



**NORTHERN IRELAND PRACTICE AND EDUCATION  
COUNCIL FOR NURSING AND MIDWIFERY**

**FIRE MANAGEMENT POLICY**

June 2024

Any request for the document in another format or language will be considered

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Fire Management Policy outlines the arrangements for effectively managing fire safety in NIPEC premises so as to prevent the likelihood of fire occurring and, in the unlikely event of fire, to protect employees, visitors and others from injury and mitigate potential damage to property.

Compliance with the Policy is a requirement under The Fire and Rescue Services (Northern Ireland) Order 2006 (FSO) and The Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010. This is in addition to the requirements under The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 and The Disability Discrimination Order (Northern Ireland) 2006 to implement effective arrangements for access and emergency evacuation for employees and visitors.

Other related legislation is listed below:

- The Dangerous Substances and Explosives Atmospheres Regulations 2002.
- Corporate Manslaughter and Homicide Act 2007
- The Smoking (Northern Ireland) Order 2006
- Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2001
- Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000
- The Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996
- The Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1996
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following NIPEC policies:

- Health and Safety
- Moving and Handling Guidance
- Adverse Incident Reporting Policy

## **2. AIMS/OBJECTIVES**

The aims of the Fire Management Policy are to:

- define Appropriate Persons under legislative requirements;
- ensure compliance with all relevant legislation;
- undertake suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments of NIPEC offices and to review at a regular timeframe or when material changes occur;
- identify and implement reasonably practicable control measures to reduce the risk of injury or damage from fire;
- provide suitable fire safety instructions and evacuation procedures to all employees and to visitors, contractors and others whilst on premises;
- ensure regular testing of fire alarm systems and fire evacuation drills are organised by the Landlord Agents and records of same are kept;

- ensure testing and maintenance of all firefighting equipment, emergency lighting and portable appliances and other existing fire precautions are undertaken and records maintained;
- liaise with Department of Health's Fire Safety Unit in their fire safety inspections and respond to and take action on any recommendations made.

### **3. ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **3.1 General**

Fire safety is the responsibility of **all** NIPEC staff. Some managers will have specific roles according to their responsibilities for ensuring that their staff are appropriately trained in fire safety. Responsibilities for each member of staff depending on which category they fall into are outlined in this policy along with NIPEC's arrangements for ensuring that fire safety equipment is maintained and that appropriate training is given for staff depending on their roles and responsibilities.

NIPEC also has responsibilities to ensure that any premises leased from external organisations and used by their staff, has in place measures to minimise the risk of fire and safe procedures for evacuation in the event of fire breaking out.

#### **3.2 NIPEC Council / Audit and Risk Committee**

The effectiveness of the management of principal risks is delegated by NIPEC Council to the Audit & Risk Committee. The Committee should ensure that they have appropriate assurance that the requirements of current fire safety legislation are met in NIPEC premises.

#### **3.3 Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for fire safety in NIPEC. The operational responsibilities for the implementation of this policy is delegated to the Head of Corporate Services (HCS) who will assume the role of nominated officer (fire) to ensure that NIPEC complies with the FSO and that agreed programmes of investment in fire precautions are properly accounted for in NIPEC's Business Plan.

#### **3.4 Head of Corporate Services (HCS)**

As the nominated officer (fire), the HCS will have delegated responsibility for the implementation and co-ordination of fire safety arrangements measures. They will also ensure that sufficient competent personnel with appropriate resources are available to implement the Fire Management Policy and the overall requirements of policy are met.

Specifically, they have direct responsibility for the following:

- That fire safety measures and fire safety practices within NIPEC premises are maintained;

- To seek assurance from the Health and Fire Safety Committee that effective fire safety controls measures are in place and provide regular updates to Council/Chief Executive;
- To ensure that Fire Risk Assessments are completed in line with regulatory requirements or when material changes occur;
- Implementation of any control measures identified by the Fire Risk Assessment above;
- To ensure that NIPEC staff understand and implement the requirements of the Fire Management Policy and have access to fire safety training, in addition to any other specific training, i.e. fire wardens, use of evacuation chair;
- arrangements are in place to ensure that all contractors, visitors and any other persons whilst in/on premises are controlled and made aware of the relevant fire safety instructions;
- any person who may be especially at risk from fire has a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) and that it is reviewed at least every 12 months.

### **3.5 Business Support Manager**

The Business Support Manager, supported by the Corporate Services Officer, is responsible for the implementation and co-ordination of NIPEC's Health and Fire Safety agenda. Duties include:

- chairing NIPEC's Health and Fire Safety Committee and co-ordinating the implementation of its workplan, including regular internal health and fire safety risk assessments and action plan;
- acting as the main contact person for DoF/James House Fire Safety Unit concerning fire risk assessment and co-ordinating the implementation of any actions and recommendations arising from their reports;
- ensuring that fire safety equipment, portable appliances and emergency lighting are maintained and tested on a regular basis with all maintenance records by specialist contractors updated in the Site Log Book.

### **3.6 Health and Fire Safety Committee**

NIPEC's Health and Fire Safety Committee is responsible for coordinating health and safety arrangements, including fire safety. The Committee reports directly to Business Team and meets at least three times a year. Key responsibilities as outlined in the Terms of Reference include:

- To act as a consultative forum, normally meeting a minimum of three times each financial year, for the consideration and discussion of health and fire safety issues;
- To act on behalf of and to advise Business Team / NIPEC Council on matters of health and fire safety policy, structure and communications; and to recommend any action necessary to ensure the health and safety of staff and members of the public (including contractors and visitors to premises);
- To keep under review the legal and statutory obligations with regard to health and fire safety and environmental regulation compliance, and to identify through regular monitoring and reporting to the Business Team areas where compliance is at risk or not being achieved;

- To receive reports on health and fire safety, including fire risk assessments, routine statutory audits (e.g. fire drills/alarm testing, portable appliance and emergency appliance/light testing) and incident / accident reports and to make recommendations to the Business Team of any corrective action required;
- To receive updates on changing health and fire safety legislation, and to review and assist in the development of policies and procedures to meet all statutory requirements;
- To ensure all staff are aware of their safety and environmental obligations through the receipt of regular monitoring reports to ensure these obligations are being discharged appropriately;
- To monitor staff awareness and training as they relate to health and fire safety and environmental issues to ensure appropriate training is provided to enable staff to safely discharge their duties;
- To receive reports and review personal safety for staff and visitors on the premises, particularly where it could impact on health and fire safety;
- To receive reports on the progress of the relevant Assurance Checklist Action Plan;
- To report quarterly on safety and environmental activities to the Business Team and annually to the NIPEC Council with the information required to discharge their duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1997) and other related legislation.

### **3.7 Line Managers**

Each Line Manager will ensure that all staff they manage:

- have read and understood their responsibilities as outlined within the Fire Management Policy;
- co-operates with the nominated officer (fire) or their deputy in carrying out their duties;
- completes annual fire awareness training and participates fully in fire drills without exception;
- Ensure the relevant mandatory e-learning training has been completed.

### **3.8 Fire Safety Wardens**

Nominated Fire Safety Wardens will receive specific instructions for their roles and will assist in the event of evacuation, checking that all staff and visitors have left the premises. They will also assist in carrying out fire safety checks in the areas where they work, reporting any fire hazards to the nominated officer (fire) and/or the Business Manager / Corporate Services Officer.

The names of The Fire Safety Wardens will be displayed clearly in key areas of NIPEC's accommodation including the kitchen and meeting rooms.

### **3.9 All staff**

It is essential that all NIPEC staff:

- read and understand their responsibilities as outlined within the Fire Management Policy;

- co-operate with the Business Manager and Corporate Services Officer in carrying out their duties;
- know and follow the evacuation procedures if fire breaks out;
- report all fires and potential fire hazards to their line manager;
- complete annual fire awareness training and participate fully in fire drills without exception.

## **4. FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT**

Fire Risk Assessments should include:

- identification of fire hazards and assessment of risks arising from them;
- identification of people at risk;
- details of dangerous substances;
- fire prevention and protection measures in place;
- an action plan compiled of any additional fire safety measures required to address relevant risks.

### **4.1 External Assessment**

NIPEC is a tenant of the DoF owned James House who organise regular Fire Risk Assessments of the entire building (including NIPEC's accommodation), in line with statutory requirements. These are carried out by the DoF Fire Safety Unit and the NI Fire and Rescue Service.

The James House Facilities Management team coordinate the development and implementation of resulting actions arising from the risk assessment in consultation with all tenants of James House. All preventative and protective measures deemed necessary must be completed within the timescale set out within the fire risk assessment report.

### **4.2 Internal Assessment**

Under the Health and Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1992, employers are required to carry out a suitable assessment of the risk arising out of its work activities. To meet this, NIPEC undertakes an internal health and safety and fire risk assessment of its premises every 12-18 months. This involves every member of staff undertaking a self-assessment of their work area and reporting any potential health and safety issues. All issues raised are collated and an action plan developed, the implementation of which is overseen and progress reported by the Business Support Manager / Health and Safety Committee to the Business Team.

As required under The Fire Safety Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2010, regular internal fire risk assessments of potential hazard areas within NIPEC's offices (e.g. kitchen) are undertaken by the Business Support Manager using a checklist. Any issues identified and required actions are noted within the above action plan and implemented.

## **5. TESTING AND MAINTENANCE**

### **5.1 Evacuation Procedures**

NIPEC's Evacuation Procedure is detailed in Appendix 1 – this information is displayed for any visitors to NIPEC offices in meeting rooms, the kitchen and other communal areas of the premises.

Practice fire evacuation drills for the entire building are conducted at least twice a year by the Facilities Management Team of James House, or as advised by DoF Fire Safety Branch, to test evacuation procedures and ensure that fire safety systems are effective and operating correctly. The Facilities Management Team of James House keep records of all evacuations, whether by fire or drill, within their Fire Evacuation Record Log. This is accessible to all tenants of the building on request.

In the event of a James House evacuation NIPEC Fire Wardens should report to the Fire Prevention Officer (currently Roy Press, Senior Project Manager, Facilities Management Team, James House).

### **5.2 Alarm Systems**

The testing of the building's fire alarm system is the responsibility of the James House Facilities Management Team. This is carried out weekly and recorded accordingly (see Appendix 2).

### **5.3 Fire Safety Equipment**

To ensure NIPEC meets its legislative requirements, the testing of NIPEC's fire safety equipment and emergency lighting is completed by both NIPEC staff and external contractors. The completion of all testing and implementing of any identified actions, are managed and monitored by the Business Support Manager/ Corporate Services Officer.

## **6. PERSONAL EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN (PEEPs)**

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) are developed for any person who needs special assistance to exit a building in an emergency situation. Line Managers should create and hold a PEEP for anyone who requires assistance and review every 12 months. Line Managers should ensure that all new staff receive the paperwork and ensure that they advise management if they require a PEEP.

Any assistance required for visitors to NIPEC offices should be considered in advance by the senior officer hosting their visit to the office.



## **Evacuation Chairs**

Evacuation Chairs may be used to assist in the evacuation of persons who cannot get themselves out of the building unaided. The Nominated Officer Fire (NOF) is responsible for the provision of training in the use of evacuation chairs.

## **Business Continuity Plan**

If a significant fire incident occurs and the building has to be evacuated the NIPEC Business Continuity Plan will be put into action.

## **7. REPORTING / MONITORING**

NIPEC's Health and Fire Safety Committee, chaired by the Business Support Manager, is responsible for overseeing and co-ordinating NIPEC's health and fire safety arrangements, and reports on activity to NIPEC's Business Team on a regular basis.

Health and Fire Safety are also areas covered by the assurance process. The completion and monitoring of 'assurance maps', and associated action plans, outline assurances that exist in respect of compliance with key legal requirements and any gaps in control and/or assurance. NIPEC's Audit and Risk Committee should seek assurance that any gaps in compliance are being monitored and/or actioned.

## **8. EQUALITY SCREENING**

This policy has been screened for equality implications as required by Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

The screening has identified specific equality impacts and outlines the way that these will be addressed. No significant equality implications have been identified therefore the policy will not be subject to an equality impact assessment.

The equality screening has been published and can be accessed here <http://www.hscbusiness.hscni.net/services/2166.htm>

## **9. MONITORING AND REVIEW**

A copy of this policy will be given to all staff, who should be aware of their individual responsibilities. The nominated officer (fire) will oversee the implementation of this policy within NIPEC.

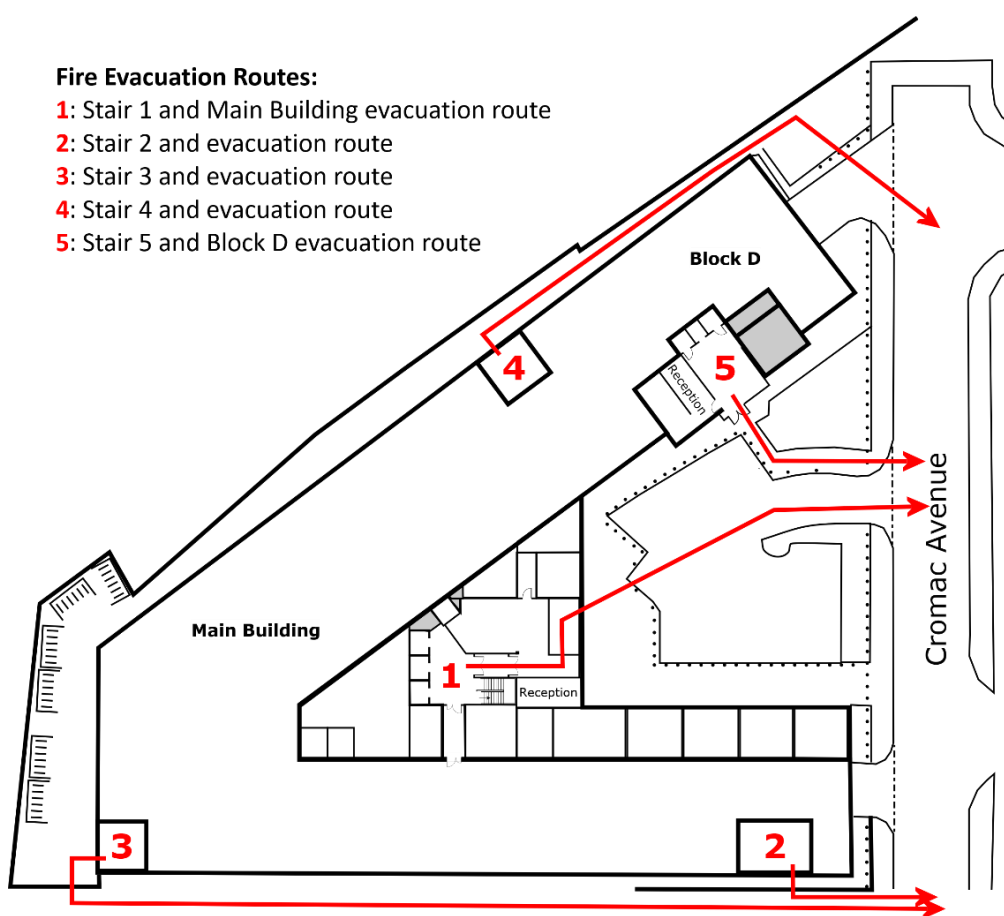
This policy will be monitored during its time period and reviewed in May 2027.

# NIPEC JAMES HOUSE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR ALL STAFF

### Evacuation Routes

Fire escapes routes and emergency evacuation procedures are sign-posted throughout the building.



### Evacuation Procedures: Fire Action

On discovering a fire staff should:

- Shout "Fire" and operate the nearest Fire Alarm 'Break Glass' / Manual Call Point (the fire alarm signal will operate within a few seconds).
- The fire alarm signal is a siren.
- Call the Fire and Rescue Service by dialling **999** from a place of safety outside the building.

When the fire alarm is activated, staff should leave the building in an orderly manner via the nearest exit. Staff should assist their visitors and report to the building's assembly point.

The buildings assembly point will be in **the space in front of the Gasworks Hotel**.

During an evacuation staff **must not**:

- **Stop to collect personal belongings**
- **Run within the building**
- **Use the lifts**
- **Re-enter the building until advised it is safe to do so**

Some evacuations may require staff to use an alternative route to that usually taken, so staff should familiarise themselves with the layout of building and the safety mechanism for exiting the building.

Staff who have Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) may wish to wait at the Refuge Point until the stairway is less busy and/or to wait for their designated assistance. This is **not** intended as a waiting area for NI Fire & Rescue Service.

Tenants are responsible for ensuring that any equipment required to safely evacuate their staff, or visitors, is available and safe to operate. You may wish to secure evacuation chairs within your designated area.

**All staff and visitors should make their way to the assembly point and wait there for further instructions.**

## **Fire Alarm Test Procedure**

The fire alarm will normally be tested each week on Tuesday at approximately 10am but may need to be varied to capture those on different work patterns. This will be triggered using a different manual call point / break glass each week.

A PA announcement will precede each weekly fire alarm test.

During the weekly fire alarm tests, fire wardens should check different rooms within their designed areas to ensure that the fire alarm can be heard.

Practice fire evacuation drills will be conducted at least twice a year, or as advised by the James House Facilities Management team to test evacuation procedures and ensure that fire safety systems are effective and operating correctly.

**All** occupants are required to leave the building during a practice evacuation and any other time the fire alarm is activated.

**All staff and visitors should make their way to the assembly point and wait there for further instructions regarding re-admission to the building.**