R.E.A.L Foundation Trust

Fire Procedure Policy

(September 2021)

Introduction

This policy seeks to cover the main requirements for demonstrating compliance with current fire safety legislation and it is recommended that it be kept in a loose-leaf format with new record keeping pages photocopied or downloaded when required.

R.E.A.L Foundation Trust Fire Safety Policy 

The company recognises that it has a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy working environment and acknowledges that this includes ensuring that procedures are developed and followed in respect of fire and other emergencies.

The company will endeavour to control the associated risks and to comply with the legal requirements relating to fire safety and other emergencies, as contained within the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and with the specific guidance notes issued by the Health and Safety Executive and Fire Authority.

The following rules and procedures will be applied in relation to this area and associated work activities:

• The company will take such general fire precautions as will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of all employees and other persons that may be affected by its activities.

• Risk assessments will be completed for all premises occupied by the Company for the purpose of identifying the general fire precautions required to be implemented.

• The significant findings of the assessments and details of any groups of persons identified as being especially at risk will be recorded and brought to the attention of relevant employees and other affected persons.

• All relevant risk assessments will be subject to periodic monitoring at a frequency prescribed by the assessment.

• All relevant risk assessments will be subject to periodic review at a frequency prescribed by the assessment or when they are no longer valid or significant changes have occurred.

• Where dangerous substances may be present in or on premises, the risk assessment will take account of any relevant special hazards with a view to eliminating or reducing the risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

• All premises will be equipped with appropriate fire-fighting equipment and with fire detectors and alarms were considered to be necessary, as determined by the risk assessment.

• All non-automatic fire-fighting equipment will be easily accessible, simple to use, and their location will be indicated by signs.

• Suitable and sufficient emergency routes and exits will be designated for all company premises and selected in order for employees and any other persons to evacuate as quickly as possible.    
• All emergency routes and exits will lead to a place of safety and will be indicated by signs.

• All emergency exits and the routes to emergency exits from premises must be kept clear at all times.

• All emergency exit doors will open in the direction of escape and allow easy and immediate opening.

• All emergency exit doors must remain unlocked and unfastened at all required times.

• All emergency exits and routes requiring illumination will be provided with suitable emergency lighting.

• All fire alarms will be maintained in efficient working order, good repair, serviced at required intervals and tested at regular intervals, as determined by the risk assessment. A suitable record of such tests will be kept and maintained.

• Fire drills / emergency evacuations will take place at required intervals. A suitable record of such drills shall be kept and maintained.

• All employees will be provided with suitable and sufficient instruction and training on the appropriate precautions and actions required to be taken by them in case of fire or other emergencies. This training will be provided at induction and repeated periodically and/or when required.

• All visitors to company premises, including contractors, will be provided with suitable information, and will be required to record their details in a register, including times of arrival and leaving.

• The company will appoint one or more suitable `Competent Persons` for every premises, who will be responsible for ensuring that all preventative and protective measures for fire and other emergencies are in place. All such appointees will be provided with adequate information, training, and other resources in order to carry out his/her role and duties effectively.

• The company will appoint a sufficient number of fire marshals at every premises in order to implement and manage the emergency evacuation procedures.

• The company will prepare and publish a Fire / Emergency Plan for all company premises.    
  
General Fire Safety Advice

The advice given below is provided by the local Fire and Rescue Service and is intended to assist in  preventing an outbreak of fire, or if a fire does occur, assist in preventing injury and unnecessary damage  to premises:    
  
The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005    
With the exception of a very few specialised sites and specific risks, the vast majority of sites and premises  throughout England & Wales must conform with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety)  Order 2005.

Duty holders must:

• carry out a fire-risk assessment identifying any possible dangers and risks

• consider who may be especially at risk

• get rid of, or reduce, the risk from fire as far as is reasonably possible and provide general fire precautions to deal with any possible risk left

• take other measures to make sure there is protection if flammable or explosive materials are used or stored

• create a plan to deal with any emergency and, in most cases, keep a record    
• review your findings when necessary

Means of Escape

• Fire doors are provided to prevent the spread of smoke and heat. Keep them shut when not in use and never prop them open or remove self-closing devices.

• Keep corridors and stairways clear of storage and waste material.

• Ensure that final exit doors can be readily opened from the inside without a key.

• Keep areas outside of final exit doors always clear of obstruction.

• Always ensure that exits and access, which are not in normal use, are clearly indicated, with the exit signs visible from the furthermost part of a room.

Fire Alarm Systems

• Always ensure that the fire alarm system is in working order, that the relevant staff know how to use it and what action to take on hearing the alarm.

Portable Fire Extinguishers / Hose Reels

• These are intended for fires in the early stages. Ensure that all staff know where the extinguishers are sited and how to operate them safely.

• Always ensure that they are inspected and maintained regularly.

Emergency and General Lighting

• Ensure that all lighting systems are checked and maintained regularly.

• Replace any defective bulbs/tubes/components immediately.

Instructions to Staff and Visitors

Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities in the event of an emergency – i.e.

• They know how to raise the alarm,

• They know how to call the Fire and Rescue Service,

• They know when not to tackle a fire,

• They know how to use a fire extinguisher correctly and safely

• They know the correct evacuation procedures for the premises,

• They are aware of the contents of the Fire Risk Assessment.

Electrical Installations

• The misuse of electricity is a major cause of fire. Old wiring should be regularly checked and renewed if necessary.

• If an increasing number of electrical appliances are being used, you should seek advice from a qualified electrician to consider if additional ring circuits are required.

• Ensure that you always use the correct fuse.

• Before retiring for the evening, or before leaving the building ensure that plugs are removed from the sockets relating to all appliances not in use.

Heating

• Keep boiler rooms/houses clear – do not use as an extra storeroom.

• Keep portable heating appliances away from furniture and any combustible materials.

Smoking Materials

• A no smoking policy is in place for all R.E.A.L workplaces and smoking must only take place in designated areas approved by the Health and Safety Manager.

• Be vigilant in areas where people smoke and provide adequate ashtrays.

Common causes of fire:

• Electricity: It is a source of heat. Faults should be repaired immediately by a competent electrician.  Switch off appliances after use.

• Rubbish: Get rubbish out of the premises and into bins with lids as quickly and as often as possible.

• Heaters: Portable heaters start fires if not placed carefully and used wisely.

• Dangerous Goods: Correction and duplicator fluids and all aerosols are either flammable or explosive. Keep them all well away from any source of heat. The careful use and storage of any flammable liquid is essential to maintain a safe working environment.

• Arson: Help to protect your premises from the arsonist by locking away any flammable material, liquids, or gases. Effectively secure your premises at the end of the day, including any out of the way doors or windows that are easily missed. Keep waste bins within secure areas until collection by waste disposal contractors.

What to do in case of fire?

• On the sounding of the fire alarm, the building must be evacuated following the prepared evacuation plan for that specific building.

• When leaving the building do as much as possible to reduce draughts which may fan the fire. If possible close all windows and doors.

• Ensure that the Fire and Rescue Service is called immediately and that a responsible person is designated to meet the fire appliance when it arrives and do NOT re-enter the building for any reason.

**USEFUL CONTACTS/INFORMATION**

IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 999

Fire Alarm Maintenance BW Fire Engineering – 01773 715978

Emergency Lighting BW Fire Engineering – 01773 715978

Fire Extinguisher Maintenance BW Fire Engineering – 01773 715978

Building Maintenance : Darren Hill 07876834617   
  
  
Health and Safety Manager : Mark Spencer 07904 890 381     

**Instructions for Duty Managers, Emergency Co-ordinators and Fire Marshals**

*Duty Managers:*

In order to support the Managing Director and the Board of Directors in fulfilling their legal obligations,  staff appointed as Duty Managers will have delegated responsibility for the day to day safety management  of a designated building or part of a building and with this the appropriate level of authority including the  powers of sanction e.g. closing a building or restricting its use, shutting down normal operations, denying  use of equipment and machinery, preventing unsafe work to continue etc. Duty Managers will be provided with assistance from the Health and Safety Manager to fulfil their duties.

During a fire related incident e.g., an evacuation of the building due to the activation of a fire alarm the Duty Manager will assume the role of Emergency Co-ordinator. It shall be the responsibility of the Duty Manager to ensure that suitable arrangements are in place to ensure that their absence from site is appropriately covered i.e., their role is covered by another competent member of staff who also understands their role as Emergency Co-ordinator.

*Emergency Co-ordinators:*

The Emergency Co-ordinator’s role is fundamentally to take control of an emergency e.g., an evacuation of a building during a fire related incident and to be responsible for key decisions and for co-ordinating the actions of all persons on-site including appointed Fire Marshals until such time that they are relieved of their duties by a senior manager. The Duty Manager will also be responsible for liaising with the relevant emergency services if they arrive on site.

*Fire Marshals:*

Fire Marshals will be appointed and trained as per the findings of each individual Fire Risk Assessment and will primarily be responsible for the following:

• In the event of a fire alarm undertaking a sweep of a designated area (if safe to do so). During this sweep they will check that all areas are clear of all persons; direct and instruct occupants to fire exits and the fire assembly point; pass on any significant information to the Emergency Coordinator; maintain good order at the fire assembly and follow instructions given by the  Emergency Co-ordinator or emergency services in attendance.

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The sounding of a continuous alarm declares that the fire alarm panel has been activated either manually or by a detector head or manual call point (break point). Red beacon lights will also flash during an activation.

When the alarm sounds or attention to a fire related situation is made verbally all persons must immediately leave the building by the nearest available exit and proceed to the designated assembly point.

Meanwhile the Duty Manager or delegated Emergency Co-ordinator must collect this Fire Procedures and Fire Safety Logbook and immediately make their way (if safe to do so) to the fire alarm panel in order to identify the nature and location of the activation.

If a fire situation is confirmed then all persons must evacuate the building and the Fire and Rescue Service must be called immediately by dialling 999 and providing them with the address:   
The Duty Manager/Emergency Co-ordinator will then take up a safe position in readiness for the arrival of  the Fire and Rescue Service so that critical information can be shared.

If there is no obvious fire risk the Duty Manager/Emergency Co-ordinator must, with the help of other available competent staff, check the location and device (detector head or manual call point) that has been activated and rectify the fault or make further arrangements to rectify the fault. During this period all other persons must remain at the fire assembly point until the Duty Manager/Emergency Co-ordinator declares it safe to re-enter the building and is confident that the alarm system has been reset and is fully operational.  All persons are to be made aware that the silencing of the alarm does not mean that it is safe to re-enter the building.

Upon re-entry to the building the Duty Manager/ Emergency Co-ordinator must complete the Alarm Activation Record Sheet.

Training Material and Recording of Fire Safety Training

General fire safety training forms part of the initial Health and Safety training provided during staff induction and is further complemented by the EduCare Fire Safety in Education programme which must be completed by all staff during their 6-month probation period. All mandatory staff training is recorded and kept centrally by HR. Any non-mandatory additional fire safety training e.g. Emergency Co-ordinator and/or Fire Marshal training; Practical Use of Fire Extinguishers etc. must be recorded by the venue Duty Manager and/or the Health and Safety Manager.

Fire Safety Systems and Arrangements:

Most buildings that you will be expected to work within will be provided with detection systems which are designed to give early warning of fire so that people are able to react as quickly as possible to any situation arising. Included are break glass points and sensors that will, in most circumstances, automatically trigger the alarm when activated.   
Upon activation the alarm will ring continuously and where fitted alarm beacons will flash.

Upon discovering or suspecting a fire:

• Raise the alarm by shouting “FIRE, FIRE, FIRE” or by activating a break glass point

• If safe to do so, tackle the fire using the appliances provided, but do not endanger yourself or others in doing so

• Leave the building by the nearest safe exit

• Close all doors behind you

• Report to your assembly point

• Do not stop to collect personal belongings

• Do not use lifts

• The silencing of the alarm does not mean that it is safe to re-enter the building – please wait until authorisation is given - If in doubt stay out!

Fire Marshals:

To assist with swift evacuation and communication at fire assembly points there are several staff who act as Fire Marshals during an evacuation, and you must always follow their instructions. Fire Marshals are appointed as additional help and may not always be present during an evacuation— please remember that it is your responsibility to get yourself out of the building and to your fire assembly point as quickly and as safely as possible.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP’s):

A personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) must be completed for all people who are regularly on site who will require assistance during an emergency evacuation - please contact Mark Spencer if you require any further help or advice.

More local arrangements should be made by whoever is hosting visitors who require assistance.

Fire Extinguishers:

Do not attempt to fight a fire if:

• It is bigger than a wastepaper bin

• Smoke is affecting your breathing

• You cannot see your way out

• Gas cylinders or chemicals are involved

• Your efforts are not reducing the size of the fire

• There is a risk to yourself

IF IN DOUBT GET OUT!