

# HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT OF INTENT (HSP001 V1.6)

## **COVERAGE**

*This policy covers all of the Group organisations*

## **LINKS TO OTHER ACCORD GROUP POLICIES**

*HSF 078 H&S Document Reference Register*

## **CUSTOMER INFORMATION LEAFLETS**

## **FORMS AND OTHER LINKS**

*HSF 078 H&S Document Reference Register*

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## 1. MISSION & VALUES

### 1.1. OUR MISSION

- 1.1.1 The Accord Group makes a difference. Our customers get value for money, excellent services, quality, innovation and a sense of belonging. We do this by empowering our talented people and engaging our residents to give an outstanding service, all in all giving a great customer experience!
- 1.1.2 We constantly monitor our services to ensure that they are of the highest quality and we ask for feedback from our customers to make sure that we are clear about how our services are received. We also look for new opportunities where we believe we can offer something new and improved.
- 1.1.3 We have created partnerships and alliances with other organisations, groups and businesses to combine our skills, products and much more so that we can be as efficient as possible.
- 1.1.4 The organisations which make up the Accord Group are part of a family rather than any hierarchy. They are empowered to run their own affairs, independent, yet helping each other and providing multiple solutions. In a word we are a community, with shared ideas, values, interests and goals. The proof of our success is real and tangible.

### 1.2. OUR VALUES

This Policy directly supports our values by:

#### 1.2.1 Communities

We regularly check that the safety of employees, volunteers, contractors and others working within the communities served by the Group is being maintained and supported by up to date and relevant operable health and safety policies, procedures and operational safe systems of working wherever this is practicable.

#### 1.2.2 Commitment

We aim to ensure that employees, volunteers, contractors and service users are aware of and comply with statutory regulations, recognised best practice, Accord Group policies, procedures and safe working practices.

We make every effort to provide the appropriate resources to ensure that employees have access to relevant information, tools and resources to enable them to work safely within their respective working environments.

#### 1.2.3 Innovation

We pride ourselves on identifying and introducing best practice wherever practicable and evolving new ways of applying these across the Group's activities where practicable to do so.

### 1.3. POLICY STATEMENT

The health and safety policy is intended to demonstrate the groups' commitment to the health, safety and welfare to its employees and anyone who may be affected by its business undertakings. The policy details responsibilities for health and safety management and the arrangements for ensuring we meet our legal duties. By following the requirements of the policy the group will ensure legal compliance, prevent possible financial loss due to litigation and work towards the prevention of accidents, assaults and incidents.

### 1.4. POLICY OUTLINE

The policy is divided into four parts as follows:

1. **Statement of Intent** - Signed by the Group Chief Executive to demonstrate commitment to the policy.
2. **Organisation** - Which clearly shows where responsibilities lie and what those responsibilities are.
3. **Arrangements** – What needs to be in place to make the policy work
4. **Monitoring** – The method of ensuring the requirements of the policy are carried out effectively

### 1.5. INTRODUCTION

- 1.5.1 This Policy defines the principal health and safety responsibilities of all Accord group employees in pursuance of the group statutory health and safety duties contained within the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, and other relevant legislation.
- 1.5.2 The Accord Housing group understands that health and safety must feature prominently at all levels within the organisation to ensure that health and safety objectives and priorities are monitored and delivered to a high standard.
- 1.5.3 The need to establish and maintain a strong proactive Health & Safety culture is recognised throughout the group, as is the requirement to ensure it is driven from the very top of the organisation.
- 1.5.4 To ensure that the management of health and safety is effective it needs to be an integral part of the management structure in the same way as managing such issues as service performance, continuous improvement and investors in people.
- 1.5.5 The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 places almost all accountability and responsibility for health and safety on the employer at the highest management level of the organisation. However, in reality, the practical application of health and safety requires many of these duties and responsibilities to be delegated to varying levels of the organisational structure. Whilst these duties and responsibilities can be delegated the accountability for achieving them still clearly remains with the actual duty holder.

This Policy Document is in four parts:

**STATEMENT**

The Group Chief Executive's declaration of intent on behalf of the organisation.

**ORGANISATION**

The defining of roles and responsibilities within the organisation.

**ARRANGEMENTS**

The procedures and systems necessary for implementing the policy.

**MONITORING**

The system for auditing the effectiveness of the arrangements and for reviewing health and safety performance.

## 1.6. STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 1.6.1 The Accord Housing Group requires all Board members, Chief Executives, Executive Board, Directors, Assistant Directors, Managers, employees and people with who we do business to secure a high standard of health and safety at work and show proper personal concern for their own and others safety, the safety of equipment, by exercising due care and attention and observing authorised methods of working and codes of practice, including those inherent in their professional or trade training.
- 1.6.2 All applicable health and safety standards and requirements established, under statute law or associated approved codes of practice will be met and adhered to, **but the absence of statutory standards or requirements will not be regarded as grounds for failing to promote a desirable “best practice” standard.**
- 1.6.2.1 Accord Housing group for its part will provide professional services, including a Health & Safety Advisory Service and will seek to ensure that:
- 1.6.2.2 All plant and equipment meet appropriate safety standards
- 1.6.2.3 Appropriate health and safety training is delivered
- 1.6.2.4 A high concern for health and safety among all employees is encouraged through an active consultative process
- 1.6.2.5 Information and advice is provided to maintain safe working practices.

Signed:

Date: May 2018

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Caffrey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Group Chief Executive

## 1.7. ORGANISATION

### 1.7.1 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Accord Housing Group will adopt health and safety arrangements in line with this policy.

### 1.7.2 CORPORATE MANSLAUGHTER & CORPORATE HOMICIDE ACT 2007

- 1.7.2.1 Following the introduction of the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007 it is vital that all senior members of staff are aware of their responsibilities. Should a fatality occur and a duty of care toward the deceased is proven, unlimited fines may be imposed on the company. The company can also be ordered to post details of the offence in the media. This is in addition to the possibility of prosecution for breaches under Health and Safety Laws which can be incorporated into manslaughter proceedings.
- 1.7.2.2 The Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act will be used when a breach of duty resulting in a death cannot be attributed to an individual or where the controlling mind of the company cannot be identified particularly in large and complex companies.

### 1.7.3 GENERAL

- 1.7.3.1 The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and subsequent health and safety legislation states that all employees have health and safety responsibilities when at work.

Although some duties and responsibilities may be delegated, accountability for health, safety and welfare at work is not transferable and cannot be evaded.

- 1.7.3.2 The Group Chief Executive and the Boards of Management of the Accord Housing group has overall responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of its employees, service users, visitors and anybody affected by its operation. There are a substantial amount of duties most of which will be delegated across the organisation. The Group Chief Executive and the Boards of Management must ensure the following duties are carried out effectively:-
- a) the budget is managed on a risk priority basis, so that health, safety and welfare are maintained;
  - b) ensure that all Chief Executives, Executive Boards, Directors, Assistant Directors, Managers and Supervisors act so as to adequately control risks to health and safety associated with work places and work activities under their control, in accordance with the requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations and other relevant legislation;
  - c) ensure that health and safety responsibilities are identified within job descriptions, as required;
  - d) evaluate, monitor and review health and safety arrangements and performance formally once a year;

- e) consult with the appropriate specialist support services and any employee's representatives so that any issue that may affect the health and safety of employees at work and service users can be effectively dealt with;
- f) arrange for health and safety representatives, who may be appointed under statutory regulations, to carry out their duties;
- g) ensure that all welfare facilities are provided and maintained to an appropriate standard;
- h) ensure that this policy is communicated to all employees, and relevant parties.

1.7.3.3 The Group Chief Executive, Executive Board, Directors, Assistant Directors, Managers and Supervisors across the group will have delegated health and safety duties to undertake to ensure that all necessary health and safety activities, requirements and standards are undertaken and met within their respective areas of control. This will be done under the direction of the Group Chief Executive, Executive Management and the Risk, Health and Safety Manager. Any member of staff with supervisory responsibilities will-

- a) ensure that risk assessments are in place for all activities undertaken in all areas and that professional knowledge and input is provided, as required and:-
  - Eliminate accident potential as far as is reasonably possible;
  - Regularly review and update risk assessments as appropriate, including post accident/assault or near miss incident;
  - Conform to statutory regulations, codes of practice, guidance and to best practice;
  - Take account of individual personal requirements, such as disabled people, individuals with poor literacy and those who use another language;
  - Pay particular regard to service users, visitors, young people and contractors, who will be unaware of dangers and risks
- b) ensure that health and safety is considered in routine meetings with staff;
- c) identify any employee health and safety training needs and provide adequate information, instruction, and supervision necessary to secure the health and safety of all persons under their control;
- d) ensure that any new staff receive specific health and safety induction training, including the safe use and operation of any equipment. Where required risk assessments, operating instructions and safe systems of work/method statements will be shared with the employee. Records of induction and use of equipment must be kept;

- e) take immediate appropriate action in respect of any work situation (including contractors) within their control, which they consider to pose a serious and immediate risk to health and safety;
- f) ensure that accident, assaults, near miss incidents and ill health conditions are investigated in order to identify any measures necessary to prevent a recurrence and reported according to the Accord group procedures as well as legal requirements;
- g) ensure that approved items of first aid provided are readily available for use, under the control of a responsible person or trained first aider and those employees are aware of their location.
- h) ensure that Executive management are made aware of any breach of statutory regulations or unsafe practices which cannot be dealt with effectively by them;
- i) ensure that contractors operating at facilities under the control of the Accord group are provided with an induction to site and sufficient information to carry out their work without risk as far as is reasonably practicable. Ensure that appropriate measures of competence are in place when selecting contractors and provide information so that they understand requirements for performance standards;
- j) ensure that premises are managed in line with health and safety requirements, that statutory inspections of plant and equipment are undertaken and that site inspections take place at suitable intervals dependent on the working environment;
- k) ensure that all defective equipment or plant is taken out of use until repaired or replaced;
- l) ensure that protective clothing or equipment is issued and used when necessary;
- m) ensure that areas of work are maintained to a high standard of housekeeping and that all necessary welfare facilities are in place e.g. toilets, washing facilities, and rest area. Welfare facilities for mobile workers e.g. grounds maintenance must be considered and appropriate supplies made available e.g. hand cleansers;
- n) ensure a fire risk assessment and emergency evacuation plan are in place for all premises, all employees are aware of the emergency procedure and testing and maintenance of all fire fighting, fire protection, fire detection or suppression equipment is carried out in line with statutory standards;
- o) respond appropriately to all hazards brought to their attention by employees;
- p) Undertake appropriate health and safety training courses.

## 1.7.4 EMPLOYEES

- 1.7.4.1 All Accord group employees at work will take health and safety seriously and perform their work in such a way that does not place themselves or others at risk.
- 1.7.4.2 Every employee has a duty to:
- a) take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions;
  - b) co-operate with their employer, in allowing them to fulfil their health and safety obligations;
  - c) correctly use work equipment and personal protective equipment or anything provided in the interests of health and safety;
  - d) not interfere or misuse anything provided for their health, safety or welfare;
  - e) provide specialist or professional knowledge required to complete risk assessments in their area of work;
  - f) Report any hazard or malfunction to their supervisor. Employees must use all normal lines of internal communication before contacting external enforcement agencies;
  - g) Follow all written and verbal instructions they are given to ensure personal safety and the safety of others, particularly service-users who may not have sufficient understanding to have due regard for their own health and safety;
  - h) Use their professional and specialist training to undertake dynamic risk assessments in difficult or emergency situations;
  - i) Be sensibly and safely dressed for their particular working conditions;
  - j) Conduct themselves at all times in an orderly manner in the workplace;
  - k) Avoid any improvisations or shortcuts that could create unnecessary risks to health and safety;
  - l) Maintain tools and equipment in good condition, reporting all defects to their supervisor;
  - m) Report to their supervisor all accidents, assaults, near miss incidents and suspected or confirmed work-related ill-health;
  - n) Attend appropriate health and safety training courses;
  - o) Have knowledge of all processes, materials and substances they use;
  - p) Have a thorough understanding of fire evacuation procedures, the positions of fire alarms and equipment;

- q) Understand the risk assessments in their areas and comply with the control measures arising from them.

### **1.7.5 CONTRACTORS**

- a) All contractors will be expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner whilst working on behalf of the Accord group.
- b) Contractors will be expected to produce all required documentation before commencing work e.g. risk assessments, methods statements, permit to work etc. Documentation should be produced at pre contract meetings although this may be generic at this stage. Specific task documentation should be available for viewing prior to commencement of work or at any stage during the process.
- c) Any contractor found to be working in an unsafe manner will be asked to cease work and a senior manager from the relevant group organisation or the Health and Safety Manager should be contacted.
- d) Contractors must be given all relevant documentation e.g. asbestos register before commencing works to ensure the safety of the worker, Accord group employees and service users.
- e) Any contractor found to be working in an unsafe manner or breaching health and safety regulations will have their contract reviewed. In the interim period they may be asked to suspend works until such time that they are deemed competent to continue working for the Accord Group.

## **1.8. ARRANGEMENTS**

The following arrangements will be adopted to ensure that the Group Chief Executive, Board of Management, Chief Executives, Directors, Assistant Directors and Senior Managers fulfil their responsibilities and provide the foundation for securing the health and safety of employees, and all users of Accord Housing group sites.

### **1.8.1 SETTING HEALTH & SAFETY OBJECTIVES**

The Group Chief Executive, Board of Management, Directors, Assistant Directors and Senior Management will specifically review progress of health and safety objectives which will be set by the Risk, Health and Safety Manager. Where necessary health and safety improvements will be identified and included within an action plan. In addition progress on health and safety matters will be reviewed by the Resource and Audit committee.

### **1.8.2 PROVISION OF AN EFFECTIVE HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING STRATEGY / PLAN**

The Risk, Health and Safety Manager in conjunction with the Learning and Development Manager will produce a Health and Safety Training Plan on an annual basis. Each operational area will receive a training matrix for the year. The matrix will include core training and job role specific training as required. Any additional training required may be requested by managers

as part of the performance development review process. The refresher training periods will be set on an individual basis for each training course and will be determined by legislation, best practice or the needs of the business.

### **1.8.3 PROVISION OF AND EFFECTIVE CONSULTATION PROCESS**

Each site should have a health and safety committee in place which should meet at least twice per year and on an ad hoc basis should a particular need arise. Where a site only has a small number of employees it will be acceptable to report to a centralised service committee. Committees will ensure that concerns raised are dealt with effectively, with identified responsibilities and target dates for action. Where issues cannot be dealt with locally, concerns should be raised in the first instance with line managers.

### **1.8.4 SPECIALIST ADVICE AND SUPPORT**

Specialist advice and support can be obtained from the Risk, Health and Safety Manager or Health and Safety Advisers, the Learning and Development Manager, the Organisational Development Manager and external bodies such as the HSE (Health and Safety Executive) the Fire Service, CQC (Care Quality Commission), Fire Service or Local Authority Environmental Health, as required.

### **1.8.5 ESTABLISHING ADEQUATE HEALTH & SAFETY COMMUNICATION CHANNELS**

1.8.5.1 Communication and the exchange of health and safety knowledge and information will be via the Group Health and Safety Forum (established in June 2009) Electronic Policy Management system, face to face meetings and email bulletins. Where necessary, these communications will be recorded, to include:-

- a) line management meetings and staff meetings at site;
- b) provision of information relating to safe systems of work and risk assessments;
- c) communication of advice from the Risk, Health and Safety Team, other relevant internal departments i.e. Asset team or Organisational Development, external enforcing and legislative bodies;
- d) communication of health and safety bulletins or information from the Risk, Health and Safety Team;
- e) communication of the Accord Group advice, guidance and policies;

1.8.5.2 The Health and Safety Forum has representation from all Accord Group subsidiaries. Representatives will raise issues on behalf of colleagues and service users from their area of work, share best practice with Forum members and consult with colleagues and service users regarding health and safety issues, policies, procedures and guidance.

1.8.5.3 Where health and safety issues cannot be resolved at local level, they will be escalated through the management structure as appropriate.

1.8.5.4

## **1.8.6 FINANCIAL RESOURCES**

The Group Chief Executive, Board of Management, Chief Executives, Executive Board, Directors, Assistant Directors and Senior Management will review the available finance to determine, in the light of past performance, if adequate resources are being deployed to ensure adequate health and safety and will take appropriate actions as necessary.

## **1.8.7 OTHER ARRANGEMENTS**

- 1.8.7.1 The document HSF 078 references specific guidance, arrangements and procedures which should be adapted to suit the needs of particular service areas, where necessary.
- 1.8.7.2 Guidance, arrangements and procedures may be adopted without alteration where appropriate but must be reviewed to ensure their suitability.

## **1.9. MONITORING, REVIEW & PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

This Health and Safety Policy and its effectiveness, in terms of health and safety performance, will be reviewed by Senior Management and the Risk, Health and Safety Manager on a regular basis, or as required.

### **1.9.1 HEALTH & SAFETY ACTION PLAN AND OBJECTIVES**

The Group Chief Executive, Boards of Management and Executive Board will ensure that all health and safety objectives and actions are carried out in a timely manner.

### **1.9.2 AUDITING**

- 1.9.2.1 Auditing in simple terms is the structural process of collecting information on the efficiency, effectiveness and reliability of the total health and safety management system and drawing up plans for any corrective action.
- 1.9.2.2 The aims of the audit should be to establish that:
  - a) Appropriate management arrangements are in place;
  - b) Adequate risk controls systems exist, are implemented, and reflect the hazards the organisation faces;
  - c) That appropriate workplace precautions are in place
  - d) Health and safety responsibilities are being properly identified and discharged correctly.
  - e) Management teams are accepting and dealing effectively with their devolved health and safety obligations.
  - f) Accord Housing group health and safety codes, procedures and policies are being applied and adhered to.
  - g) Employees are aware of, and complying with, health and safety rules, and are health and safety conscious.
  - h) Accidents, assaults, near miss incidents and ill health are reducing and trends are showing improvements.
  - i) Employees are receiving appropriate health and safety training.
  - j) Statutory requirements are being met.

- 1.9.2.3 An end of year audit summary will be produced to show areas of concern and highlight good practice. Year on year statistics will demonstrate if progress is being made against set targets.

### **1.9.3 ACCIDENT, ASSAULTS AND NEAR MISS INCIDENTS**

- 1.9.3.1 Managers and Supervisors will ensure that accidents, assaults and near miss incidents are reported and monitored in line with Accord Group Guidance and procedures. Where accidents are serious, repeated or attributable to failures of management, these will be brought to the attention of the Risk, Health and Safety Manager for further advice.
- 1.9.3.2 Accident, assault and near miss incident records will be analysed to identify underlying causes, trends and common features in order to implement any required changes to safeguard employees and service users.

### **1.9.4 THIRD PARTY MONITORING / INSPECTION**

- 1.9.4.1 All sites/establishment may be subject to third party inspection and monitoring, by one or more of the following:-
  - a) HSE (Health and Safety Executive)
  - b) Local Authority Environmental Health
  - c) CQC (Care Quality Commission)
  - d) The Fire Service
- 1.9.4.2 Actions arising from third party audit/inspection must be dealt with as appropriate. Non compliance of actions may result in enforcement notices being served or prosecution leading to fines and/or imprisonment.

### **1.9.5 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The following subject headings will be used to judge health and safety performance:

- a) Accident, assault near miss incident statistics
- b) Audit ratings
- c) Loss due to accident, assault or work related ill-health claims

### **1.9.6 REPORTS**

A formal report will be submitted to the Resource and Audit committee and to the Boards of Management in April of each year. The reports will contain information on the above Key Performance Indicators for the previous financial year and any other pertinent issues that have arisen during the year.

## 1.9.7 FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

Group Health, Safety and Risk Manager: 07917215062

- a) HSE: [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)
- b) CQC: [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)
- c) Local Environmental Health: See telephone directory or the internet
- d) Local Fire Service: See telephone directory or the internet
- e) Health Protection Agency: [www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)