



Introduction to the Toolkit



Small businesses like yours need easy access to information and practical guidance to help you comply with health and safety legal requirements. As an employer, you want to protect your employees' health at work and avoid the human and business costs associated with workplace ill health. These goals can be achieved by following the guidance in this Toolkit.

The focus of the Toolkit is on workplace health. Much has been written and is available on websites and from other sources to help businesses manage safety. Much less information, however, is available on managing employee health and yet over the past few years ill-health issues have accounted for more work days lost in Irish businesses than workplace accidents. A healthy workforce brings real benefits to a business in terms of increased productivity and reduced disruption and costs associated with absence.

The Toolkit is made up of a number of individual pull-out sections. The idea is that if an employer needs information on a particular topic, he or she can go directly to that section and get the relevant information.

There is an emphasis on risk assessment throughout the Toolkit. The five simple steps needed to carry out a risk assessment are explained and some examples are given. This should enable small businesses to carry out a risk assessment without the need to engage external consultants.

Each section is made up of a number of frequently asked questions. This design should help you find the specific information you require easily and quickly. Every effort has been made to keep the language simple and easy to understand and to avoid legal and medical terminology.

At the end of each section you will find details of sources of further information and contact details for organisations referred to in the text.

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