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Both volunteers and recipients of voluntary services are entitled to safe and healthy workplace environments.

In saying this, management committees and boards of community organisations have a responsibility to monitor and manage risks effectively.

If ignored, risks have the potential to impact on your community organisations legal liability and insurance claims.

This fact sheet provides information that will help you identify and manage risks effectively.

## What is risk management?

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Effective risk management seeks to either prevent, or reduce an organisation's risk levels.

It is an ongoing process that should be applied to all aspects of your organisation's activities, incorporating planning, identification, crisis management, assessment and communication.

Risk management should ensure there is adequate insurance to cover and reduce any potential legal liability.

## Risks

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All organisations, depending on the nature of their operations will have different sources of risk. The most common include:

- unsafe workplace
- no emergency and/or medical plan
- inadequate or inappropriate insurance
- not incorporated

## Benefits of risk management

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Having a strong risk management policy has many benefits for both your organisation and your volunteers, benefits to your organisation include:

- more effective management of assets, activities, events and programs
- improved safety
- lower costs and greater certainty with budgets (not being subject to legal liability)
- improved compliance with legal requirements and regulations
- enhanced image and reputation.

## Steps to managing your organisation's risk

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1. Develop a risk management policy.
2. Nominate someone to have responsibility for risk management, a nominated Risk Manager.
3. Identify 'key' people who will be involved in managing risk.
4. Identify risks (what are they?), analyse risks (what are the elements of the risks?) and evaluate risks (health and safety, financial).
5. Develop a risk elimination and reduction plan that includes risk control methods such as training programs.
6. Have a clear communication strategy to communicate this to your staff, stakeholders and volunteers.
7. Ensure that the board or management committee addresses risk management periodically at meetings, to ensure a regular review.

## Additional resources

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*Community Support*, Government of South Australia <https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/community-support>

*Ten Steps to a Safer Organisation*, Our Community  
[http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/insurance/view\\_help\\_sheet.do?articleid=249](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/insurance/view_help_sheet.do?articleid=249)

*Assessing and Managing Risk*, Government of Victoria <http://www.volunteer.vic.gov.au/toolkit-for-volunteer-organisations/manage-your-organisation/risk,-safety-and-insurance/assessing-and-managing-risk>

*Risk management through Volunteer Screening*, Canadian Volunteer Benevoles  
<http://volunteer.ca/content/screening>

*Insurance: What's it all about?* Council of Social Service of NSW

<http://www.ncoss.org.au/content/category/9/156/172/>

*Risk Management Resources for Recreation and Sport Organisations*, South Australian Government

<http://www.recsport.sa.gov.au/about-us/risk-management/resources.html>

*Risk Management*, NSW Government

[http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/sportsclubs/ryc\\_risk.asp](http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/sportsclubs/ryc_risk.asp)

*Better Safe*, a hard copy book about "*Risk Management in Volunteer Programs and Community Service*" by Linda L. Graff. This book is available from Volunteering SA & NT Phone (08) 8221 7177 for a copy.