

DOGWOOD PRODUCTIONS CIC

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Dogwood Productions is a Community Interest Company and referred throughout simply as “Dogwood”.

We are committed to reviewing our Health and Safety Policy regularly. This policy was last reviewed: March 2026

This document, and any supporting documents, are accessible to staff, including freelance staff and those contracted on a short-term basis.

This policy is an active document and will be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure it remains fit for purpose and in line with current legislation and guidance.

Primary Aims

Dogwood recognises and accepts its duty under the law to:

- Prevent injuries in the workplace.
- Maintain a safe and healthy workplace.
- Establish and maintain effective systems for managing health, safety and welfare.
- Ensure that all those that it works with are competent, able to perform their tasks safely and are consulted on issues, which affect their health and safety.
- Provide and maintain a safe and healthy environment for anyone who could be affected by our activities.

Definitions and Response

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and related legislation places duties on employers, employees, the self-employed and those in control of premises.

The nature of Dogwood's work will vary from time to time, taking those that work with it into a variety of premises, undertaking creative activity and tasks in support of such activity. As a consequence, we recognise that at any point whilst there is an overarching responsibility under that act, there may be specific legislation that reflects that particular situation.

Dogwood has no permanent premises, but recognises the requirement to adhere to policies and regulation in which it undertakes activity and will ensure that those who work with the company are made aware of the same and adhere to their provisions. This policy also relates to all office-based activity, homeworking and project delivery activity.

Dogwood's Board of Directors takes ultimate responsibility for the setting and review of Policy. It will appoint a nominated individual to be responsible for its implementation in the day to day running of each of the company's activities and this will be made known to all those engaged in the project.

All those working with the company are responsible for implementing this policy, taking reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others that they affect. This includes carrying out their own risk assessment and voicing any queries or concerns about health and safety; highlighting any hazards they have discovered and declaring any injury or accident they have suffered.

Self-employed people have duties to ensure they work safely so that their activities do not create risk to themselves or others. In this context, 'self-employed' has a different meaning in health and safety matters to that used in tax matters.

Dogwood has Public Liability and Employers Liability insurance, details of which and of this policy will be made available to all those working with the company.

At the commencement of each project, the designated safety individual will brief those engaged on the project and relevant risk assessment procedures ensuring they are aware of: hazards and risks they may face; if any measures are in place to deal with those hazards and risks, if necessary; and how to follow any emergency procedures.

Potential Hazards

As indicated, the potential hazards in each Dogwood project will be dependent on the nature of the project. Where a risk assessment identifies a new or major hazard, specialist advice will be sought. Each risk assessment will indicate whether the activity is subject to legislation specific to the task or activity. Where such legislation is identified, the project will not proceed until the nominated safety individual has positively identified that the proposed work conforms to the legal requirement.

Notwithstanding the identification of hazards specific to a project, Dogwood recognises that within most activities particular hazards are likely to recur.

Manual Handling

There is a large amount of manual handling involved in theatre production, especially for touring shows. Many loads are awkwardly shaped, heavy and often difficult to move in sometimes very confined spaces. We are aware that more than a third of the injuries reported annually to HSE are related to manual handling. These tend to be long-term injuries, which can have serious implications for those involved.

We recognise that reducing the amount and severity of manual handling is a legal obligation. The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended) apply to work which involves lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling or carrying. The designated officer will be required to utilise the methodology of a code of practice in the working practice of each project, that being:

[Manual handling at work: A brief guide](#)

Working At Height

There is a legal hierarchy for selecting equipment for work at height, based on using the safest possible method of work that can reasonably and practicably be used in the circumstances. These include negating the need to work at height by specialist lights and their positioning, using existing gantries and walkways to fall mitigation.

Where the potential to work at height has been identified, the designated safety officer will indicate as such in the risk assessment and utilise a specialist code of practice to mitigate the risk, that being the ABTT [Code of Practice for the selection and use of temporary access equipment for working at heights in theatres](#).

Slipping and Tripping

Each location that Dogwood utilises is likely to have unique characteristics. However, as good practice personal items, props and other project materials which could pose trip hazards will be kept away from thoroughfares or exits. Cables, which run by or near thoroughfares or exits, must be taped down.

Equipment

Most Dogwood projects will utilise electrical equipment which may be owned by the company or hired from a third party. We will ensure that electrical equipment is regularly serviced and tested by qualified PAT testers.

Transport

Dogwood will ensure that all vehicles used for projects are hired from reputable sources and are road worthy, legal, safe and serviced regularly. This provision will apply to other vehicles supplied by the company or in which travel is offered to project members.

We will ensure that all van drivers hold a full, current driving licence, are insured and experienced drivers capable of driving safely.

Noise

Dogwood understands that hearing loss caused by exposure to noise at work can be a significant work-related occupational illness and is committed to working with partner venues to ensure the responsible management of noise to protect employees, contractors and visitors from the effects of noise induced hearing loss.

Where a specific risk is identified, we will provide appropriate protection.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment documentation is produced for each project managed by Dogwood. Where Dogwood is a partner in a project managed by a third party, we will take all reasonable steps to ensure a risk assessment is in place and correctly completed.

Documentation will include templates to be filled in, listing details such as Risks or Hazards, Level of Risk, Potential Impact, and Controls in place to mitigate risk. The assessments are normally produced by the designated safety office, but these might be undertaken by a specialist partner.

Where Dogwood is undertaking activity at a recognised venue with its own paid or voluntary staff, we will work closely with a relevant staff member at the host venue or site to ensure an assessment has been made.

Where Dogwood utilises a venue that has no such staff, its own assessment will be made and this will always carry a section in respect of fire prevention and emergency escape. First aid provision will be identified and we will ensure that project staff know what to do in the case of an accident or emergency. If no project members are trained as fire marshals and

although all have been briefed on evacuation procedures, the most senior member of staff present at the time of a fire/suspected fire will co-ordinate the evacuation.

Risk assessments will be maintained at the company's office and online and made available to all those participating in a project.

Reporting Accidents

An accident book is maintained by the company and accidents are written into the book at the time of incident; detailing who was involved, what happened and any action that was taken, irrespective of the location of the accident.

In addition, accidents occurring at external venues are also recorded in the venue's accident book.

Serious Incidents will be reported to the directors as soon as is practical and action taken to ensure that the incident is not repeated. Serious incidents are also reported to the Health & Safety Executive.