

Dedham Therapy Farm CIC Health and Safety Policy

Review – March 2026

Last review March 2025

Statement of Intent

Dedham Therapy Farm CIC makes it a priority to prevent accidents in the workplace and cases of work-related ill health by assessing, managing and removing health and safety risks arising from work activities. Adequate training will be given to all employees to ensure that they are competent within their roles. All employees must be able to identify risks and raise awareness to management and take action to prevent any incidents from occurring. Any health and safety issues are to be raised by employees, students or volunteers of the farm as soon as safely possible to the named people below. To engage and consult with employees on day-to-day health and safety conditions and provide advice and supervision on occupational health. Dedham Therapy Farm CIC has emergency procedures in place of fires and any other significant incident that may occur. To maintain safe and healthy working conditions, provide and maintain plant equipment and machinery, and ensure safe storage / use of substances. Responsibilities for Health and Safety

Arrangements for Health and Safety

- Risk assessments to be carried out on all activities.
- Risk assessments to be carried out on all animals on the farm.
- COSHH file to be maintained and updated regularly.
- Regular health and safety training sessions are to be held for staff and volunteers.
- Health and Safety to be on the agenda and discussed and team meetings.
- All employees, students and volunteers of Dedham Therapy Farm CIC are to be aware of the Health and Safety procedures in place and feel confident in following them. Additional support can be gained from your line manager if required.
- Health and Safety law poster to be displayed.
- All employees and volunteers must know where the first aid kit and accident book are kept.
- All employees and volunteers must know how to raise the alarm in case of an accident or emergency.

Fire Procedure In the event of a fire on the farm.

All staff have a responsibility to ensure their Farm Assistants can leave the farm safely. If an unintentional fire that is outside of the campfire area is spotted on the farm you must;

- alert others in the team using the call button on your walkie talkie then announcing fire and the location.
- The fire warden is to delegate calling the emergency services to a staff member that is not responsible for anyone else that day.
- Make sure you have everyone in your group and begin to exit the setting heading towards the fire assembly point on the slope in the mill lane car park, using the quickest and safest route possible.
- Do not attempt to get any belongings or animals out when you are trying to vacate the farm with your group.
- It is the responsibility of the main fire marshal designated for that day during the team planning meeting to ensure all present individuals on the farm are accounted for.
- If you are unable to vacate the farm safely you must alert the fire marshal swiftly using your walkie talkie.
- Once all individuals are off site. If any animals have their life endangered due to the fire and can be safely removed from the boundary line of the farm then the fire marshal for that day will designate this action to a member of the team who can safely achieve this.

COSHH - Control of Substances Hazardous to health

It is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers and students to ensure they are safely using any substances whilst at work. The main staff member who oversees COSHH is responsible for updating the COSHH folder to ensure that it is up to date and provides clear information on the use of substances.

Anyone that uses a substances whilst at the farm must

- Read the COSHH document to ensure proper use is completed
- Read the farm risk assessment to ensure they are following measures in place
- Follow all instructions outlined for the use of the product

- Ensure anyone they are responsible for is supported to ensure their safety in using it.
- Use appropriate PPE where stipulated
- Report any difficulties with following the above procedure and not to use the substance until it is safe to do so.

Training

It is the farm Director's responsibility to ensure the team has adequate training to ensure the safety of all employees, volunteers and students. All employees are required to complete a minimum of a two-week induction, further training may be required subject to previous experience which includes manual handling training, health and safety awareness, fire marshal, use of safety equipment, safeguarding, understanding risk assessment, food hygiene, gdpr and other relevant courses. This training is monitored by management and any training is given routinely each year and refreshed on an annual or longer if advised basis.

It is the responsibility of the employee to notify management if they do not feel confident in carrying out their duties safely.

Each admin week staff are expected to take part in any required training to ensure their safety and the wellbeing of service users.

First Aid

First aid is only to be administered by a trained employee. Staff must follow the first aid procedure below.

- Each planning meeting on each day a Lead first aider is delegated. This individual is responsible for first aid on this day. • In the event of an injury that requires first aid to be administered the staff member should notify the lead first aider for the day.
- The first aider should either go to the individual concerned if it is not safe for them to move or the staff should bring the individual to the lead first aider.
- If an individual requires first aid off site the therapist that is running the group can administer first aid if they have the training to do so but must inform the lead first aider that they are doing this via the walkie talkie or phone.

Working at height

Work at height means work in any place where, if there were no precautions in place, a person could fall a distance liable to cause personal injury.

If considering working at height you should;

- do as much work as possible from the ground;
- Are you an approved member of staff with the correct training? If not report the work to management so this work can be correctly allocated.
- ensure workers can get safely to and from where they work at height;
- ensure equipment is suitable, stable and strong enough for the job, maintained and checked regularly;
- make sure you don't overload or overreach when working at height;
- take precautions when working on or near fragile surfaces;
- Use protection from falling objects;
- Consider your emergency evacuation and rescue procedures.
- Take a sensible, pragmatic approach when considering precautions for work at height. Factors to weigh up include the height of the task; the duration and frequency; and the condition of the surface being worked on. There will also be certain low-risk situations where common sense tells you no particular precautions are necessary. Only staff with sufficient skills, knowledge and experience are to perform the task, or, if they are being trained, that they work under the supervision of somebody competent to do it. Always consider safety measures that protect everyone who is at risk (collective protection) before measures that protect only the individual (personal protection).

Always ask;

1. Can you avoid working at height?
2. Am I trained for this and have I been approved to complete this work by management?
3. If not, can you prevent a fall from occurring?
4. If not, can you minimise a fall from happening?
5. Have I completed a risk assessment for the task? If your risk assessment determines it is correct to use a ladder, you should further MINIMISE the risk by making sure workers:

- use the right type of ladder for the job
- are competent (you have had adequate training and/or supervision to help)
- use the equipment provided safely and follow a safe system of work
- are fully aware of the risks and measures to help control them.

Employees have general legal duties to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions, and to co-operate with their employer to enable their health and safety duties and requirements to be complied with. For an employee, or those working under someone else's control, the law says they must:

- report any safety hazard they identify to their employer;
- use the equipment and safety devices supplied or given to them properly, in accordance with any training and instructions (unless they think that would be unsafe, in which case they should seek further instructions before continuing).

Manual handling

All employees, volunteers and students have a responsibility to;

- ensure they are following safe manual handling practices when maneuvering or lifting awkward or heavy loads.
- Report any damages to equipment or any awkward or heavy loads that can't be safely moved.

It is the employers responsibility to;

- ensure new staff have completed manual handling training and that all staff complete a refresher course on a biannual basis.
- The employer must ensure there is available equipment to reduce the risk of carrying heavy loads.
- Must ensure such equipment is in good repair.

Lone working

Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. At Dedham Therapy Farm Team CIC There are various reasons why you may be required to work alone. This may be when taking care of the animals, working with Farm Assistants in the community, offsite away from the farm or on site but in a secluded space on the farm setting. There will always be greater risks for lone workers without direct supervision or anyone to help them if things go wrong. You can watch a video on advice for lone working by clicking the below link.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P2MxIL0jopM>

Lone working does not always mean a higher risk of violence, but it does make workers more vulnerable. The lack of support nearby makes it harder for them to prevent an incident. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines violence as 'any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work' – this includes verbal threats.

- When a member of staff, volunteer or student is expected to go offsite from the farm or for a community visit alone or alone with a Farm assistant the employee must bring it up in the team morning planning meeting. Stating your expected location or route if walking and expected time leaving and returning.
- A scheduled community visit off site must be logged on your staff calendar and the entry must state your expected location.
- At the end of the lone working appointment you must check in with the office, or a member of management after the appointment to make sure the team knows you are safe. To ensure the safety of lone workers all staff, volunteers and students must follow the emergency procedures.
- make a phone call if it is safe to do so. If you do not feel you can state there is an emergency you can use the excuse that you are waiting for a parcel and ask if it has arrived?
- If a phone call is not appropriate you can press the emergency call button on your walkie talkie and a member of the team will try and locate you using your expected location shared during the team meeting. If you are concerned the call button alarm will raise suspicion you can turn your volume down.
- You can send a text using your mobile phone
- Call emergency services if they are required and you are able to. If not, a member of the team can do this on your behalf. These procedures must be tested every 6 months to ensure they are appropriate and that everyone understands the procedures. It is the employees, responsibility to ensure that when working alone with a Farm Assistant that any activities are appropriately graded and risk assessed for their farm assistant to complete. They must ensure that they understand the emergency procedures and follow

them. They must report any difficulties they have in following the procedure. Risk assessment. Risk assessments are to ensure that any risks can be mitigated and measures can be put in place to reduce the risk. They are there to ensure the safety and enjoyment of the farm activities and to ensure that sessions are positive and safe for staff, volunteers, students and Farm Assistants. It is farm policy to monitor risk using the farm general risk assessment, community risk assessment and individual risk assessments for each animal department and Farm Assistants. Each activity must be risk assessed on the general assessment. If a Farm Assistant has a higher level of risk outside of the general assessment you must log this on their individual assessment and ensure appropriate measures can be put in place to reduce the risk. Farm Risk assessments must use the Dedham Therapy farm templates and use the same matrix available to all staff to ensure continuity throughout. It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure they have read and understood the measures in place for all risks on the farm. That they follow the measures and report any risk to management that they have identified but not yet documented on the risk assessment or need further measures in place that have not yet been identified. It is the employer's responsibility to ensure any appropriate equipment is supplied to ensure measures can be adhered to and to monitor all risk assessments. The employer must provide training and supervision during the induction period to ensure that staff know how to complete and read the risk assessments and ongoing supervision is provided for therapy staff to ensure that any changes in Farm Assistant behavior or presentation can be risk assessed and monitored frequently.

Consulting Employees

Dedham Therapy Farm continuously consults its employees, volunteers and students with regards to health and safety. This is done in the form of;

- Regular formal and informal supervision
- Induction process for new staff
- Annual appraisals
- Team meetings to discuss risk, Farm Assistants, team strength and weaknesses

Dedham Therapy Farm prides itself on a collaborative approach to staff consultation and team and service development. Dedham Therapy Farm expects its employees, volunteers and students to familiarise themselves with company policy, risk assessment and procedures. This is to ensure the wellbeing and safety of themselves, other team members and Farm Assistants accessing the services. Dedham Therapy Farm relies on the collaborative approach of the team to enable staff to feel heard and to ensure the service provided is safe and enjoyable for employees and service users.

Stress Management

Dedham Therapy Farm CIC understands that working in a setting where there may be behaviour that challenges staff, in an entirely outdoor setting where the weather may impact on mental health, that staff may need extra support other than what management can provide them with. With this in mind, Dedham Therapy Farm provides an Employee Assistance program through Health Assured and the Wisdom app, to allow access to mental health support, coaching, savings and strategies to help manage poor mental health. Dedham therapy Farm follows their training and supervision policy to ensure staff have adequate support and training to provide the best support to their case load and to quickly identify any areas that staff need support and further develop their skill set. Management ensure team building activities are provided throughout the year and provide opportunities for the team to socialise and share skills and experiences.