



Wicklow Uplands Council Safety Statement:

This statement sets out the health & safety policy of Wicklow Uplands Council and the means through which that policy is to be implemented. Our objective is to provide a safe and healthy place of work for all staff members and to meet all our duties and obligations to our visitors.

It is Wicklow Uplands Council's intention to protect our employees from accident or ill health at work. The company will seek to ensure that all our equipment and systems do not constitute a risk to the Health & Safety of our employees and we will consult with employees on risk improvements. **Our approach to Health & Safety as far as is reasonably practicable will be:**

1. To Provide a Safe Place of Work.
2. To continue to identify and control hazards.
3. To prevent as far as is reasonably possible, any improper conduct or behaviour likely to put the Safety, Health & Welfare of employees at risk.
4. To consult with staff on all Health & Safety matters.
5. To provide a safe system of work practices.
6. To provide appropriate information to staff members on a continuous basis.
7. To make Health & Safety a key issue.

Employer Responsibilities: The responsibility for the provision of a safe place of work rests with the Management of Wicklow Uplands Council. **Specifically these responsibilities are:**

- To maintain a safe and healthy work environment for employees, in addition to conforming to all current statutory requirements.
- To provide the appropriate type and level of training to enable employees perform their work safely and efficiently.
- To make available to every employee appropriate equipment to ensure Health & Safety.
- To maintain a vigilant and continuing interest in all Health & Safety matters relevant to both the company and staff.

Employee Responsibilities:

As a valued employee of Wicklow Uplands Council you have a responsibility to yourself and your fellow workers to carry out your work in a safe and considerate manner. **Employees must:**

1. Co-Operate with Wicklow Uplands Council in maintaining a safe work place.
2. Report any potential hazards to management and not work in any hazardous conditions should they; in the employee's opinion exist.
3. Be aware of the nearest emergency exits and firefighting / first aid equipment.
4. Never interfere with or misuse anything provided by the company in the interests of Health & Safety.
5. Read the company Health & Safety statement
6. Not partake in any form of horseplay or prank likely to lead to injury to you or others.

Smoking/Alcohol and Drugs:

It is not permissible to attend work under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs. The smoking of tobacco products is prohibited in the offices of Wicklow Uplands Council. Smoking can take place outside the Parish Hall building. This smoking policy forms part of the overall Health & Safety Policy and any breach will be dealt with under the Company's disciplinary procedure. Visitors, contractors and temporary members of staff are expected to abide by the terms of this policy.

Manual Handling:

Manual Handling is defined as the "transporting of a load by one or more employees and includes lifting, putting down, pushing, carrying or moving a load, which by reason of its characteristics or of unfavourable ergonomic conditions involves risks, particularly of back injury to employees". This is a priority issue because it is a major cause of accidents in the workplace. It is Wicklow Uplands Council's policy to minimise the need for manual handling of loads and so therefore should be avoided as far as is reasonably practicable. Employees must check the weight of the load before attempting to lift it and if the load is too heavy get help. **When lifting, follow the following basic principles:**

1. Relax the knees. Lowering movements should start at the knees not the head.
2. Get close to the object to be lifted. Get a good balance by keeping the feet apart. One foot will automatically be ahead of the other.
3. When in position, bend the knees and lift with the strong muscles in the legs.
4. Lift gradually, smoothly and without jerking, keeping the object close to the body and the back straight.

Training:

Wicklow Uplands Council is committed to identifying the safety training needs on an ongoing basis. Staff will be involved in the identification of hazards in the office and advised of the particular hazards pertaining to their area. Staff will be trained to respond to such hazards in order to prevent accidents/injury to themselves, their colleagues and clients.

Consultation:

Wicklow Uplands Council is committed to consulting with its staff members regarding safety, health and welfare in the office. Staff are involved in the identification of hazards and are trained in dealing with the hazards identified. The safety statement will be included in Induction Training and staff will be advised on how to deal with any problems that arise.

Reporting of Accidents:

Staff are required to report all accidents and near misses, whether resulting in injury or not, to management. Under the Safety, Health & Welfare at Work General Application Regulations 1993, employers must report certain occurrences to the Health & Safety Authority and ensure records are kept on site for a period of 10 years. The following details are required:

- Date, Time and Place of the incident.
- Name, Address, Occupation and Age of the injured person.

- Circumstances, including cause and nature of the injury and the arrangements made for its treatment.

All accidents will be investigated by a member of management and a written report prepared. Corrective action will be taken where necessary to avoid a reoccurrence. Accidents involving persons who are not members of staff but are visiting or working on the premises must also be reported.

Fire Procedures:

In the event of a fire and providing there is no danger to the persons concerned, every effort should be made to extinguish or contain the fire pending the arrival of the fire brigade. The magnitude of the outbreak must dictate whether attacking the fire should take priority over reporting and evacuation. All staff should be familiar with the exit routes and should also know the location and type of fire extinguishers in the office.

If you discover a fire you should:

- Activate the fire alarm (located on the landing outside the main office).
- If there is a reasonable hope of extinguishing the blaze, attack the fire immediately (Fire extinguishers are located on the landing outside the main office door).
- **Do not under any circumstances, expose yourself to danger.**
- Leave the building by the nearest fire exit and proceed to your designated assembly point.

If you hear the alarm you should:

- Switch off any equipment under your control and leave the building by the nearest fire exit.
- Do not stop to collect personal belongings.
- Once outside, do not enter the building until you are told it is safe to do so.
- The fire alarms are tested periodically by the fire officer through the management of Roundwood Parish Hall

Guidelines for VDU users:

As part of their duties employees spend long periods of time using visual display screens. Any necessary adjustments will be made to avoid RSI, eyestrain and other ailments associated with work on screens, which must be adjustable for height, tilt and brightness. No employee will be asked or expected to work any computer which is not in proper working condition, or does not meet the highest specifications. Employees working continuously on-screen should alternate tasks so that at least 10 minutes during each 60 minutes of work is spent doing off-screen type of work. This work is to be undertaken away from the screen, but does not constitute a break.

Employees who habitually use VDU's have the right to an eyesight test, the cost of which will be met or reimbursed by the company.

Hazard Analysis:

A hazard is anything at work that might cause harm e.g. Electricity, Hot Surfaces, Lifting Heavy Loads, Slippery Floors, and Poorly Lit Stairways etc. Staff must be aware of the potential hazards and risks involved and report specific hazards to management. A hazard analysis will be carried out once a year by Management. Particular attention will be paid to areas of high risk i.e. Floors, Stairs and Manual Handling. Wicklow Uplands Council will remove hazards by engineering means where necessary.

First Aid:

First Aid boxes are provided to ensure that first aid supplies are easily accessible when required in an emergency. A First Aid box is located on top of the storage cabinet in the attic space. It will be checked yearly and shortages replaced. Employees have an obligation to ensure that First Aid Boxes, like any safety equipment, are not tampered with. Free access to First Aid Boxes must be maintained at all times. Painkillers cannot be provided in the First Aid Boxes.

Security:

The Parish Hall building is protected by CCTV which is monitored by Roundwood Parish Hall Committee. CCTV covers all entrances to the building and the car-park to the side of the building. There is no CCTV on the 1st floor.

Employees of Wicklow Uplands Council are key holders of both the office and the main building. The office must be locked by the last person to leave the office. As events are often held in the hall at night, it is at the discretion of the employee whether or not to lock the main building upon leaving. Employees should always feel safe in their work environment. As employees can at times be working alone in the office they can lock themselves in the office if they feel more secure.

If an employee feels is threatened or feels unsafe, they should ring Roundwood Garda Station at (01) 281 8142 or dial 999 and seek assistance.