

Home Health Foundation, Inc.

SUBJECT: FIRE RESPONSE AND EVACUATION PLAN

PURPOSE: To define the process for staff response to fire alarms or fire activity. The process addresses staff actions to reduce the risk of injuries or loss of life in the event of a fire.

Policy

To protect our employees and facilities from the dangers of fire, HHF has developed a fire prevention policy to reduce the risk of potential injuries and property damage.

General Statement

We are a responsible employer and take our fire and safety duties seriously. We have formulated this plan to help us comply with our legal obligations to staff and visitors. This includes the provision of a safe place of work where fire safety risks are minimized.

Employee Duties

All employees have a duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that they do not place themselves or others at risk or harm. All employees are expected to cooperate fully with any procedures that may be introduced as a measure to protect the safety and well-being of staff and visitors.

Communication Guideline

All employees will be educated to this plan on hire and annually.

Operational Guidelines

1. Fire risk assessments have been completed and are reviewed regularly. As a result of these assessments there may be alterations to the premises or new work processes. Fire risk assessments are carried out by the Safety Committee and Executive Team Members.
2. The fire evacuation procedure will be practiced four times a year. A record will be kept of the date and the time taken to evacuate the buildings.
3. All escape routes shall be clearly posted and shall be kept free from obstructions at all times. Escape routes shall be checked weekly by the Facilities Manager or designee for any obstructions and if found shall be corrected.
4. Evacuation procedures are posted prominently on every corridor next to the Fire Alarm Box.
5. All fire extinguishers will be serviced and maintained annually by a suitable contractor. If any employee notices defective or missing equipment, they must report this to the Facilities Manager or designee.

6. Alarms are checked on a quarterly basis by a contractor and are tested via landlord's vendor.
7. Emergency lighting is checked annually by a contractor and monthly by the Facilities Manager or designee.
8. All visitors must be logged into the visitors' book at the reception desk on arrival on site.

Emergency Evacuation Plan

1. **If you discover a fire: ACTIVATE** the alarm immediately. This can be done by activating the nearest Fire Alarm Call Box. If the fire is smaller than a wastebasket, an employee at their own personal discretion can **EXTINGUISH** with a fire extinguisher using the **PASS** method.
2. Evacuate using the nearest available fire exit. Do not stop to pick up any personal possessions. Report to the assembly point for a roll call.
3. **If you hear the fire alarm:** Leave the building immediately using the nearest available fire exit. Report to the assembly point for a head count. If you are with a visitor, ensure they accompany you.
4. **Persons responsible for taking headcount:** The directors and/or managers check the roll and report to the Facilities Coordinator or designee if roll is complete or not.
5. **Designated Evacuation Meeting Sites:**
 - a. Lawrence - Rear parking lot, third line back from building, front of entry I
 - b. Lowell - The far right end of the parking lot behind the Chevy dealership
 - c. Newburyport - Parking lot by tree
 - d. Seacoast – front parking lot by “Seacoast Mall” sign
 - e. Hospice House - Front entrance in parking lot
 - f. Malden – parking lot across the street
 - g. York – front parking lot, in front of the Long Sands sign
 - h. Bedford – front parking lot at light pole
6. **Assisted Evacuation - Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)**
 - a. Any staff member who is unable to leave the building unaided in the event of an emergency will require a PEEP for their evacuation.
 - b. Completed PEEP forms are kept in the fire safety folder.
 - c. Those who need aid to leave the building may include: anyone with a physical disability such as a wheelchair user but also could include an employee with a recent foot injury who is on crutches, someone with visual impairment, hearing difficulties or someone heavily pregnant.
 - d. Anyone with mobility issues will be evacuated according to their PEEPS.
 - e. Employee is responsible for initiating a PEEP request. Request and type of assistance will be documented in the employee's HR file by a member of the HR team. HR will notify the employee's manager of the presence of a PEEP. PEEP volume will be assessed by the Safety Committee every 6 months.
 - f. Based upon volume of PEEPs, volunteers to assist with evacuation will be sought from the workforce via a request from the Safety Committee and HR. Volunteers will be trained on use of physical evacuation assistance techniques, location of evaluation and evacuation details.

Fire Safety Fact Sheet
Office Setting

Before a Fire Emergency-Planning

1. Keep your most important personal belongings readily accessible, especially keys to your home and vehicle, pocketbook, wallet, medications and appropriate clothing for outside assembly. *You may not be able to return to the building for an extended period.*
2. Know the location of the nearest available fire alarm pull stations in the building where you are located and how to activate them. Fire alarm pull stations have self-inscribed instructions.
3. Know the location of at least two of the nearest available exits from your area.
4. Do not use elevators in case of emergency *they may not work!*
5. Know the locations of the nearest available fire extinguishers in your area. (Note: building occupants are not required to fight fires.)
6. Participate in fire drills and take them seriously.
7. Be aware of persons in your area who would have difficulty evacuating due to physical limitations during an evacuation.
8. Be aware of any rooms or offices where an alarm may not be heard, including, but not limited to some bathrooms.

Home Health Foundation has adopted the “RACE” protocol for fire response:

- R RESCUE**
- A ACTIVATE THE ALARM**
- C CONTAIN THE FIRE**
- E EXTINGUISH AND EVACUATE**

When a fire occurs, act quickly. The first two or three minutes are most critical for safety. It is a **RACE** for safety: In the event of a fire follow the above **RACE** protocol:

- Rescuing persons in immediate danger is your first priority. Stay calm to reassure them. Remember to stay low during the rescue. Smoke rises to the ceiling and forms a heavy dense cloud that slowly descends. This cloud is deadly, because it contains toxic gases that can kill within minutes. Heat also rises. In a fire, it is possible for temperatures to vary from 90 degrees F near the floor to a lethal 600 degrees F at eye level.
- Don't hesitate to activate the alarm with any question of fire. **Never Yell, "FIRE!"** You must avoid creating confusion and panic. Team work is helpful. One person can pull the alarm or call the receptionist with the precise location of the fire while a co-worker rescues persons in danger and/or notifies the employees in the area of the fire with instructions to evacuate. Never hang up before asking the party at the other end to repeat the location of the fire and any pertinent data.
- Confine the blaze by closing all windows and doors of the room or area where the fire is located as long as it is safe to do so.
- If it is safe, extinguish the blaze (if it is small) using the fire extinguishers available at all sites. If a person's clothing is on fire, wrap the person tightly in a large blanket or coat to extinguish the flames. If a piece of equipment catches fire, pull the plug if possible or have the electricity turned off at the panel. If a fire can't be extinguished, be prepared to evacuate the building.

Fire Extinguisher Safety Tips:

Use a portable fire extinguisher if the fire is incipient (size of a wastebasket) and remember these useful tips:

1. Most fire extinguishers are installed close to an exit.
2. To operate a fire extinguisher, remember the word **PASS**:
 - a. **P**ull the pin. Hold the extinguisher with the nozzle pointing away from you & release the locking pin.
 - b. **A**im low. Point the extinguisher at the base of the fire.
 - c. **S**queeze the lever slowly and evenly.
 - d. **S**weep the nozzle from side-to-side.
3. Read the instructions that come with the fire extinguisher and become familiar with its parts and operation before a fire breaks out.
4. Keep your back to a clear exit when you use the fire extinguisher, so you can make an easy escape if the fire cannot be controlled. If the room begins to fill with smoke and fire, leave immediately.
5. Know when to go. Fire extinguishers are one element of a fire response plan, but the primary element is safe escape.

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS....

1. Know locations of exits.
2. Learn how to operate the fire extinguishers in the office.
3. If you discover a fire, sound the alarm.
4. Plan emergency routes for quick exit. Know the escape routes (posted throughout the office.)
5. Don't open doors without first testing for heat radiating from them.
6. Remember to touch walls and doors with the back of your hand rather than your palm.
7. Stay close to the floor to avoid inhaling too much smoke.
8. AVOID SHOUTING - remain calm at all times.
9. Walk - don't run - to the nearest emergency exit! NEVER use an ELEVATOR to evacuate during a fire or a drill.
10. No talking. No cell phone use.
11. Do not return to your area for personal items; immediately exit the building.
12. Anyone who is not able to exit down the stairs in a safe and quick manner should stay to the side and exit after everyone else to avoid injury or cause a back-up in the stairway.
13. Meet in the predetermined area away from emergency equipment.
14. Re-enter building only upon notification by emergency personnel.

Responsibility: All Staff
Distribution: Leadership, YHH Manual

Nature of Change	annual review adding new locations
CEO Signature	_____ / ____ / ____ Date