

HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING & GUIDANCE FOR VOLUNTEERS

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October 2024



Introduction

RNID is committed to keeping everyone involved in our services safe – our staff, our volunteers and the people we support.

We have both moral and legal obligations to keep everyone safe, to promote health and safety and provide training.

Health and safety is the responsibility of all at RNID and the aim of this training and guidance is to give you an understanding of how you can help to keep yourself, and others involved in RNID activities, safe.



Managing risks

One of the key things we do to keep everyone safe is assess and manage risk.

This means looking at things which could go wrong, how likely it is to go wrong, and what are the possible consequences if it does go wrong.

We decide what measures we need to put in place to manage the risk – sometimes this means changing or adapting the way we do things.



Managing risks

In our daily lives, we all manage risk. For example, we consider risks if we are travelling late at night or going to new places.

Sometimes risks are related to how we deliver a service or the venues we deliver services from. For example:

- Trailing wires, loose paving or other things which could lead to trips and falls.
- Environmental conditions e.g., too hot or too cold to work.
- Poor hygiene measures which can lead to illness.
- Exposure to toxic substances.
- Lack of knowledge or giving wrong information could impact on others.



Managing risks

We want to make sure that you feel safe in your volunteering activities.

Your volunteering role and activities are risk assessed to ensure that any hazards or risks have been minimised and that processes are in place if something goes wrong.

In addition to this training, your staff contact will provide any additional training or information which is specific to the role and activities you are involved in



Personal safety

It is important that you take responsibility for your own safety and here are some tips on keeping safe whilst volunteering:

- Always have your mobile phone with you, charged up.
- Let a friend or family member know when and where you are volunteering and what time you are expected home.
- Make sure you have the phone number for your RNID contact saved in your phone and that your friend or family member has that RNID contact number as well.
- If you are travelling outside daylight hours, consider any precautions such as avoiding secluded areas and avoid walking late at night if possible. Try and use public transports stops in well-lit area.



Personal safety

- Don't enter a situation where you feel unsafe and remove yourself from a situation where you feel unsafe.
- In an emergency, call 999.
- If you have any concerns about your safety when volunteering, talk to your volunteer manager.
- If your volunteer role includes volunteering on your own, e.g., delivering a home visit, there are specific processes in place which your staff contact will go through with you.
- Your staff contact will give you an additional leaflet with further guidance on volunteering on your own.



Personal safety

When carrying out your volunteering activities for RNID, you are not expected to put up with any inappropriate behaviour which makes you feel uncomfortable or at risk.

For example, you should feel able to end a conversation or leave a situation if you feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

If you are visiting people in their own homes, you should leave immediately if you feel uncomfortable or threatened.

You should report anything that makes you feel unsafe to your volunteer manager.

RNID will respect and support decisions to end or leave a situation where inappropriate behaviour has taken place and we will treat all incidents seriously.



Health and wellbeing

We want everyone who volunteers for RNID to have the best possible experience, and we want to support your health and wellbeing needs.

When you start to volunteer for us, if you have advised us of any health issues or things which are practically difficult for you, we will do a risk assessment and consider any adjustments we need to make to your role or activities to accommodate that.



Manual handling

Manual handling means transporting or supporting a load by hand or bodily force. It includes lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving loads.

Most manual handling in our volunteering activities is infrequent and low risk. The risk assessment for your service and your personal risk assessment will consider in detail any risks associated with the activities in your role.

We will provide items to help with moving items where required, e.g., trolley.

If any manual handling is required which has a significant risk, a separate assessment and training will be undertaken.

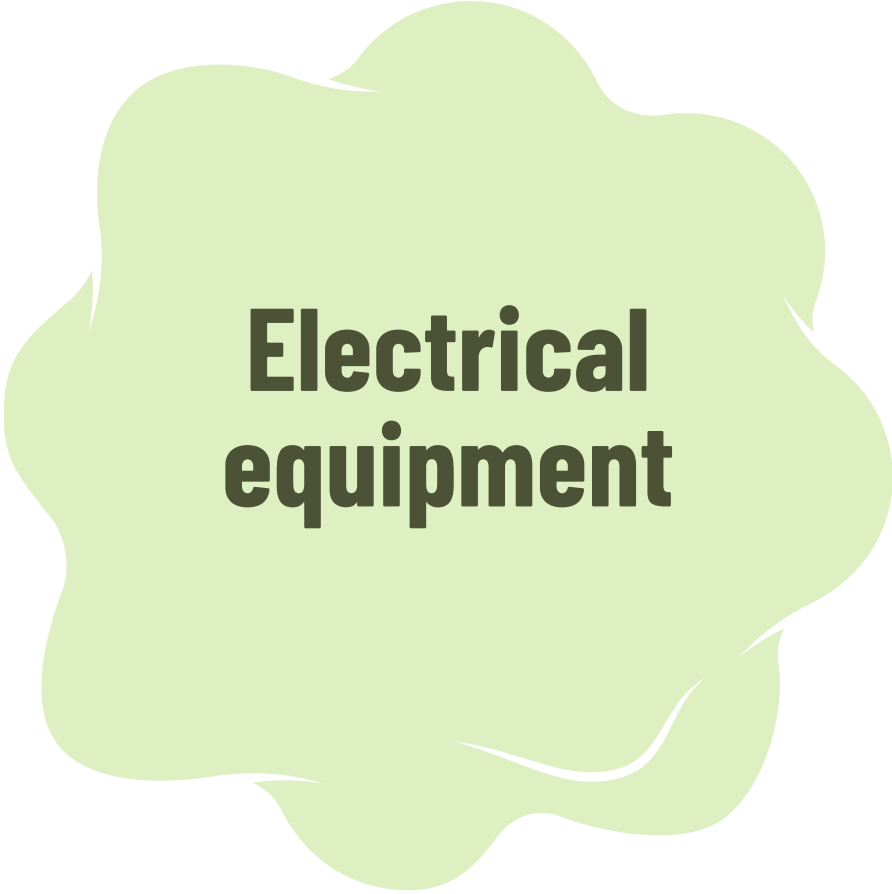


Manual handling

You should not lift, move or handle any heavy or awkward object, unless a risk assessment and appropriate measures or training has been put in place.

We have put together some general guidance on safe principles and practice for manual handling. which your volunteer manager can share with you.

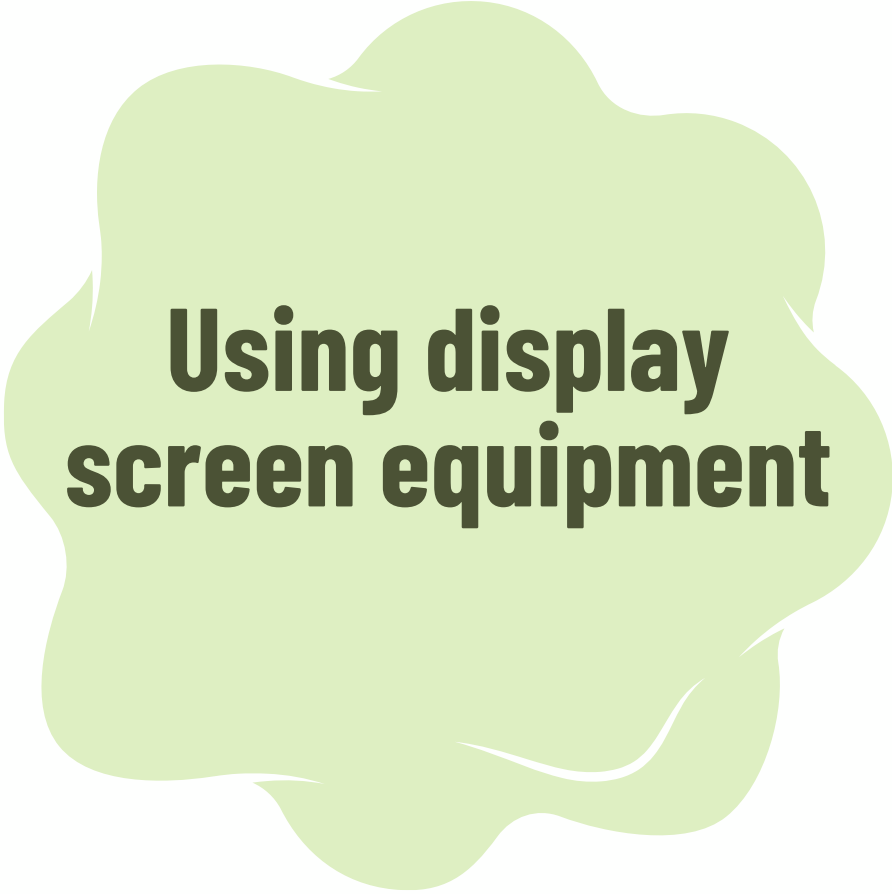
If you use a pull-up banner, you can watch this [video](#) to see how to set-up a pull-up banner.



Electrical equipment

If you use any electrical equipment in your role e.g. a laptop or iPad, please visually check the equipment and accessories such as mains chargers regularly (with the equipment disconnected) and let your volunteer manager know of any faults. Things to look out for:

- Damage to leads including fraying, cuts or heavy scuffing e.g. from floor box covers
- Damage to the plug, e.g. to the cover or bent pins
- Tape applied to the lead to join leads together
- Coloured wires visible where the lead joins the plug (the cable is not being gripped when it enters the plug)
- Damage to the outer cover of the equipment itself, including loose parts or screws
- Signs of overheating, such as burn marks or staining on the plug, lead or piece of equipment
- Equipment that has been used or stored in unsuitable conditions such as wet or dusty environments or where water spills are possible
- Cables trapped under furniture or in floor boxes



Using display screen equipment

If your role involves using a computer, we have put together some general guidance on using display screen equipment safely. Your staff contact can share this with you.



Insurance

All volunteers are covered by RNID insurance while involved in activities agreed and carried out on behalf of RNID.

Insurance includes cover for accidents to another person or their property and personal injury (where the injury could reasonably have been prevented by RNID).

If you choose to drive and use your own car in your voluntary role, your licence should be full and not provisional, preferably without endorsements.

We strongly advise that you tell your insurance company that you'll be driving in a voluntary capacity and check that you are covered for that. Further information is in the volunteer handbook.

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Part 2 – slides 15 to 21 - additional information for RNID Near You volunteers

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Managing risks

Your RNID Near You co-ordinator will risk assess activities and the venue you volunteer in.

You can support this by looking out for potential hazards in your sessions such as:

- Is there enough space for people waiting?
- Can you see any trip hazards?
- Are the surfaces we are using clean?

You may be able to make simple adjustments to make things safe – but only do this if you are not putting yourself at risk.



Managing risks

If the issue relates to the venue – you can tell a member of staff at the venue – but also tell your RNID Near You Co-ordinator about the hazard and any action taken.

Always tell your co-ordinator of any hazards so the risk assessment can be updated as needed.

If there is a significant risk which can't be resolved, contact your co-ordinator straight away for advice.



Incidents and emergencies

Although quite rare in our services, incidents do happen which may require you to take immediate action. For example, this may be a fellow volunteer falling ill or a fire drill in the venue.

As part of your role training, your RNID Near You Co-ordinator will go through with you the emergency procedures for your venue, and you will have an emergency contact telephone number for your Co-ordinator.

You must tell your staff contact of any incidents or near misses which occur in your volunteering activities so we can learn and adapt from that as needed.



Incidents and emergencies

What you can do to be prepared for any incidents or emergencies in RNID Near You:

- Ensure you have your mobile phone with you or you know where you can access a telephone in the building.
- Ensure you have contact details for your RNID Near You Co-ordinator with you.
- Be aware of where the first aid kit is in the venue or if there is a first aider on site (this will be covered in your role induction).
- Be aware of fire safety procedures in the venue (this will also be covered in your role induction).
- You should report any incidents, near-misses and concerns to your RNID Near You Co-ordinator who will gather the relevant information from you and manage internal reporting of these in RNID.



Equipment

In your volunteer role, you may need to use equipment provide by RNID. In RNID Near You, these could include, for example, small tools we use to maintain or repair hearing aids such as scissors or screwdrivers.

You will receive training on using RNID equipment safely and in line with infection control requirements, and equipment should always be used as shown in the training.

Your RNID Near You Co-ordinator will check, and review equipment used regularly but if you spot any issues with equipment – let your Co-ordinator know.

Please don't use any tools of your own unless you have discussed and had the use of the equipment signed off by your RNID Near You Co-ordinator.



**THANK
YOU**

Thank you for reading through this training presentation and guidance.

If you have any concerns at any time about a health and safety issue or just want more information on anything in this presentation, please contact your staff contact.

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Part 3 – slides 22 to 26 - additional information for RNID in Communities
volunteers

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Managing risks

When a talk to a group is being arranged, your staff contact will gather key information on the activity, location, venue and travel to venue and assess any additional or specific risks measures that need to be put in place before the activity can go ahead.

Your staff contact will fully brief you and agree arrangements with you before the activity is confirmed.

Please also refer to the **RNID in Communities guidance**.

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Managing risks

If you are unsure about any arrangements for an activity or if there are any practical difficulties e.g. you think that the venue is difficult to travel to – please tell your staff contact.

If the spot an issue in the venue during your volunteering – you can tell the group leader – but also tell your staff contact about the hazard and any action taken.

If there is a significant risk which can't be resolved, get in touch with your staff contact straight away for advice.



Incidents and emergencies

You will have a contact person at the group you are giving a talk to.

When you arrive at the venue, ask your contact for a brief tour of the venue so you know where facilities are as well as emergency procedures and exits.

Although quite rare in our activities, incidents do happen e.g., someone falls over or has a near miss accident.

You must tell your staff contact of any incidents or near misses which occur in your volunteering activities so we can learn and adapt from that as needed.



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