

Effective as from 1 January 2018

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

The Legal Assistance Centre (the “Centre”) has a moral, legal, financial and psychological responsibility to protect its most valuable assets, its employees. The acceptance and execution of this responsibility is the primary function of the Director and all the staff members.

### **Employer’s Duties**

To fulfil these responsibilities the following aspects will be pursued:

1. Adopt the prescribed legal requirements as stipulated in sections (39) to (47) of the Labour Act, Act 11 of 2007 (the “Act”).
2. Provide a safe working environment within and on the premises of Legal Assistance Centre by:
  - ❖ Maintaining a safe and healthy work environment as well as adequate facilities and arrangements for the welfare of all employees.
  - ❖ Ensure the participation of all stakeholders in the implementation of the said policy.
3. Prevent undesired incidents and accidents through:
  - The adoption and implementation of a Health and Safety Policy.
  - The reporting and investigation of all incidents/accidents and losses, regardless of its nature, and the implementation of measures to prevent any recurrences.
  - The liaison between staff and cooperation with recognised workers representatives, if in existence, with regard to accident reporting and investigation.
  - The determination of the extent and costs of all undesired incidents and accidents.
4. Apply and adapt this policy to the extent that it will lead to a safer working environment, continuous improvement and a better rendering of service to the public.



## **Employees Duties**

Every employee has a duty to:

1. Take reasonable care to ensure-
  - The employee's own safety and health in the workplace; and
  - The safety and health of any individual who may be affected by the employee's activities at work; and
2. Co-operate with the employer to enable the employer to perform any duty imposed as per the Act.

## **Employee's right to leave dangerous place of work**

If an employee has any reasonable cause to believe (which may *inter alia*, include, working in a dilapidated office, threats due to the work of LAC, etc) that it is neither safe nor healthy to continue work in a place of work, such an employee may leave the workplace.

The employee must however immediately inform his/her coordinator, the Manager or the Director of the basis for believing that it is not safe or healthy to continue working there.

The employee, who leaves the work place on the basis outlined herein, should receive the same conditions of service applicable to that employee and should receive the same remuneration during the period of absence.

## **Election of health and safety representatives**

LAC employees are entitled to elect a workplace representative from among themselves and such an appointee will have the rights and duties as set out in section 43 of the Labour Act.

This representative will be the liaison between management and staff in issues pertaining to health and safety.

## **Emergencies**

In the case of an emergency at the office or on official travel, the Director or his / her designee must immediately be notified. In the case of a medical emergency, staff should first summon an ambulance. A staff member should accompany the colleague needing medical assistance or treatment to the hospital. If the distressed employee



is unable to communicate her/his wishes, staff should immediately notify a designated contact on the emergency contact list in the employee's personnel file.

In case of fire, staff should activate the building's alarm and then alert the fire department. The first and foremost consideration is the safety of visitors and employees, and then attention may be given to fighting the fire and protecting property.

### **Office Security**

Security is the responsibility of each employee. LAC staff should accompany visitors while in the LAC's office. It is the responsibility of each employee to secure their computers (i.e. shut down or lock) and sensitive files when they are not at their workstations, especially after hours. Likewise, employees responsible for LAC's equipment must secure this equipment before leaving work.

It is specifically recorded that laptops left in vehicles are not covered by insurance and should such laptops be stolen, the relevant employee will be held personally responsible for the cost of a replacement laptop.

It is the responsibility of the last person leaving the office in the evenings or weekends to ensure that the main office door is locked and alarms are set. Employees should arrange to have main door keys if they expect to stay after hours.

LAC does not accept responsibility for an employee's personal property. Personal items should not be left unattended at workstations and under no circumstances should valuables be left unattended on desktops or in plain view. If the employee loses or finds anything, including keys, the employee must notify the PA to the Director.

### **Promulgation and Implementation**

As is the case with other policies and guidelines of LAC, this policy will be accessible to all staff members of the Centre.

In addition, it will be distributed via email to all staff and will be made available in electronic or hard copy format.

### **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed after every 3 years or earlier in consultation with employees using established consultative mechanisms and revised as necessary to keep up to date with new legislation and workplace changes.

