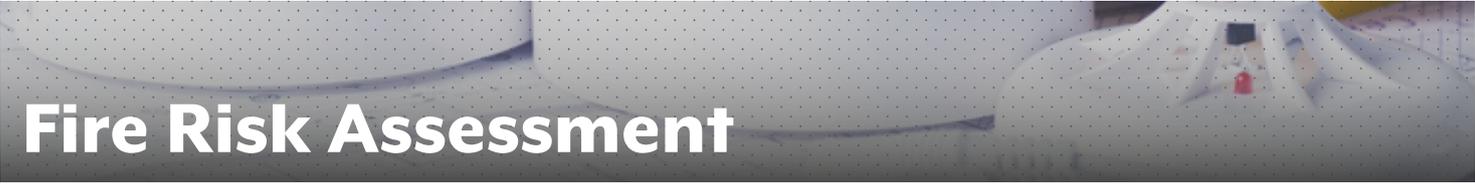


Guidance Information for Care and Healthcare Providers

- **Fire Risk Assessment**
- Staffing levels
- **Evacuation**
- Maintaining social distancing at the assembly point
- **Vulnerable people**
- Training
- **Use of fire extinguishers**
- Testing and maintenance
- **Means of escape**
- Fire and Rescue Service visits
- **Current legal notices received from my local Fire and Rescue Service**
- Miscellaneous



SUPPORTING YOU TO PROTECT YOUR BUSINESS



Fire Risk Assessment

The RR (FS) O 2005 still applies and it is the duty of the Responsible Person (RP) defined in Article 3 of the order to ensure risk from fire is identified and suitable measures implemented, these should be recorded in your fire risk assessment. All care provided facilities should review their Fire Risk Assessment and Emergency Procedures/Plans in light of the COVID-19 impact may be having on their staffing levels, evacuation arrangements, training and maintenance.



Staffing levels

During this difficult period RP's should ensure sufficient staffing levels remains to support the premises Emergency Evacuation Strategy. If staffing levels are currently affected by COVID-19, care homes should review their Fire Risk Assessment and Emergency Plan. If staffing levels cannot support the evacuation strategy, the care home should consult with their Fire Risk Assessor or Primary Authority.



Evacuation

In the unfortunate event a fire occurs in your premises you must ensure the fire service is called at the earliest stage and confirmation provided to inform the operator that evacuation is taking place.



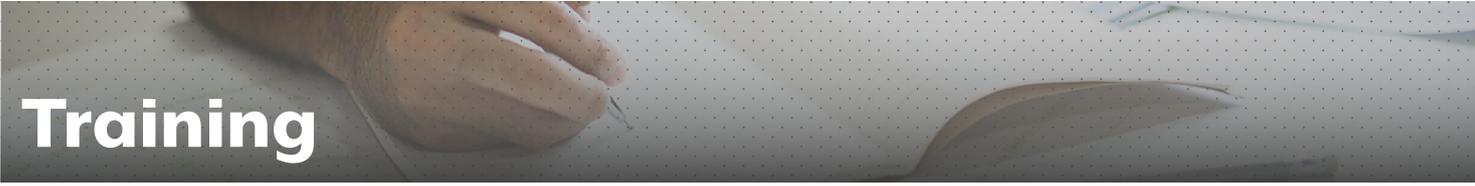
Maintaining social distancing at the assembly point

Should all occupants are required to leave a premises and report to a pre-determined Assembly Point social distancing may be impacted during the evacuation, further information can be found by following NFCC guidelines on maintaining hygiene at Assembly Points.



Vulnerable people

RP's should ensure that Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) continue to be reviewed where residents rely on staffing levels to initiate evacuation procedures. Such reviews must carefully weigh the fire risks and the facilities to operate safely. The RP may wish to should consider where practical, relocating occupants within the premises, minimising the areas in use, and investigating all avenues to provide the required number of staff. Where doubt exists you may consider contingency plans.



Training

The RP should ensure there are sufficiently trained staff to assist them in managing fire safety, its paramount everyone understands what to do in event of fire. If required, any new staff can familiarise with the premises via a desktop drill. All staff working at the premises should receive training relevant to their role and responsibilities in event of fire. The current level of training against each individual should be reviewed and updated as necessary, this is essential for occupants unfamiliar with the premises. E.g. familiarisation with the use of any emergency evacuation equipment.



Use of fire extinguishers

Any person expected to use a fire extinguisher should:

- Be familiar with the operating instructions;
- Understand which extinguisher can be used on which type of fire;
- Be aware of the fire extinguisher locations.

Fire extinguishers should be kept clean to prevent cross-contamination and should be maintained on a regular basis (if this is not possible at the present time, then regular visual checks should be made to ensure equipment is not damaged.)



Testing and maintenance

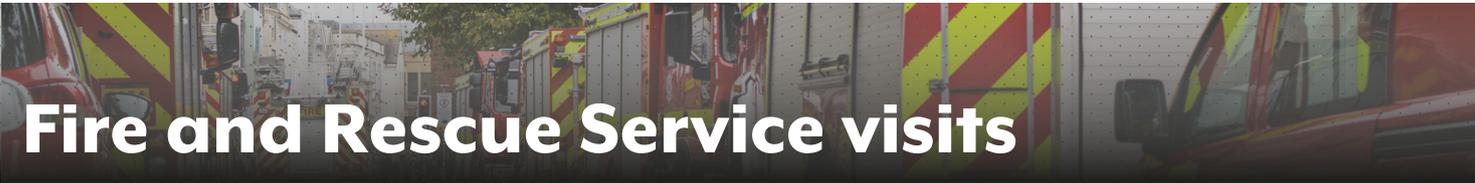
Following the Prime Minister's announcement on 23 March 2020, there is currently no relaxation of fire safety legislation and it is the responsibility of the RP and/or duty holder to ensure they are testing and maintaining all fire safety measures to maintain a safe premises.

The NFCC's view is that people working on vital fire safety measures such as the installation and maintenance of fire safety measures should be considered key workers within the provisions of HM Government guidelines, as they are providing key public services and critical safety functions in order to keep premises safe. They must also keep themselves safe whilst carrying out these essential activities.



Means of escape

There still needs to be a suitable and sufficient number of fire exits for the number of occupants within your premises that are immediately available. This should ensure occupants do not have to travel excessive distances, pass through an area of high fire risk or move towards a fire to escape. Doors should not be wedged open to stop people from touching handles. Fire doors are an important fire safety measure, keep fire doors closed and follow government advice on hand washing and cleansing hard surfaces. Some fire doors may be held open by automatic releasing hold-open devices specifically designed and installed for this purpose.



Fire and Rescue Service visits

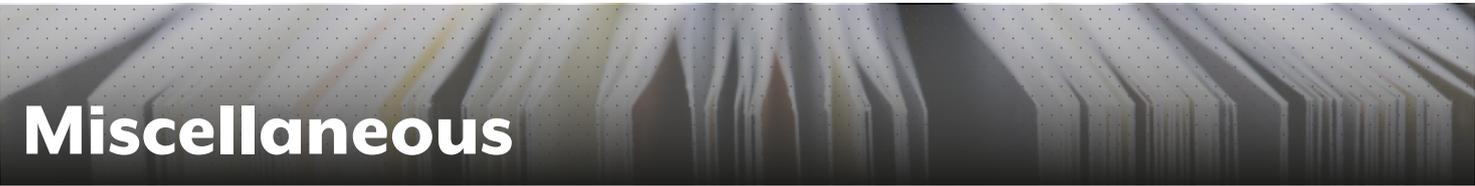
In the current situation SWFRS is following Government guidance on limiting non-essential contact and taking a risk-based approach to all fire safety activity, focusing resources on the highest risks. Unless it is identified as a significant risk, it remains the RP's duty to ensure risk from fire is identified and suitable measures implemented. This can be achieved by reviewing the current Fire Risk Assessment and/or seeking advice from a competent Fire Risk Assessor. General fire safety advice is also available by contacting your local FRS.



Current legal notices received from my local Fire and Rescue Service

The current situation with COVID-19 has not changed the status of any notices issued under the RR (FS) O 2005. You should contact the issuing FRS if you require further advice and guidance. If the schedule cannot be completed before the notice expires, please contact your local FRS who will advise you. SWFRS will check if notices are complied with, but this will be carried out on a risk based approach depending on individual circumstances.

You could also assist the FRS in any updates of work(s) carried out, which may include photographic images where applicable, to ease this process, which will be verified at a later time. Please remember if you believe you will not complete the work scheduled on notice by the expiry date given, inform the FRS at the earliest opportunity to apply for an extension of time.



Miscellaneous

- Consider prohibiting any hot works unless necessary. If necessary, ensure they are carried out by a competent person with a suitable and sufficient risk assessment and appropriate checks following completion of the work.
- Keep waste materials away from the building and restrict access to it.
- Keep escape routes are kept clear of any combustible items/material.
- Ensure smoking policies are strictly adhered to.