

# Safety Matters in Charity Retailing

Information Sheet No. 10

ASSOCIATION OF  
**CHARITY SHOPS**  
SUPPORTING CHARITY RETAIL

020 7255 4470 T 14 CENTRAL HOUSE  
020 7255 4475 F UPPER WOBURN PLACE  
LONDON WC1H 0AE

## Signs, Posters and Notices

### Safety Signs

The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996 put into practice the European Directive on Safety Signs. This is designed to standardise safety signs and symbols throughout the European Union to reduce the risk of misunderstandings arising from geographical differences.

All employers must use a safety sign where a risk would otherwise go uncontrolled. These signs must use the statutory colours, shapes and symbols. They must be kept in a good condition. Hand-made signs are not acceptable.

#### There are five types of safety signs:

**Safe Condition.** A green square or rectangle with a white border gives information about safe conditions within a designated area. A typical example would be a Fire Exit sign or a First Aid notice.



**Prohibition.** A red circle with a red diagonal cross through a white background and the symbol within, means that this particular act is prohibited within a designated area. A classic example would be a No Smoking sign.



**Mandatory Action.** A blue circle around a white symbol or text means that this particular action **must** be carried out within a designated area. An example would be an instruction to keep a fire door closed.



**Fire Fighting.** A red square or rectangle encompassing a white symbol indicates the location of fire fighting equipment and alarms.



**Hazard Identification.** A yellow triangle with a black border containing a symbol indicates that there is a potential hazard within a designated area. Caution, Wet Floor or Caution, Mind the Step signs are typical examples.



### Notices

All workplaces are required by law to display the following posters and notices:

- Employer's Liability Insurance Certificate
- H&S Law – what you should know - poster
- Employer's H&S Policy Statement
- Fire Emergency Instructions
- Emergency Aid notice - with the names of Appointed Persons

There should also be a sign on display indicating the location of the first aid box if it is not kept in a prominent position, clearly visible to all who work on site.



**Health & Safety Law Poster**

Employers have a legal duty under the Health and Safety Information for Employees Regulations (HSIER) to either:

- a) display the H&S Law poster in a prominent position in each workplace or,
- b) provide each worker with a copy of the equivalent leaflet / pocket card outlining British health and safety laws.

On 6 April 2009, HSE published a new version of their H&S Law poster. This presents the same information in a new way that is intended to be readable and engaging.

It is currently permissible for either the new or the old versions of the poster to be displayed. However, the old poster and leaflet **must** be replaced by the new poster or pocket cards by no later than **5 April 2014**.

*The Old – pre-2009 – Poster:*



The old poster, pictured above, contains three blank boxes that need to be completed with the relevant information for the organisation and the workplace. These relate to safety representatives, the competent person to assist with H&S responsibilities and the details of the local enforcement authority and of the Employment Medical Advisory Service. The latter addresses can be obtained by phoning HSE's Infoline on 0845 345 0055.

Unlike the previous approved poster and leaflet, the new 2009 poster and pocket card do **not** require the employer to provide further

information in writing: instead, workers are advised to phone the HSE Infoline (0845 345 0055) to be put in touch with these services.

*The New 2009 Poster:*



Employers are not obliged to display the H&S Law poster if they instead give each worker the new pocket card, or the pre-2009 leaflet *Health & Safety Law – What you should know*. (See the Further Reading section of Information Sheet No. 1.)

However, if they do give their workers the pre-2009 leaflets, they must also provide each worker with the information that would have been inserted in the 3 blank boxes on the poster, and to keep that information updated. It is because of this that employers tend to display the poster rather than hand out the leaflet.

Some charities find it helpful to put all H&S posters and notices on one notice board.

*Acorns Children's Hospice Trust and The Shaw Trust shops have a notice board that is designated for H&S notices only. Save the Children UK shops have a cupboard designated for H&S where the first aid box, accident book and all H&S files are kept.*

**Smoke-free Regulations**

Under the regulations introduced in 2007, all workplaces must be smoke-free and have a No Smoking sign displayed in a prominent position at each entrance.

For most shops in England the signs need to:

- Be the equivalent of A5 in area
- Display the international No Smoking symbol in colour, 70mm diameter minimum
- Carry the words 'No Smoking. It is against the law to smoke in these premises.'

The required dimensions for signs in Wales and Northern Ireland are slightly different. In Wales the wording should be in Welsh and English.

Shops located within other smoke-free premises (e.g. indoor shopping centres) need only to display a sign with the international symbol in colour, 70mm in diameter minimum, at each entrance.



### Other Notices

Some organisations have other notices on display, either on their H&S notice board or elsewhere in the backroom. These include:

- Safe Sorting Guidelines poster
- Safe Working Practices poster
- Manual Handling techniques poster
- Local Doctor/Casualty Department contact details
- Safety Instructions for Visitors
- Steamer Safety notice
- Steamer Staff Training Record
- Fire extinguishers – what the different types are for and how to use them

The next sheet in this Information Pack is an A4 notice on **Puncture Wounds**. This gives advice on what to do in the event of an injury that may involve contamination or infection. It could be photocopied and issued to shops as a backroom notice. Laminating the notice would increase its life.

PDSA laminates all its backroom H&S notices and posters, and has issued a Sharps Injury notice to all its shops. (This is similar to the Association's Puncture Wounds notice.)

### Charity Shop Posters

The Association has produced a set of three posters – pictured below – which can be downloaded for free from the website ([www.charityshops.org.uk](http://www.charityshops.org.uk)). Designed for displaying in shop backrooms, the set comprises:

- **Safe Working Practices poster (A2)** This contains the basic Do's and Don'ts for working safely in charity shops.
- **Manual Handling poster (A3)** This shows the good lifting and carrying techniques required in charity shops.
- **Safe Sorting poster (A3)** This lists the key steps to sorting donated stock safely.

### Further Reading

*Safety signs and signals. Guidance on the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996.*

HSE publication ISBN 0 7176 0870 0

*ROSPA Safety Signs Catalogue.*

Available from [www.rospa.co.uk](http://www.rospa.co.uk) or telephone 0121 248 2000

For more information on the new H&S Law poster, visit the HSE website:

[www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/lawposter.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/lawposter.htm)

For more information on smoke-free regulations see Chapter 8E, or visit:

[www.smokefreeengland.co.uk](http://www.smokefreeengland.co.uk)

[www.smokingbanwales.co.uk](http://www.smokingbanwales.co.uk)

[www.spacetobreathe.org.uk](http://www.spacetobreathe.org.uk)

