

L'ARCHE ANTIGONISH
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH &
SAFETY POLICY, PROCEDURES, and GUIDELINES

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Part A: Policy.

L'ARCHE ANTIGONISH OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

L'Arche Antigonish is committed to providing a healthy and safe work environment for its employees and integrating that commitment into our everyday activities. To realize that commitment, we will implement the following Occupational Health and Safety Policy:

L'Arche Antigonish is responsible for the health and safety of its employees while they are at work and will make every effort to provide a healthy and safe work environment.

Leadership Team, House Leaders and Program Coordinators will be trained and held responsible for ensuring:

- That the employees under their supervision follow this policy.
- That employees use safe work practices and receive adequate training to protect their health and safety.
- The safety of equipment and the facility at large.

The Leadership Team will cooperate with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee, the Health and Safety Representatives and employees to create a healthy and safe work environment. Cooperation will also be extended to others such as contractors, owners, inspectors, etc.

The employees of L'Arche Antigonish will be required to support our health and safety policy and to cooperate with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee, the Health and Safety Representatives and with others exercising authority under the applicable laws.

It is the duty of each employee to report to the House Leaders, Program Coordinators and/or Leadership Team, as soon as possible, any hazardous conditions, injury, incident or illness related to the workplace. Also, employees must protect their own health and safety by complying with applicable laws and by following company policies, procedures, rules and instructions as prescribed.

Working safely is required of all employees in all situations. Where possible, hazards will be eliminated. Where hazards do exist as a function of the nature of the work, employees are required to use personal protective equipment, clothing, devices and materials, or to take other protective measures as established by the safe work practices.

We recognize the employees' duty to identify hazards, and support and encourage employees to play an active role in identifying hazards and to offer suggestions or ideas to improve health and safety.

To ensure this policy continues to meet our needs, L'Arche Antigonish will ensure it is reviewed by our Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee, Health and Safety Representatives and employees at least annually.

Part B: Organization.

Responsibility for ensuring that this policy is being carried out at L'Arche Antigonish premises lies with the Community Leader, Health and Safety Coordinator, House and Project Leaders, and the Health and Safety (OHS) Committee. (See appendix)

All employees have a responsibility to co-operate with L'Arche Antigonish to achieve a healthy and safe work place and to take reasonable care of themselves and others.

Any employee who notices a health and safety problem, which they are not able to correct, must straight away inform their House/Project Leader, the Health and Safety coordinator or a member of the OHS committee. (See appendix)

The Health and Safety (OHS) Committee are responsible for:

- a) Safety Training Program: Orientation team. (See appendix)
- b) Carrying out safety inspections.
- c) Investigating accidents.
- d) Monitoring maintenance of equipment: Health and Safety coordinator.

Responsibility for ensuring that the Health and Safety Policies and Guidelines are read, signed for and is being carried out lies with the Health and Safety (OHS) Committee.

Part C: Specific Arrangements.

Copies of the L'Arche Antigonish Occupation Health and Safety Policy, Procedures, and Guidelines are kept in each workplace and online at www.larcheantigonish.ca/policies. Employees must sign each procedure or guideline directly relevant to their place of work to ensure that they have understood them, and agreed to put them into practice. Employees must review each procedure or guideline annually and sign to say they have done so.

First Aid

Each house or place of work or office is to have a First Aid box whose location is to be made known to all who come there. They should also have trained First Aiders who will be responsible for reporting accidents, which are to be recorded.

In each location:

- The First Aid box is kept: (See appendix)
- All full time employees will be trained in First Aid within their first 3 months
- Accident records are kept: At the office.

Inspections

Health & Safety inspections are carried out by Homes Coordinator on a bi-monthly basis at all locations. This inspection takes account of General cleanliness, Food Hygiene, ensuring escape routes are kept clear, waste disposal, safe storage and any other areas as appropriate

Risks

Fire safety, electrical equipment, machinery and dangerous substances are all regularly checked by a nominated person in each of L'Arche Antigonish premises. Risk Assessments are made on both the premises and regarding people with learning disabilities. These are recorded and the records kept with the area Health & Safety documentation.

Fire Safety

Fire alarms, lights and escape routes are checked on a monthly basis by an assistant, who also checks that Firefighting equipment is usable and in the right place.

The fire alarm system and the fire extinguishers are serviced on an annual basis. See appendix for details of company that services fire extinguishers.

Risk Assessment

L'Arche Antigonish operates a Risk Management Policy and Risk Assessment procedures are carried out in each house, work and office area. The Risk Assessment Procedure must be in place where the activities of any person connected with L'Arche, (whether an assistant or a person with a learning disability), present a hazard either to themselves or others.

Risk Assessments will be done yearly by the Homes Coordinator for each location.

Training

The people responsible for ensuring all employees receive Health and Safety Training are: The Assistants Coordinator and the Health and Safety (OHS) Committee members. Every employee must receive induction training in Health and Safety. The areas covered must include: safety inspections, emergency planning, medication administration (applies to house and work only), electricity, first aid, food hygiene, fire safety and evacuation procedures, accident reporting, infectious diseases, manual handling of loads and people, and personal protective equipment.

Advice and Consultancy

The local Occupational Health and Safety Office address: (See appendix)

The local Doctors contact details: (See appendix)

The pharmacy we use: MacKinnon Pharmasave, 243 Main St

Phone: 863-3040

Hospital: St Martha's Regional Hospital, 25 Bay St

Phone: 867-4500

In order for the Health and Safety Policy to operate successfully, it is essential that the Employer and each individual employee take their respective responsibilities seriously. The following procedures are included as a safeguard.

Grievance Procedure

If you have reported a possible safety or health hazard to your House or Project Leader and/or Homes Coordinator and feel that insufficient action has been taken, you should refer the matter in writing to the Community Leader.

The Community Leader will promptly investigate the matter and discuss the conclusions with you and the Safety officer on the local Committee. Appropriate measures will be implemented as soon as possible.

Disciplinary Procedure.

Understanding and complying with all the health and safety procedures is of the utmost importance and is a **LEGAL OBLIGATION**. (See note below)

Failure to comply with these procedures or tampering with any of the health and safety equipment may lead to implementation of the Disciplinary Procedure.

NOTE: Failure to comply with legislative health and safety requirements can lead to **personal prosecution** by the enforcing authority.

Part D: Health and Safety Guidelines

FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURES

- Read the Evacuation Plan for your house, workplace or office. Talk through these procedures with your House leader or Health and Safety officer. You have an important role and need to react correctly to the ALARM
- Keep all exits and hallways unblocked. They are needed for emergency evacuation!
- Co-operate in all Fire Drill and evacuation procedures.
- Co-operate in the regular maintenance and testing of Fire Equipment.
- Fire drills are to be scheduled. Assistants who are on their time away/days away during a scheduled drill date will not be required to participate in evacuations. In the event of an alarm sounding that is unscheduled (burning toast sets off the smoke alarm), assistants on their time away/days away who are in the home during the alarm will enter into a supporting role and aid in evacuation procedures.

EMERGENCY CALLING THE FIRE DEPARTMENT, AMBULANCE OR RCMP

Lift the telephone receiver and dial 911.

Give the operator the telephone number of the building and state FIRE, AMBULANCE, or RCMP (as applicable).

When the fire department, ambulance or RCMP answers, state clearly the reason you are calling and give the address of the building.

- DO NOT REPLACE THE RECEIVER UNTIL THE FIRE DEPARTMENT, AMBULANCE OR RCMP HAS REPEATED YOUR ADDRESS AND HAS CONFIRMED THAT YOU MAY HANG UP.
- Call the on call Coordinator (telephone number on the most recent Community Information Sheet) to make sure the community knows what is happening.
- IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE, RAISE THE ALARM AND EVACUATE THE BUILDING. CLOSE ALL DOORS AS YOU GO, STAY OUT AND DO NOT COME BACK FOR VALUABLES ETC.

EMERGENCY DISASTER PROCEDURES

A disaster (for example fatality, multiple casualties, fire, flood, and major damage) is fortunately, a very rare occurrence. Hopefully no one will ever be in this situation but accidents, as we know, are always unplanned. As always with health and safety, it is sensible to be one step ahead. Frightening though a disaster may be - it will be far less so if everyone, including, where possible the Core Members, has already worked out what to do in advance.

- Follow EMO (Emergency Management Office) PLAN located in your House.

FIRST AID AND MEDICATION

- KNOW where the First Aid box is in your house, day program or office.
- KNOW who the First Aiders are in your house, day program or office.
- The First Aid box must be kept: **(a)** easily available; and **(b)** fully stocked.

ADMINISTRATION AND CONTROL OF MEDICINES

L'Arche Antigonish has a comprehensive Administration of Medication Policy and Storage of Drugs policy. See www.larcheantigonish.ca/policies for a copy of the most up-to-date policies.

Assistants ARE NOT permitted to administer medication until they have read both of these policies, completed the required training, and have been signed off by their House/Project Leader as competent to administer medication.

There are two types of records available in a home/day program kept where medication is stored.

1. **Medication profile** - an individual record for each resident of all medication with notes of particular interest e.g. allergies.
2. **Administration record** - an individual record of medication administered.

There is a person named responsible for the maintenance of records and medication by the house leader in each home/day program. These records ensure that medications are administered efficiently in accordance with the prescriber's instructions and allow for an adequate method of stock control.

LIFTING & MANUAL HANDLING

Manual Handling is not just about lifting people. It is also about pushing and pulling heavy or awkward shaped objects, twisting your body, and by doing so putting excessive strain on it.

All Assistants are required to take care of themselves and to make proper use of any system or equipment provided by L'Arche. This applies to lifting, objects or people. The Community is responsible for assessing all situations where lifting or manual handling is involved, and will provide appropriate equipment and /or training. If lifting or manual handling is unavoidable, the following steps are to be taken:

1. Follow the specific procedures that are in place with individuals in your area. (See their Individual Support Plans - ISPs). If heavy objects are involved, follow the procedures in place, and use any equipment provided.
2. You must **ASK FOR HELP** if you feel an injury might be caused to you or the person being lifted. Don't take foolish risks. Back injuries are often permanent.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES ABOUT LIFTING - GOLDEN RULES

- Before you start, use your **HEAD**. This is the most important part of the body. **THINK** before you lift. Always **CONSIDER** and **ASSESS**: a) the task c) the

working environment /distance /impediments b) the load d) your capabilities /the need of the team & its capabilities. Then you do the following:

- **Always** keep your back straight.
- **Bend** your knees and hips.
- **Tuck** your chin in.
- **Never** twist your body.
- **Use** your WHOLE HAND to grip - and grip no wider than shoulders
- **Position** yourself as CLOSE to the load as possible, keep your feet apart, and adjust your base to keep it secure.
- **Be sure** of the purpose and direction of the movement planned, (do it in stages if necessary).
- **Explain** actions to those helping, or being helped - **Only ONE person** to do this.
- **Clear** the area around where the lifting is to take place - the route, the pickup and set down points.
-

N.B. NEVER ATTEMPT TO LIFT A PERSON OR ANYTHING THAT YOU KNOW IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR YOU.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR HELPING PEOPLE MOVE

Some Core Members will have specific guidelines in regards to manual handling and the operation of aids to enable safe manual handling. These guidelines are located in their ISP and must be read by Assistants before they engage in Manual Handling with Core Members.

DUTIES OF L'ARCHE ANTIGONISH AS AN EMPLOYER

- To conduct a suitable Risk Assessment of all Lifting and Manual Handling situations involving assistants and members.
- To seek advice from a specialist consultant for each Risk Assessment
- To train all assistants who may need to 'Lift', the methods and use of equipment specified by the specialist consultant.
- To maintain any equipment used for manual handling and lifting to a healthy and safe standard.
- To review the Risk Assessment, outcome and monitor standards on an annual basis and make changes when appropriate.
- To provide basic awareness of Manual Handling course for all house and work assistants.

DUTIES OF EMPLOYEES

- To use lifting techniques and equipment specified by Risk Assessment outcome, (not just to ensure safety but to maintain consistency for the people with disabilities and assistants).
- To report any defects in equipment provided.
- To participate in any training provided.

- To inform their Supervisor/House/Program Leader of any physical condition which may affect their ability to assist people in manual handling situations safely.
- To report all injuries and accidents to their Supervisor/House/Program Leader and in the relevant Accident Book as soon as possible after the event.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH ANY ASPECT OF THESE DUTIES MAY RESULT IN ACCIDENTS AND/OR DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

GUIDELINES FOR ASSISTING SOMEONE IN A WHEELCHAIR.

Any assistant might be required to help with a wheelchair, so please read even if no one in your house uses a wheelchair.

- Put the **brake on**
- Place the footrests to the side. This prevents the person and yourself from banging your shins (if someone has poor circulation they will bruise easily).
- Make sure the person knows you are there. Invite them to move (give details) and ask for their assistance.
- Look them in the eye when you invite them, and reinforce with a physical gesture, e.g. holding out your hand. You may have to wait a little while but you should never move before the person is ready.
- Make sure the person's feet are straight on the ground.
- When assisting from the side, get a firm grip of the person's hand (ask an assistant who knows the person the best way). Make sure their elbow is tucked in close to their side. Never pull a person under the arms.
- When assisting from the front, place your hands just under the core member's shoulder blades or grip the handles of a transfer belt. (Make sure the belt is snug enough to not ride up). They can place their hands on your shoulders or grip your belt, but never your neck.
- Place your feet a little way apart.
- Bend your knees a little.
- Stick your bottom out!! It may look silly but will help you lift and save your back.
- With support, guide the person out of the wheelchair by leading them forward. If the person knows what you are doing, they will be able to assist you.
- If you cannot hold a person because of an unexpected movement, you can either: a) Lower them back into their chair if possible b) Shout for help, or c) Drop the person if necessary (This is speaking to situations where a core member might lurch away from the assistant unexpectedly and take a fall, and it might be better to let them go completely rather than have the assistant fall on top of them, creating further injuries on both persons).
 - If you cannot work out a particular move/lift, **ask for advice** from a more experienced assistant, or from the physiotherapist if necessary.
 - Remember to maintain a person's dignity, especially in an emergency situation.

SAFETY IN VEHICLES

There are three elements to think about when using vehicles:

1. IS THE VEHICLE IN A SAFE CONDITION TO DRIVE?
2. IS THE DRIVER LICENSED, TESTED AND PHYSICALLY ABLE TO DRIVE?
3. ARE THE PASSENGERS SEATED PROPERLY, BELTED AND CALM?

VEHICLE CONDITION

- BEFORE DRIVING, especially prior to longer journeys, (outside of Antigonish), drivers should check the condition of the car, (oil, fuel, water, wipers, lights, tires, door locks, safety belts). Check brakes and steering on first moving off. If the vehicle is **NOT SAFE** and it is not possible to rectify faults, then don't put people at risk use alternative forms of transport. REPORT any faults to the office. At the beginning of each day, the pre-trip checklist should be completed and signed. Also ensure snow and ice is completely removed from the vehicle before setting off on your journey.
- Any heavy objects, luggage, shopping, etc. - should be loaded in such a way that they will not fly forward in case of sudden breaking or accident. Please do **NOT OVERLOAD VEHICLES**. If carrying WHEELCHAIRS, (as baggage), please secure them well as they can cause serious injury if they get loose. If a person is in the wheelchair please follow relevant procedures.
- Every vehicle should have a FIRST AID BOX. Ensure that you know where it is, and that it is there and complete! There are also FIRE EXTINGUISHERS in the vehicles - check that you know where they are and how to use them.
- MAINTENANCE schedules must be adhered to for annual/bi-annual inspections, yearly brake inspections and regular services.
- Insurance is provided for all vehicles. The details are found in each vehicle in the glove compartment.
- If you breakdown or need roadside assistance call the office or the emergency cell phone who will get help out to you.
- If you are in an accident with another vehicle you should complete the Accident details form found in the glove compartment when it is safe to do so.

DRIVERS

- Only those drivers who meet the requirements of the L'Arche Antigonish Drivers Policy may drive L'Arche Antigonish vehicles. A copy of the most recent policy is available at www.larcheantigonish.ca/policies
- Drivers should be prepared to give emergency First Aid. A one day basic first aid training course would be the minimum requirement.
- On long journeys PLAN for breaks and have a relief driver. **STOP IF TIRED.**
- DRIVERS are ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE for the SAFETY of passengers, and must ensure they are ALL USING SAFETY BELTS.

PASSENGERS

- SEAT BELTS. The law requires that seat belts are worn at all times, even for a very short journey. This applies to front and back seats. Be conscious about teaching the people in your area to find and fasten their seat belts as soon as they get into a vehicle, as well as helping when necessary.
- SEATING. Anyone who for any reason might be a danger or distraction to the driver should never sit next to, or immediately behind, the driver. Reasons might be: grabbing (intentional or otherwise), potential aggression or noise which the particular driver finds distracting. Before someone gets into the vehicle, think about where they will need to get out, so that they can sit in a place where they will get out on the sidewalk side.
- Ensure you have ADEQUATE SUPPORT for the group who are travelling in a vehicle, and if individuals are anxious do try to reassure and calm them before setting off. OBSERVE the MOOD of the group and aim for a CALM atmosphere.

On a long journey it is useful to take:

- A garbage bag, (and see that it is used). - A cluttered floor is dangerous, particularly around the driver or any exit. It is also unhygienic and unpleasant;
- A plastic bag and tissues in case of sickness;
- A bottle of water and paper cups.

ALL ASSISTANTS ARE JOINTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR SAFETY IN THE VEHICLES, AND THE COMFORT AND WELL BEING OF PASSENGERS. DO NOT LEAVE EVERYTHING TO THE DRIVER!!

Tips that can help you in an accident

- Turn off ignition and turn on your emergency flashers.
- Get immediate help for anyone who is injured. Don't move a victim unless the person is in immediate danger. Try to keep injured people warm.
- Don't let anyone smoke, light a match or place lighted flares near the vehicles in case of a fuel leak.
- Call the police, give them the exact accident location, and inform them of any injuries or unusual circumstances.
- Warn approaching traffic by asking bystanders to direct traffic.
- Notify L'Arche Community Leader or on-call Coordinator - the telephone number will be found on the most recent Community Information Sheet.

FOOD SAFETY AND HYGIENE

Food is of great interest to our whole community. There are three issues for us to be aware of in this regard:

1. Nutrition: Eating a healthy, balanced diet
2. Proper food handling to prevent contamination: Controlling bacteria and preventing infections by how we handle and store food.

3. Safety in the kitchen: Storing sharp knives safely, avoiding slippery surfaces, ensuring proper maintenance and care electrical equipment, etc.

Bacteria occur naturally in uncooked food as part of the natural process of decomposition which is why all foods have a limited shelf life and /or sell by dates. Cooking kill's bacteria but they grow well between 8o C and 63o C

Four things affect bacterial growth in food:

1. The length of time food is kept,
2. The temperature at which food is kept,
3. Cross contamination of cooked food with raw food or new food with old food, and
4. Cleanliness.

Time:

IF IN DOUBT THROW IT OUT - SMALL SAVINGS ARE NEVER WORTH A
SERIOUS HEALTH RISK

- We use date labels when opening food kept in the fridge
- Never keep food too long - use leftovers on following day if possible and NEVER more than three days after originally cooked.
- Observe sell by and best before dates;
- Check food (by sight/smell) before using it;
- Never re-heat any food more than once.

Temperature:

FOOD MUST NOT BE KEPT BETWEEN 8°C AND 63°C (45°F AND 145°F)

Most cases of food poisoning are caused by food being kept at lukewarm temperatures: Food should either be really hot or really cold. A high temperature kills bacteria, a low temperature stops them multiplying. Be careful when changing the temperature of food. Heating up or cooling down food means that it goes through a lukewarm phase. Keep the lukewarm phase as short as possible.

De-Frosting

- Food must be thoroughly defrosted before cooking.
- The best way to defrost anything is overnight in the fridge. If it is a large piece of meat, it will need longer (e.g. more than 24 hrs. for 20 lb. Turkey - see instructions on the packaging).
- Throw away the thawed liquid.
- Never try to speed up the thawing process.
- Frozen PLUS Heat = lukewarm = dangerous.
- If food is not defrosted enough to cook in time for a meal, choose another menu, even if it is inconvenient.
-

Re-Heating Food

- Never re-heat food until it is just warm. Either eat it cold, or re-heat it thoroughly until it is piping or boiling hot. Re-heated food must be heated to 70°C for more than 2 minutes. (Use the Thermometer!). Bacteria are killed at HIGH temperatures, but they multiply at lukewarm temperatures.
- When re-heating meat, first heat to a very high temperature for first 30 minutes and then reduce as necessary (cover with foil or add liquid to prevent drying out).

Shopping

- Keep to a minimum the amount of time food is kept in a vehicle or shopping bag. Get food home and into the refrigerator as soon as possible. Always buy chilled and frozen foods last when shopping.

Fridge and Freezer Temperatures

- Use a thermometer to ensure that fridge temperatures are 0 - 4°C and freezer at less than - (minus) 18°C.

Other Points

- Never leave meat (cooked or uncooked) in a lukewarm place;
- Do not leave food on the cooker top, by a radiator, in a warm room, or out on a warm day;
- Make sure food reaches a high temperature right through when re-heating;
- Do not leave food to cool in a warm place;
- Do not re-freeze frozen food once thawed
- Always cook food thoroughly and sufficiently
- Use a meat thermometer as appropriate

Contamination and Cross-infection:

Uncooked food contains bacteria. Cooking kills them.

If you put:

- * uncooked food next to cooked food,
- * raw food next to cooked food,
- * uncooked food (e.g. raw meat) next to raw food (e.g. lettuce);

You risk getting contamination from bacteria where it will cause major problems.

TO AVOID CONTAMINATION:

- Do not store uncooked food next to raw food or cooked food.
- Do not store raw food next to cooked food.
- Do not leave food uncovered in the fridge. Use lids, plates, containers.
- Store uncooked meat on the bottom shelf.
- Do not use porous material (e.g. wood) chopping boards, for uncooked food.
- Wash all surfaces and utensils used for uncooked foods using very hot water. Rinse surfaces/utensils used for raw meat in BOILING water (boil kettle).

Cleanliness

Different bacteria grow on almost every surface around us. Everything that is touched can then spread bacteria onto the next surface that is touched. To ensure good cleanliness:

- Always wash your hands:
 - * before and after preparing food,
 - * in between handling raw, cooked and uncooked food,
 - * after using the toilet, coughing or sneezing.
- Remind people with a learning disability to do the same, and ensure this is done.
- Keep kitchen equipment (spoons, knives, mixing bowls, etc.), sinks and working surfaces, clothes and rubbish bins scrupulously clean.
- Do not use kitchen sinks for washing hands or laundry.
- Use clean and non-porous chopping boards for all food.
- If you have a cut or a graze, cover it with a BLUE waterproof band-aid, (so it can be easily seen if it falls off).
- NEVER handle food if you have:
 - * diarrhea or vomiting,
 - * septic cuts, sores or boils,
 - * discharges from eyes, ears or nose,
 - * or if you know you are a carrier of an infectious disease.
- Do not smoke while preparing food.

SPECIFIC FOODS AND THEIR RISKS

Fruit and vegetables: always wash thoroughly. They have been in the earth, in tropical climates, much handled, sprayed with chemicals.

Potatoes: Do not use potatoes which have gone green. They contain a chemical which is harmful to women and their future children.

Fish and Shellfish: Be very careful. They must always be fresh. Never re-heat. Never keep shellfish longer than 24 hrs. Keep cold until cooked.

Bread: If bread contains mold (blue, green, white or red), throw it away. There will also be bacterial contamination which cannot be seen. Do not simply cut off the obviously affected part.

Beans and lentils: Ensure that you follow the correct cooking instructions. Some contain harmful toxins which are destroyed by soaking and cooking for different lengths of time.

Eggs: Do not use raw eggs

Soft cheeses: Are often made with unpasteurized milk. Do not give to people who are elderly or physically frail, or pregnant.

Canned food: Never store food in the can once it is opened. (A chemical reaction with the inside of the tin produces toxins). Remove contents, put into a container and cover. Do not use tins which are swollen, dented, rusted or damaged.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT FOOD POISONING:

Food poisoning is always very unpleasant. It can make people very ill, and it can kill. People who are elderly or physically frail are especially at risk and can die from food poisoning. Symptoms of food poisoning can range from mild nausea and diarrhea to severe and prolonged nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and complications affecting breathing. Food poisoning is caused by bacteria or chemical toxins. Most food poisoning is caused by bacteria and is preventable.

SAFETY

KEY SAFETY POINTS:

1. EVERYONE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR SAFETY. If you see anything you consider to be a safety risk: • PUT IT RIGHT IF YOU CAN! • INFORM the person responsible (Team leader, Health and Safety Coordinator) so that they can put it right and so that it can be added to the Checklist, if necessary, for future reference. • If it is not corrected, INFORM the Community Leader.
2. CO-OPERATE in keeping your home, workplace or office a safe environment.
3. Find out the LOCATION of, and MODE of OPERATING, of the Service Points: Ask your Team leader - Gas; Electricity; and Water (See appendix)
4. READ the current Risk Assessments, and H&S Audit for your area. Your house or program's Risk Assessment checklist will be based on these. They will help you become familiar with what have been identified as risks, potential risks or current priorities for YOUR area. (The sample "Watch out room by room", lists a series of questions which will help you see the types of things you must become aware of on daily basis).

SAFETY – OHS INSPECTION FORM

See appendix for a copy of the OHS Inspection Form.

MISSING PERSONS

If a Core Member is missing, inform the relevant House / Project Leader immediately or in their absence a member of the Leadership Team. Also refer to the L'Arche Antigonish Missing Persons Policy – the most recent policy can be found at www.larcheantigonish.ca/policies

CONTROL OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

These regulations require all employers to make an assessment of the health risks which may arise from substances used in connection with their work.

GENERAL SAFETY PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED:

1. All hazardous substances must be STORED in a SAFE PLACE.
2. NEVER DECANT these substances from their ORIGINAL CONTAINERS. It is a requirement that everyone can see immediately from the label what the substance is, and what the manufacturer's recommendations are. In the case of bulk purchases, you may decant the substance into IDENTICAL but already finished/empty smaller containers, OF THE SAME MAKE.
3. Always READ the LABEL before use, making note of action to be taken in case of an accident. Always follow the instructions.
4. DO NOT EAT or inhale and AVOID skin contact.
5. Always WEAR the recommended personal protective equipment, e.g. gloves, masks, aprons etc.
6. NEVER MIX substances, this could give rise to dangerous by-products.
7. Consider REPLACING a hazardous substance with a less or non-hazardous one. Always do so if practicable.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

GOOD PRACTICE:

New electrical equipment should be checked by the team leader for a correctly wired, safe plug with the right size fuse. It is advisable to mark each item to show that it has been checked.

GENERAL DO'S AND DON'TS:

DO:

- Ensure that everyone involved in the use of electricity is fully informed of the safety requirements;
- Unplug appliances when not in use.
- Handle switches and apparatus with dry hands;
- Carry out regular inspections and maintenance;
- Ensure that extension cords are completely uncoiled
- Check electrical tools and their flexible cords before use and store them in a clean dry place;
- Follow manufacturers' instructions;
- Contact an electrical contractor when in any doubt about the safety of electrical equipment of the installation;
- Ensure that the contractors install electrical systems which comply with the Electricity at Work Regulations.
- Use outdoor plugs for outdoor equipment.

DON'T:

- Extend cables or flexible cords by means of temporary joins;
- Overload circuits or flexible cords, e.g. when using multiple adapters;
- Connect portable electric tools to lighting circuits;

- Continue to use faulty equipment. Switch off, call in an electrician and make sure that no-one can use the equipment until it is mended;

NON CANADIAN Plugs and Electrical Equipment:

L'Arche welcomes people from all over the world, but Canada has its own electrical standards for plugs and voltages. These are NOT necessarily compatible with electrical goods from other countries. If used you may destroy them and could cause a fire, or injury. DO NOT USE THEM !!!

ELECTRICAL CHECKS :

It is good practice to do an annual check on all portable items. (This is always a part of your area's checklist). All plugs should be examined, wires checked in case they are loose or wrongly wired and fuses checked for the correct fuse.

GAS SAFETY

There are two dangers around gas to be aware of. Explosions from a leak of unburned gas, and poisoning from carbon monoxide from burned gas.

EXPLOSION:

If you smell gas on entering a building:

- DO NOT turn on anything ELECTRICAL, (e.g. a light switch);
- OPEN windows and doors;
- CHECK all Gas appliances are turned off, (often the leak will be caused by the stove being left on and unlit);
- TURN OFF the mains Gas if the above is not the cause;
- EVACUATE the building until Gas disperses, and;
- CALL for help if necessary and/or call Gas Supplier (see appendix)

CARBON MONOXIDE: Any gas appliance which malfunctions can emit carbon monoxide. Unlike unburned gas, you cannot see or smell carbon monoxide and it is HIGHLY POISONOUS. It can kill in a matter of hours, and you are particularly vulnerable when asleep.

The reasons include:

- Poor installation of equipment;
- Appliances not working properly;
- Appliances not being regularly serviced;
- The outside flue becomes blocked;
- Inadequate ventilation in the room, and;
- Unqualified people install and maintain equipment.

SO THE FOLLOWING BASIC RULES MUST BE FOLLOWED:

- ALWAYS ensure your gas appliances are regularly serviced, normally once a year;
- ONLY use a registered gas fitter.

- CHECK carbon monoxide detector regularly.
- NEVER block air vents on appliances.
- NEVER block or obstruct outside grilles, flues or air bricks.
- NEVER fit draught-stripping to the doors of a room containing a gas appliance.,
- DON'T use any appliance if you think it is not working properly. Signs to look for include yellow or orange flames, soot stains around the appliance and a pilot light which constantly goes out.
- DEATH could be caused if you fail to observe these instructions.

SAFETY IN AN OFFICE

Many of our houses and workplaces have a small room used as an office, or have a Computer Room as one of the Community's work projects. Also all Communities have an Office for their administrative and meeting requirements. They are often overlooked from a safety point of view.

There are a few things which everyone needs to be aware of when using an office as a part of a bigger building, and a few additional things which people working full time, or on a regular basis in a Community Office should be aware of.

GENERAL SAFETY ASPECTS FOR WORKING IN OFFICES.

Things to watch out for: (This list is not Exhaustive and can be added to).

- Trailing wires;
- Overloaded shelves;
- Open drawers that can trip or cut people passing;
- Lifting items, (stationery and files can be heavy or awkward);
- Improvised "ladders" used;
- Quality of furniture /equipment used, (causing strain, or electrical risks);
- Security – money and /or medication can be a target for break-ins;
- Bad habits whilst working, (e.g. drinking whilst using electrical equipment);
- Poor housekeeping, (e.g. storage issues, rubbish, quality of food hygiene).

SAFETY ON HOLIDAYS & HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION

Whenever you stay somewhere new find out about the safety precautions. There is always an enormous amount to do when you first arrive but it is important to establish the HAZARDS as soon as you can and certainly within 24 hours of arrival.

VACATION SAFETY CHECKLIST: (THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE)

1. Make sure you have a list of all relevant EMERGENCY TELEPHONE numbers for the place you are staying at.
2. Always leave TELEPHONE NUMBERS where you can be contacted when away on a community vacation. Make sure, too, that you have a list of CONTACT NUMBERS for assistants and residents that can be telephoned should help be needed.

3. Make sure you take your own FIRST AID kit (there will be one in every vehicle) and any necessary medical information about the people who will be on vacation with you in case of accidents or emergencies. Remember common problems that occur on vacations, such as SUNBURN.
4. Make sure you have a carefully worked out system for taking and DISTRIBUTING MEDICATIONS when on vacation and that you have an adequate supply, particularly in case you are delayed from returning home for any reason, (i.e. take several extra days' supplies).
5. When you arrive at your vacation destination CHECK as soon as is practicable for any special SAFETY FEATURES or hazards e.g.: Exit routes, fire system, type of alarms in building being used; Very hot water in bathrooms /showers; Slippery or treacherous staircases /passages; Dangerous or unusual types of lifts; Any hazards relating to swimming pools, ponds, or activities you do; Local environment problems, (e.g. tides, busy roads etc.)
6. DISCUSS the hazards and safety precautions with the property owners.
7. Work through these with everyone and AGREE any special precautions which may need to be taken.

SAFETY WITH BARBECUES & BONFIRES

Before lighting a bonfire, check with Department of Natural Resources Fire Index and refer to guidelines from Town of Antigonish as regards container/fire pit requirements.

There have been some awful accidents as a result of using some flammable liquids when lighting barbecues or bonfires. Petrol, paraffin and methylated spirit are extremely dangerous and **MUST NOT BE USED**.

Barbecues should be placed AT LEAST 1 metre from the house when in use.

Therefore, only approved, solid fire lighters should be used, **NEVER** any liquids.

SAFETY CHECKLIST:

1. Never use fluid fire lighters, only solid fuel lighters;
2. Only approved assistants to be in charge of barbecues /bonfires;
3. Ensure you have a bucket of sand nearby;
4. Keep people well away from open flames;
5. Ensure there is a First Aider & First Aid kit available to treat burns;

Only light bonfires in the approved position and on a protected site, (i.e. surround site by stones and light well away from any buildings)

COLD WEATHER AND WINTER MAINTENANCE

There will be times during the year when winter/cold weather maintenance of vehicles and property will be necessary within the homes, offices, and programs.

- All exits, emergency exits, ramps, and stairwells will be cleared as soon as possible after snowfall. They will be salted and sanded as necessary to prevent ice accumulation and potential hazards. Snow will also be cleared to provide safe passage to all members of the premise to the designated emergency rendezvous location. The OHS Committee strongly recommends snow removal to happen several times throughout the day to minimize risk of injury and ice accumulation.
- All premises will have access to salt and sand however it is the responsibility of the premise to purchase these as required. All premises will have access to shovels for snow removal and these will be provided (or purchased as required).
- Snow must be removed from vehicles prior to first use and after each additional snow fall. Headlights, windows, roofs, and licence plates will be cleared of all ice and snow. There is a bylaw in Antigonish that prohibits snow from remaining on vehicles during use. Any infractions of this bylaw will be the responsibility of the vehicles operator.
- Vehicles will be equipped with studded winter tires and proper snow removal tools. Each vehicle will have a bag of sand in it at all times.
- Proper winter attire is the responsibility of the employee. If you require support in acquiring the necessary equipment/gear/attire please contact the Community Leader or the Safety Coordinator.
- If an employee is unable to participate in snow removal for medical reasons please inform your House Leader/Program Leader so arrangements can be made.

ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS - REPORTING PROCEDURES

- Report all accidents or near misses to the OHS Committee
- The Community Leader will ensure that any accidents and incidents are investigated and the necessary improvements made in safety arrangements. The Community Leader will also ensure that accident records are reviewed regularly to establish any trends and indications of further safety action required.

REPORTING:

All injury accidents, (however minor), mishaps, damage accidents and any near misses, **MUST** be recorded and a record given to the OHS Committee. Actions taken, or recommended, to prevent recurrences should be noted and record must be signed and dated.

A **NEAR MISS** is an accident or dangerous occurrence that could have resulted in serious injury especially vehicle related incidents, and incidents of challenging behaviour.

Any cases of infectious disease must also be recorded and reported.

BODILY FLUIDS

Viruses such as HIV and Hepatitis B are passed from one person to another through the exchange of bodily fluids. It is therefore a matter of personal protection and also protection of the other person to take appropriate precautions when there is any risk of bodily fluids being exchanged. You will be made aware of the level of risk in your area.

PROCEDURE FOR GOOD PRACTICE.

- Assume that everyone may have an infection of blood borne viruses, regardless of any diagnosis.
- Plastic gloves and /or other protective clothing to be worn when helping with certain intimate care such as cleaning after the toilet, changing incontinence pads, helping with sanitary protection, and shaving. They must also be worn to help with teeth cleaning if there is any bleeding from the gums, and to help with bathing if intimate cleansing is involved. They must also be worn when administering any medication rectally (i.e. suppositories or enemas).
- Plastic gloves to be worn when cleaning up any vomit, urine, blood or faeces.
- Cover any exposed skin lesions (cuts, burns, abrasions, eczema) with a waterproof dressing.
- Razors, toothbrushes, etc., must not be shared, and must be kept separate.
- Spillages of blood or other infectious fluids must be cleaned immediately, using bleach.

DISPOSAL OF CLINICAL WASTE

- All items (incontinence pads, sanitary towels, etc.) contaminated with blood or other body substances including soiled dressings and gloves must be disposed of in the garbage.
- Stained linen and bedding may be washed at approx. 80°C, i.e. the hottest cycle of the washing machine. If hand washing is unavoidable, always wear rubber gloves and use hot water and detergent.
- Dish ware and cutlery must be cleaned in the dishwasher. Larger pots and pans can be washed by hand with sippy water. Hands must be washed afterwards.
-

IN CASES OF POSSIBLE INFECTION

Immediately after the potential infection, (e.g. if a person has been bitten or scratched, or an existing wound has been in contact with potentially infectious fluid), the site must be washed thoroughly, if possible with running hot water. If the infection is through a wound it should be squeezed (not sucked) to encourage bleeding. The injury must be wiped with an alcohol swab and covered with a waterproof dressing. The incident must be recorded, with the name of the source, (i.e. the person involved), and the circumstances in which the potential infection occurred.

The source, (i.e. the person involved), must be considered infected until tests show otherwise. The injured person must be taken for a blood test.

Appendix

Health and Safety Coordinator: Natalie Cameron
 Health and Safety Committee: Carl MacDonald - Co-Chair
 Peter MacDonald- Co-Chair
 Peter Schenke
 Sue White

OHS Orientation Team

Community Leader: Beth Wolters
 Office Support: Carl MacDonald
 Homes Coordinator: Natalie Cameron
 Assistants Coordinator: Peter MacDonald

Location of First Aid Boxes

House/Day program/Office	Location of first aid box(es)	First Aiders
Covenant	Mainfloor Washroom	All assistants
Hope	Office table	All assistants
Emmaus	Kitchen & apartment	All assistants
Dixie	Cupboard in pantry	All assistants
Jubilee	Counter next to fridge	All assistants
Cornerstone	Bathroom cupboard	All assistants
Horizons	Kitchen cupboard	All assistants
Studio	Kitchen cupboard	All assistants
Office	Finance Office	All Assistants

Local OHS Office

Occupational Health and Safety Division
 Labour and Workforce Development
 11210 Highway #16
 Boylston, NS
 B0H 1G0
 Phone – 902-863-9615 (Paula Dobson)

Local Medical Practitioner Contacts

Dr Booth	220 Main St	902 863 6669
Dr Brennan	220 main St	902 863 3737
Dr Chaisson	220 Main St	902 863 4070
Dr Fuhrmann	220 Main St	902 863 2674
Dr Gallant	133 Church St	902 863 4497
Dr Hickey	26 Market St	902 863 1775
Dr Howard	40 Church St	902 863 4558
Dr MacKenzie	133 Church St	902 863 2455
Dr Menard	40 Church St	902 863 4558
Dr McKenna	133 Church St	902 863 4471
Dr Murphy	133 Church St	902 863 4488
Dr Steeves	26 Market St	902 863 1775

Gas, Electricity and water points at each home/workplace

Home	Gas point location	Electricity point location	Water point location
Covenant	N/A	Basement, attic stairs	Basement
Dixie	N/A	Hope house front hall	Cupboard in Dixie den
Emmaus	N/A	Front hall, Apartment	Furnace room
Hope	N/A	Hope house front hall	Cupboard in Dixie den
Jubilee	N/A	Basement - Room across from basement stairs	Basement- Room across from basement stairs
Office	Basement	Basement	Basement
Horizons/Studio	N/A	Basement	Basement
Cornerstone	N/A	Back Bedroom	Utility Room (front)

Gas Maintenance: MacGillivray Fuels – 902 863 2500

Fire Alarm System Maintenance: Berkven's Electrical – 902 863 8664

Fire Extinguisher Service and Maintenance: Levco Fire and Safety – 902 867 1200



SAFETY – OHS INSPECTION FORM

House: _____ Date: _____

<p>Kitchen / Laundry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is ventilation adequate? • Are chemicals stored safely? • Are stove tops left on? • drying tea towels over cookers? • unsafe spouts on kettles? • pot handles turned away from front of stove? • hot oil/fat? • slippery floors? • spilt water? • floor left uncovered? • household cleaners left in damp boxes • high shelves and aerosols left on ledges • top heavy kitchen cabinets? • sharp knives? • can openers? • improvised cookers? • kettles/irons left plugged in? • worn mats/turned up ends? • bin with broken glass? • ragged can or tin edge? 	
<p>Living Room / Dining Room</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire extinguishers – checked recently? • Unguarded fires? • clothes/chairs too near fire? • objects/mirror over mantelpiece? • loose mats, carpets? • no portable heaters in middle of room • no proper ventilation? • furniture removed from usual place? • heavy furniture? • multi-plug adapters? • electrical equipment? • switches left on? • plugs not pulled out? • unsteady chairs? • cluttered areas? • trailing TV/telephone wires? • too low/high chairs? 	

Hall / Staircase / Landing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire doors – do they close properly? • cluttered entrance ways? • loose mats? • banisters for steep/awkward stairs? • poor lighting? • worn / torn carpets? 	
Bedrooms	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cluttered/top heavy wardrobe? • no candles • no cigarettes • no proper ventilation • care with portable heaters • condition of bedside lamps /lampshades • unsteady bedside tables? • extension cables? 	
Bathrooms / Toilets / Showers	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • medicine cabinet filled with old unused bottles and pills? • portable electrical appliances? • pull cords on lights & special heaters? • no handrails on bath? • no slip mat in bath? • slippery floors? • no proper ventilation? • mold? 	
Outside the House	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • garden tools - condition /storage? • Garden sheds /greenhouse? • worn broken steps? • uneven paths? • no handrail at entrance? • no outside light? • obstructions? • any broken glass, tins, rubbish etc.? • Winter conditions - ice, snow? 	

Inspection performed by: _____

Assistant Signature: _____

