

Some Assembly Required



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Many of us avoid buying furniture and appliances that display package warnings like “some assembly required.” We are easily demoralized knowing it could be a long time before we enjoy a new purchase. Yet when it comes to risk management, the assembly process should not discourage us. Assembly is *always* required to build an effective risk management program.

We often search for pre-assembled products to train our volunteers and staff how to perform at high levels. But let’s face it, nonprofits are extraordinarily different based on their structures, history, size, culture, resources, location, scope of services, mission and more. These differences necessitate custom, self-assembled risk management education and training.

Consider the following questions as you reflect on whether your risk management program is custom-fit or ill-fitting:

- Do you provide multiple methods and opportunities for paid and volunteer staff to learn the safety and risk management practices? (e.g., orientation, online training, in-person refresher courses, written materials)
- Are your risk management policies reviewed and adjusted to evolve alongside changes in organizational structure, reporting relationships, technology, or programming?
- Do you welcome, receive, and follow up on feedback from paid and volunteer staff about policies and training?

If you seek to assemble a custom-fit risk management program for your nonprofit, start by learning about risk. Need training? Take a peek at our most popular webinars:

[Risk-Aware Contracting: What You Don’t Know Could Cost You](#)

[Employee Handbook: Dos and Don’ts](#)

[Managing Social Media Risk and Reward](#)

[Risk Management and Strategic Planning](#)

[Shred or Retain? What Documents should my Nonprofit Keep?](#)

Need to create custom policies? Consider our web application, www.MyRiskManagementPolicies.org.

Melanie Lockwood Herman is Executive Director of the Nonprofit Risk Management Center. She welcomes your ideas about any risk management topic, suggestions for best-in-class risk management, and questions about the Center's resources at Melanie@nonprofitrisk.org or 703.777.3504. The Center provides risk management tools and resources at [www.https://nonprofitrisk.org/](https://nonprofitrisk.org/) and offers [consulting assistance](#) to organizations unwilling to leave their missions to chance.