



Phoenix Community Care Ltd Policy & Procedure

Fire Safety

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Fire Safety

1. Introduction

The procedure is part of the Health and Safety Policy Document.

It must be read in conjunction with the procedural arrangements on General Workplace Assessment and others, which impose duties to carry out workplace risk assessments, such as COSHH, Flammable Substances and Smoking.

This procedural arrangement is effective immediately and requires full co-operation from staff, management, service users, volunteers and others.

Fire Safety is an issue that affects everyone at work - from employees and managers to contractors, visitors, and maintenance staff, as well as service users themselves. Fire can cause widespread damage to the workplace, and the potential is there for anybody to be seriously injured or killed unless fire risks are adequately controlled.

The primary objective of fire safety legislation is to save lives and reduce the risk of injury when a fire breaks out. However, it is not only the responsibility of managers to ensure that fire procedures are complied with. It is the responsibility of everyone.

Managers must ensure that adequate fire precautions are in place - including fire escape routes and fire fighting equipment - so that if a fire does occur, everyone in the workplace can avoid harm. Once started, fires consume anything combustible in its path. It may take hours before enough heat has built up to allow it to spread, and other fires may develop very quickly, depending on the available fuel, oxygen and heat source.

In all buildings and offices there is a need to quickly investigate any signs of a potential fire such as smoke or the smell of burning and take action to prevent the initial problem developing. If everyone has this attitude, a serious incident may be averted.

Protection from fire is based on 3 elements: -

1. Prevention
2. Detection
3. Response

The overall quality of the building's fire defence depends on how well each aspect is co-ordinated and linked.

2. Fire Safety

a. Prevention

Prevention relies on minimising flammability and controlling ignition sources. It is necessary to consider matters such as smoking and cigarette disposal, keeping fire doors closed or fitted with closing devices connected to the alarm system, switching off electrical appliances and unplugging late at night and

minimising the accumulation of rubbish, undertaking regular electrical safety checks and tests.

b. Detection

Detection relies upon people being alert, and the use of smoke or heat detectors linked to the alarm system. A record must be kept of the monthly alarm tests and also the quarterly alarm test carried out by the appointed contractor. (These records and all other Fire related records must be kept in your Fire Log Book – PCC UAM houses are recorded digitally).

c. Response

Response relies upon clear passageways for people to move away from fire-affected areas, good communication with the emergency services and the availability of fire extinguishers. Emergency lighting must be in good condition and tested 6 monthly. All exit routes and doorways must be unobstructed, fire doors are fitted with closers which work, extinguishers are in place and that rubbish is cleared away.

3. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP)

A Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) must be prepared for each individual, staff or service user, who has a mobility or sensory impairment. An individual's plan should detail the actions that staff are expected to take should that individual need to evacuate the building.

Any client who is learning English as a second language will be provided on induction with a visual picture language evacuation plan or in their native tongue.

4. Fire Drills

Fire drills must be held regularly to ensure that staff are familiar with the procedures defined in the Emergency Plan. The drills will not require the 'forced evacuation of Service Users', although those who wish to take part to increase the validity of the drill should be encouraged to do so. They must be held at the very least once a year with all staff given the opportunity to participate.

The responsibility for carrying out fire drills rests on the Fire Marshal. A fire drill is intended to ensure, by means of training and rehearsal, that in the event of fire:

- The people who may be in danger act in a calm & orderly manner.
- Where necessary, those designated carry out their allotted duties to ensure the safety of all concerned.
- The means of escape are used in accordance with a predetermined & practiced plan.
- If evacuation of a building becomes necessary, it is speedy & orderly.

5. Fire Evacuation

Fire evacuation will normally be to the identified fire assembly point, in the event of a fire or other similar emergency. On arrival, the professional fire officers will be able to decide upon further evacuation requirements.

6. Records

Records of alarm tests, checks on emergency lighting and fire drills must be kept in the through the PCC online form. PCC's fire marshal or Housing manager will provide guidance on issues relating to fire safety, and must always be consulted for advice relating to local circumstances.

7. Training

All staff, service users and volunteers will receive instructions or training so that they are fully aware of the local Fire Safety arrangement and the action they must take upon discovering a fire or hearing the fire alarm sound.

8. Fire Safety Risk Assessment

Fire Risk Assessments looks at ways of reducing the risk - for example, by introducing a smoking policy or by storing flammable substances in fire-resisting stores, ensuring that plant and equipment are maintained and tested according to manufacturers recommendation.

The Fire marshal and housing manager is responsible for completing the attached Fire Safety Risk Assessment. When completed a copy of this may be located in the property files and must be readily available to the Fire Officer. The Risk Assessment must be reviewed either as details change or annually.

Managers, staff, service users and volunteers need to be aware of their responsibilities with respect to :-

- The Fire Safety Risk Assessment
- The building and their responsibilities regarding fire safety
- The fire alarm system
- Portable fire fighting equipment.

9. Completing a Fire Risk Assessment

The Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations require PCC to complete a fire-risk assessment for all properties. Those properties that need to have a fire certificate may have additional individual requirement recommended by the fire officer. An existing fire certificate may form the basis of the fire risk assessment (IT IS NOT A SUBSTITUTE FOR A FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT).

10. Objectives of the fire Risk Assessment

The housing manager must :-

- **Identify hazards and people at risk**
- **Remove or reduce the hazards**
- **Manage the remaining risks to acceptable levels by:-**
 - Ensuring that all occupants are alerted and can move to a safe area in the event of a fire
 - Reducing the probability of a fire starting;
 - Limiting the effects should a fire occur.

11. Key Stages of Fire Risk Assessment

As with the general workplace risk assessments the simplest approach to take is that based on the Health & Safety Executives recommended '5 Steps to Risk Assessment'.

Step 1 - Identifying Fire Hazards

For a fire to occur it needs sources of heat and fuel and air (oxygen). If these hazards can be kept apart, removed or reduced, then the risk to people and the building is minimised.

Identify any combustibles - these can be divided into two main groups; combustible fuels such as paper, wood, cardboard, and highly combustible fuels such as thinners, solvents and polyurethane foam.

Identify any sources of heat - workplaces will contain heat / ignition sources, some will be obvious such as cooking equipment or open flames. Others will be less obvious such as the heating effect of glass by electrical equipment Always ensure that combustible or flammable substances are kept away from sources of heat Electrical wiring, faulty equipment, or incorrectly positioned appliances.

You should also make reference to:

- Unsafe acts - such as smoking in restricted areas (such as kitchen, store room, and bedrooms plant/boiler rooms etc) - this should be discouraged and only designated smoking areas used.
- Unsafe conditions - hazards that may assist a fire to spread .

Step 2 - Identify locations and persons who are at significant risk

Particular reference must be made to those with physical or sensory impairments or English as a second language. Consideration must be given to all groups of people who may be in the premises including visitors and contractors working on site. Identify any people sleeping on the premises, not just service users but live-in staff and sleep-over staff.

Step 3 - Reduce the risks

Evaluate the risks and determine if the existing arrangements are adequate or need improvement. Having identified the hazards you need to reduce the chance of a fire occurring and spreading, thereby minimising or removing the chance of harm to people in the property by:-

- **REMOVING** the hazard altogether.

- **REDUCING** the hazard to the point where there is little or no risk
- **REPLACING** the existing hazard with a safer alternative
- **SEGREGATING** the hazard from the property
- **DEVELOPING A PREVENTION POLICY & CULTURE** to ensure hazards don't occur.

Step 4 - Record your findings.

You must use the attached forms. The written record of your fire risk - assessment must be kept with the house file or emergency plan, and always kept readily available in the property folders which are kept in the kitchen areas of the properties.

Step 5 - Review

All risk assessments must be reviewed at least **annually, or sooner, if there is a change in circumstances**. A change could be a small fire within a property, or it could be a change in working practice e.g. a fire exit is temporarily blocked whilst construction work is undertaken.

The Housing Manager and Fire marshal must ensure that the fire risk assessment is reviewed as appropriate.

12. Fire Safety Guidance

Furniture

It is important that all furniture in PCC properties is not itself a potential source of fuel for a fire. There are stringent legislation that govern modern furnishings.

All furniture purchased or donated for use within the properties/Offices must meet the current British Standard Fire Resistance Requirements: -

- Upholstered articles must have fire resistant filling material.
- Fabrics must have passed a match resistance test if bought by P.C.C.
- The combination of the fabric and the filling material must have passed a cigarette resistance test if purchased by P.C.C.

Service User's Furnishings

Service users' rooms must be fitted with a 30 minute BS fire resistant door fitted with a self closing device and either linked into the fire alarm system or fitted with a "door guard" which would perform the function of ensuring the door is closed should the fire alarm be activated.

13. Fire Action

Within all properties / offices the following should apply:-

- The training officer is to ensure that all staff are familiar with the organisation Procedure.
- Arrangements for Fire Safety.
- A comprehensive Fire Risk Assessment must be in place and available at all times.

- Fire procedures must be documented and readily displayed.
- All staff, service users and volunteers must be trained and aware of the fire procedures within the service and refresher training be given on a regular basis and documented.
- The housing manager must ensure that Personal Evacuation Plans (PEEP's) are in place.
- All fire doors must be kept closed at all times, especially at night. No combustible materials should be stored in any electrical / gas intake cupboards, under stairs, or in areas where there are significant ignition sources.
- Fire checks must be regularly carried out by the fire marshal or housing manager and documented in accordance with PCC's Procedural Arrangement on the following areas; -
 - Fire alarm
 - Smoke / heat detectors
 - Emergency lighting
 - Fire extinguishers/ hose reels / fire blankets
 - Fire drills
 - Fire doors

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan

Service user Name _____

Room Nos _____

Fire Zone _____

Mobility

Sensory Impairment

Specialist Equipment

Evacuation Method

Day:

Night:

Name of person carrying out assessment: _____

Service User Signature or proxy: _____

Service Manager Signature: _____

Date of assessment: _____

Fire Risk Assessment

Service:

Date:

Part I What will burn?

Have you got the following		Yes / No
Flammable solids		
1	Paper and cards	
2	Plastics	
3	Textiles (e.g., curtains, fabric collages etc.)	
4	Upholstered furniture	
5	Furniture with damaged covering exposing padding.	
6	Notice boards on escape routes with bundles of paper on them	
7	More than 20 % of the wall area in any room covered with hardboard, chipboard, plastic tiles or flock wallpaper.	
8	Any ceiling covered with polystyrene tiles.	
9	Artificial plants/foilage.	
10	Displays involving combustible materials on escape routes	
11	Paper or other flammable decorations used at festival times.	
12	Other combustible solids. If so what are they?	
Flammable liquids / gases		
13	Flammable liquids kept in the workplace e.g., cooking oil, petrol, methylated spirits, white spirit etc. If so what are they	
14	Flammable liquid containers left open without tops on	
15	Main gas supply	
16	Bottled Gas LPG	
17	Cylinders of other gas e.g., air or oxygen	
18	Aerosol cans	

If the answers to any of the questions in part I were "YES", please consider which of the following you already do and which you could do:

Reducing The Risk From Things That Will Burn:	Already Do	Could Do
1. Replace any of the combustible materials with non-combustible alternatives.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduce the amounts of combustible materials stored on the premises. 2. Keep combustible materials in fire resisting stores away from sources of ignition. 		
4. Limit the size of combustible displays and site them away from escape routes.		
5. Remove loose bundles of paper from notice boards.		
6. Replace furniture with combustible upholstery items that are not so combustible.		
7. Replace damaged furniture.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Improve housekeeping arrangements for disposal of waste and rubbish. 9. Remove combustible wall linings and replace with more suitable materials. 		
10. Remove combustible ceiling linings.		
11. Introduce real plants or fire-resistant foliage.		
12. Purchase curtains that are inherently flame retardant, treat other curtains and large fabric collages etc. with fire retardant. (NB stage curtains must be inherently flame retardant).		
13. Avoid using hanging combustible decorations particularly near light fittings.		
14. Reduce the volume of flammable liquids that are kept in the premises.		
15. Keep all containers closed when not in use.		
16. Replace flammable liquid with a non-flammable alternative.		
17. Regular servicing and maintenance of gas fuelled equipment		
18. Reduce the number of gas cylinders kept on the premises.		
19. Reduce the number of aerosol cans kept on the premises.		
20. Replace aerosols containing flammable propellant with non-flammable ones.		
21. Keep undersides of temporary structures free from rubbish, vegetation and stored items.		

Part 2. What Will Cause It To Burn?

Which of these sources of ignition have you got?	Yes or No
1. Hot processes e.g., cooking, welding, flame cutting, incineration, tar boilers.	
2. Light bulbs and fittings near combustible materials (e.g., paper in storage).	
3. Fluorescent light tubes and fittings near combustible materials (e.g., paper in storage).	
4. Portable heaters.	
5. Multipoint adapters in electrical sockets.	
6. Extension leads plugged into adapters or other extension leads.	
7. Damaged or faulty electrical equipment	
8. Any faults with the electrical installation.	
9. Smoking on premises.	
10. Arson a potential problem.	
11. Other sources of heat. If so what are they?	

If the answers to any of the questions in part 2 were "YES", please consider which of the following you already do and which you could do:

Reducing the risk from sources of ignition:	Already Do	Could Do
1. Avoid using processes that use flames or heat.		
2. Have a safe system of work for every process using flames or heat.		
3. Remove combustible material away from light fittings.		
3. Replace radiant heaters or those with a flame with convector heaters or central heating.		
4. 5. Install extra electrical socket outlets.		
6. Use fused multi plug adapters.		
7. Use thermostats.		
8. Use residual current devices (RCDs).		
9. Be sure regular inspection of portable electrical appliances.		
10. Ensure prompt reporting of any damaged or faulty electrical equipment or wiring.		
11. Smoking policy - if allowed in any areas provide suitable furniture and adequate ashtrays.		
12. Keep wheeled bins secured and away from buildings.		
13. Store LPG cylinders in a secure ventilated place away from other combustible materials.		
14. Flammable materials kept locked up when not in use.		
15. Means of access including ladders kept secure when not in use.		
16. Metal containers fitted to all letter boxes.		

Part 3. What Might Cause A Fire To Spread?

Does your workplace have any of the following features?	Yes / No
1. Holes in floors, walls and ceilings around services such as pipes and cables.	
2. Ductwork without dampers that passes through floors, walls and ceilings	
3. Undivided voids beneath the floor	
4. Undivided voids above the ceilings	
5. Voids beneath panelling or other features that lead to fire spreading To the floor above	
6. Could fire start in part of the building and not be noticed	
7. Fire doors propped open	
8. Undivided corridors over 45m long.	
9. Other features that could lead to the spread of smoke or flames in the event of a fire.	
If so what are they?	

If the answers to any of the questions in part 3 were "YES", please consider which of the following you already do and which you could do:

Reduce the risk of a fire spreading	Already Do	Could Do
1. Fire stop all holes around services to the same standard as material that are passing through.		
2. Install dampers in ducts in line with walls/ceilings.		
3. Divide voids below floors		
4. Divide voids above ceilings.		
5. Fire stop hidden areas such as those behind panelling.		
6. Provision of automatic fire detection and alarm.		
7. Close but don't lock fire doors when premises in use.		
8. Self closers on fire doors work effectively.		
9. Someone checks that all doors are closed last thing at night.		
10. Corridors over 45m long fitted with self closing fire doors of 20m fire resistance.		

Part 4. How will we know a fire has started and how will we escape?

Which apply in your workplace?	Yes No
We have a manual fire alarm (e.g., handbell, electric bell, shouting etc). OR We have automatic fire detection and alarm (e.g., smoke, flame or heat detectors).	
2. The alarm can be clearly heard anywhere on the premises.	
3. The alarm is checked weekly and a record of the result of the check kept.	
4. The alarm is tested from a different call point each time.	
5. All alarm call points are kept clear and unobstructed.	
6. Fire evacuation procedures are displayed in each room.	
7. Escape routes are signed with a running person, arrow and open door pictogram where not obvious to the users of the building.	
8. Fire escape routes are kept free from obstruction, tripping/slipping hazards and in good repair.	
9. Fire exit doors can be opened easily in an emergency.	
10. Fire exit doors open outwards.	
11. All fire exits lead to a place of safety in the open air.	
12. Every part of the workplace has two potential escape routes.	
13. Everyone on the premises is less than 45 meters from a fire exit.	
14. Inner rooms have a vision panel, a gap of at least 500mm above the dividing partition or there is a smoke detector in the outer room.	
15. There are sufficient fire escapes for everyone to get out of the workplace to a place of safety within 3 minutes of the alarm sounding.	
16. Fire drills are held at least twice a year and records kept.	
17. Emergency lighting is installed where necessary.	
18. Emergency lighting is checked monthly and serviced at six-month intervals and the checks recorded.	

If the answers to any of the above was “No” then detail in the action plan at the end of the document what you intend to do.

Part 5. People At Risk?

Which of these apply to your workplace?	Yes	No
1. People in the building unfamiliar with its layout and escape routes.		
2. Regular use or visits by people whose mobility is impaired.		
3. Regular use or visits by people who have other forms of disability.		
4. Contractors unfamiliar with the fire risks of the premises.		
5. Employees working in areas where there is a high risk of a fire occurring.		

Take into account the following:

- What people may be doing when the warning is given
- What they have to do before they can commence escaping
- The number of people who share the escape route
- The distance they may have to travel and the route itself to the nearest point of safety

If the answers to any of the questions in part 5 were "YES", please consider which of the following you already do and which you could do:

Reducing the risk to people	Already Do	Could Do
1. Enough employees have sufficient training to be able to ensure speedy and orderly evacuation of everyone in the workplace.		
2. Work out a personal evacuation plan for any regular user of the building with a disability.		
3. Escape routes are suitable for the person who uses them.		
4. Sign escape routes if they are not familiar to the people present (Correct pictogram).		
5. Ensure that all know what to do in the event of fire.		
6. Ensure sufficient training is given to reduce risks of fire.		

Training should cover the following:

- Fire Routine:** Assisting other people including service users and volunteers.
- Means of giving warnings:** Documented evidence
- Fire exits:** Knowledge of 'stay put' policy (if applicable)
- Fire assembly points:** Consider for visitors / public etc (especially during open days, fetes etc).

Part 6. How Could We Fight A Fire?

Which does your workplace have?	Yes / No
1. At least one 13A rated water extinguisher per 200 square meters of floor area. (Hose reel can be used as an alternative).	
2. Additional fire fighting equipment is provided for particular risks: a) Dry powder extinguishers b) Foam extinguishers c) Carbon dioxide extinguishers d) Fire blankets	
3. Fire fighting equipment is sited close to exits,	
4. Fire fighting equipment is clearly visible at all times or is indicated by a sign	
5. Sufficient employees have had training in how to operate fire fighting equipment safely and efficiently	
6. All fire fighting equipment is serviced and checked annually and records kept of this	

If answers to any of the questions in part 6 were “No” please complete the action plan below

What we need to do	Resources / help needed	Priority	Date for Completion
What we need to do	Resources / help needed	Priority	Date for Completion

For further help and advice please contact: The fire prevention officer or your Health and Safety Adviser.

Fire Risk Assessment carried out by:

Name:

Position:

Workplace:

Date:

Summary of Findings:

Approved by Service Manager

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Assessment Review Date:

Please send a copy to the Health & Safety Adviser for information.