

Council of Somali Organisations

Safety Guidance

October 2021

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Registered Charity Number 1154667
Company number 07405401 (Private company limited by
guarantee without share capital).



Introduction

CSO recognises that there are ongoing challenges to keeping organisations safe and secure. Not only because of the COVID pandemic, but also due to racism, xenophobia and hate crime. **Here is a Guide to Keeping your Organisation Safe and Secure.**

This guide has been produced to provide helpful guidance and tips on how to keep organisations that support their communities, and the people that they support, safe. It can be used by managers, staff and volunteers to help mitigate any risks and potential harm to their service users.

Guide Headings

- Appoint an organisation safety team
- Review your organisation's safety operations
- Complete an organisation safety checklist
- Keep your service users safe
- Utilise local partnerships
- What to do in an emergency

These will be described in further detail over the next slides

Appoint an Organisation Safety Team

- Appoint a lead security person for your organisation
- Train safety officers
- Carry out or update an urgent risk assessment for your organisation's security processes
- Consider holding relevant drills to ensure processes are working when needed
- Keep an incident report log to record any incidents
- Appoint a spokesperson for the organisation to liaise with the media and make statements

Review your Organisation's Safety Procedures



- Ensure there is adequate security at busy times
- When your buildings are not in use ensure door and windows are locked and limit access points to the buildings
- Keep gates closed and locked when your organisation is closed
- Have a member of staff or volunteer on site during opening hours
- Implement a lone worker policy if any staff need to work alone
- Prepare a lockdown policy for your organisation

Complete an organisation safety checklist

- Ensure your buildings are well-lit externally
- Check your CCTV is fully working and always recording
- Fire exits and related paths must be kept clear and unobstructed
- Have an evacuation plan clearly displayed
- When locking up, check all windows, doors and points of entry are locked and secure
- Ensure fire, smoke, burglar and carbon monoxide alarms or detectors are working properly and tested
- Have visitors sign in and accompany them throughout their visit

Complete an organisation safety checklist



- Make sure unused halls and spaces are locked
- Seek professional advice to ensure buildings are adequately insured
- Report suspicious packages to the police immediately
- Ensure any instances of hate, whether online, mail or phone calls are reported and do not engage with them
- Report all racist, xenophobic and hate attacks at a hate crime reporting centre and look at a system to record your organisation or buddy up with a hate crime reporting centre where it can be recorded: www.gov.uk/report-hate-crime or call 101 to report it to the police

Keep your Service Users Safe



- Encourage your service users to:
 - travel with others and not to walk alone in secluded areas
 - consider carrying a personal alarm with them
 - have an emergency setting on their mobile phone if they ever need to call the police
 - walk in well-lit areas and busy main roads where there is more likely to be people around
 - always inform family and friends of routes taken when travelling

Utilise Local Partnerships



- Create relationships with local Counsellors and police/fire/emergency services in your locality as well as meet your local MP to discuss community concerns and ensure your premises are compliant with building regulations on fire safety
- Set up a meeting with local police community support officers (PCSO) who can support you organisation and visit regularly
- Build close relationships with local interfaith groups or set up local interfaith groups or set up a local interfaith group if there is not one already in place
- Create good relationships and security arrangements with surrounding local organisations in the case of an attack or in an emergency to support each other

What to do in an Emergency



- Call 999
- Have an emergency contact list of local community support groups
- Install an emergency police alarm in reception to use if needed
- Remain vigilant and calm

Useful Contacts



- For non-emergencies:
 - Report to the police using 101
 - www.gov.uk/report-hate-crime

- To report any suspicious activity, contact the anti-terror hotline on:
 - 0800 789 321
 - www.act.campaign.gov.uk

Summary



- Prepare a safety plan and review it on a regular basis
- Ensure your security systems are in place and fully functioning
- Continue engaging with local partnerships
- Remain vigilant and calm
- Report hate crime and abuse