

General Election 2019:

Campaigning Safely



GENERAL ELECTION 2019: CAMPAIGNING SAFELY

You can find all of the resources referred to in this guidance, and more, in the 'my welfare' section of the party website. If you have any questions you can telephone or email the Safeguarding Unit 0207 783 1134, safeguarding@labour.org.uk

PLANNING CAMPAIGNING ACTIVITIES

When you organise campaign activities you need to ensure that you keep people safe and reduce the risks to children and adults at risk. When planning your campaign activity consider:

Location

- arrange a meeting place easily identifiable on Google maps
- Have you made preparations for bad weather?
- Are there refreshments available nearby or do members need to bring them?
- Where are the nearest public toilets/accessible facilities?

Transport

- Are there good public transport links?
- If transporting young members or adults at risk you must ensure there is one adult driving and at least one adult supervising
- If you're driving you must hold a valid driving license, MOT certificate and car insurance
- check with your insurance company that your policy covers you when driving as a volunteer during party activities

Leadership and staffing

- Campaigning activities involving members under eighteen must have an activity leader. They will be the point of contact for young members if they have questions or concerns
- Ensure that there are enough adults to provide the appropriate level of supervision, the recommended adult to child ratio is one to ten
- You must ensure that there will always be more than one adult present when organising activities with young members or adults at risk
- buddy up new young members with a more experienced young member or volunteer for activities
- Any activity involving children should involve at least one first aider

Communication

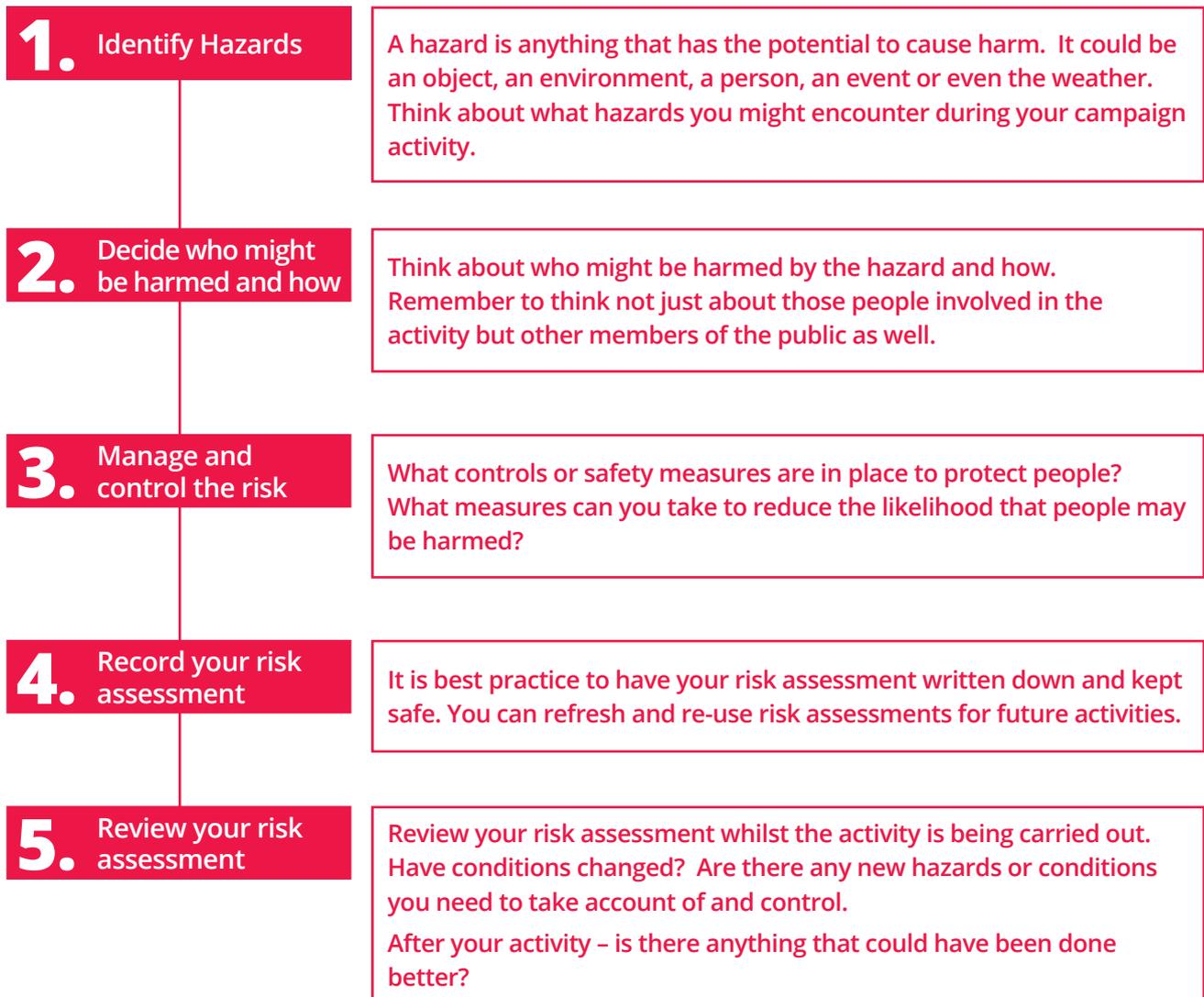
- Before campaign activity starts the activity leader should ask any young member (aged 14-18 years old) to complete a Campaign Activity Register, the register should always be available to the activity leader during activity.
- All young members should receive a Campaign Activity Contact Form with the mobile phone number of the activity leader and an alternate point of contact before they start campaigning
- Any communication with young members should follow the standards set out in the Safeguarding Code of Conduct

ASSESSING RISK

When young members and adults at risk take part in campaigning activities you must consider the risks associated with the activity. The process of assessing the risks doesn't need to be lengthy and bureaucratic, you don't need to list every hazard, only those which present the highest risk.

You should follow a five step process to identify and assess risks:

You can find a downloadable risk assessment template in the Safeguarding area of the Labour Party website.



CORE CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES

Canvassing and Get out The Vote (GOTV)

- An activity leader should know how many teams are out canvassing, particularly if they have children or young members, at any one time. They should have a list of who's running boards and check in regularly
- If you're running a board you are responsible for checking on the welfare of the members knocking on doors. Keep in sight line with young or vulnerable members. Never turn a corner or enter a new street until young members have caught up with them
- If you're running a board take a note of the mobile phone numbers of the members canvassing with you in case of an emergency. Record them on a Campaign Activity Register. Contact numbers for children should not be recorded on personal mobile phones
- New young members should be buddied up with a more experienced canvasser until they are confident to canvas independently
- Remind canvassers never to accept an invitation to enter a property whilst campaigning
- Remind members not to engage in heated discussions or debates and withdraw from any situation that is escalating or might lead to conflict
- When canvassing in high rise blocks of flats it is the responsibility of the member running the board to check that all canvassers are present when leaving the block

Street stalls

- Street stalls should always be positioned safely. Consider the proximity to traffic or main roads
- Ensure that new young members are buddied up with older more experienced volunteers or members
- Members should be reminded not to engage in heated discussions or debates and withdraw from any situation that is escalating or might lead to conflict
- Identify a safe space nearby, such as a café, library or supermarket, that members can withdraw to if conflict does occur

Rallies, press conferences and events

- At rallies and events young members should be assigned a specific role with a more experienced volunteer or member of staff to supervise them. The aim of the event and the young member's role should be clearly communicated to them
- If a protest or counter demonstration occurs the welfare of young members is paramount. They should be directed away, or remove themselves, from any area of conflict
- It is important that you have the permission of any young member under eighteen years old before taking or using photographs or videos of them. It is best practice to get written permission from the young member, you can use the Labour Party Photography and Video Permission form

Phone banks

Whilst the physical risks at a phone bank are low, organisers should be alert to the fact that members do sometimes receive verbal abuse during calls. Organisers should check in with young members during phone banks to ensure they are confident to carry out the activity and conduct a quick debrief after the session to ensure that no young member has been affected by an abusive call.

GENERAL SAFEGUARDING CONSIDERATIONS

Register, headcounts and welfare checks

- If your activity involves more than five young members keep a register of young members. Regularly check on their welfare during your activity and ensure that all young members are accounted for at the end of the activity
- Never store young members' contact details in their phone. Use the Campaign Activity Register to record young member details (you can download a copy from the safeguarding area of the Labour Party website)
- If young members and adults at risk are conducting satellite activities (activities away from a main group e.g. door knocking) it is important that you regularly check to ensure they have not got into difficulty
- You should agree in advance what actions you will take if you cannot contact a young member and ensure that you have a record of the activity they were doing and where they were
- All records containing personal or sensitive details of young members must be securely shredded or destroyed after the activity

In the event of an accident

- There should be a clear plan for what to do in the event of an accident involving a young member or an adult at risk
- The plan should include the location of the nearest hospital or medical centre (identified in advance)
- Who will contact the young member's or adult at risk's parent/carer?
- All accidents involving a young member under the age of eighteen or an adult at risk must be recorded and reported to the Safeguarding Unit
- You can use the Campaign Activity Incident Report Form to record accidents (you can download a copy from the safeguarding area of the Labour Party website)
- When organising activities with young members you should always have an up to date first aid kit available

STAYING SAFE WHILE CAMPAIGNING-

Public discourse in the UK is increasingly polarised and, in particular in relation to Brexit, we have seen an increased level of threats and abuse both online and in person towards elected representatives. If you are out campaigning or at an event and you are subject to hostility or worried about the behaviour of another individual or group, your safety is paramount. Withdraw from the situation and go to a safe place. In an emergency call the police on 999.

- ▶ Always stay on the doorstep: Never enter a property, even if invited
- ▶ Stay in groups or pairs if possible
- ▶ If a member of the public becomes aggressive or hostile, remain calm, do not engage and remove yourself from the situation as quickly as possible
- ▶ Get to a place of safety and inform your event lead of any safeguarding or welfare concerns.
- ▶ Tell a colleague/event lead if your route or plans change
- ▶ Check in and out with the event lead
- ▶ Always carry a fully charged mobile phone (with credit if applicable), ensure you have an emergency contact number for the event or safeguarding lead
- ▶ Be mindful of your surroundings. Avoid distractions such as your mobile phone or headphones
- ▶ Trust your instincts. Do not knock on a door or enter a garden or driveway that you feel uncomfortable about
- ▶ If you believe you may be in danger while campaigning, contact the Police via 999

