

Fire Safety Policy and Procedure

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Fire Safety Policy and Procedure

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Introduction

Banquo staff and service users should be as safe as possible from the threat of fire or from injury in the case of an outbreak of fire.

The best way to ensure this state of safety exists is to:

- have robust fire policies and procedures in place
- ensure that staff are well trained to cope with an outbreak of fire or an alarm in a service user's home or in the office. Banquo aims to comply with all legal requirements and best practice guidance relating to fire safety.

This policy sets out the values, principles and procedures underpinning this care service's approach to fire safety.

The aim of the service is to ensure that, as far as is possible, fires are prevented and that, in the event of a fire, staff know exactly what to do and how to react.

Other Legislation and Guidance

Banquo recognises that fire safety regulations and standards apply to any workplace offices that are under the control of Banquo.

In this regard, it will comply with all aspects of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, which requires employers and owners of workplace premises in England and Wales to:

- appoint a person responsible for fire safety
- conduct and implement the findings from a fire risk assessment
- keep the assessment under regular review
- have in place effective fire safety policies, procedures and systems.

Banquo will also take note of and apply best practice in fire safety in the care sector for England and Wales, following government guidance on Fire Safety in the Workplace.

It is recognised that, while the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 does not apply to domestic premises, such as the homes of service users, Banquo still has a duty of care to ensure the safety of its staff working in such settings.

In the Banquo's Office Space

On the discovery of or suspicion of a fire:

- staff should remain as calm as possible
- the first person aware of the fire or on the scene should raise the alarm immediately by operating the nearest break glass call point or by shouting "Fire"

- if the suspicion is raised by seeing smoke coming from under a door or by seeing smoke in a closed room staff should on no account attempt to open the door but should raise the alarm and summon the fire brigade as quickly as possible
- small fires can be fought with the appropriate fire extinguisher, but only if safe to do so and only if the alarm has first been raised.

In the event of a fire or of the fire alarm sounding, staff should:

- evacuate the building immediately and go to the nearest designated fire assembly point
- remain as calm as possible and help any visitors, disabled persons or contractors on the premises to evacuate
- close all doors
- ensure that, if any person is not accounted for, this is immediately reported to a fire brigade officer.

Staff should never:

- stop to collect valuables or possessions
- use lifts
- open doors where they can see smoke coming through unless that is the only means of escape
- attempt to re-enter the building until told it is safe to do so by the care service manager or coordinator by a nominated fire warden or by a fire brigade officer.

The fire procedures are based upon the following principles.

1. In the event of fire, the safety of life should override all other considerations, such as saving property or extinguishing the fire.
2. If a fire is discovered, the alarm should be raised immediately as the first action taken.
3. All employees are empowered to take this action if they believe there is a fire and no authority need be sought from any other person.
4. Banquo will always support employees who operate the fire alarm system in good faith, regardless of whether it is ultimately determined that a fire existed.
5. Banquo does not require persons to attempt to extinguish a fire, but extinguishing action may be taken if it is safe to do so after the alarm has been raised.

Fire Risk Assessment Protocol

To control fire safety risks in offices under control of Banquo, the care service will practice a stringent programme of fire risk assessments.

Our policy is to:

- identify, in carrying out normal risk assessment procedures, those activities that require a safe system of work
- identify safe methods of work for these activities — where necessary, these will be written formal safe systems of work
- implement these systems using the expertise of employees involved in the work activities
- monitor the workings of the safe systems through workplace inspections and reviewing accident/incident statistics derived from accident reporting procedures.

The aims of the fire risk assessment will be to:

- identify any fire hazards
- reduce the risk of those hazards causing harm to as low a level as reasonably practicable
- decide what physical fire precautions and management arrangements are necessary to ensure the safety of people in the building if a fire does start.

The management team is responsible for carrying out fire risk assessments. Daily checks (usually at close of day) should be made that:

- fire doors are closed
- fire exits and stairways are free of clutter
- all unnecessary electrical equipment and heaters are turned off
- storerooms or rubbish areas do not have smouldering fires
- areas where contractors have been working are free of fire hazards
- access points for Fire Rescue Services are clear and unobstructed.

Weekly checks should be made that:

- alarm systems function and can be heard in all parts of the building
- all fire-fighting equipment is in good repair and is in place
- stocks of flammable materials or gases are kept to an absolute minimum and are stored safely away
- all goods and boxes are safely stored away to minimise clutter, reduce the fuel available to a fire and to enable people to exit the building safely in the event of an emergency
- all fire instruction notices and no smoking notices are in place and have not been obscured
- individual rooms do not contain obvious fire hazards such as overfull waste baskets or portable heaters placed close to curtains
- all electrical equipment is free of obvious defects such as worn or broken cables and leads
- security arrangements are all in place to discourage arson.

Annual checks should be made that the following are serviced on an annual basis:

- fire alarm systems
- smoke detectors
- emergency lighting
- sprinkler systems
- fire-fighting equipment.

Administrative Guidelines

Full records of fire precautions should be kept in the fire log. This information should be entered by the fire safety lead or by one of the nominated fire wardens and should include:

- for fire drills: the times and dates of drills and the time between sounding the alarm and the last person leaving the building
- for fire alarm tests: the times and dates of tests
- for fire-fighting equipment, alarms and fittings such as emergency lighting: the times and dates of inspections, of replacements and of servicing

- for training: times and dates of training events, who attended and what was covered. The Registered Manager is responsible for ensuring that nominal rolls are kept up to date.

In Service Users' Homes

Workplace fire regulations do not apply to the homes of service users.

However, Banquo still has a duty of care for its staff working in such settings and will therefore take all reasonable actions to ensure their safety. In this organisation, a fire evacuation plan should be agreed as part of the initial health and safety risk assessment in any new service user's home where staff will be required to work.

The plan should be entered in the service user's plan and should note:

- escape routes
- fire risks (ie smoking habits of service users, use of electric bar fires, etc)
- evacuation risks (ie is the service user immobile or disabled/is the evacuation route restricted)
- use of smoke detectors/fire safety telecare.

All risk assessments should be discussed with the service user, or their representatives, and an agreement on any action to be taken made. Where evacuation or fire risks are high then professional fire advice should be sought.

All service users should be encouraged to adopt fire awareness behaviours and to install smoke alarms. Special evacuation arrangements should be made for service users with limited mobility, wheelchairs or sensory impairments. On the discovery of or suspicion of a fire, home care staff should:

- remain as calm as possible and raise the alarm immediately
- evacuate the house immediately, helping any service users, visitors or relatives on the premises to evacuate as per the evacuation plan
- ensure that everybody who was in the house is accounted for
- close all doors upon leaving
- call the fire brigade if not already done
- ensure that any person not accounted for is immediately reported to a fire brigade officer on arrival
- contact Banquo's head office and report the fire
- record the details of the incident in the Incident Book in the central office and fill out any accident forms in the event of injuries.

If the suspicion of fire is raised by seeing smoke coming from under a door or by seeing smoke in a closed room staff should on no account attempt to open the door but should raise the alarm and summon the fire brigade as quickly as possible.

Staff should never:

- stop to collect valuables or possessions
- use lifts (except for disabled stair lifts where there is no alternative means of transporting a service user downstairs)
- open doors where they can see smoke coming through unless that is the only means of escape

- attempt to re-enter the building until told it is safe to do so by a fire brigade officer.

Training

All new staff will be taken through the policy on fire safety as part of their induction process. All members of staff should be aware of the procedures in case of a fire at the care service premises. They should also all be aware of how they must respond in the event of an emergency. The care team is responsible for organising and coordinating fire training.

All new and existing staff should know:

- who is responsible for ensuring the correct fire procedure is carried out
- who the fire wardens are
- the location and usage of all fire extinguishers and where special extinguishers (eg those suitable for use on electrical equipment) are located
- the location of break glass fire alarm points
- the emergency fire evacuation procedures
- how to use the care service communication systems to make announcements
- how to use the internal telephone systems to call the fire brigade.

In-house training sessions for existing staff should be arranged so that all relevant staff can attend regular training session. Such general fire safety training should include instruction on fire prevention, on what to do in the event of a fire and on firefighting. Records should be kept in the fire log of who attended each session. Staff who do not attend should be reminded to attend the next session. All staff should attend fire training, including night staff and part-time staff. Additional training will be available for fire safety wardens.

Monitoring

In this care service, the Fire Safety Policy should be reviewed annually or after any fire-related incident or change in guidelines.

All fire-related incidents, including false alarms and “near misses”, should be investigated thoroughly by the Register manager and the Fire Risk Assessment amended as necessary.

Professional fire safety advice should be obtained for this review where required.

Changes arising from the results of any review should be communicated to staff and all persons concerned.

Related Policies and Procedures

Health and Safety Policy and Procedures

Incident Management Policy and Procedures

Training and Development Policy and Procedures

Legislation and Guidance

Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974

London Fire Brigade [The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005 - Fire safety law | London Fire Brigade \(london-fire.gov.uk\)](https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/)