

Evacuation Arrangements for People with Disabilities – Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans Health & Safety Management Standard Issue 3 (November 2019)

Introduction

This document contains corporate standards and guidance on Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans. It is the responsibility of managers to ensure that adequate arrangements for emergency evacuation are in place in any area under their control.

This document must be read in conjunction with any additional guidance specific to divisional issues or activities.

Managers' Checklist

The checklist below identifies key actions involved in ensuring that Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans are in place. Further information about each of these points is contained in this document.

1. Are there any employees within your area of responsibility who may require assistance in an emergency evacuation?
2. Have written Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) been created?
3. Have any additional control measures identified by the PEEP been put in place?
4. Are PEEP reviews on a regular basis?
5. Have visitors to the premises been considered?

Systems of Evacuation

The safe and effective evacuation of people with disabilities needs careful thought. Management procedures need to be in place, which take account of the scenarios that could foreseeably arise. For example, the procedures adopted for disabled people employed in a building, will be different to those for disabled people visiting the building who may be unfamiliar with its layout.

Systems of evacuation that may be implemented include:

- **Progressive horizontal evacuation.** This system can be used in buildings with a phased alarm system. It involves a person passing from one 'fire compartment' into another that is not part of the initial evacuation zone. A 'fire compartment' is a part of a
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building separated from other parts of the same building by fire-resisting walls, ceilings, floors and doors.

- **Evacuation by lift.** This method is only possible where there are special 'fire-fighting lifts' with a secondary power supply/battery backup and a structurally protected lobby shaft.

- **Evacuation by stairs.** This method involves the use of equipment such as 'Evac-Chairs'. It is usually only possible if people are being evacuated downwards, or horizontally.

- **Using refuges.** BS5588: Part 8 defines refuges as: 'Relatively safe waiting areas for short periods. They are not areas where disabled people should be left alone indefinitely until rescued by the fire brigade, or until the fire is extinguished. (This should not be confused with the use of refuges in progressive horizontal evacuation.)' A refuge is an area separated from the fire by a fire-resisting construction, which that also has access to a final fire exit via a safe route. It provides a temporary space for disabled people to wait for other people, who will then help them evacuate.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

Where an employee regularly uses a building it is important that emergency evacuation issues are properly identified and arrangements documented in a 'Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan' (PEEP).

It is the responsibility of line managers to ensure that PEEPs are produced for disabled employees working within their area of responsibility. Managers must ensure that the individuals concerned are actively involved in the creation of their PEEP.

Line managers should involve premises managers as necessary. E.g. to identify suitable refuge areas, to communicate any issues with the premises management that have been identified, etc. A copy of the agreed PEEP should always be sent to the manager in control of the premises.

Writing a PEEP

The following factors need to be considered when writing a PEEP. A form for recording PEEPs is provided with this guidance.

1. The individual's disability
 - What is the nature of the individual's disability?
 - What problems does the individual feel they would encounter if they were evacuating the building in an emergency?
2. What buildings or areas of the building, does the individual commonly use?
 - Each area may require slightly different arrangements.
3. What are the current general provisions for fire evacuation within the building, or areas of the building identified above?
 - Does the building have refuge areas in quickly accessible locations?
 - Are the Fire Wardens/Floor Evacuation Officers aware of any potential problems evacuating the building?
 - Is the means of raising the alarm consistent with the individual? E.g. a person with a hearing impairment may not be able to hear an audible alarm.

4. What are the current evacuation arrangements for the individual?
 - Are there any people appointed to assist the individual in an evacuation?
 - Is there adequate 'cover' at **all times** the person is at work?
5. What is the individual's current awareness of evacuation procedures? Do they know:
 - Action to take on alarm activation (including recognition of alarm)?
 - The exit routes that can be used?
 - The location of refuge areas?
 - How and where to report to designated personnel?
 - What equipment is needed and where is it located?
6. What additional measures are required?
 - Means of alerting the individual to the alarm activation?
 - Is there a need for improved awareness of procedures? (This could include the awareness of the individual, their appointed assistants, Fire Wardens/Floor Evacuation Officers, etc.)
 - Clearer use of refuges, evacuation by stairs, progressive horizontal evacuation?
 - Training for 'assistants'?
 - What equipment is needed and where should it be located?
7. Training, practice and drills
 - Are relevant staff and disabled persons sufficiently trained in evacuation procedures and are practical practices and drills carried out at regular intervals?

Evac-Chairs

A common method of evacuation is 'evacuation by stairs'. Where this method is used, it is the responsibility of line managers to ensure that an adequate number of employees are trained in the use of evac-chairs, and where necessary trained in assisting individuals into the evac-chair.

Line managers should also ensure that evac-chairs are readily available. If there are concerns about location or availability, line managers should inform the manager in control of the premises.

Please contact your Premises Manager or Health & Safety Adviser for further information on evac-chair training.

Reviewing PEEPs

PEEPs should be reviewed on an annual basis, or sooner where appropriate. E.g. changes to the layout of the building, a (real or practice) evacuation has revealed problems in the PEEP, there have been changes in personnel providing assistance, etc.

Visitors

It would be difficult to create a written PEEP for every visitor who could require assistance during an emergency. If this is not reasonably practicable, general arrangements should be in place to address any issues arising. For, example:

- Check that exit routes from areas open to the public are easily accessible.
- If a meeting or event is being organised, ensure that the location is suitable for the

likely attendees.

- When planning meetings or events, ask people to inform you before the event/meeting if they require any assistance in an emergency.
- Posting notices in reception areas asking visitors to contact a member of staff if they require any assistance in an evacuation.

Accessibility Advice

Further advice on accessibility issues is available from LCC's Equalities Team.

VERSION CONTROL SUMMARY

Document:	Evacuation Arrangements for Disabled – Health & Safety Management Standard		
Issue Number:	3	Date of Issue:	November 2019

Summary details of amendments made at this review.

Page	Section / Paragraph	Amendment
3	Writing a PEEP – point 7	Reference made to ensuring arrangements for appropriate training, practice and drills are in place
3	Visitors	Clarification of the requirement for PEEPS to be in place for visitors