

Appendix 9(a): Risk Assessment Guide

As a church we are committed to protecting those we serve and all who work with them. It is important that our acts or omissions do not cause injury to our fellow workers, members or visitors while attending our services. All activities and environments carry an element of risk. Our responsibility is to minimise or reduce those which are not acceptable in any given situation.

Each church must adopt safe working practices. Working safely means that we think about the safety aspects of every organised activity, including outings and holidays, and then do what is necessary to keep those involved safe. This is called a risk assessment.

A risk assessment is: identifying sensible measures to control the risks in an activity.

It involves looking at an activity or environment to identify potential hazards (things that could cause harm) to individuals and then thinking about what needs to be put in place to eliminate or reduce the risks.

Our responsibility is to identify foreseeable risks, e.g. door movements that could slam onto little fingers; or recreational activities that must be led by a trained/qualified person; or first aid and emergency communication arrangements needed. Some things carry a higher risk or will affect a larger number of people and these should be addressed first.

Carry out a risk assessment when: an activity involves vulnerable people, is a one-off activity, is to take place off site, or is a regular activity which is being reviewed.

A **hazard** is anything that may cause harm, such as open fire, deep water, crossing roads, climbing heights, etc.

The **risk** is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by these and other hazards, together with an indication of how serious the harm could be.

Use the four questions risk assessment process: to identify the risks associated with an activity or event. This will enable you to identify the actions needed in order to make it safe for all those who would be participating.

*Some practical steps you could take include:

- ✓ trying a less risky option
- ✓ preventing access to the hazard
- ✓ organising activities to reduce exposure to the hazard
- ✓ using protective equipment
- ✓ having first aid facilities on hand
- ✓ briefing workers and audiences on safety measures

1. What are the potential hazards?

E.g. open fire, deep water, climbing heights, crossing roads, etc.

2. Who might be harmed and how?

E.g. wheel chair users bumping into equipment; active children falling into a river, running across roads.

4. Have all the points been recorded? Now act on them.

Review the hazards, the potential harm and what's in place to control the risks. Make sure to prioritise those risks that would cause serious harm or affect the most people.

3. What are the risks and our precautions*?

How likely is the harm to occur, i.e. what is the level of risk? What's already in place to control the risk? Then: a) Can we get rid of the hazard altogether? b) If not, how can we control the risks so that harm is unlikely?

Simple risk level estimation

Acceptable = Equivalent to usual risks in daily life – no specific action needed

Moderate = Beyond acceptable and attention should be given to reducing the risk

High = Serious harm possible unless the risk is reduced or removed before the activity begins

Grave = Risk of death or major injury beyond that which can be tolerated; must be substantially reduced or fully removed

Risk is a part of everyday life and we are not expected to eliminate all risks. What we must do is make sure we know about the main risks and the things we need to do to manage them responsibly. We are not expected to anticipate unforeseeable risks or take measures that are outweighed by the time, money or trouble they would take to control the risk.

The activity/event:

Number of people involved:

Date of risk assessment:

Completed by:

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing?	Do you need to do anything else to control this risk?	Action by who?	Action by when?	Done
Audio visual cables	Staff and visitors may be injured if they trip over the additional cables laid.	Cable tidy or large mats placed over cables. No trailing leads or cables.	Make announcement for all to be careful.	Duty Elder	Morning of the event	xx/xx/xx xx/xx/xx
						Hint, tab here for new row

You should review your risk assessment if you think it might no longer be valid (e.g. following an accident or if there are any significant changes to hazards, such as new activities).

For further information and to view our example risk assessments go to http://adventist.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/8048/01-SDA-Health-and-Safety-Policy-Statement-Dec-2009-Final.pdf or <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/casestudies/>