

HSE HANDBOOK 2026

for farm relief workers, agricultural substitute workers and apprentices

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Contact	900 64 316 dagligleder@vtvaldres.no

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART 1 – VLT AND THE HSE RESPONSIBILITY	
1 About VLT	3
2 HSE policy, responsibility and participation	4
3 Start-up, training and young workers	5
PART 2 – EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND ACUTE INCIDENTS	
4 First aid and acute incidents	6
5 Fire, power outage and evacuation	7
6 Accidents, non-conformities and near-misses	8
PART 3 – SAFE WORK ON THE FARM	
7 Livestock and animal handling	9
8 Tractors, machines and work equipment	10
9 Falls, heights, silos and confined spaces	11
10 Chemicals, gas and biological risk	12
11 Protective equipment, noise, dust and ergonomics	13
12 Infection control, hygiene and food safety	14
PART 4 – WORK ENVIRONMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS	
13 Working alone and communication	15
14 Psychosocial work environment	16
15 Violence, threats, harassment and substance abuse	17
16 Working hours, absence, privacy and insurance	18
PART 5 – ADMINISTRATIVE ROUTINES	
17 ProResult, time registration and contact	19
ATTACHMENTS	
A Checklist before the first work session	20
B Farm card and emergency preparedness	21
C Risk assessment and action plan	22
D Non-conformities, near-misses and improvement	23
E Routine for internal reporting	24
F1 Report notification	25
F2 Case handling log for reports	26
F3 Receipt confirmation and impartiality assessment	27
G Digital approval and receipt confirmation	28

About VLT

- VLT is the employer for its own staff and has the overall responsibility for ensuring that work is organised and followed up in a safe manner. The client manages the daily work on the farm and provides the necessary farm-specific training.
- VLT provides holiday and leisure relief, illness relief and emergency preparedness. The work can take place on different farms with different types of operation, animals, machines and local risk conditions.
- The handbook applies to farm relief workers, agricultural substitute workers and apprentices. It must be used together with the employment contract, work schedule, local routines, risk assessments and instructions from VLT and the client.
- Each person must only carry out tasks they have been trained for and are able to do safely. In case of doubt, work must be stopped and VLT or the client must be contacted.

HSE policy, responsibility and participation

- VLT shall work systematically with HSE by setting written goals, documenting organisation and responsibility, identifying hazards and problems, assessing risk, preparing plans and measures, and checking that the measures work.
- The managing director is responsible for ensuring that the HSE system is up to date, known and systematically reviewed. The client must provide information about local hazards, ensure safe work equipment and follow up the work on the farm. VLT retains employer responsibility for its own staff.
- Employees must follow instructions, use protective equipment, report faults and hazards, and participate in mapping, risk assessment and improvement work. The safety representative must be consulted when planning and carrying out measures that affect the work environment.
- Mapping, risk assessment, action plans, non-conformity routines and the systematic review of internal control must be documented in writing and kept up to date.
- When work may involve particular danger to life or health, VLT must ensure a written work instruction describing the safe method of work, who may carry out the work and necessary safety measures. The instruction must be available and understandable.
- Work that involves immediate danger to life or health must be stopped. Work may only resume once the danger has been clarified and necessary measures have been implemented.
- The need for an approved occupational health service must be assessed based on the organisation's industry code and risk conditions. If VLT is subject to an obligation or the risk indicates it, an occupational health service must be engaged and used preventively with a written plan for the assistance.

Start-up, training and young workers

- Employment contract, place of work, working hours, contact persons and expected tasks must be clarified before starting. The employee must be given access to relevant routines and know who to contact in case of questions or incidents.
- Training must be adapted to the work tasks and include the farm's escape routes, meeting point, first aid and fire extinguishing equipment, animals, machines, chemicals, protective equipment and local risk conditions.
- Practical training must be documented. The employee must receive guidance and follow-up until the task can be carried out safely and must not be given independent work without the necessary competence.
- Before a person under 18 years of age is put to work, VLT must carry out and document a specific risk assessment based on age, maturity, experience, work tasks and workplace. The employee and the safety representative must participate, and necessary information must be given to parents/guardians when the regulations require it.
- Persons under 18 years of age must not carry out work that is prohibited under the regulations or that may involve particular danger. Any exceptions as part of vocational training may only be used when all conditions in the applicable regulations are met, the work is necessary for the training, and it takes place under the safe supervision of a competent person.
- For persons under 15 years of age or attending lower secondary school, special restrictions apply, and written consent from parents/guardians must be obtained before lawful work begins. Working hours, breaks, daily and weekly rest, and the prohibition on overtime for young workers must be followed.

First aid and acute incidents

- In case of acute danger: secure your own safety, stop the work, alert others and call the correct emergency number: 110 fire, 112 police, 113 ambulance or 116 117 emergency medical help.
- Clearly state what has happened, the exact address or GPS position, the number of injured and known hazards. If possible, make sure someone meets the emergency services at an agreed meeting point.
- If breathing is not normal: call 113, put the phone on speaker and start CPR with 30 chest compressions and 2 rescue breaths. Follow the guidance from 113.
- Stop severe bleeding with direct pressure. Do not move an injured person unless necessary to avoid further danger.
- If manure gas, silo gas or another dangerous atmosphere is suspected, no one should enter. Alert the emergency services and prevent others from being exposed.

Fire, power outage and evacuation

- Everyone must know the escape routes, meeting point, fire alarm routines, main switches and the location and use of fire extinguishing equipment at the workplace.
- In case of fire, people must be alerted and evacuated, 110 must be called, and doors closed if this can be done without risk. Firefighting should only be attempted when the fire is small, the correct extinguishing agent is available and your own retreat is secured.
- Animals are only evacuated when this can be done without danger to people. The client must have a plan for prioritization, driving lanes and temporary housing.
- In case of a power outage, the routines for ventilation, water supply, milking, feeding, alarms and backup power must be followed. Faults in electrical systems must be handled by qualified personnel.
- After the incident, the area must be secured, affected persons followed up, and the incident registered as a deviation.

Accidents, deviations and near misses

- In case of an accident or near miss, work must be stopped, the area secured, and necessary first aid and alerting carried out. Do not expose yourself or others to further danger.
- Incidents, dangerous conditions, injuries, environmental discharges and breaches of routines must be reported to VLT as soon as possible and registered in the deviation system with time, place, course of events and immediate measures.
- VLT must keep a register of all personal injuries occurring during work and illness that may be caused by the work or workplace conditions, even when the incident does not result in absence. The register must only contain information necessary for prevention; medical information requires consent.
- Deviations must be investigated to find underlying causes, not to assign blame. Measures must have a responsible person and a deadline, and the effect must be checked before the case is closed.
- In case of a work accident with serious injury or death, the employer must notify the police and the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority as soon as possible, in accordance with section 5-2 of the Working Environment Act. The safety representative must receive a copy of the notification. The accident site must, as far as possible, be preserved until necessary investigations have been carried out.
- Work injury or occupational illness must also be reported to NAV and the insurance company when the conditions for such reporting are met.

Livestock and animal handling

- Follow the farm's routines, observe the animals' behavior and plan the way of working and escape route before work begins. Avoid standing between animals and fixed structures.
- Be especially aware of animals with young, bulls, rams, sick or injured animals and animals showing unusual or aggressive behavior. Information about known risk animals must be given before the work session.
- Use suitable driving lanes, gates and catching devices. Do not rely on makeshift barriers, and do not enter pens or stalls unless the animal can be handled safely.
- Work with risk animals must not be done alone when the risk assessment requires two people. Children and unauthorized persons must be kept away from the work area.
- Animal welfare problems, injuries, signs of illness or faults in equipment must be reported immediately to the client and, if needed, to VLT.

Tractor, machines and work equipment

- Tractors, machines and work equipment must only be used by persons who have the necessary training, competence and any legally required certificates or driving rights.
- Before use, brakes, lights, steering, tires, couplings, guards, emergency stop and leaks must be checked. Faults that may affect safety must be reported, and the equipment taken out of use until the fault is fixed.
- Use the seat belt where available. No one should be in the danger zone around moving machinery, power take-off shafts, implements or a raised load.
- Before cleaning, adjustment, removal of blockages or maintenance, the engine and power supply must be stopped, the key removed, and the equipment secured against movement and accidental start.
- Passengers may only be carried on an approved seat. When driving on the road, current traffic rules, marking and securing of loads must be followed.

Falls, height, silo and confined spaces

- Work at height must be planned and risk assessed. Collective measures such as railings, scaffolding or a work platform should be chosen over personal fall protection when possible.
- Ladders must be intact, stand firmly and be used for short-term, light work. They must not be used as a work platform when safer equipment is needed.
- Openings, hatches, manure cellars and edges must be secured against falls. The work area must be kept tidy, with good lighting and non-slip walkways.
- Silos, tanks, pits and other confined spaces may contain oxygen deficiency or dangerous gases. No entry is allowed without a specific risk assessment, measurement, ventilation, an outside watch and planned rescue.
- If gas is suspected, the area must be left immediately. Rescue attempts without proper equipment and competence can lead to more injuries.

Chemicals, gas and biological risk

- Chemicals must be labeled, stored safely and used according to the label, safety data sheet and the farm's chemical inventory. Unknown products must not be used.
- Risk should be reduced by choosing less dangerous products, limiting the amount and exposure, and ensuring suitable ventilation before personal protective equipment is used.
- Required eye protection, gloves, protective clothing and respiratory protection must be used and maintained correctly. Contaminated clothing must be changed and washed separately.
- In case of spills or exposure, follow the product's first aid and emergency advice. Bring necessary information and packaging when contacting a doctor or the Poison Information Centre.
- Biological risk can include bacteria, viruses, fungi, dust, animal fluids and puncture injuries. Good hygiene, covering wounds, cleaning and vaccination assessment reduce the risk.

Protective equipment, noise, dust and ergonomics

- Risk should first be reduced through safe working methods, technical measures and good organisation. Personal protective equipment is a supplement when the danger cannot be removed in another way.
- VLT and the client must clarify which protective equipment is needed and ensure it is available, fits the user and is maintained. The employee must use the equipment as instructed and report any shortcomings.
- Noise and dust must be reduced at the source through shielding, ventilation, cleaning and choice of working method. Hearing protection and suitable respiratory protection must be used when the risk assessment requires it.
- Heavy lifting, twisting, repetitive work and unfavourable working positions must be limited with aids, good working height, variation and breaks. Ask for help with lifting or tasks that cannot be safely done alone.

Infection control, hygiene and food safety

- Follow the farm's infection control plan and hygiene barrier. Use clean work clothes and cleaned or farm-specific footwear and equipment when moving between herds.
- Wash your hands after contact with animals, feed, manure and chemicals, and before breaks and meals. Wounds must be covered, and food and drink must not be kept in contaminated areas.
- If infectious disease is suspected, contact between animals and herds must be limited, and the client and VLT must be notified before further work on other farms.
- Medicines must only be handled according to instructions. Identity, dose, time and withdrawal period must be recorded so that milk and meat are not delivered in violation of applicable requirements.
- Equipment and milking systems must be cleaned according to set routines. Deviations that may affect animal health or food safety must be reported immediately.

Lone work and communication

- Before lone work, it must be clarified where the work is carried out, expected finish time, which tasks are included, known risks and who should be contacted if check-in does not happen.
- The employee must have a charged phone or other suitable communication equipment, know the address or GPS position, and know where emergency services should meet.
- High-risk tasks, including work with dangerous animals, in confined spaces, near hazardous gas, under lifted loads, or where quick assistance is needed, must not be performed alone.
- If there is no mobile coverage, alternative communication or additional staffing must be arranged. Changes to work location or finish time must be reported to the contact person.
- If check-in does not happen, the contact person must try to reach the employee and follow the agreed escalation plan, including notifying emergency services when the situation requires it.

Psychosocial work environment

- Work must be organised with clear roles, realistic expectations, a reasonable workload and the possibility for support and clarification. The employee must know who has decision-making authority at the workplace.
- Good communication, respect and early handling of disagreements should prevent conflicts. Criticism and feedback must be given factually and relate to the work, not the person.
- Bullying, harassment, discrimination and other improper behaviour are not accepted. Incidents must be raised with the general manager, safety representative or another suitable recipient.
- In case of heavy workload, sleep problems, insecurity or other factors affecting work ability, the employee should ask for help early. VLT will consider adaptation and necessary follow-up.
- Changes in work, technology or organisation must also be assessed based on psychosocial consequences and the need for information and training.

Violence, threats, harassment and substance use

- In case of violence or threats, your own safety comes first. Withdraw, call for help, and dial 112 in case of acute danger. Do not try to handle a dangerous situation alone.
- Incidents and threatening situations must be reported to VLT and recorded as a deviation. Affected persons must be offered quick follow-up, and the need for a doctor, police or occupational health service must be assessed.
- Harassment and other improper behaviour must be reported through VLT's routine. The case will be handled confidentially, impartiality will be assessed, and retaliation against the person reporting is prohibited.
- It is not allowed to be under the influence or use intoxicants during working hours. Medicines that may affect safety must be discussed with a doctor and, if needed, with VLT, without sharing unnecessary health information.
- If there is reasonable suspicion of impairment, risky work must be stopped, the person must be removed from dangerous work, and the general manager must be contacted for further handling.

Working hours, absence, privacy and insurance

- Working hours, breaks, rest periods and any on-call duty must follow the employment agreement, the work schedule and applicable rules. Changes and extra work must be agreed with VLT.
- Illness and other absence must be reported as early as possible according to VLT's routines. Provide what is necessary for planning, but no more health information than the employer needs.
- Personal data, images, operational information, codes and information about customers and colleagues must be treated confidentially. Images or information must not be shared without valid grounds or consent.
- Work-related injuries and incidents must be reported and documented immediately, even if the effect seems minor at first. VLT will assess further follow-up, insurance reporting and any reporting to authorities.
- Private vehicles or equipment may only be used for work when this is agreed, safe and adequately insured.

ProResult, time registration and contact

- Working hours must be registered continuously in ProResult on the correct client and activity. Start and end time, breaks, supplements, driving and other agreed information must be correct.
- The registration must be checked before submission. Errors or omissions must be corrected as soon as possible and raised with VLT if the employee cannot correct them themselves.
- Work must not be carried out or registered under another person's name. Login and access must remain personal and be protected against misuse.
- Technical problems must be documented, for example with date, time and screenshot, and reported to VLT. Hours are recorded temporarily in an agreed way until the system is available again.
- Questions about work schedule, pay, absence, HSE or assignments should be directed to the correct contact person at VLT. Acute safety incidents must be reported immediately and not only registered in the system.

APPENDIX A

Checklist before the first work shift

Checkpoint	Done
Employment contract and plan	☐
Contact/on-call phone	☐
Address and meeting point	☐
First aid and fire extinguishing equipment	☐
Escape routes and emergency stop	☐
Livestock and risk animals	☐
Machine training	☐
Chemicals/SDS	☐
Protective equipment	☐
Lone work/check-in	☐
ProResult	☐

APPENDIX B

Farm card and preparedness

Information	To be filled in
Farm	
Address/GPS	
Client	
Alternative contact	
Veterinarian	
Meeting point	
First aid	
Fire extinguishing equipment	
Main switch/emergency stop	
Backup power	
Escape routes	
Special risks	
Check-in	

APPENDIX C

Risk assessment and action plan

Field	Information
Workplace	
Task/area	
Date/next review	
Responsible	
Participants/safety representative	
Occupational health service need	

No	Hazard	Who/how	Current measures	S	C	Risk

No	New measure	Responsibility	Deadline	Residual risk	Status

APPENDIX D

Deviation, near miss and improvement

Field	Description
Deviation no.	
Date/place	
Reported by	
Incident	
Consequence	
Broken routine	
Immediate measures	
Causes	
Previous similar cases	

Measures	Responsibility	Deadline	Done	Effect check	Closed

Routine for internal whistleblowing

Role	Name	Phone	E-mail
General manager	Sissel Skarsbø	900 64 316	dagligleder@vltvaldres.no
Safety representative	Veronika Ringli	954 65 121	verneombud@vltvaldres.no
Chair of the board	Geir Arne Dokken	906 24 087	styreleder@vltvaldres.no
Alternative impartial recipient	Gina Cecilie Elvog		

- VLT encourages employees and hired-in workers to report reprehensible conditions. A reprehensible condition can be a breach of law or regulation, written ethical guidelines, or ethical norms with broad support in society.
- Reporting can be done orally or in writing. Normally, the general manager or safety representative should be notified. The whistleblowing form can be used, but is not a condition for reporting.
- If the report concerns the general manager, the chair of the board is notified. If the report concerns the chair of the board, Gina Cecilie Elvog is notified. VLT does not have a deputy chair.
- Employees can always report internally to the employer or a representative of the employer, and can also report via a union representative, safety representative or lawyer. Employees can always report externally to a public supervisory authority or other public authority. Reporting to the public must follow the conditions in the Working Environment Act § 2 A-2.
- The person receiving the report must register receipt, assess impartiality, confirm receipt when contact information is available, examine the report within a reasonable time and assess any necessary immediate measures.
- VLT must in particular ensure that the whistleblower has a fully sound working environment and, if necessary, implement measures to prevent retaliation. Any unfavourable action, practice or omission that is a result of or reaction to whistleblowing is prohibited.
- The person reported about must be looked after, given information about the allegations and a genuine opportunity to respond, while the whistleblower's identity and other personal information are only shared when there is a legal basis and a professional need.
- Whistleblowing cases must be documented and stored securely with limited access. Personal information must not be kept longer than necessary for the purpose and applicable legal obligations.
- The whistleblowing routine must be in writing, easily accessible, and developed and revised in cooperation with the employees and their union representatives or safety representative.

Whistleblowing report

USE Can be used anonymously. The form is not a condition for reporting.

Field	To be filled in
Date/time	
Whistleblower's name, may be left blank	
Contact method	
Who/what does the report concern?	
What happened?	
When/where?	
Involved parties/ witnesses	
Ongoing?	
Risk/consequence	
Documentation	
Reported earlier?	
Suggested measures	
Need for immediate action	
Received by/date	
Impartiality assessed	
Case manager	

Case processing log for reports

ACCESS RESTRICTED Only persons with a work-related need shall have access.

Case information	Registration
Case number	
Date received	
Recipient	
Case manager	
Impartiality	
Classification	
Urgent measures	
Risk of retaliation	
Preventive measures	

Date	Activity/investigation	Participants/source	Documentation	Responsible

Closing	Registration
Factual basis	
Conclusion	
Measures	
Responsibility/ deadlines	
Reporter informed	
Reported person informed	
Effect check	
Closed by/date	
Further follow-up	

Confirmation of receipt and impartiality assessment

Field	Registration
Case number	
Date received	
Recipient	
Confirmation sent to reporter	
Recipient impartial: yes/no	
Transferred to	
Case manager	
Immediate measures	
Retaliation risk/measures	
Further processing	
Next follow-up	

Digital approval and confirmation of receipt

Field	Information
Document owner	Sissel Skarsbø
Participation	Veronika Ringli og Gina Cecilie Elvog
Approval responsibility	The Board
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Approval date	_____
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The employee's receipt and review is registered digitally with name, date and document version. No handwritten signature is required.