



Health and Safety policy

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1 Introduction

Alamo Housing Co-operative owes a duty of care to its members, its employees, our contractors and to everyone who visits the homes and other buildings we own or manage. We are also obliged to follow health and safety legislation and regulatory requirements.

This policy is intended to provide a summary of our responsibilities to ensure the health and safety of all those we owe a duty to and to explain how we will meet those responsibilities.

Where another landlord is responsible for meeting a particular health and safety duty, so far as is practical, the management committee and staff will monitor the landlord's compliance with its health and safety obligations.

The policy is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to health and safety law or best practice and should be read in conjunction with the relevant local procedure and / or the statutory guidance produced by the Health and Safety Executive.

2 What we mean by health and safety

We define health and safety as:

All the steps we need to take to protect our members, staff, contractors and others from the risks which may arise as a result of our activities as a housing co-operative

We all have a duty as members of Alamo Housing Co-operative, as committee members and as employees to do what we can reduce the risk of accidents to ourselves and to others.

This means that if we notice any sort of hazard that relates to our properties or to the services we provide to members, we should report it, or if it is safe to do so, we should take action to remove it ourselves. We should not assume that someone else will do it for us.

3 Objectives of the health and safety policy

The objectives of the health and safety policy are:

- To maintain safe and healthy working conditions and to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health, including taking steps to reduce the risks faced by lone workers.
- To provide training to employees so that are competent to do their work. To provide committee members with training that will enable them to discharge their governance responsibilities in respect of health and safety.
- To engage and consult with employees on day-to-day health and safety conditions and provide advice and supervision on occupational health
- To implement emergency procedures - evacuation in case of fire or other significant incident – for homes which share a common entrance and also for office buildings.
- To ensure that electrical and mechanical installations and equipment are serviced regularly and maintained in a safe condition.
- To ensure that members and staff are not exposed to noxious gases, corrosive chemicals, or other harmful substances. In particular to ensure that gas appliances are properly maintained and do not emit carbon monoxide.



Alamo Housing Co-operative

Health and safety policy



4 Responsibility for health and safety

The management committee will be responsible for health and safety policy and for ensuring that procedures are implemented, so that at all times the co-operative complies with current legislation. The committee may choose to delegate operational responsibility for health and safety matters to staff, agents or contractors, but will remain responsible for checking that procedures are followed. In their capacity as directors, members of the committee may be held liable in the event that there is a breach of health and safety legislation. However, where the landlord of a property has retained responsibility for a particular function under the management agreement, the landlord will be liable for any breaches.

5 Health and Safety Executive

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is the public body responsible for the regulation and enforcement of workplace health, safety and welfare. As part of its work the HSE investigates accidents, primarily those occurring in the workplace. All the homes owned or managed by Alamo Housing Co-operative are also on occasion a workplace for our staff and contractors, so many of our activities fall under the regulatory authority of the HSE.

The HSE provides a comprehensive range of guidance notes and intended to help employers and others to reduce risks and to comply with health and safety legislation. Alamo Housing Co-operative will implement local procedures to control certain health and safety risks, but we will always endeavour to follow best practice as described in the HSE's guidance.

If Alamo Housing Co-operative has not established a local procedure to control a particular health and safety risk, we will instead follow the HSE's guidance. We may also seek a professional opinion.

6 Housing Health and Safety Rating System

All rented properties must meet certain standards before they are considered safe and fit to live in. These standards are set out in the *Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)*.

The HHSRS takes lots of different potentially dangerous things into account, including:

- Structural problems such as leaking roofs, excessive draughts and poor insulation;
- Dampness, condensation, and mould growth;
- Rats, cockroaches and other serious infestations;
- Broken glass, falling plaster, dangerous stairs and similar disrepair;
- Faulty or dangerous gas or electrical installations;
- Blocked drains or problems with rubbish or sewage;
- Unacceptable noise levels;
- Damaged asbestos;
- Smoke, fumes or gases.

Alamo Housing cooperative is committed to providing homes that are fit to live in. If any of our homes are found to contain hazards as defined by the HHSRS, remedial works will usually qualify as an emergency or urgent repair under our *Repairs and Maintenance Policy*.

Members living in shortlife accommodation should note that we cannot always apply the same repair standards to shortlife housing as we do to permanent accommodation. However, we will always ensure that whatever the type of tenancy, the homes we manage are safe.



7 Annual health and safety risk assessment

In order to decide what steps we should take to meet our health and safety obligations, the management committee will consider health and safety as part of the annual risk assessment programme. The committee will review each risk to ensure that procedures are compliant with the latest best practice, that procedures are being followed, and that controls are adequate.

There are many potential risks, and other risks may be added or removed from the risk map from time to time, but the following risks will always be included as standing items:

Property risks: gas safety, fire safety, asbestos, Legionella, mechanical hazards, structural hazards;

Employment risks (construction and caretaking): falls and other construction accidents, injury by machinery, exposure to chemicals, assault (especially lone workers);

Employment risks (office): air and water quality, sanitation, trip hazards, faulty or inappropriate IT equipment and furniture, chemical exposure;

Employment risks (other): discrimination, bullying, victimisation or other behaviour which affects an employee's mental health.

8 Training

All our staff need to know how to work safely and without risking their health. We will provide clear instructions, information and adequate training for all our employees.

We will also provide contractors, consultants and other people working for us with information on:

- the hazards and risks they may face;
- the measures in place to deal with those hazards and risks;
- how to follow any emergency procedures.

In order that the management committee is able to discharge its supervisory and strategic responsibilities, we will also provide health and safety training for committee members.

9 Emergency evacuation

It is a legal requirement under the *Fire Safety Regulations* that the managers of certain types of building must produce and publish a plan for evacuation if there is fire or other emergency.

Alamo Housing Co-operative will produce an evacuation plan for each building containing one or more flats where the only exit is a common doorway. Members living in the building will be advised of the plan, and a copy will be fixed to the wall in the common hallway.

We will also produce an evacuation plan for our office, and inform our staff and other regular users of the building what they should do in the event of an emergency.

10 Monitoring and reporting

All significant one-off health and safety incidents or risk will be reported to the management committee, and if serious or urgent, immediately to the chair.

Each year, as part of the annual risk assessment programme, the committee will review performance and controls relating to the standing health and safety risks.

The board may also decide to receive and review performance information on key risks such as gas safety on a more regular basis.

Alamo Housing Co-operative

Health and safety policy

11 Key property risks

| Risk | What the law says the landlord and / or agent must do | Who does it? |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Structural and minor hazards | <p>Deal promptly with anything that could to cause an accident. Hazards come in many forms, but typical examples include: a broken paving stone, loose roof tile, or faulty appliance. Anyone who fails to take reasonable steps to mitigate a hazard may be considered <i>negligent</i>.</p> <p>We expect everyone, members and staff alike, to accept responsibility for reporting hazards of any kind.</p> | <i>Everyone</i> |
| Gas safety | <p>Ensure that all our boilers and other gas appliances meet the latest <i>Gas Safety Regulations</i>.</p> <p>Commission an annual gas safety check for every home with a gas supply from a certificated <i>Gas Safe</i> engineer and have the engineer remedy any faults.</p> | <i>Depends on management agreement</i> |
| Fire safety | <p>Commission a regular inspection by a suitably qualified consultant of all our blocks of flats (included converted houses) and offices to make sure that they comply with the current <i>Fire Safety Regulations</i>.</p> <p>Implement any recommendations resulting from the inspection promptly.</p> <p>Create a fire emergency procedure for each building and advise staff and members what the procedure is. Put up fire safety notices in each building.</p> <p>Conduct regular checks on all buildings with communal areas to ensure that emergency escape routes are kept clear and to test fire equipment.</p> | <p><i>Depends on management agreement</i></p> <p><i>Alamo & landlord</i></p> <p><i>Alamo</i></p> <p><i>Alamo & landlord</i></p> |
| Asbestos safety | <p>Carry out an one-off inspection and document any asbestos containing materials (ACMs) in an asbestos register as required by the <i>Control of Asbestos Regulations</i>.</p> <p>Have any ACMs removed by a suitably licensed contractor, or if it safe to do so, carry out remedial action and label the materials. Periodically reinspect any remaining ACMs to ensure they remain undisturbed.</p> <p>Advise anyone who may come into contact with asbestos in the properties we own or manage of the location and type of the asbestos present and of what precautions they should take.</p> | <p><i>Depends on management agreement</i></p> <p><i>Alamo & landlord</i></p> |
| Electrical safety | <p>Ensure that the electrical installations in all our homes are safe.</p> <p>Commission a regular inspection, no more than every five years, by a suitably qualified electrical engineer of the electrical installations in all the homes and other buildings we own or manage.</p> <p>Remedy any faults identified by the engineer promptly and implement any recommendations to upgrade any parts of the installation.</p> | <i>Depends on management agreement</i> |
| Legionella safety | <p>Take all necessary steps to ensure that water supplies do not become contaminated with Legionella (or other) bacteria.</p> <p>Common precautions include, testing water supplies, cleaning communal water tanks, flushing systems, and cleaning showerheads.</p> | <i>Depends on management agreement</i> |
| Mechanical safety | <p>Arrange for regular inspection and servicing of mechanical equipment, such as lifts, electric doors and parking gates, by a suitably qualified engineer.</p> <p>Replace old equipment before it becomes hazardous.</p> | <i>Depends on management agreement</i> |

12 Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually. It will also be reviewed if there are changes to relevant legislation or to the regulatory framework.