



Fire Sector Federation

Personal Emergency Evacuation General Residential Premises

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Check List on Securing Safe Escape from Fire

Assessment of evacuation procedures from a personal level, to ensure the safe escape of any individual from fire, is a critical component of any fire risk assessment – it represents a key part of a founding principle - the preservation of life. Evacuation procedures, with the associated provision of safe routes of escape to a place of ultimate safety, must therefore be inherent and a clear part of any building's fire safety strategy.

Although individual needs may be intrinsically variable, starting with escape from the immediate vicinity of a fire, the need arises to be able to assess the collective escape of multiple individuals under frightening and threatening situations. In residential buildings, where regular practiced escape is uncommon and conversely changes in residents may be frequent, the importance of the evacuation procedures is heightened.

This guide and check-list has been prepared primarily to assist fire risk assessors. It has no formal or legal status. It has been developed within the fire sector industry in the absence of other guidance using the format of a check list. The questions, which may be selected as appropriate by the competent fire risk assessor, are designed to assist individual fire risk assessors as an aide-memoire.

The idea of the check-list is to set out questions which can then be interpreted by the fire risk assessor and used in discussions with their clients to explore and determine what actions, if any, appear appropriate for the building under assessment. Questions selected should have recorded answers.

The scope of the guidance and check list relates specifically to general residential buildings, which are often unstaffed and usually have a two-phase evacuation strategy (commonly called 'stay put'), where initially residents remain inside any unaffected flat or apartment prior to a decision, often determined by responding fire and rescue services, to evacuate.

However, this guidance recognises that, regardless of the stated evacuation strategy, any individual may decide to evacuate and start their escape because of personal circumstances or the situation at the time, removing themselves from a perceived or actual threat of harm to a place of safety i.e. a safe area beyond the building, and this should be born in mind when using the check list questions.



Key points for Responsible Person who maintains the whole fire escape strategy 24/7

1. The Fire Safety Order requires regular suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks relevant persons are exposed to in a building especially those persons at risk. Due regard must be had for other legislation, for example, the Equality Act 2010, Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Building Regulations 2010 As Amended, etc.
2. Assessment of the risks allows general fire safety precautions to be put in place and this includes planning emergency routes or means of escape.
3. Securing a safe escape from fire requires a person-centred understanding of the individual residents in a building and attention must be given to persons who self-declare a vulnerability.
4. The Responsible Person and all other duty holders (for example leaseholders and managing agents) should make reasonable effort to contact each individual resident or their representative to open a discussion on any concerns about escape from fire and record this action.
5. Based upon a resident's self-declared information a decision can be made to either rely on self-evacuation or to formulate a plan with special arrangements.
6. This may result in an individual requiring special arrangements, perhaps a tailored Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan ('PEEPs'), which could involve additional assessments, responsibilities and implications.

Key points for Residents who are the person at the centre of the evacuation plan

1. Residents share a legal responsibility (Article 5 of the Fire Safety Order 2005) with the building's Responsible Person, who provides the means of escape, to ensure there is a clear understanding of their ability to escape from fire.
2. In particular, the resident may be able to self-evacuate using the buildings common escape facilities or may require special assistance because of their personal vulnerabilities.
3. It is essential the resident cooperates with the Responsible Person to correctly identify, discuss, and agree how they will evacuate in an emergency. This requires a partnership to work together.
4. Although a resident may exercise personal choice as to the level of personal risk, they find acceptable in discussing their escape preferences these will have to be realistic and practical.
5. Residents should recognise a level of reasonableness is required to secure appropriate evacuation facilities.
6. If difficulty does arise in trying to agree suitable evacuation arrangements an approach could be made for advice to the local Enforcement Authority to try and reach a mutually acceptable resolution.



Key Points for Fire Risk Assessor who is auditing the plan at one point in time

1. Fire Risk Assessors have a legal duty to audit, assess, advise, and assist as contracted by the Responsible Persons.
2. A Fire Risk Assessment will need to consider the evacuation strategy and the means of escape arrangements. The Fire Risk Assessor may conduct an assessment and provide advice or recommend action, but, the ultimate determination and implementation will remain the responsibility of the Responsible Person.
3. The Fire Risk Assessor must therefore be diligent and exercise appropriate consideration when undertaking the assessment of the means of escape arrangements with action and ongoing care to secure overall safe escape from fire being the responsibility of the Responsible Person.
4. Other persons, for example, social care and fire risk professionals, hold a duty to be diligent but cannot replace either the individual Resident's or Responsible Person's responsibilities.
5. A check list process has been developed to support the Fire Risk Assessor audit and review. This may also assist the Responsible Person to discharge their responsibility.
6. This document is for guidance only and following it does not necessarily demonstrate compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005.



Securing Safe Escape Checklist

1.	Does the building fire strategy take emergency evacuation into account?	
2.	What is the evacuation strategy for the building?	
3.	Are there staff on site during daytime working hours?	
4.	If 'Yes' to 3 provide details (number of staff, working hours etc.)	
5.	Are there staff on site overnight?	
6.	If 'Yes' to 5 provide details (numbers of staff, working hours etc.)	
7.	Do all staff receive fire safety instruction and training on induction?	
8.	Do all staff receive periodic fire safety refresher training?	
9.	Are staff with special responsibilities (e.g. fire wardens) given additional training?	
10.	Is the escape strategy available to all residents, FRS, placed in the PIB and regularly reviewed?	
11.	Is the escape strategy stay-put or simultaneous evacuation?	
12.	Does the buildings escape strategy reflect the residents required escape plans?	
13.	Have attempts been made to contact all residents in the building and residents responses recorded?	
14.	When will residents next be contacted to update and review planning?	
15.	Have all residents been asked how they intend to escape in an emergency?	
16.	Are there any residents who have self-reported that they cannot escape without assistance?	
17.	Have residents who self-identify as needing assistance been given a PEEP?	
18.	Are there residents with physical or cognitive impairment?	
19.	Can resident's special requirements be reasonably satisfied?	
20.	Has the FRS been invited and conducted Safe and Well visits?	
21.	Is a representative or advocate required to help residents requiring assistance reach decisions?	
22.	Will residents requiring assistance need special facilities to escape?	
23.	Is a mutual agreement resolution required to agree reasonableness of special facilities?	
24.	What advice is available for residents who may have temporary impairments like illness or injuries?	
25.	What records (which need to be digital, coded and held securely) of resident's needs are kept?	
26.	How many residents with cognitive and physical impairments are known to be in the building?	



Securing Safe Escape Checklist

27.	Of those residents in 26 how many residents agreed to have PEEPs?	
28.	Of those residents in 26 how many residents refused to engage?	
29.	Are any of the residents' wheelchair users?	
30.	If 'Yes' to 29 provide details (numbers, floor location of flats etc.).	
31.	Are there any residents with other mobility issues that would prevent them self-evacuating?	
32.	If 'Yes' to 31 provide details (numbers, floor location of flats etc.).	
33.	Are there any residents with visual impairment issues that would prevent them self-evacuating?	
34.	If 'Yes' to 33 provide details (numbers, floor location of flats etc.).	
35.	Are there any residents with hearing impairment issues that would prevent them self-evacuating?	
36.	If 'Yes' to 35 provide details (numbers, floor location of flats etc.).	
37.	Are there any residents with cognitive health issues that would prevent them self-evacuating?	
38.	If 'Yes' to 37 provide details (numbers, floor location of flats etc.).	
39.	Are there any residents for whom English is not their first language?	
40.	If 'Yes' to 39 provide how evacuation information will be provided to them	
41.	Have Person Centred Risk Assessments (PCRAs) been conducted?	
42.	Are Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) in place for residents unable to self-evacuate from immediate danger and from the building?	
43.	Is there a formal process to manage and audit PEEPs and PCRAs?	
44.	If 'Yes' to 44 provide details, including whether information is held in a Property Information Box?	
45.	What guidance has been used to prepare PEEP?	
46.	Does the PEEP have social carers, family, friends or neighbours willing to assist in an evacuation?	
47.	Is the person offering assistance in the PEEP also living with the resident?	
48.	Will assisted resident's PEEP escape plan impact or restrict other residents ability to escape?	
49.	What action will be taken to assist any resident who needs or is requested to evacuate?	
50.	Has coded PEEP detail been placed in the Premise Information Box?	
51.	If a stay put and await rescue strategy is in place what further advice has been given?	
52.	Have investigations, actions and responses related to safe evacuation been recoded?	