place to deal with incidents that disrupt the continuity of services, and where necessary Cafcass will invoke the Incident Management Team (IMT) to manage large scale incidents.

7.2 Evacuation of people with a disability

7.2.1 Line managers should ensure that a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) is produced for any colleague with a disability within their office which should always be put together in consultation with the individual. Business Services Managers should produce a generic plan for members of the public and visitors.

7.3 Fire Safety

7.3.1 All colleagues must complete the mandatory online fire safety e-Learning course available on Cafcass Learning at least once every year.

7.3.2 Business Services Managers are responsible persons for the offices they manage and together with the Estates and Health and Safety Team will ensure that each office has an up-to-date Fire Risk Assessment in place and that fire safety services are provided and maintained.

7.3.3 Cafcass procedures for safe evacuation in the event of a fire will include the provision and use of Fire Marshals to check offices wherever practicable and will rely on all colleagues being aware of and responsible for their own safe evacuation whether a Fire Marshal is present or not. Process currently under review.

7.3.4 Cafcass will follow the arrangements required by any landlord, host department or facilities management company where offices are in shared multioccupancy premises.

7.3.5 Guidance on Fire Safety - Evacuation procedures, PEEPs and Drills is available on the Cafcass intranet.

7.3.6 Fire safety requirements are outlined in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, further details of which can be found on Gov.uk and the HSE website.

7.4 Management and Prevention of slips, trips and falls.

7.4.1 Colleagues should take sensible everyday precautions such as keeping the office tidy, wiping up spillages, preventing trailing cables, blocking access routes etc.

7.4.2 **Colleagues must:**

- Wear suitable footwear that is appropriate for the weather conditions at the time.
- Use handrails when ascending or descending staircases.
- Be aware of hazard warnings and proceed accordingly with caution.
- Not climb on any furniture or equipment to reach anything at height.
- Use suitable and appropriate steps if necessary to access items stored at height.
- Report or immediately clean up spillages.
- Not leave items in circulation routes that could cause a person to slip or trip.
- Dispose of waste in the appropriate container.

7.5 **Use of electrical equipment**

- 7.5.1 Electrical equipment, including portable electrical items fitted with plugs, fixed wired items such as plug sockets, lighting and equipment such as wall mounted hand dryers will be maintained in safe working order.
- 7.5.2 Colleagues must carry out a visual check of any portable electrical appliance prior to using it – guidance is available on the intranet.
- 7.5.3 Colleagues must ensure all portable electrical appliances provided for use at work are made available for testing at least once every two years as reasonably requested.
- 7.5.4 Further guidance on electrical safety can be found on the HSE Website.
- 7.5.5 Managers must ensure that any potential risks to the health and safety of colleagues, contractors and/or visitors are assessed using the principles outlined in the HSE booklet 'Five steps to Risk Assessment'. The competent¹ identified colleague carrying out the assessment should record the significant findings of their assessment on the Cafcass record of risk assessment form. The assessment should be signed off by the appropriate line manager of the working arrangements / task / individual being assessed.
- 7.5.6 Managers should assess risks presented by any new activity, task or the introduction of any new equipment or working arrangements.
- 7.5.7 Managers should re-assess the risk from any existing activity, task, equipment or working arrangement where there is reason to believe that the likelihood or severity of the risk of harm have increased.
- 7.5.8 The extent of a record of the assessments required above will depend upon the risk presented. Tasks, activities, equipment etc, that present a low or negligible risk will not require the completion of a full risk assessment record.
- 7.5.9 Control measures, safe systems or other actions to maintain the risk from a task, activity, working arrangement or work equipment at a low level should be recorded if without those measures the risk would be higher.
- 7.5.10 Colleagues must follow any management instruction issued because of a completed risk assessment unless the individual believes this will place them at harm or imminent danger. If an individual refuses an instruction because they believe they will be placed at risk of harm or imminent danger, they should discuss this with their line manager or with their manager's manager.

¹ Competency as defined in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

8.0 Incident and accidents

8.1 Incident and Accident Reporting

- 8.1.1 Any colleague who has a H&S related incident such as an accident, near miss violent, threatening, or abusive incident whilst at work or associated with their work, must report it as soon as possible using the electronic health and safety management tool, AssessNET. Incidents should be reported through the AssessNET portal – the link for which is available on the Cafcass intranet. A guide for the AssessNET incident process can be found here. Reports can also be made using smart phones once the application has been added. If it is not practicable for a colleague or a contractor or other person to record the H&S incident in AssessNET the Cafcass Incident and Accident report form, available in the forms section of the Health and Safety pages on the intranet should be used and provided to their line manager, ensuring a copy is sent to the National Health and Safety Adviser and, if they wish, to their trade union representative.
- 8.1.2 Any H&S related incident that is reportable to the HSE under the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) will automatically be triggered within the AssessNET system but will be signed off and sent to HSE by the National Health, Safety and Security Manager.

8.2 Accident Investigation

- 8.2.1 Managers must investigate any H&S incidents reported that result in harm or, if a near miss, could have resulted in harm. Investigation findings must be added to the relevant AssessNET incident report.
- 8.2.2 A reportable accident that results in specified injury must be investigated by the manager of the person to whom the incident has occurred as soon as it is reported, to ensure that any evidence and witness statements can be gathered in a timely manner. At this point the Estates and Health and Safety Team and relevant Assistant Director or senior manager as well as the relevant Trade Union health and safety representative must be informed.

9.0 Information and Training

9.1 Induction

- 9.1.1 Any new colleagues must receive suitable induction training within the first four weeks of their commencement by following the HR Induction framework available at the HR intranet page. Line managers will ensure employees receive an induction.
- 9.1.2 All new colleagues must complete a series of mandatory H&S eLearning courses within the first month of employment. Please discuss with your Line Manager if you have any problems accessing the training.

9.2 Information, instruction, and training (e-Learning and guidance)

9.2.1 The provision of information, instruction and training is a key requirement of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

9.2.2 To ensure the requisite level of information, instruction and training is provided to all colleagues Cafcass provides:

- Mandatory Health and Safety modules available on the Cafcass learning portal, that all new colleagues should complete as part of their induction.
- A mandatory fire safety refresher course which all colleagues must complete annually.
- A mandatory health and safety refresher course which all colleagues must complete annually.
- A page on the Cafcass intranet that contains the Cafcass Health and Safety Policy.
- A health and safety page on the Cafcass intranet that provides procedures and guidance for all colleagues, and which also contains links to forms and generic risk assessments.

Policy owner	Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Approved by	CMT
Approved on	22 April 2025
Attestation	To be attested to September 2025.
Version	1.3
Amended	April/May 2025 - refresh of policy in formatting and updating links. - Added information on Fire Safety and Emergency Provisions. - Amendments made following CMT Feedback.
Next review	April 2026

Annex A- Useful Links

Health and Safety Executive

- [HSE: Information about health and safety at work](#)
- [Lone working: Protect those working alone - HSE](#)
- [Five steps to Risk Assessment'](#)
- [First aid at work: The Health and Safety \(First-Aid\) Regulations 1981. Guidance on Regulations L74](#)

Cafcass Links

General Health and Wellbeing

- Health and Wellbeing pages
- Health and safety risk assessment form
- My Learning Cafcass
- Cafcass Associates page

Health and Wellbeing offer

- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) (sharepoint.com)
- BHSF Health Plan

DSE/Occupational health

- Particular needs equipment and furniture (sharepoint.com)
- Employee Guide to Occupational Health Assessments
- A generic DSE assessment
- Link to AssessNET
- Guidance on the use of DSE when working remotely
- Particular needs software, equipment and furniture guidance

Manual Handling

- Generic manual handling risk assessment

Managing unacceptable behaviour

- Managing unacceptable behaviour guidance

Fire Safety

- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)
- Fire Safety - Evacuation procedures, PEEPs and Drills

Lone Working

- Personal Safety and Lone Working

Other External Websites

Support for lone working

- <http://www.personalsafetyadvice.co.uk/>
- <http://www.suzylamplugh.org/>

Driving

- ROSPA [safer-driving-for-work-handbook.pdf](#)