

Everything you need to know about Health and Safety

1. Do Poplar HARCA offices and neighbourhood centres have fire procedures in place?

Yes. In the event of a fire emergency, stay calm and follow the signs directing you to the nearest fire exit. Do not use lifts. Poplar HARCA staff and fire marshals will instruct you and assist you in leaving, in the event of any difficulty.

2. I am accompanying a disabled relative to an event in one of your centres. Are your premises disabled-friendly?

We try to ensure that our neighbourhood centres and those Poplar HARCA offices which are open to the public are accessible. Entrance ramps for wheelchairs have been installed where required and disabled toilet facilities are provided. We also have portable hearing loop systems available at our reception desks which can be moved around our buildings if needed. If you have any questions or concerns, please call us on 0800 035 1991 and we will do our best to assist you.

3. Do Poplar HARCA offices and neighbourhood centres have trained first-aiders?

Yes, we have named, qualified first-aiders at all our premises. In the event of a first-aid emergency, please request assistance from a member of staff.

4. If I have an accident on Poplar HARCA premises, should I report this?

Yes, please. Our aim is to learn lessons from any accidents or incidents in order to prevent further occurrences. If you have an accident or near miss, please inform one of our officers who will summon a first-aider if required and assist you in completing a Poplar HARCA accident and incident report form.

5. I am concerned about an issue in my residential block which might have health and safety implications. Who can I report this to?

We really appreciate you sharing your concerns with us – these could be about individual dwellings, communal areas of residential buildings, or play areas managed by Poplar HARCA. Please contact us on 0800 035 1991 and say that you have a health and safety issue to report. Remember to leave your contact details so that we can

keep you informed of progress. In the event of an emergency, please ring 999 as usual.

6. How can I obtain a free smoke alarm and home fire safety check?

We are working closely with the London Fire Brigade to promote fire safety in the home. On request, the LFB will visit you to arrange a home fire safety check and will fit a smoke alarm free of charge if you don't already have one. You can phone them free to arrange this on 0800 028 4428.

7. I have smoke alarms in my home. How often should I check these and replace batteries?

Test your smoke alarms monthly using the test button. If it's battery-operated, replace your batteries annually (unless you have a ten-year alarm) or whenever required. If you have wired-in smoke alarms fitted by Poplar HARCA, get in touch if they are not working. Wired-in smoke alarms have a back-up battery to ensure that your alarm will still work during a power failure. This type of alarm will "chirp" if the battery is running low in which case you should change it. Vacuum your smoke alarms periodically by holding the brush attachment on your vacuum cleaner up to the closed case. This reduces dust build-up thereby helping to prevent false alarms.

8. What do I do in the event of a fire in my block?

You can download our fire safety emergency plan from our website. You can also request a paper copy.

9. I want to book a room in one of your community centres. What are the health and safety requirements?

That depends on the type of activity or event and whether it is a one-off or a regular event. We have a checklist risk assessment form that we ask you to complete as part of the booking process. For higher risk activities such as martial arts or dance teaching we expect you to make your own first-aid provision and to have your own insurance. If you run activities for vulnerable adults or for children and young people you will need to provide evidence that teachers and supervisors have been DBS checked. Anyone making bookings should be given a health and safety induction to ensure that they are familiar with fire and other health and safety procedures. We also expect you to leave the premises in a clean and safe condition. Please ring any of our centres if you need further details or want to book.

If you want to know more about health and safety, contact us on 0800 035 1991.