

Checklist: Minimise the Risk of a Manslaughter Case

Since accidental death is the starting point for any manslaughter case, corporate or individual, accident prevention is the best defence. So, first check that you have an effective safety management system (SMS) in place. Back this up with policies, procedures and training to ensure your risk of a fatality is as low as it can possibly be. It is vital that senior managers are directly involved; so, if you are an owner, director, partner or other senior manager, use the checklist below to identify weak spots in your procedures.

Safety Checks for Directors, Partners and Other Senior Managers	Yes	No
Do you have an up-to-date health and safety policy and check it's actually being implemented (this implies putting in monitoring to verify this is the case)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you appointed a competent person to advise you on health and safety? Having invested in such a person, listen to and apply the advice they give!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have comprehensive and up-to-date risk assessments and check that any additional precautions recommended by the assessments have been implemented? To protect your organisation from manslaughter cases, your risk assessments should give priority to hazards such as being hit by a vehicle, falling from height and being trapped in machinery since these are the top three causes of fatal workplace accidents in the UK.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is there a system to report and record accidents, recognising that minor accidents and near misses, if not properly investigated and dealt with, often go on to cause more serious and possibly even fatal injury?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you use audits and inspections to proactively identify hazards (so that they can be remedied) and check that the SMS is working (if not it will need to be revised)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you lead by personal example in matters such as following safety rules ('no entry to pedestrians') and wearing PPE? Don't take the line you are too senior for these to apply to you.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are all your employees competent (have the knowledge, skills and experience) to carry out their work safely – and do you have the training records to prove it?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you discuss health and safety at meetings (including board and senior management meetings) and hold your colleagues to account for achieving and maintaining high standards?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>