

health and safety at work

The Recruitment and Employment Confederation, of which Bucks and Berks Recruitment is a member, has produced this information to make sure that Temporary Workers and candidates are aware of their responsibilities under Health and Safety at Work law, as well as our responsibilities and those of our employer Client(s) that use our services.

Temporary Workers and Candidates' Responsibilities

Your Consultant will inform you of any health and safety risks that our employer Clients have notified us about with regard to temporary assignments or permanent vacancies. If you work in an assignment as a Bucks and Berks Temporary Worker you will receive our Temps Guide. Please pay special attention to the health and safety section.

Everyone must take care of his or her health and safety at work. Young or inexperienced workers require special consideration, so if you are under 18 you must tell your supervisor/manager in the employer Client to which you are assigned. Below are details of your responsibilities, which can also be found on our website www.bucksandberks.co.uk.

You must:

- Assess any risks to your health and safety during an assignment. This extends to reporting any dangers or inherent risks in the workplace to a representative of the employer Client.
- Observe the employer Client's Health and Safety at Work policy, if possible, asking the employer Client for sight of the policy before starting the assignment.
- Co-operate with the employer Client on health and safety matters, following all instructions to ensure a safe system of work.
- Advise Bucks and Berks Recruitment and the employer Client if you are pregnant and that a specific risk assessment needs to be undertaken by the employer Client.
- Take all reasonable steps to safeguard your own safety and that of any other person who may be affected by your actions.
- Report any injury or accident that occurs whilst on the assignment to the employer Client, and ensure that Bucks and Berks Recruitment is informed of all details of the injury or accident as soon as possible.
- Wear any protective clothing and equipment that you have been told to wear in order to carry out the assignment.

Our Employers' Responsibilities

Employer Clients are required by law to:

- Treat Temporary Workers and candidates as they would treat one of their own employees for all health and safety matters.
- Make Temporary Workers and candidates aware of their health and safety policy.
- Assess the risks to which Temporary Workers and candidates might be exposed and to draw them to their attention and to Bucks and Berks Recruitment.
- Advise Temporary Workers and candidates on any hazardous substances with which they may be working.
- Advise Temporary Workers and candidates on emergency and evacuation alarms and procedures, particularly in the event of a fire.
- Ensure that manual handling is carried out safely by people trained to do so.
- Let Temporary Workers and candidates know the name(s) of their authorised health and safety representative(s).
- Ensure that Temporary Workers and candidates are wearing and using any appropriate protective clothing and equipment required for the work.
- Record any accidents or injuries to Temporary Workers and candidates in the employer Client's accident record book and if necessary inform Bucks and Berks Recruitment and the Health and Safety Executive.
- Analyse the risks involved to Temporary Workers and candidates who regularly use computers/VDUs.

Bucks and Berks Recruitments' Responsibilities

We are responsible for:

- Making reasonable enquiries of employer Clients about their approach to health and safety, their health and safety policy and risk assessment.
- Passing on to Temporary Workers and candidates all the relevant information provided by the employer Clients on any qualifications and skills they will need in order to do the job safely and any health and safety issues connected with the assignment.
- Advising Temporary Workers and candidates on any standards of health required by the employer Client and any medical checks that they may have to undergo.

health and safety – computer/VDU users

Specific health and safety rules protect Temporary Workers and candidates who habitually use computers for a significant part of their normal work. It is the employer Client's responsibility to analyse the health and safety risks of workstations.

Temporary Workers under a contract for services are defined as a 'user' of computers and VDUs whilst working through Bucks and Berks Recruitment. Unlike employees who regularly work with VDUs, Temporary Workers are not entitled to free eye tests and Temporary Workers should provide their own suitable eyewear.

There are many things that Temporary Workers, candidates and Clients can do to help themselves and ensure that they avoid potential health problems:

- Adjusting their chair and computer to find the most comfortable position to work. As a rough guide, forearms should be approximately horizontal and eyes at the same height as the top of the screen.
- Make sure there is enough space underneath the desk to move legs freely. If there are any obstacles such as boxes or equipment, please ask your supervisor/manager to move these.
- Avoid excess pressure on the backs of your legs and knees.
- Not sit in the same position for long periods and making sure you change your posture as often as practical.
- Adjust keyboard and screen so that you have a good viewing and keyboard position. A space in front of the hands is sometimes helpful for resting the hands and wrists when not typing.
- Not bending hands at the wrist when using the keyboard. Try to keep a soft touch on the keys and do not over stretch your fingers.
- Make sure there is enough workspace for documents. A document holder may help to avoid awkward neck movements.
- Arrange desk and screen so that bright lights are not reflected on the screen. Temporary Workers and candidates should not be directly facing a window or bright lights.
- Adjust curtains or blinds to prevent unwanted light.
- Make sure the screen is clean.
- Use the screen brightness control to suit the lighting conditions of the room.
- Organise work so that Temporary Workers and candidates can take regular, short breaks away from the screen (recommended every hour).

health and safety – manual handling, lifting and carrying

Temporary Workers and candidates must not put themselves at risk when lifting and carrying in an assignment. If you have not received specific training in manual handling you should bring this to the employer Client's attention, if asked to lift or carry items at work.

health and safety – general fire safety

Our employer Clients should inform Temporary Workers and candidates of the procedures to be taken in the case of a fire, when they first start work. Temporary Workers and candidates should make themselves familiar with the procedures to be followed, including fire drills, fire alarms and the fire exits at the place of work.