



Fire Safety Policy and Procedure

Scope

1. This policy applies to all Dudley Mind employees, service users, visitors and those working on Dudley Mind premises.

Purpose

2. To contribute to and ensure the implementation of those aspects of Dudley Mind Health & Safety policy that deal with fire safety.

Review

3. This policy will be reviewed by the senior management annually. It will be initiated by the Operations Manager who with Dudley Mind CEO is the author of this document.

Authorisation

4. Dudley Mind Health & Safety policy was authorised by the Board on 1st January 2008 Last updated

Training

5. The operation of procedures described in this document requires training which will be provided for by Dudley Mind through relevant accredited trainers/organisations.

Introduction

6. The two main enforcement agencies with respect to fire are the Fire and Civil Defence Authority and the Local Authority:
 - 6.1 The fire authority enforces the Fire Precautions Act 1971 and the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1999.
 - 6.2 The Local Authority enforces the Housing Act 1985 as amended.
7. The Fire Precautions Act 1971 applies to commercial undertakings, for example hotels, offices and is enforced by the Fire Authority.

8. As from October 2006 businesses are no longer required to apply for a Fire Certificate for office premises but are obliged to have a Fire Risk Assessment in place.

Enforcement

9. Fire Officers can visit at any reasonable time and do not have to give notice of visit.
10. An organisation can be prosecuted for failure to undertake a fire risk assessment.
11. With effect from 1st April 2008 the fire risk assessment form, at Appendix B (and explanatory notes at Appendix A) must be completed annually for all workplaces. The completed form should be retained in the fire file.
12. Fire Drills will be carried out on all premises every six months. Where premises are jointly occupied Dudley Mind will work in conjunction with others concerned. If risk assessments show it to be necessary fire drills may be held more frequently.

Fire Precaution Principles

13. For a fire to occur all three elements of the triangle must be present.

FUEL	OXYGEN	HEAT
SOURCE		

14. Fire precautions are based on the principle of trying to keep the main exit from any building free of fire for a half hour period from the outbreak of the fire. Half an hour is deemed to be sufficient time for persons to leave a building on their own accord unaided.
15. Fire is extremely dangerous and potentially has consequences such as:
 - 15.1 Cuts off and/or destroys escape route
 - 15.2 Rapidly reaches all other parts of the building increasing danger to life and property

Policy

16. The aim is to ensure the prevention of fires and if one occurs to minimise the spread through training instruction good working practices and effective fire prevention methods and equipment.
17. In any Dudley Mind property you may find all or some of the following:
Fire Doors
Self Closing Doors

Intumescent Strips, Smoke Brushes
Fire Alarm System, Smoke Detectors ,Fire Bells, Break Glass Alarm
Points
Fire fighting Equipment, Fire Extinguishers, Fire Blankets and Fire
Notices

17.1 To ensure that fire precautions provided will be effective the following checks shall be undertaken regularly:

That fire doors can be shut and are shut unless connected to fire alarm system with automatic closing devices.

That fire exits are kept clear at all times

That the fire alarm system is working

That the fire fighting equipment is available operational and in correct location

17.2 The frequency of checks will be as follows:

Fire doors – Daily

Fire exits – Daily

Fire alarms – Weekly

Fire fighting equipment – Monthly

The frequency of the checks in any premises may only be decreased if the Risk Assessments show it to be appropriate.

Procedure

18. Statistically most fires occur because of carelessness, often with everyday items. Attention to the following will help prevent fires:

18.1 Electrical – Turn off all appliances when not in use, if possible unplug them too

Never overload electric circuits

Ensure light bulbs are of the right wattage

Always use the recommended fuse

Never operate an appliance with a worn flex

Have all portable electric appliances tested annually

18.2 Waste and Rubbish – Ensure all waste and rubbish is stored carefully for disposal, not near flames or heat sources

Action in the event of a fire

19. At all Dudley Mind premises there must be a plan of the fire procedure containing information about:

Who will telephone the fire brigade
Who will undertake the evacuation
Fire escape routes out of the building
Location of Assembly point

19.1.If you discover a fire:

Operate the nearest fire alarm

Call the fire brigade

Attack fire if possible using the appliances provided only if you are competent to do so

Proceed to the assembly point

19.2 On hearing the fire alarm:

Leave the building by the nearest available exit

Close all the doors behind you

Report to the assembly point

Do not reenter the building till the fire brigade instructs you to.

Fire Extinguishers

20. Fire extinguishers should only be used by persons who are competent to use them. Do not attempt to use an extinguisher unless you are absolutely certain that you can successfully tackle the fire. If you do decide to use the extinguisher remember as a general rule:

Red (Water) extinguishers are for use on paper, textiles furniture

Black (CO₂) extinguishers are for use on electrical fires

Cream (Foam) extinguishers are for use on oil fires

Blue (Powder) extinguishers are for use on all electrical equipment fires upto 1000 volts

Maintenance

20. All the fire precautions will only be effective when in full working order

- 21 The fire alarm system should be on a service contract which will mean that it is serviced on an annual basis. In addition to this the fire alarm system should be checked by staff on a weekly basis. Each week the alarm will be triggered from a different call point to check that the alarm rings.
- 22 The fire extinguishers should be on an annual service contract. In addition to this a weekly check should be made that they are in the correct location. A monthly check should be carried out to see that they have not been tampered with or discharged. If so, they should be refilled.
- 23 A checklist that may be used to ensure that all fire checks are carried out and when they are due is Appendix C.
- 24 A full fire risk assessment should be carried out annually. It should also be reviewed annually or earlier if needed. The checklist and notes that may be used for this assessment is Appendix B.
- 25 All enquiries, amendments or suggestions for improvement arising from this document should be addressed to the respective Team Manager or Operations Manager.

Appendix A

Dudley Mind Fire Safety Policy and Procedure

Testing Fire Systems

In addition to the service visits carried out at regular intervals Dudley Mind shall ensure at all its work places all fire equipment is tested or checked according to this schedule.

Fire Alarm System

It is important that the fire alarm is tested properly each week. The safety of all concerned will be severely endangered if this is not done. It is not sufficient to turn the alarms on the panel and listen as this only shows that the control panel is working. The fire alarm system will be tested weekly using the following procedure.

Procedure

1. Select a different call point every week. Insert the test key into the unit to sound the alarms.
2. Check the building to confirm all alarms are ringing. Alternatively, in large buildings, check the bells on a cyclical basis.
3. Check the electro magnetic/automatic door releases (where fitted) work correctly.
4. Check that the control panel display is indicating the correct zone for fire.
5. Check that the system is operational.
6. Record the test in the fire log book.

Emergency Lighting

The emergency lighting operates on a battery and is linked into the electrical circuit. Should the power fail for any reason, one of them being the consequence of a fire, the emergency lights will come on enabling all to see nearest exit route. Therefore, it is important that they are checked monthly as per the procedure below.

When the fire alarm system is serviced the engineer will also test the emergency lighting system to ensure that it is fully operational. In that month the responsible

person may not test the emergency lighting system but must confirm with the engineer that they (the engineer) have done so.

The Test

It is advisable to conduct the test quickly as turning on the emergency lighting drains the battery. If the process takes too long the battery may go flat when it is actually needed.

1. Switch off the electrical supply so that the mains lighting fails.
2. Check all emergency lighting units to confirm they are switched on.
3. When check is completed switch the main power supply back on. The emergency lighting should go off.
4. Record the test in the fire log book. (This procedure may only be varied if so instructed by the service engineer, in which case the Operations Manager should be informed and the amended procedure attached to this policy)

Fire Extinguishers

A check will be made daily that the extinguishers are in the correct location. Any that are not should be returned to the designated location.

The extinguishers will be checked monthly to see if they have been tampered with or discharged. This is done by checking the seal and pressure indicator on the equipment. Where needed the extinguishers will be refilled.

Record in the fire log book.

Record Keeping

Full records of all tests and service visits conducted in connection with any fire alarm system and fire fighting equipment should be maintained. Such records will be kept in a fire log book at each work place. The book will be inspected regularly and must be kept available.

Any incident of fire or false alarm must be recorded with full details of what happened.

Fire drills must be recorded, including required details.

Each workplace will produce and maintain a list of all the fire alarm and fire fighting equipment on site, including their exact location.

The fire log book is a legal record. All entries must be in ink, legible and signed.

Appendix B

Dudley Mind Fire Safety Policy and Procedure

Fire Risk Assessment Form

Location

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Completed By.....Date

Completed.....

	YES	NO
MEANS OF ESCAPE		
Sufficient number of exits		
Exits lead to place of safety		
Gangways and escape routes free from obstruction		
All fire doors labelled		
All fire safety signs and fire exit signs clearly visible		
All doors used for escape available for use		
Self closing devices working		
Exits clearly indicated and all escape routes adequately lit		
Where necessary, doors used as means for escape open in direction of travel		
Doors used for means of escape easily and immediately open without use of key		
Floor surfaces on the escape route free from trip and slip hazards		
Stairways in good state of repair		
LIGHTING		
Emergency lighting system in working order		
FIRE ALARM		
Fire alarm system in working order		
Service contract in place		
Alarm can be raised without placing anyone at risk		
Fire alarm call points clearly visible and unobstructed		
COMBUSTIBLE MATERIALS AND SOURCES OF IGNITION		
All flammable substances and combustible materials stored		

safely		
Heating appliances fixed in position at safe distance from combustible material and suitably guarded		
All items of electrical equipment fitted with fuses of the correct rating		
All electrical protective devices suitable for purpose		
Lengths of flexible cable kept to the minimum		
Cables run only where damage is unlikely, and not under floor coverings or through doorways		
Upholstery of furniture in good condition		
Workplace free of accumulated rubbish, waste paper or other materials which could catch fire or be set alight		
Suitable facilities for disposal of smoking materials available		
Suitable measures to protect against arson in place		

Any further action required to bring property to a satisfactory standard

Appendix C

Dudley Mind Fire Safety Policy and Procedure

Fire Safety Checklist

Location:

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ITEM TO BE CHECKED	FREQUENCY	ACTION
Automatic Fire Alarm System	Daily	Check that fire alarm panel indicates normal operation. Record any faults, inform engineer.
	Weekly	Test alarm initiation from different call points in rotation and record results
	Biannually	Full check by competent service engineer
Smoke and Heat alarms where fitted	Biannually	Full check by competent service engineer
Emergency Lighting Equipment	Monthly	Check all units for state of repair and working order
	Biannually	Full check by competent service engineer
Automatic Fire doors	Weekly	Check working with alarm test
	Biannually	Full check by competent service engineer
Fire exits for obstruction	Daily	Remove all obstructions
Escape routes for obstruction	Daily	Remove all obstructions
Fire extinguishers, blanket in correct location	Daily	If equipment out of place put back in correct location
Fire extinguishers, blanket tampered with or	Monthly	If tampered, discharged or used order refill,

discharged, used	Annually	replacement Full check and service by competent service engineer
Fire action signs in place	Quarterly	Replace if missing
Fire drill carried out regularly	Six monthly	Record in fire log book

NOTE:

As owners of the building it is the responsibility of Dudley MBC to ensure the biannual inspection, testing and maintenance of the automatic ADT fire detection system is carried out.

