

POLICY: HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. Policy Statement

This policy has been developed to provide Staff/Volunteers of Books To Africa International (Books2Africa®) with guidance on the health and safety policies and procedures of the organisation, in key risk areas, and complements staff/volunteer training.

2. Responsibilities

Everybody at Books2Africa has a role to play in health and safety. Whilst you are working/volunteering, we will ensure that you are provided with the appropriate information, supervision and training required, to enable you to complete your voluntary work safely. This includes providing suitable systems and procedures.

As a staff/volunteer you should take reasonable care of yourself and others while working/volunteering for Books2Africa, and follow any health and safety advice and instruction, given to you for your role. Staff/Volunteers should co-operate with Books2Africa on health and safety matters, and immediately report accidents/incidents. Staff/Volunteers should not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.

If you do not feel confident about health and safety issues relating to your role or feel an activity has potential to harm to cause injury, you should talk to your Manager.

3. Emergency

In the event of an emergency you can contact the Emergency number on 01227392239 during working hours. If the Fire Brigade, Police or Ambulance Service are required, dial 999 and give clear details to the public emergency service. Please carry these numbers with you at all times when on Books2Africa's Business so we can support you if necessary.

4. Accident reporting

If you are unfortunate enough to have an accident/incident, whilst you are undertaking voluntary work for Books2Africa, you must report the details of the accident/incident to us. You should also report near misses. Books2Africa's accident/incident report forms are available from your Manager, and should be completed and returned to your Manager.

5. Fire

When you start working/volunteering you should be given guidance on fire safety, and the emergency procedures to follow in the event of an evacuation of the building, (request this information if it is not given). Information given should include:

- A. When fire alarms are tested, and what they sound like.
- B. Location of fire exits.
- C. Where people should go upon exiting the building.
- D. Whether there are any nominated Fire Marshals.

6. First aid

When you start working/volunteering you will be given guidance on the first aid facilities and cover arrangements available (request this information if it is not given). You should be informed of any trained first aiders and the location details of first aid kits or rooms. This information will also be displayed throughout the building.

7. Safeguarding young people

Books2Africa believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or young person to experience abuse of any kind and recognises its responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all young people by a commitment to practice which protects them from harm. It is not the responsibility of Books2Africa to decide whether or not abuse has taken place. It is our responsibility to act if there is cause for concern, in order that the appropriate agencies can investigate and take any action necessary to protect a child or young person.

If you have any concerns that a young person has been or is being abused please contact your Manager or the Chief Executive. Please consult our Safeguarding Policy for more information.

8. Personal safety

Staff/Volunteers must abide by Books2Africa's Health and Safety Policy, and should take all reasonable steps to ensure that their own personal safety is not put at risk. Staff/Volunteers should report all near misses, incidents, violent or aggressive behaviour and any concerns about personal safety that you identify or become aware of in the course of your work.

In particular Staff/Volunteers should not make home visits, or undertake client meetings in an environment where the volunteer and the client are in a lone or isolated situation (e.g., out of hours in an office with no other individuals around). Staff/Volunteers are advised to carry a mobile phone with them, and follow any local working arrangements provided by their Manager regarding personal safety.

Books2Africa will ensure that:

- A. appropriate sanctions are taken in the event of violent or aggressive behaviour during any Books2Africa's activity;
- B. aftercare procedures are made available should a volunteer suffer from violence or aggression in the course of their work; and
- C. provided voluntary workers with suitable information and training to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities whilst protecting their personal safety.

9. Use of cars on Books2Africa's business

It is important that you notify your motor insurers if you are going to use your vehicle on behalf of Books2Africa to ensure that adequate cover is in place. You will need additional insurance cover where your travel is not deemed purely as commuting. If you claim mileage on the "Staff/Volunteers Expenses Form" you will be prompted to confirm you have insurance.

10. Safety of locations and venues

As a staff/volunteer working with Books2Africa you have a “duty of care” to ensure that any location selected by you for any of Books2Africa's activity (e.g. meeting, social event etc) is adequate and safe for the activity being undertaken. This means checking:

- A. appropriate facilities are available (sanitary, welfare and first aid provision)
- B. correct licences are held;
- C. staff provided at the venue are competent to carry out their tasks safely;
- D. the venue is free from potential hazards (such as trailing cables);
- E. fire precautions are in place (fire-fighting and alarm systems, signage, lighting, adequate escape routes, assembly points, and smoking policy) and that all attending the venue are briefed on the arrangements;
- F. insurance cover is in place;
- G. named persons take responsibility for the provision, maintenance and safe use of tools, plant and equipment being used; and
- H. a named persons take responsibility for the control of any hazardous substances.

Finally, you must ensure that an adequate risk assessment has been carried out where there are any significant risks at the venue. This assessment must be completed by a competent person. Your manager will be able to advise you on this.

11. Planning an event

Where any activity is undertaken on behalf of Books2Africa, even through a third party (such activities could include a garden party, a bbq or parachute jumping) it is imperative that they are planned in accordance with the Health and Safety Guidelines. If you are planning such an activity/event please ensure you talk to your manager or contact the Chief Executive for further advice and support.

12. Using a computer

Before using a computer to carry out Books2Africa's business, make sure that:

- A. you set up your computer comfortably
- B. you adjust your chair comfortably
- C. you take breaks

You can request for a change of equipment or furniture by speaking with your manager.

13. Lifting or carrying

All those working/volunteering at Books2Africa must undergo the Safe Manual Handling Training on their induction day/first working day before carryin gout any lifting tasks. All staff/volunteers are not expected to undertake manual handling tasks that may be detrimental to their health, safety or welfare. General information regarding manual handling is available through the Safe Manual Handling Training material.