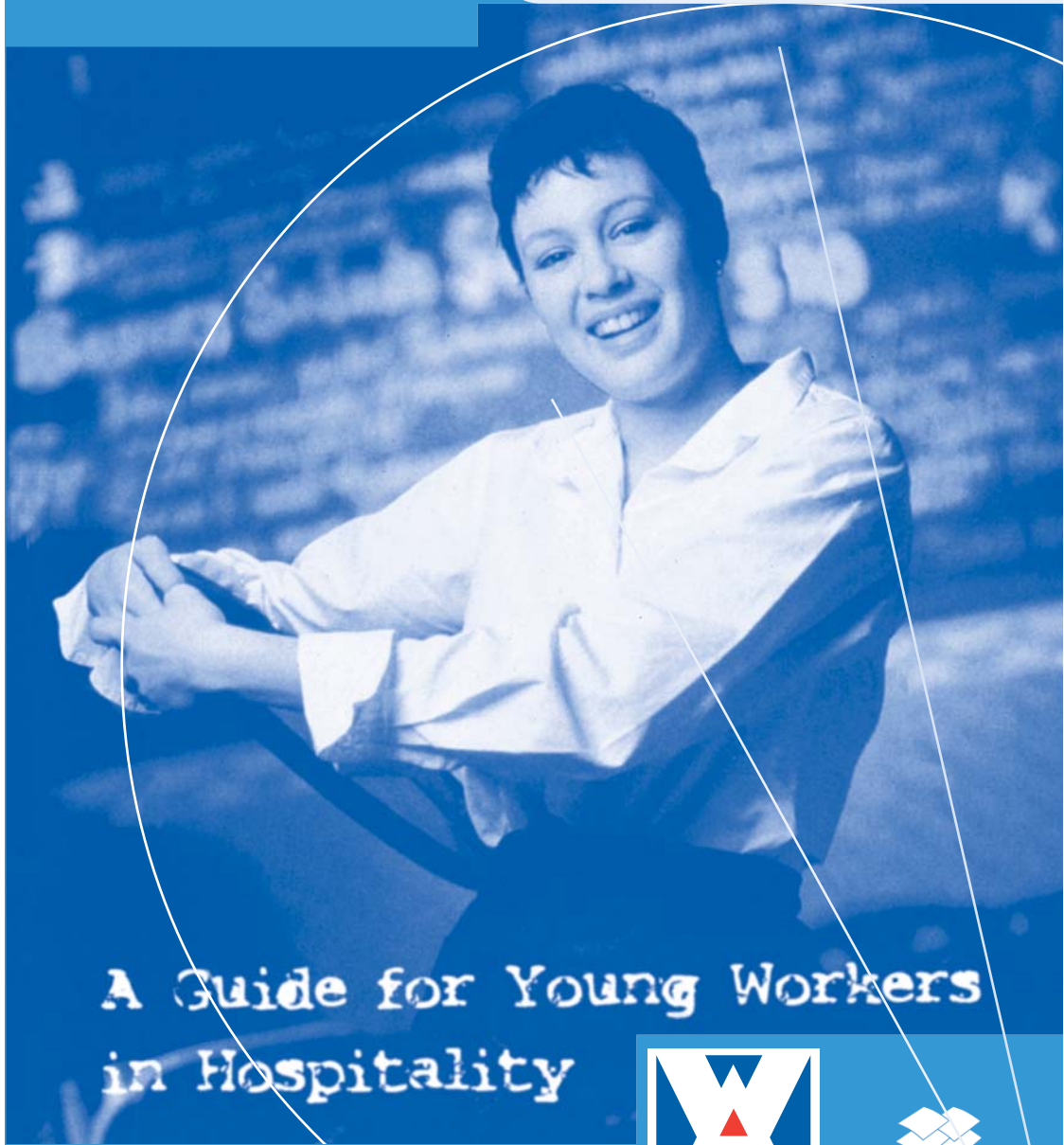


Safety at Work



A Guide for Young Workers in Hospitality



Commerce Queensland
QUEENSLAND'S CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

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Occupational Health and Safety Why Bother?

You are probably aware that a large percentage of persons employed in the hospitality industry are either school students or recent school leavers. The age of the workforce together with high levels of staff turnover raise occupational health and safety concerns in the industry. As a young worker in the Hospitality Industry you stand a much higher risk of being injured at work than older workers.

Injury statistics show that a high proportion of workers under the age of 24 will be injured during their first

year at work. Some of these injuries will result in permanent disability, ongoing pain and in extreme cases death.

Laws concerning occupational health and safety designed to protect all workers from injury are in place in ALL states of Australia.



What are the Benefits?

Occupational health and safety benefits everyone in the workplace including YOU!

Occupational health and safety laws ensure:-

You are not exposed to hazards

You are provided with a safe workplace

You are trained to reduce your risk of injury



Who's Responsible?



Everyone plays a part. Your employer must ensure that your health and safety is not harmed in any way. You must also take responsibility for looking after your own health and safety, while not putting others at risk.

What's my Employer Responsible for?

Employers should take all reasonable steps to ensure work is performed safely. Your employer has the primary responsibility for the health and safety of everyone in contact with the workplace. This responsibility includes:

- Providing safe work areas, machinery and equipment;
- Providing a safe work process;
- Providing protective equipment where needed;
- Providing information, instruction and training

What are my Responsibilities?

The law states you **MUST** also take care of your own safety and not put your fellow workers at **RISK OF INJURY**. This requires you to;

- Follow health and safety instructions;
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) and clothing in a correct manner;
- Inform your employer about hazards and injuries in your workplace;
- Co-operate with your employer regarding health and safety matters so they are able to carry out their duties under occupational health and safety legislation.



What Hazards should I be aware of?



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Hazard Grid

Type of Work

Examples of Hazards

Housekeeping/Cleanup

- Hazardous substances in cleaning products
- Draining or disposing of used oil
- Blood or discarded needles (sharps)
- ^a Biological waste

Food Service/Kitchen

- Wet & Slippery floors
- Deep fry equipment
- Hot cooking equipment and oil
- Sharp objects used in food preparation

Retail/Sales

- Violent crimes
- ^a Heavy lifting

Storage/Receival

- Lifting, carrying, pushing & pulling
- Work Environment



Can I Do Anything to Prevent Accidents and Injuries?

If you are able to identify a hazard or potential hazard in your workplace you are well on the way to preventing injuries and accidents.

1. So be alert to hazards!

2. Let your employer know! and

**3. Follow instructions
to solve the problem!**

What about

Often manual handling is thought to be the lifting of heavy objects, however, it is more widespread than that. Manual handling refers to any activity that requires the use of a person's force to lift, lower, push, pull, carry or otherwise move or restrain an object. Tasks can range from the lifting of heavy cartons/equipment to those including repetitive or forceful movements and the maintenance of constrained or awkward postures. Examples of manual handling which you may be exposed to include; unloading and storing of goods, cleaning deep fryers, removing rubbish, setting up

Specific Hazards?

1. Manual Handling

tables and function rooms, making beds delivery or collecting of plates, cutlery and drink trays or serving customers. So you can see that many of the activities in your industry involve manual handling.

To reduce the likelihood of suffering an injury as a result of manual handling, it's important to:

- Ask your employer for training in preferred manual handling techniques, dealing with specific manual handling hazards and in the use of mechanical equipment;
- Try and organise your work so manual handling is limited;
- Reduce repetitive or sustained bending, twisting and reaching where possible;
- Push rather than pull;
- Plan the task first;
- Use mechanical equipment where available e.g. hoists, trolleys, step ladders etc;
- When lifting or carrying keep the load as close to your body as possible;
- Use team lifts where appropriate

Did you Know?

Manual handling injuries usually result in strains and sprains to workers' lower back, however they may also involve the neck and limbs. On occasions injuries may result in surgery or life-long disability affecting your career and social life. Workers under the age of 18 have bodies which are still developing and therefore are at greater risk of suffering a permanent injury. Injury may occur suddenly or develop gradually over a period of time.



The Working Environment

Slips, trips and falls

To reduce the likelihood of suffering an injury as a result of slips, trips or falls it's important to:

- Avoid cluttered work areas and floors;
- Wear footwear appropriate to the type of floor surface;
- Keep stairs and floors clean and dry;
- Ensure power cords are never placed across walkways;
- Know the procedures for cleaning spilled substances and removal of objects causing a risk.

Did you know?

Slips, trips and falls account for a high proportion of injuries in the hospitality industry. Workers may experience injuries involving fractured bones, muscle strains, sprains, cuts and abrasions and in extreme cases, head injury (brain damage).

Did you know?

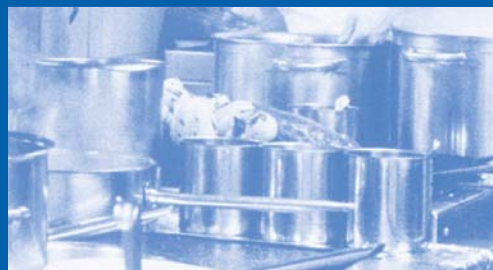
Exposure to heat may aggravate other medical conditions such as high blood pressure or existing heart problems. It may result in heat related illnesses such as prickly heat, heat exhaustion (fainting), heat cramps or heat stroke.

Hot Working Environment

Hot working conditions such as those found in kitchens may lead to heat related illness. This occurs when the body is unable to lose heat fast enough to maintain a steady core body temperature. Signs and symptoms of heat related illness may include one or more of the following: rashes, muscle cramps, weakness, dizziness, fainting, nausea and headache. So to avoid suffering a heat related illness it's important to:

- Wear appropriate clothing (summer and winter uniforms etc);

- Drink water and rest in a cool area;
- Use ventilation/extraction and air-conditioning systems and inform your employer if they appear faulty;
- Be aware of emergency/first aid procedures associated with heat related illness;
- Where possible work at your own pace;
- Perform heavier work in cooler areas or at cooler times of the day;
- Be aware of heat illness risk factors.



Plant

Powered & Non-powered Machinery

Plant refers to both powered and non-powered machinery. In the hospitality industry many pieces of machinery (plant) are used, including cutters, slicers, dicers, mincers and knives. There are a number of potential hazards associated with plant including:

- Moving parts (e.g. guarding);
- Power source of equipment (e.g. electricity);
- Noise;
- Hazardous substances (e.g. fumes);
- Stability of equipment (e.g. bench mounted equipment);
- Use of pressure vessels (e.g. espresso machines).

You may be injured while using or cleaning machinery/equipment as a result of coming into contact with moving parts, or being trapped between moving parts. You can reduce the chance of an injury when using plant by:

- Participating in training/instruction from your employer concerning the correct use of the equipment: if unsure always ask;

- Checking that all guarding is in place before operation;
- Keeping equipment clean and in good working order;
- Turning off equipment prior to cleaning;
- Replacing all guards after cleaning is complete;
- Only using a machine for its intended purpose.

When using knives it is important to:

- Cut away from your body;
- Store knives safely with the blade pointing down;
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) when required e.g. mesh gloves;
- Use the appropriate knife for the job e.g. boning knife;
- Use knives with comfortable and water proof handles;
- Always use a proper chopping board or block;
- Don't leave knives lying around e.g. in a sink full of water.

Burns



Heat related injuries such as burns and scolds are very common in your industry. They often are a result of contact with stoves, boiling liquids, hot oil, hot pots and utensils, pressure cookers and steam emission.

You can reduce the risk by:

- Ensuring pot handles do not protrude over the edge of stoves;
- Organising your work area away from heat sources;
- Ensuring you are trained in preferred techniques for handling hot liquids and utensils by your employer;
- Opening pot lids away from your body;
- Not using wet cloths to pick up hot objects (may result in steam burns);
- Checking that all hot equipment is clearly identified (e.g. signage and warnings etc), if not inform your employers.



Deep Fryers

A variety of jobs within the hospitality industry involve exposure to deep fryers in one way or another, e.g. chefs, kitchen hands, cleaners and waiters.

Injuries as a result of burns are commonly associated with the deep fryers. So when working with or in the vicinity of deep fryers, attempt to:

- Ensure vats are fully covered before changing filters;
- Avoid draining used oil/grease into plastic containers;
- Ensure fryers with hot oil/grease are not moved/rolled;
- Dispose of oil/grease in daylight hours or in good lighting;
- Involve more than one person in carrying oil/grease containers (particularly down stairs);
- Don't work close to hot fryers when the floor is wet;
- Use automatic food lowering devices with hot oil/grease wherever possible.



Electricity

The use of electrical equipment has the potential to be a serious hazard in the hospitality industry. Electricity can result in fire, explosion or serious injury such as electric shock, burns and in some cases death.

You can lessen the chances of electrical related injury by:

- *Reporting broken, frayed and cracked leads and plugs to your employer;*
- *Unplugging equipment prior to cleaning;*
- *Asking your employer for training/instruction in the recommended operation of any electrical equipment you are required to use;*
- *Keeping power leads away from heat, water and oil;*
- *Avoiding overloading i.e. using double adaptors;*
- *Wearing PPE e.g. rubber soled shoes and gloves etc as instructed.*



Personal Security and Violence at work

As a worker in the hospitality industry chances are you will be exposed to a form of occupational violence at least once in your working life.

Violence may be in the form of verbal abuse, threats, harassment or physical assault and may result in serious physical or psychological injury. This violence may stem from dissatisfied customers (in some instances under the influence of alcohol or drugs) or from co-workers.

You can reduce the risks associated with occupational violence by:

- *Participating in training provided by your employer on how to deal*

with potentially violent situations at your workplace;

- *Being familiar with first aid facilities in your workplace;*
- *Understanding appropriate procedures in the event of an incident;*
- *Avoiding working alone, particularly at night;*
- *Being familiar with your workplace security system;*
- *Avoiding poorly lit carparks and streets when travelling to or from work at night;*
- *Asking your employer for a copy of sexual harassment guidelines.*

Fire



There is a significant risk of fire in the hospitality industry particularly in the fast food and restaurant trade. The use of gas, naked flames and hot oils in kitchens, flammable substances used by cleaners and smoking by customers in restaurants, hotels and bars contribute to a high risk of fire. It is essential to adhere to fire safety precautions.

You can reduce this likelihood of fire in your workplace by:

- Regular cleaning of exhaust fans and hoods to prevent build up of waste residue;
- Prompt disposal of rubbish and old boxes which may pose a fire hazard;
- Ensuring you participate in fire safety procedures training.

Biological Waste

As workers in the hospitality industry you may come into contact with biological waste. This refers to waste that contains human tissue and body fluids, animal tissues and carcasses, medical swabs and dressings, items soiled with urine, faeces or other body fluids or excretions. All of which may be potentially infectious. Examples where exposure to these types of hazards may arise include; handling of soiled linen and towels and emptying waste bins in bathrooms, toilets or hotel rooms.

To reduce the risk of contracting infection you can;

- Place waste in a specifically marked bin and take directly to place of disposal;
- Maintaining high standards of personal hygiene e.g. thorough hand washing with soap and water after contact with contaminated items and after removal of protective gloves;
- Cover cuts or abrasions to prevent exposure to bacteria;
- Using personal protective equipment (PPE) e.g. gloves, face masks etc;
- Follow food hygiene requirements carefully

Hazardous Substances

You may be exposed to hazardous substances in your industry. A hazardous substance refers to any substance, whether solid, liquid or gas, that may cause harm to you.

Some of these may include cleaning fluids and powders, paint and/or glue.

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are detailed information on hazardous substances which are provided to your employer by the manufacturer or supplier of the substance.



When working with hazardous substances it's important to:

- Always wear appropriate PPE provided by your employer;
- Ensure adequate ventilation;
- Ensure good personal hygiene e.g. washing hands before eating;
- Make sure your employer has provided you with training in the correct use of the substances and first aid procedures;
- Do not eat, drink or smoke while working with a hazardous substance.

Other Hazards

to think about

GAS

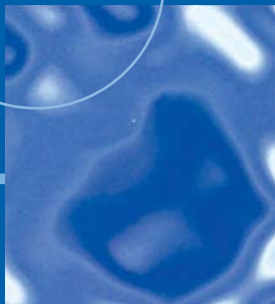
Gas is used in many cafes and restaurants as an energy source for cooking.

However, it does create a number of risks due to:

- The naked flame;
- Risk of explosion of gas bottle; and
- Gas leaks.

You can reduce the risks involved with gas by:

- Being aware the location of gas shut-off valves;
- Following correct procedures as recommended by the gas supplier;
- Asking your employer to provide you with training in safe working and emergency procedures associated with gas.



Noise



Noise is a hazard which potentially can cause permanent damage to your hearing and effect your health in other ways such as increased blood pressure, heart rate and stress.

Excessive noise is measured at 85 dB(A) (which is an average level measured over an 8 hour period) and at a peak of 140 dB(A).

If you work in an area which is a likely source of excessive noise (e.g. kitchen, laundry, bars with DJ's and live bands etc) you can reduce the risk of injury by:

- ^a Wearing ear protection supplied by your employer;
- Being instructed by your employer on how to wear and take care of your hearing protection effectively.



Skin penetrating injuries

Our skin forms a protective barrier to outside infection. When we suffer cuts and/or puncture wounds, the barrier is reduced allowing life threatening infection to enter our bodies.

It is important to:

- Ask your employer about providing you with training/instruction on safe work practices and infection control;
- Use PPE supplied by your employer where necessary;
- Be aware of the procedure in your workplace for reporting a skin penetrating injury;
- Dispose of potentially contaminated sharps into a suitable, puncture resistant container;
- Avoid picking up sharps - use tongs etc.



Fitness for Work

It is *essential* that all persons are in a fit state to carry out their duties while at work. Alcohol and certain drugs can effect an individual's ability to perform their duties in a safe manner placing themselves and/or others at risk. To ensure that your own safety and the safety of others is not effected by fitness for work issues:

- Check with your Doctor regarding any prescribed medication you may be taking and the possible effects on your ability to perform your job safely;
- Don't attend work unless you are in a fit state to perform your duties in a safe manner;
- Inform your employer and/or supervisor if you have reason to believe a co-worker is not in a fit state for work.





Are you ready to perform your job in a safe manner?

Prior to commencing a new job or your regular duties, you might like to ask yourself the following questions in order to reduce your risk of injury at work.

- 1 Have I read carefully any written or printed information regarding occupational health and safety supplied to me by my employer?.....
- 2 Have I participated in instruction/training in the safe operation of all pieces of equipment I am expected to use in the course of my regular duties?.....
- 3 Am I aware of my obligations/responsibilities under current occupational health and safety legislation?
- 4 Do I know what my employer's obligations/responsibilities are under occupational health and safety legislation?.....
- 5 Am I aware of the common hazards associated with my job?.....
- 6 Have I participated in an induction/initial training process performed by my employer prior to commencing my duties?
- 7 Has my employer supplied me with all PPE necessary to perform my job safely and instructed me in its correct use?.....
- 8 Am I familiar with the process of identifying and reporting hazards in my workplace?.....
- 9 Do I know who to contact for further information regarding occupational health and safety in my state, if necessary?.....

If you answered NO to any of the questions, talk to you employer about what can be done so you can answer YES! Remember safety at work is everyone's concern!



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For further information on
Occupational Health and
Safety phone:

- Commerce Queensland on
07 3842 2257
Website: www.commerceqld.com.au
- WorkCover NSW Information
Centre on 13 10 50
Website: www.workcover.nsw.gov.au

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