CREATING SAFE SPACES: STRENGTHENING HEALTH & SAFETY IN THE NONPROFIT WORKPLACE

Safety is one of the most powerful expressions of care.
A safe and healthy workplace is foundational to a nonprofit's ability to serve. It protects people, builds trust, and demonstrates respect for staff, volunteers, and clients alike. When health, safety, and accessibility are prioritised, nonprofits create environments where everyone — from employees to beneficiaries — can thrive. Here's how to strengthen your organisation's approach to safety and wellbeing.

1 BUILD A FOUNDATION OF RESPONSIBILITY

Safety begins with leadership accountability.

- Under Bermuda's Occupational Safety and Health Act 1982, every employer must ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of employees.
- Organisations with 10+ employees must form a Health and Safety Committee; smaller ones must appoint a Health and Safety Officer.
- Go beyond compliance: investigate near misses, maintain incident logs, and foster transparency.
- Involve staff in safety discussions so they become co-creators of a safer workplace.

✓ ***Safety is not paperwork — it's shared responsibility.***

2 PROMOTE PHYSICAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

A healthy workplace is both physically and emotionally safe.

- Maintain hygienic, comfortable, and hazard-free facilities.
- Recognise and address burnout — a major concern for more than half of Bermuda's nonprofit leaders.
- Encourage open dialogue about stress and mental health.
- Update policies on illness reporting, remote work, and infection prevention.

✓ ***When people feel heard and supported, they perform — and serve — at their best.***

3 PRIORITISE ACCESSIBILITY & INCLUSION

A truly safe space is one where everyone belongs.

- Ensure physical accessibility — ramps, railings, lighting, and signage.
- Strengthen digital and communication accessibility — large-print materials, multiple languages, accessible websites.
- Train staff to support individuals with disabilities or special needs.
- Align with the Bermuda Human Rights Act 1981, ensuring fair and equitable access for all.

✓ ***Accessibility is not an add-on; it's inclusion in action.***

4 PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES

Preparedness builds resilience and confidence.

- Develop an Emergency Response Plan covering medical incidents, fire, natural disasters, or loss of connectivity.
- Define clear communication protocols and evacuation procedures.
- Assign roles and responsibilities to staff for crisis management.
- Conduct regular drills and safety reviews.

✓ ***Planning ahead reduces panic — and protects people when it matters most.***

5 MAINTAIN FACILITIES & ACCOUNTABILITY

Well-maintained environments reflect professionalism and care.

- Schedule regular inspections and preventative maintenance.
- Establish clear systems for reporting and responding to hazards.
- Address issues promptly — from broken lighting to poor ventilation or sanitation.
- Treat facility upkeep as an ongoing process, not a one-time fix.

✓ ***Physical environments speak volumes about organisational values.***

TAKEAWAY

Health and safety are not compliance exercises — they're acts of care.

When nonprofits build safe, inclusive, and prepared workplaces, they protect their people, strengthen their culture, and model the respect and dignity at the heart of their mission.

Safe spaces create stronger missions.

Nonprofit Alliance OF BERMUDA

Learn more at nonprofitalliance.bm