

[Enter company and/or care home name
& logo]

Fire Safety Policy

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Policy guidance

This policy template aims to assist those who are responsible for fire safety in care homes. It is a generic template that must be adapted to your particular care home premises and must account for the types of residents you are caring for and supporting. It must also include the specific procedures, work processes and equipment that are in place to control fire safety risks.

The legislation in the policy statement applies to England and Wales. If your care home is in Scotland or Northern Ireland, different legislation will apply, and you will need to make these changes to this template.

Throughout the document, there are highlighted sections where you can add more detail or make changes to suit your needs. You can also add additional sections where required. The template should be used as a guide, and it will give you a good starting point for your fire safety policy.

If you do not possess the competence to complete your fire safety policy, you must always seek professional advice from someone who has the necessary competence in fire safety.

Please note that using this generic template without making it specific to your business will not comply with fire safety laws.

Policy contents

Front page	1
Policy guidance	2
Policy contents	3
Policy statement	4
Policy aims and scope	5
Definitions	5
Responsibilities	6
Fire risk assessment	7
Fire safety precautions	8
Emergency procedures	11
Staff training	12
Information for residents, visitors and contractors	13
Procedures	13
Records	14
Monitoring and review	14

Policy statement

[Enter company/care home name] is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for its residents, employees, contractors (where applicable) and visitors. Part of this commitment is protecting them from the risks of fire, which is a potential hazard in all premises. A fire can have a devastating impact on any business. For residential care homes, with vulnerable residents, it can be catastrophic due to the dangers and difficulties associated with evacuating those with mobility issues, disabilities and other impairments.

[Enter company/care home name] takes fire safety extremely seriously and recognises that it has responsibilities to protect all relevant persons from harm, so far as is reasonably practicable. The company will endeavour to control associated risks and to comply with legislation relating to fire safety, such as:

- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (RRFSO) 2005.
- Other health and safety legislation, such as the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- UK Government Guidance – fire safety risk assessment: residential care premises.

Employees and others working for [enter company/care home name] also have duties under general health and safety legislation, specific fire safety legislation and this policy.

A copy of this policy and associated procedures will be issued to all employees during their induction. Any revisions to the policy will be communicated.

Name: [Enter name]

Signed: [The policy must be signed by the most senior person in the company]

Position: [Enter the signatory's position]

Date: [Enter the date signed]

Policy aims and scope

This Fire Safety Policy provides a framework for [enter company/care home name] fire safety arrangements and underpins the approach to fire safety management.

The aim of [enter company/care home name] is to ensure that fires are prevented, so far as is reasonably practicable. If fires cannot be prevented, the aim is to minimise fire risks and preserve life by having robust fire safety protective measures and ensuring that all relevant persons know what actions to take in line with the emergency procedures.

This policy applies to all [enter company/care home name] premises, activities, and all relevant persons (employees, including temporary and agency workers, residents, contractors, visitors, and others who may be at risk if there was a fire).

Definitions

The responsible person – the employer is the responsible person if the workplace is, to any extent, under their control. For other types of premises, the responsible person is:

- The person who has control of the premises (as an occupier or otherwise) in connection with the carrying on by them of a trade, business or other undertaking (for profit or not); or
- The owner where the person in control of the premises does not have control in connection with the carrying on by them of a trade, business or other undertaking.

Relevant persons – any person who is or may be lawfully on the premises and any person in the immediate vicinity of the premises at risk from a fire (e.g. employees, residents, contractors and visitors). It does not include firefighters who are carrying out their duties in relation to a function of a fire and rescue authority.

Competent persons – any person who assists the responsible person in undertaking fire safety arrangements, e.g. fire preventive & protective measures. They are appointed by the responsible person, as per the requirements of article 18 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

[Add any additional definitions as appropriate].

Responsibilities

[Organisation chart can be entered here if applicable, as well as details of specific fire safety responsibilities.]

The responsible person

The company has appointed a responsible person, as per the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. The responsible person has overall responsibility for fire safety within the premises. Their main duties under this legislation are to (this list is not exhaustive):

- Take general fire precautions as will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of all employees and other relevant persons.
- Make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the fire risks to which relevant persons are exposed to.
- Ensure the principles of prevention are applied when implementing any preventive or protective measures to eliminate, reduce or control fire risks.
- Ensure there are appropriate fire safety arrangements in place.
- [Add any additional specific duties as appropriate].

The responsible person for [enter company/care home name] is [enter role and/or name].

The day-to-day responsibilities for managing fire safety have been delegated to [enter role].

Fire wardens

The company has appointed fire wardens to assist in the undertaking of fire preventive and protective measures. Fire wardens' duties include:

- **Preventive (proactive) duties**
 - Assisting the responsible person with fire risk assessments and emergency evacuation plans.
 - Conducting regular internal inspections and testing (where applicable) of firefighting equipment, fire detection and warning systems, fire doors, emergency lighting, and emergency routes and exits.
 - Organising the external inspection and servicing of fire safety equipment, fire doors and fire detection systems.
- **Protective (reactive) duties**
 - Assisting with emergency evacuations and fire drills.
 - Carrying out roll calls or sweeps.
 - Tackling small fires with local firefighting equipment (if trained and does not put their safety at risk).
 - Liaising with the fire rescue service in the event of a fire.

[Add or change any duties as appropriate]

The fire warden(s) for [enter company/care home name] is/are [enter role(s) and/or name(s)].

Employees

All employees have general fire safety duties, under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, whilst they are at work. To comply with the law, every employee must:

- Take reasonable care for the safety of themselves and of other relevant persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- Cooperate with their employer, so far as is necessary, to enable them to comply with the requirements of the Order.
- Inform their employer, or other employees with specific fire safety responsibilities, of:
 - Any work situation that poses a serious and immediate danger to safety; and
 - Any shortcomings in their employer's fire safety protection arrangements.
- [Add any duties as appropriate].

Employees also have general duties under the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Employees should report all fire-related dangers or shortcomings in fire safety arrangements to [enter role and/or name] [add contact details].

Fire risk assessment (FRA)

A fire risk assessment (FRA) will be completed, with the assistance of a competent person, as per the requirements of article 9 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The [enter role] is responsible for carrying out the FRA, who will:

- Identify the fire hazards.
- Identify who is at risk.
- Evaluate, remove, reduce and protect relevant persons from the risks.
- Record the findings, prepare an emergency plan and provide training.
- Review the fire risk assessment.

The aim of the FRA is to identify the preventive and protective measures required to eliminate, reduce or control fire safety risks.

Where dangerous substances are present in or around the care home premises, the FRA will include the considerations detailed in Schedule 1 (Part 1) of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

If young people are employed, at any time, the FRA will be reviewed to include the considerations detailed in Schedule 1 (Part 2) of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

The significant findings of the FRA, and details of any groups of persons identified as being especially at risk, will be recorded and will be brought to the attention of relevant employees and other affected persons.

The responsible person will ensure that the findings of the risk assessment are acted upon, as appropriate.

The FRA will be reviewed [enter the frequency]. Significant changes to the premises, work processes, staff, residents, equipment, substances and building layout will also trigger a review. If there is a fire incident on the premises, the FRA will be reviewed immediately.

A hard copy of the FRA will be kept in a safe place [enter the location of the FRA].

Fire safety precautions

Equipment maintenance, inspection and testing

All fire protective measures, including fire safety and electrical equipment, shall be selected, installed, modified, maintained, inspected and tested by competent persons in accordance with relevant standards, the fire risk assessment and manufacturer's instructions.

Firefighting equipment

Firefighting equipment is used to extinguish fires. The types of firefighting equipment on the premises include [enter the types of firefighting equipment, e.g. sprinklers, hoses, fire extinguishers or fire blankets, and locations].

Firefighting equipment will be inspected internally [enter the frequency] by [enter who is responsible]. Inspections will include the following checks:

- It is in good condition and not damaged.
- It is in the correct location and position.
- It has not been discharged, and the safety pin and plastic tags are in place (fire extinguishers).
- It has been serviced.
- The signage is in place and correct.
- [Add any additional checks].

Firefighting equipment will be maintained and serviced by an external competent contractor [enter the frequency]. The company contracted to maintain and service firefighting equipment is [enter the company name], and their contact details are [enter their contact details].

All inspections and tests will be recorded in the [enter the details].

Only those who have been trained to use firefighting equipment will be permitted to tackle small manageable fires (i.e. the size of a small waste paper bin). They should never endanger themselves and others to extinguish a fire.

Fire detection systems

Fire detection systems detect fire and warn occupants of the danger. The types of fire detection systems on the premises are [enter the types of fire detection equipment, e.g. fire alarms, smoke detectors, call points or a manual system, and locations. Also, include any systems in place for those with impairments and disabilities].

Fire detection systems will be tested internally [enter the frequency and test method for the system in place].

Fire detection systems will be inspected internally [enter the frequency] by [enter who is responsible]. Inspections will include the following checks:

- It is clear, visible and unobstructed.
- It is not damaged.
- The signage is in place and correct.
- It has been serviced.
- [Add any additional checks].

Fire detection systems will be maintained and serviced by an external competent contractor [enter the frequency]. The company contracted to maintain and service the fire detection system is [enter the company name], and their contact details are [enter their contact details].

All inspections and tests will be recorded in the [enter the details].

Fire doors

Fire doors prevent the spread of fire and smoke. The types of fire doors on the premises are [enter the types of fire doors, e.g. manual or automatic].

Fire doors will be tested internally [enter the frequency and test method for the doors in place].

Fire doors will be inspected internally [enter the frequency] by [enter who is responsible]. Inspections will include the following checks:

- They are clear, visible and unobstructed.
- They have appropriate signage/labelling.
- They close properly.
- They are kept closed at all times (unless they are doors that automatically close when the alarm is sounded).
- There is no damage or defects that could encourage the spread of fire, smoke and toxic fumes.
- [Add any additional checks].

Fire doors will be maintained and serviced by an external competent contractor [enter the frequency]. The company contracted to maintain and service the fire doors is [enter the company name], and their contact details are [enter their contact details].

All inspections and tests will be recorded in the [enter the details].

Emergency lighting

Emergency lighting guides relevant persons to their nearest exit. The emergency lighting that is in place is [enter the types of emergency lighting and locations].

Emergency lighting will be tested internally [enter the frequency and test method for the system you have in place].

Emergency lighting will be inspected internally [enter the frequency] by [enter who is responsible]. Inspections will include the following checks:

- It is clear, visible and unobstructed.
- It has appropriate signage/labelling.
- It is not damaged.
- The indicator lights are on.
- [Add any additional checks].

Emergency lighting will be serviced by an external competent contractor [enter the frequency]. The company contracted to maintain and service the emergency lighting is [enter the company name], and their contact details are [enter their contact details].

All inspections and tests will be recorded in the [enter the details].

Fire safety signage

Fire safety signage provides instructions to relevant persons on how to prevent fires or what actions to take if there is a fire. The fire safety signage around the premises includes [enter the types of signage, e.g. fire action notices, fire exit signs, escape route signs and fire equipment signs, and locations].

Fire signage will be inspected [enter the frequency] by [enter who is responsible]. Inspections will include the following checks:

- It is clear, visible and unobstructed.
- There is no damage or defects.
- It is in the correct location and position.
- It has appropriate symbols and not just writing to account for those with limited English skills.
- [Add any additional checks].

All inspections will be recorded in the [enter details].

Means of escape

If there is a fire on the premises, relevant persons need to use their nearest route and exit to escape the building. All escape routes, such as corridors, landings and stairways, and fire exits will be checked [enter the frequency] by [enter who is responsible] to ensure that they are kept clear of any obstructions and combustibles. Checks will also be completed externally to ensure that there is nothing blocking fire exit doors from the other side.

All inspections will be recorded in the [enter the details].

[Add additional relevant fire safety precautions here, e.g. dangerous substances, electrical equipment and smoking policy].

Emergency procedures

Fire emergency evacuation procedures and escape plans will be established and will be based on the findings of the fire risk assessment. Emergency procedures will be reviewed [enter the frequency] and if there are any significant changes.

Emergency evacuation procedures will be regularly tested by carrying out fire drills and practice exercises.

Personal emergency evacuation procedures (PEEPs)

All employees who would need assistance in an emergency will have a PEEP. For care home residents, a PEEP will be incorporated into their individual care plans. The PEEP will include:

- Their safest escape route, nearest emergency exits and closest refuges.
- Who would assist the person in evacuating the premises.
- The step-by-step method of how they would be evacuated.
- Any additional aids, equipment or support required to alert the person of a fire and assist them in evacuating.
- [Add any additional detail].

A PEEP will also be completed if there are any visitors or contractors who would need assistance in an emergency.

Reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 will be considered, where a disabled person requires a PEEP.

Fire drills

Fire drills will be carried out by [enter who is responsible] at least [enter frequency]. The frequency of fire drills will be based on the findings of the fire risk assessment.

Fire drills will be arranged to take into account employees working on different days and shifts.

The outcome of the fire drill exercise will be recorded in the [enter the details]. If there are any issues, the responsible person will ensure that appropriate action is taken.

Assembly points

Clearly marked assembly points will be established, which will be detailed on the escape plan, along with the locations of fire protective equipment.

Fire action notices, evacuation procedures and escape plans will be displayed, so that staff, residents and visitors can familiarise themselves with the care home's emergency procedures.

[Add additional emergency arrangements here]

Staff training

Article 21 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires the responsible person to provide their employees with adequate fire safety training.

[enter role here] is responsible for organising and coordinating training.

All employees will undertake fire safety training as soon as is practicable after the commencement of employment, which will include:

- The fire safety policy and any relevant procedures.
- The significant findings of the fire risk assessment.
- Who the fire wardens are and others with fire safety responsibilities.
- The actions to take on discovering a fire or hearing the alarm.
- The locations of the emergency routes, fire exits and assembly points.
- Where the fire alarm activation points are and how to activate them.
- The locations of fire safety equipment.
- Emergency evacuation procedures.
- [Add or change any topics as appropriate].

Refresher training will be carried out on an [enter frequency] basis. If there are any significant changes to fire safety risks, procedures or systems, refresher training will be provided before the specified frequency.

Fire wardens will undertake additional training relating to their responsibilities and duties.

All fire safety training (including fire drills and practice exercises) will take place during normal working hours, and a written record of attendance will be kept in the [enter the details].

Information for residents, visitors and contractors

Residents will be given information on the care home's fire safety rules and should be encouraged to assist in fire prevention. These rules may be specific to the resident after an individual assessment has taken place, e.g. for smoking.

Visitors and contractors on the premises will be notified of any particular fire risks and precautions on their arrival, including what to do if there is a fire [enter how instruction will be given, e.g. an induction].

Contractors carrying out any work on the premises must include fire safety in their risk assessment and method statement before being permitted to proceed. If any 'hot work' is carried out, additional precautions will be required.

Families and guests will also be advised on the fire safety rules, such as the smoking policy.

All visitors and contractors will sign in and out in the [enter the details], so care home staff know who is on the premises.

Procedures

[Enter company/care home name] has fire safety procedures in place, which includes the following:

[List relevant fire safety procedures].

The procedures should be read in conjunction with this policy.

Records

Records will be kept of:

- Fire risk assessments.
- Fire detection equipment internal inspections and tests.
- Fire detection equipment external services and repairs.
- Firefighting equipment internal inspections and tests.
- Firefighting equipment external services and repairs.
- Fire door internal inspections and tests.
- Fire door external services and repairs.
- Any visits from the fire inspector.
- Fire evacuation procedures.
- Fire drills and practice evacuations.
- Fire safety training and instructions given.
- [Add any additional records that will be kept].

Records will be kept [enter location, e.g. log book].

Monitoring and review

Fire safety performance will be monitored by [enter monitoring procedures, e.g. inspections, audits, logging of fire incidents/near misses. Include the frequency of monitoring].

This fire safety policy will be reviewed [enter the frequency]. A review will also be required if there are any:

- Significant changes within the premises.
- Fire-related incidents or near misses.
- Changes to fire safety legislation, standards or guidelines.

Any changes to the policy will be communicated to employees and other relevant persons (where appropriate).

[Add any additional relevant sections to your fire safety policy].