

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY



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Objective:

To ensure a safe working environment for all staff and volunteers by minimizing risks, promoting health and safety awareness, and preparing for emergencies.

Policy:

1. Training

➤ Regular Health and Safety Training:

- **Initial Training:** All new employees and volunteers must complete an initial health and safety training session within their first week of joining SOSNEEDS. This aligns with the *WHO's Occupational health Standards*, which emphasize the importance of early training to prevent workplace injuries and illnesses.
- **Ongoing Training:** Regular health and safety training sessions shall be provided for all staff and volunteers, at least annually, to refresh knowledge and update on any new policies or procedures.
- **Specialized Training:** Specialized training shall be offered for roles with specific health and safety risks (e.g., handling hazardous materials, working with vulnerable populations).

➤ Content of Training:

- **General Safety Practices:** General safety practices, including proper lifting techniques, ergonomics, fire safety, and workplace violence prevention, shall be taught, aligning with *SDG 8.8 on promoting safe and secure working environments for all workers*.
- **Hazard Recognition:** Employees and volunteers shall be trained on recognizing potential workplace hazards and the importance of reporting them.
- **Emergency Procedures:** All staff and volunteers shall be familiarized with the organization's emergency procedures, including evacuation plans, first aid, and the use of emergency equipment.

2. Reporting

➤ Hazard Reporting Procedures:

- **Immediate Reporting:** All staff and volunteers shall be encouraged to immediately report any workplace hazards or unsafe conditions to their supervisor or designated safety officer.
- **Hazard Report Forms:** Hazard report forms shall be provided that can be submitted in person, via email, or through an online portal to ensure accessibility.
- **Anonymous Reporting:** Anonymous reporting of hazards shall be allowed to ensure that all concerns are addressed, even if individuals are uncomfortable revealing their identity.

➤ Incident Investigation:

- **Prompt Investigation:** All reported hazards and incidents shall be investigated promptly by qualified personnel.
- **Documentation:** Thorough documentation of all reported hazards, investigations, and corrective actions taken shall be maintained.
- **Corrective Actions:** Corrective actions to address identified hazards and prevent recurrence shall be implemented, and these actions shall be communicated to all affected parties.

Emergency Procedures

➤ Development and Maintenance:

- **Comprehensive Plans:** Comprehensive emergency procedures covering potential scenarios such as fire, medical emergencies, natural disasters, and active shooter situations shall be developed.
- **Regular Updates:** Emergency procedures shall be reviewed and updated at least annually, or more frequently if needed, to reflect changes in the workplace, staff, or potential risks.
- **Communication:** All emergency procedures shall be clearly communicated to staff and volunteers and made easily accessible (e.g., posted in common areas, included in training materials).

➤ Emergency Equipment:

- **Availability:** Necessary emergency equipment (e.g., fire extinguishers, first aid kits, AEDs) shall be available, well-maintained, and easily accessible in all areas of the workplace.
- **Training:** Training on the proper use of emergency equipment shall be provided as part of the regular health and safety training program.

Implementation and Enforcement

➤ Monitoring and Evaluation:

- **Regular Inspections:** Regular workplace inspections shall be conducted to identify potential hazards and ensure compliance with health and safety policies.
- **Performance Metrics:** Health and safety performance metrics, such as the number of reported incidents and the effectiveness of corrective actions, shall be tracked and evaluated.
- **Support Resources:**
 - **Access to Information:** Easy access to health and safety information, resources, and training materials shall be provided for all employees and volunteers.
 - **Employee Assistance Programs (EAP):** Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) shall be offered to support the mental and emotional well-being of staff and volunteers.

➤ Disciplinary Actions:

- **Non-Compliance:** Non-compliance with health and safety policies shall be clearly communicated to result in disciplinary action, which may include retraining, suspension, or termination.
- **Consistent Enforcement:** Consistent enforcement of health and safety policies shall be ensured across all levels of the organization.