



Your health, your safety:

A guide for workers

This information is from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in collaboration with the Trades Union Congress (TUC). HSE is a government organisation that works to protect the health, safety and welfare of workers by enforcing health and safety law and offering advice and support. The TUC represents over 70 trade unions with over 6.5 million members. It campaigns for fairness and decent standards at work.

If you are an employee (full- or part-time, temporary or permanent), this information explains what your rights are, what you should expect from your employer, what responsibilities you have and where to go for help. It also applies to you if you are a young person doing work experience, an apprentice, charity worker, mobile worker or homeworker.

If you are a temporary, casual or agency worker, the employment business/agency, gangmaster, contractor or hirer you are working for has a legal duty to ensure you receive the rights set out here.

You have the right:

- To work in places where all the risks to your health and safety are properly controlled.
- To stop working and leave the area if you think you are in danger.
- To inform your employer about health and safety issues or concerns.
- To contact HSE or your local authority if you still have health and safety concerns and not get into trouble
- To join a trade union and be a safety representative.
- To paid time off work for training if you are a safety representative.
- To a rest break of at least 20 minutes if you work more than six hours at a stretch and to an annual period of paid leave.

You must:

- Take care of your own health and safety and that of people who may be affected by what you do (or do not do).
- Co-operate with others on health and safety, and not interfere with, or misuse, anything provided for your health, safety or welfare.

Your employer must tell you:

- About risks to your health and safety from current or proposed working practices.
- About things or changes that may harm or affect your health and safety.
- How to do your job safely.
- What is done to protect your health and safety.
- How to get first-aid treatment.
- What to do in an emergency.

Your employer must provide, free of charge:

- Training to do your job safely.
- Protection for you at work when necessary (such as clothing, shoes or boots, eye and ear protection, gloves, masks etc).
- Health checks if there is a danger of ill health because of your work.
- Regular health checks if you work nights and a check before you start.

(Note: If you are genuinely self-employed you are responsible for providing your own first-aid arrangements, training, protective equipment and health checks, and for organising your own working time.)

Your employer must provide you with the following information:

- *Health and safety law: What you should know.* This should give the contact details of people who can help.
- Their health and safety policy statement.
- An up-to-date Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) certificate visible in your place of work.

What to do if you are concerned about your health and safety:

- Phone HSE's Infoline 08701 545500 for advice or to complain, or the TUC's Know Your Rights line 0870 600 4882.
- If you would like to speak to someone in a language more suitable to you please call 08701 545500 and tell the operator which language.
- If you have lost your job because of a health and safety matter you may be able to complain to an Employment Tribunal. Ask your trade union or local Citizens Advice Bureau for advice.