

Introduction

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act imposes a number of significant general obligations on all those concerned with health, safety and welfare at work: employers, manufacturers, suppliers, employees and the self-employed.

Every employer has a duty under s.2 of the Act to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all its employees. More specifically, the employer must:

- provide and maintain a safe and healthy place of work
- ensure safety and absence of health risks in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances
- provide the necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure employees' health and safety
- maintain places of work in a safe condition and provide and maintain safe means of access and egress
- provide and maintain adequate and safe plant and systems of work.

The Act also requires that every employer with five or more employees must prepare a written statement of general policy with respect to the health and safety at work of its employees, including the organisation and arrangement for carrying out that policy, and must bring that policy to the notice of its employees.