



guidance notes

CHARITY



Version 1

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Enclosures

General Risk Assessment form

These guidance notes are based on current legislation and we have tried to make them thorough and informative. If you require any further assistance, please contact the relevant organisations mentioned in the notes.

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Ecclesiastical was founded over a century ago by churchmen, to provide insurance for the Church. Today we are a leading insurer of charities, schools and care homes.

Owned by a charitable trust, Ecclesiastical occupies a niche of its own within the insurance industry. Apart from the funds needed to develop the business, our profits are distributed annually by our parent company Allchurches Trust Limited in the form of grants. Over the last five years alone, these grants have amounted to more than €29 million.

The fact that we have been in business for much longer than many of our competitors has allowed us to build a store of knowledge that is invaluable when helping protect your interests. So, whichever of our insurance products you select, you will benefit from our philosophy of putting people first.



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The Disability Act 2005 has established the principle of access as a civil right to all public buildings.



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Use of ladders
Every year, many people are injured, some fatally, while using ladders.



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Bouncy castles
These notes are intended to give some guidance to those proposing to hire inflatable bouncy castles.

Note: Ecclesiastical provides these guidance notes without additional charge to Ecclesiastical Charity Insurance policyholders.



Since 31 December 2005 a statutory requirement has been placed on mainstream public bodies to integrate where practical and appropriate, their services for people with disabilities with those for other citizens.

The Disability Act 2005

The Disability Act 2005 has imposed obligations on public bodies to make buildings and services accessible to people with disabilities so that disabled persons can receive the benefit of those services in the same way as can the able-bodied.



Safety requirements must not be used as an excuse for not making provision for persons with disabilities.

Key dates

Since 31 December 2005 a statutory requirement has been placed on mainstream public bodies to integrate where practical and appropriate, their services for people with disabilities with those for other citizens.

From this date public bodies were also required to ensure goods and services purchased were also accessible for the disabled.

Public owned/managed or controlled heritage sites are required to be accessible to people with disabilities with effect from 31 December 2007 (unless this causes adverse impact on the conservation of the site).

The Act places an obligation on all public bodies other than those mentioned above, to make their public buildings accessible to people with disabilities by 2015. The National Disability Authority (NDA) has produced an Accessibility Code of Practice to assist in this process.

Definition of disability

Under the Act, the term 'disability' in relation to a person, is defined in section 2 as:

'a substantial restriction in the capacity of the person to carry on a profession, business or occupation in the State or to participate in social or cultural life in the State by reason of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment'.

The 'substantial restriction' is permanent or likely to be permanent, resulting in difficulty of communication, learning or mobility or in significantly disordered cognitive processes, and/or gives rise to the need for services to be continually provided to the person.

Provisions for the persons not covered by the Act

In spite of the limitations noted above, it would seem eminently sensible when planning the course of action necessary to comply with the Act, to make allowances for other groups or persons who may experience difficulties in using the building, even though they do not have a disability as defined by the Act. Consideration should therefore be given not merely to the effects on wheelchair users, the visually impaired, those with hearing difficulties and persons with learning difficulties, but also to: -

- the elderly in general
- persons of excessively large or small stature
- children
- pregnant women
- parents and others in charge of small children, especially those with pushchairs
- those who are temporarily injured
- those who are sick or ill, and
- those who may be emotionally distressed or unstable.

Definition of services

The Accessibility of Public Services and Information provide by Public Bodies Code of Practice produced by the National Disability Authority (NDA) defines services as:

- the use of any place or amenity owned, managed or controlled by a public body
- the provision of information or an information resource or a scheme or an allowance or other benefit administered by a public body;
- any cultural or heritage services provided by such a body; and
- any service provided by a court or other tribunal

Obstacles for accessibility cover both tangible and intangible elements including communication and physical environment.

Provision of services

As public bodies are required to ensure that the services they provide to the general public are accessible to people with disabilities where practical and appropriate, the type of assistance, advice, physical access and access to information provided should be analysed and reviewed.

The Act has allowed for the establishment of a 'Centre for Excellence in Universal Design' due to be opened in 2007. This Centre will support and assist in the development of standards in the design of buildings and products, as well as providing advice and training and promotion of public awareness.

A service provider must also take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids or services if this would enable (or make it easier for) disabled people to make use of any services that it offers to the public.

Examples of auxiliary aids would be: -

- an induction loop system for persons with hearing difficulties
- signs in Braille or large text books for the visually impaired

Health & Safety

Safety requirements must not be used as an excuse for not making provision for persons with disabilities. Whilst a service provider can justify less favourable treatment or a failure to make an adjustment, if it is necessary in order not to endanger the health or safety of any person, including a disabled person, spurious health and safety precautions provide no defence.

Special provisions must be made to ensure that persons with disabilities can be safely evacuated in the event of a fire or other emergency. The requirements of wheelchair users, those with hearing and sight impairments, and other disabilities, must be taken into account when carrying out fire risk assessments and drawing up evacuation procedures.

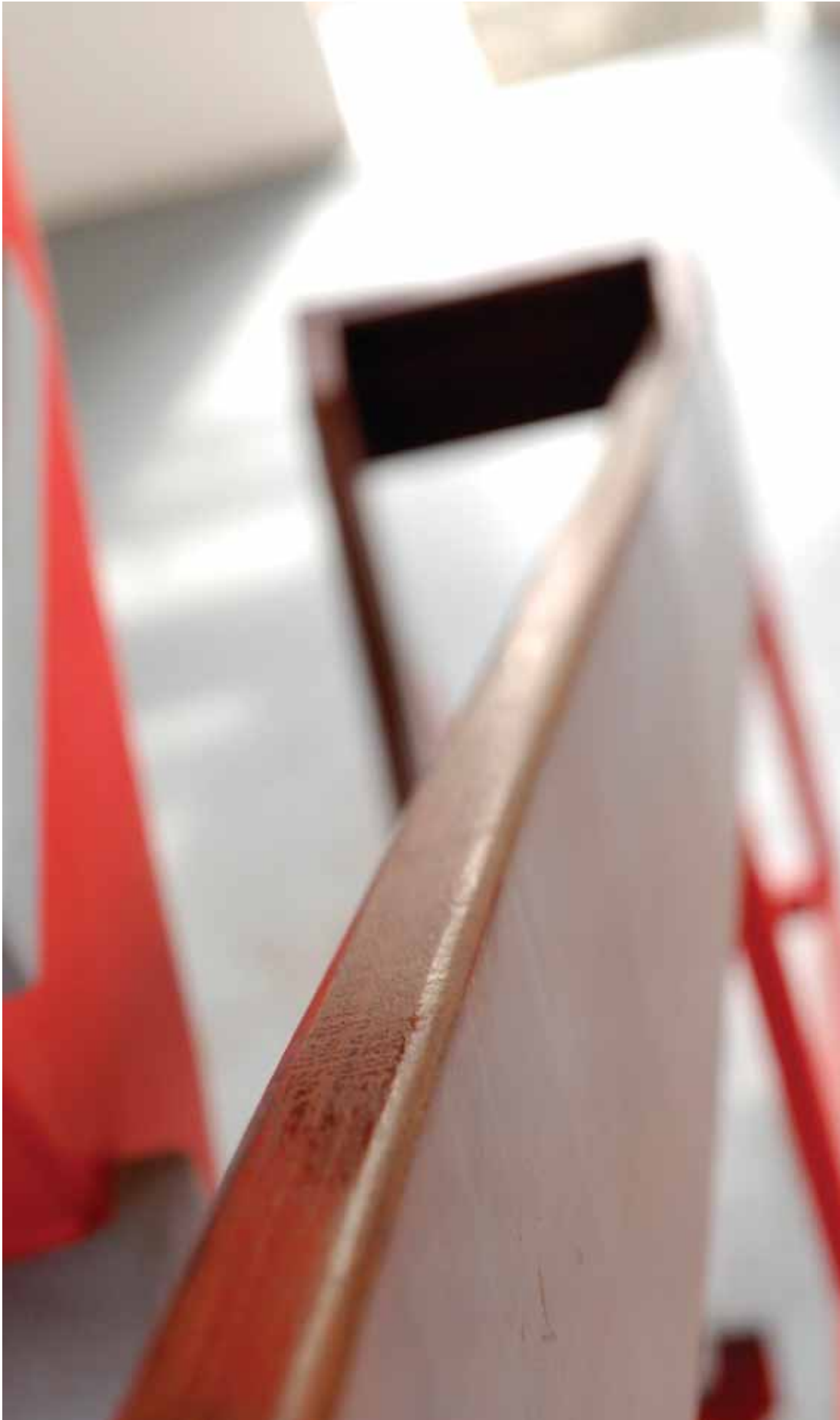
Suggested action plan

In order to demonstrate that charities and voluntary organisations have complied with their obligations under the Act, the following should be undertaken:

- Carry out an audit of both physical and non-physical barriers to access for disabled people, and record the findings
- Make any appropriate adjustments
- Provide training to staff and volunteers
- Draw the adjustments to the attention of disabled people and let them know how to request assistance
- Monitor the effectiveness of the adjustments and revise accordingly

Controls and compliance

Any work which may need to be carried out as a result of the Act does not override existing planning control, whether that be planning permission or listed buildings consent. It is most important that any work is not undertaken, particularly where it may involve the historic fabric of a building, without obtaining the correct permissions.

**Further information**

Disability Act 2005
Available from the Office of
the Attorney General/Irish
Statute Book
Tel: (01) 6314000
www.irishstatutebook.ie

*Code of Practice on
Accessibility of Public
Services and Information
provided by Public Bodies.*
The National Disability
Authority
25 Clyde Road, Dublin 4,
Ireland
Tel: (01) 6080400
www.nda.ie

*National Advisory
Committee on Disability
Training and Employment
Authority (Ireland)*
PO Box 456, 27-33 Upper
Baggot St, Dublin 4
Tel: (01) 6070500
www.fas.ie

*Database containing
relevant information,
products, suppliers and
resources relating to daily
living and disability in
Ireland.*
Lo Call: 1890 277 478
Email:
support@assistireland.ie

*OASIS (Online Access to
Services, Information and
Support)*
General information on
public and social services
www.oasis.gov.ie

Sale of second-hand goods

Each year many dangerous items (particularly electrical items) are generously donated to jumble sales and charities with the end customers often being the most vulnerable members of society.



Electrical items may be accepted for sale provided that you have them inspected and tested by a competent person

Whilst these items are given with the best of intentions, the end result could be injury or possibly death. These guidance notes are designed to help you avoid accepting the most hazardous items and to ensure the safety of those who purchase from you.

Sale or supply as a main business

If you sell or supply second hand goods as the main or as a substantial part of your business you should follow the guidelines noted below.

Furniture and soft furnishings

The S.I. 316/1995 Industrial Research and Standards (Fire Safety) (Domestic Furniture) Order 1995 governs the sale and supply of new and second hand furniture and furnishings. The law applies to retailers, second-hand shops and charity shops as well as auctioneers.

The regulations apply to upholstered domestic furniture, including settees, chairs, bed bases, mattresses, headboards, stools, dining chairs, sofa beds and garden furniture suitable for indoor use. Nursery items such as prams, pushchairs, playpens, cots and carrycots are also included. Cushions and pillows are controlled as well as loose covers for upholstered furniture.

You should be able to tell that furniture complies with the Regulations as a 'permanent' label should be attached to the item. This is normally headed 'CARELESSNESS CAUSES FIRE' and then states that the item complies with the S.I. 316/1995 Industrial Research and Standards (Fire Safety) (Domestic Furniture) Order 1995. It also explains in detail that the various

components comply with the relevant ignitability tests.

Beds and mattresses do not have to have the permanent label but should comply with the S.I. 316/1995 Industrial Research and Standards (Fire Safety) (Domestic Furniture) Order 1995.

As a guide, furniture and furnishings manufactured between 1950 and 1990 should not be accepted for sale.

Electrical appliances

Heating appliances and electric blankets should not be accepted. There is a substantial risk of these items being faulty and possible serious injuries or death resulting.

Other electrical items may be accepted for sale provided that you have them inspected and tested by a competent person such as a suitably qualified and experienced electrician (preferably a member of the Register of Electrical Contractors of Ireland (RECI) or Electrical Contractors Safety and Standards Association (ECSSA) before the goods leave your control. A register should be kept of all items inspected including date inspected, the name of the inspector, description of the item and any serial numbers. The item should also be tagged to show that it has been inspected.

Gas appliances

These items may be accepted for sale provided that you have them inspected and tested by a Registered Gas Installer with Bord Gáis Networks in conformance with the relevant Irish Installation Standards (I.S. 813 or I.S. 820) and a record is kept of all items inspected including date inspected, description and any serial numbers. The item should also be tagged to show that it has been inspected.

Toys

Toys, including second-hand toys, must comply with the 1990 Toy Safety Regulations. It is now an offence to supply a toy that does not carry a CE conformity marking. Details must be included of the name, trade name or trademark, and address of the manufacturers if they are established in the Community, or the importer if appropriate. The use of the CE marking is confirmation that all the provisions of the Regulations have been complied with.

Electrically operated toys (other than battery toys) must be inspected prior to sale by a qualified and experienced person in the same way as for other electrical items and details recorded as noted above. Any other toy must be inspected prior to sale by a suitably trained and experienced person to ensure it complies with all the relevant regulations. Guidance can be obtained from the Office of the Director of Consumer Affairs (ODCA).

Children's clothing

In order to prevent injury and possible strangulation to children, the Industrial Research and Standards (Hood Cords for Children's Clothing) Order 1976 prohibit the sale or possession of a child's outer garment with a hood, where a hood cord is fitted. This includes second-hand clothing. The regulations apply to raincoats, overcoats, anoraks and other garments suitable for outerwear. This includes tracksuit tops.

To see if the regulations apply, fasten the garment and lay it out as flat as possible. If the chest measures less than 44cm (approx 17.5 inches) then the garment must not be fitted with a hood cord.

There are also regulations that apply to the sale, manufacture and assembly of children's nightwear under the Industrial Research and Standards (Children's Nightwear) Order 1979.

All clothing should be checked to ensure that it is clean and safe for someone else to wear.

Occasional sales of goods at fêtes and jumble sales

You should always try to follow the guidelines given above as far as possible, but we accept that it is not often practical to arrange a professional inspection of electrical and gas equipment. The best thing is to refuse donations of electrical and heating appliances.

For toys and other items, use common sense. A responsible person should be appointed to check through the items prior to sale to eliminate any that seem dangerous by their nature or condition.

Preparation and sale of food

Following the introduction of recent legislation, there has been a great deal of confusion over the position of charities with regard to the provision and sale of food, particularly where this has been produced by voluntary helpers.



Everyone involved with food handling must have received training in basic food hygiene.

Provided certain basic precautions are followed, there is no reason whatsoever why charities and not-for-profit organisations should not be involved with the preparation and sale of food.

This may range from the one-off annual event such as a fete, a weekly coffee morning or lunch, or a full scale catering operation providing a large number of meals on a daily basis. Different considerations apply depending on the scale of the operation, and these are outlined below.

What the law says

The law relating to food safety is covered by the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act 1998.

The Act makes it an offence for anyone to sell or process for sale, food that is: -

- harmful to health
- contaminated to such an extent that it would be unreasonable to expect it to be eaten
- falsely described, advertised or presented
- not what the customer can reasonably expect.

The things you must do to comply with the Act are contained in the regulations below:

Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) S.I. No 369 of 2006 / European Communities (Hygiene of Foodstuffs) Regulations 2006

These cover the basic requirements for safe premises, general food hygiene, personal hygiene, and training of food handlers. Everyone involved with food handling must have received training in basic food hygiene. More detailed information is given below.

S.I. No 370 of 1995 / European Commission Directive NO 92/1/EEC

These regulations apply to the requirement for temperature control to all types of food, which, without it, might support the growth of harmful bacteria or the formation of toxins.

Product specific regulations

There are a large number of specific regulations relating to various foodstuffs such as dairy products, eggs, poultry and shellfish.

Premises which are only used occasionally for food preparation

The Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act 1998 requires premises that are used occasionally for food preparation such as church halls, and moveable or temporary premises such as marquees, follow the guidance for temporary premises. The Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) provides guides to compliance with the Regulations, and gives advice on good practice. The following is a summary of some of the main requirements.

- There are requirements in place for food preparation that a review of the premises is to be undertaken using the HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) food safety management system (the FSAI provides guidance notes for this).
- Anyone using the premises must have regard for other activities that have previously taken place in the premises. If these present a risk of food contamination, the premises should be thoroughly cleaned and, if necessary, disinfected before food preparation begins.
- Food contact surfaces must be in sound condition, clean and easy to disinfect.
- There must be a basin or basins for hand wash only, provided with hot and cold water, soap or detergent and a means of hand drying.
- Protective clothing must be provided, and high standards of personal hygiene maintained. Any wounds must be covered with a brightly coloured waterproof dressing.
- It is good practice for ALL visitors to a kitchen to wear protective clothing including hats if they present a risk of contamination.
- Hot and cold water must be available for washing tools and equipment together with a supply of detergent. It is good practice to use separate sinks for food washing. Where this is not practicable, the sink should be cleaned and disinfected between different activities.
- Adequate facilities must be available for maintaining and monitoring suitable food temperatures. In most circumstances, foods that need temperature control for safety

must be held at either HOT (at above 63°C) or CHILLED (at or below 5°C). Please note that if cooking/storing foodstuffs, the minimum temperatures required for HOT is 70°C and Chilled 3°C. The temperature of freezers must be at 18°C or below.

For holding/keeping food hot, insulated boxes will only be effective over short periods of time. For chilled storage, mechanical refrigeration equipment will normally be needed to achieve satisfactory temperatures. Ready-to-eat foods must be kept away from raw foods that may contaminate them both in storage and preparation.

Premises used for the regular preparation of food

If meals are produced on a regular basis, in addition to the requirements outlined above, other regulations apply. It may be necessary to provide separate sinks for food preparation and equipment washing if the volume of preparation in the kitchen demands it. There may be a need for mechanical ventilation.

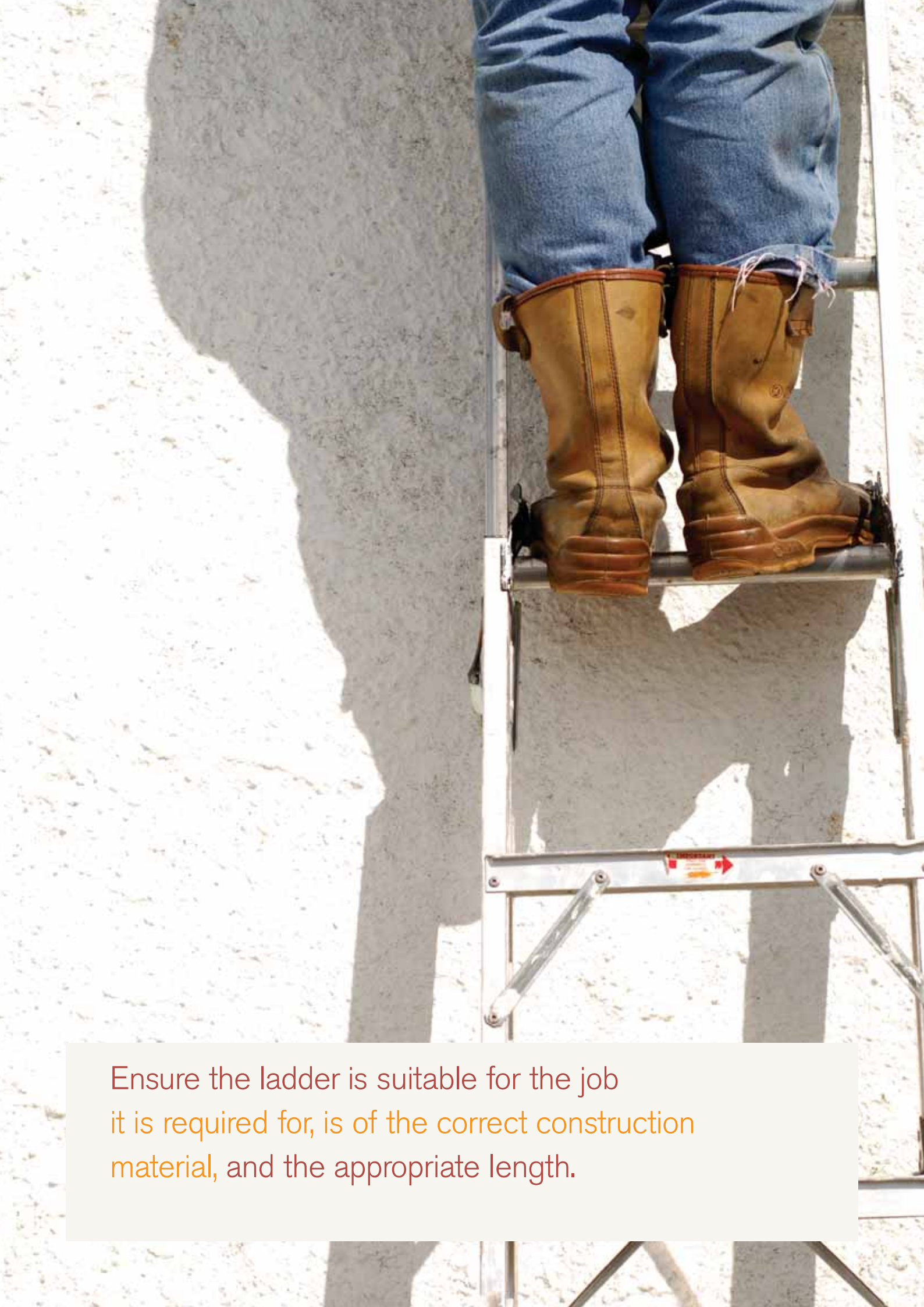
If food is provided, you may need to advise the local Health Service Executive Office about any premises you use for storing, selling, distributing or preparing food. The majority of premises will have to be registered. However, certain premises may be exempt. You should contact your local office of the Health Service Executive to check whether or not you need to register.

Further information

Details are given below of various publications providing more information. Acts and other legislation are available from The Office of the Attorney General
www.irishstatutebook.ie

A number of free guidance notes covering all aspects of food safety are available from the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1
 Tel: (1) 817 1300
www.fsai.ie

Health Service Executive
 Tel: 045 880400
www.hse.ie



Ensure the ladder is suitable for the job it is required for, is of the correct construction material, and the appropriate length.

Use of ladders

Every year, many people are injured, some fatally, while using ladders.

A fall from as little as two metres can be fatal. More than half the accidents occur because ladders are not securely placed and fixed.



Only ladders which meet the appropriate European standards should be used.

A ladder is a means of access, not a safe working platform. Ladders should only be used for minor jobs of short duration which only require the use of one hand so that the other hand can be used to hold onto the ladder.

Alternative means of access

See whether an alternative means of access is more appropriate. If possible use a mobile scaffold tower or a mobile elevated working platform (cherry picker). Consider using contractors who have the proper equipment rather than trying to do the work yourself.

Ladder standards

Only ladders that meet the appropriate European standards should be used. EN/131 applies to both wooden and metal ladders. The following maximum permitted load must not be exceeded.

Class 1 (Industrial) ladder

The maximum static vertical load is 175kg.

Class 3 (Domestic) ladder

The maximum static vertical load is 125kg.

European Standard Ladders are rated for a maximum permitted vertical static load of 150kg.

Choice of ladder

Ensure the ladder is suitable for the job it is required for, is of the correct construction material, and the appropriate length. Ladders should not be painted as this can hide defects.

For electrical work, only use ladders of a non-conductive material. Allow one metre of ladder length above the highest rung you use. Never stand on the top four rungs. We would suggest that ladders are not used for work in excess of five metres.

Stepladders

Stepladders are suitable for small jobs of short duration where it is not possible to rest a ladder against a wall or other support. They should only be used for minor maintenance at a height not exceeding two metres. The stepladder should have an "A" frame with a small working platform at the top, which can be used to hold tools and materials. The platform should never be used to stand on. There must be a mechanism to prevent the legs from spreading out and a safety catch to prevent the joint opening. They must be placed on firm level ground. The height of the steps should not exceed three times the width of the base.

Routine checks

Before use, the ladder should be checked to ensure that the general condition is sound and that it is clean and dry, free from wet paint, oil, mud or other slippery substances. In addition, checks should be made to ensure that there are:

- no cracks
- no rungs missing, bent or loose
- no stiles (outside uprights) damaged or bent
- no warping or splitting of wooden ladders
- no corrosion of metal ladders
- no sharp edges (metal) or splinters (wood)
- foot pads, caps and other rubber fittings in place and sound

Safe positioning

The ladder should be placed on a firm, level, dry surface. Where this is not possible, for example working on grass, the feet should be tied to stakes in the ground to stop slipping and a large flat board placed underneath the feet to prevent them sinking into the earth.

The ladder should only be set against structures capable of supporting the load that will be imposed upon them.

Ensure the ladder cannot be knocked over by passing traffic. Exclusion zones may be necessary to ensure unauthorised people do not pass underneath the ladder.

The ladder should be set at an angle of 75°, that is one unit of measure out from the wall, or support for every four units of measure up.

Securing the ladder

Both the bottom and upper part of the ladder should be secured by tying from the stiles to fixed objects. If ladders are frequently required to be used in the same position, then permanent ladder ties should be located into any suitable nearby masonry or brickwork. Extension ladders should have an overlap of at least three rungs.

Safe use

When using a ladder the following should be considered:

- keep your body facing the ladder at all times centred between the stiles
- don't reach too far forwards or sideways or stand with one foot on the ladder and one on something else
- do not over-stretch. Climb down the ladder and move it however time-consuming this might be
- keep both hands free to hold the ladder as much as possible. If you need to carry tools use a shoulder bag, belt holster or belt hooks. Use a rung hook for hanging a paint pot
- hold onto the ladder with one hand when working

- wear strong flat shoes or boots with dry soles and a good grip
- do not wear sandals, slip-ons or have bare feet
- do not use a ladder in strong winds or if it is raining
- only use a ladder if you feel completely confident
- do not use a ladder near overhead power lines.

Routine maintenance

Ladders should carry an identification number and a maintenance log should be kept.

As well as an inspection every time prior to use, an inspection and maintenance schedule should be employed to ensure every ladder is thoroughly inspected on a regular basis, depending on the environment where it is used and stored and the frequency of use. If any defects are found, the ladder should be withdrawn from use, suitably labelled and segregated for repair or safe disposal.

Cords, chains and ropes should be checked and replaced if defective, and pulleys should be lubricated regularly. Missing or defective pads or sleeves should be replaced.

All ladders should be cleaned regularly before being stored. Climbing or gripping surfaces should be free of oil, grease, mud or other slippery substances.

Timber ladders may be coated with a transparent non-conductive finish such as varnish, shellac or a clear preservative but not any opaque covering such as paint. Aluminium equipment should be given an adequate protective coating when it is subject to acids, alkalis or corrosive substances.

What the law says

The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 come into force on 1 November 2007. They apply to employers and persons under their control and to the self-employed.

An employer shall ensure that: -

- (a) a ladder is used for work at height only if the risk assessment has demonstrated that the use of more suitable work equipment is not justified because -
 - (i) the level of risk is low, and
 - (ii) the duration of use is short, or
 - (iii) existing features at the place of work cannot be altered,
- (b) any surface upon which a ladder rests is stable, firm, of sufficient strength and of suitable composition to support safely the ladder, so that the ladder's rungs or steps and any loading intended to be placed on it remain horizontal,
- (c) a ladder is so positioned as to ensure stability during use,
- (d) a suspended ladder is attached in a secure manner so that, with the exception of a flexible ladder, it cannot be displaced and swinging is prevented,
- (e) a portable ladder is prevented from slipping during use by -
 - (i) securing the stiles at or near their upper or lower ends,
 - (ii) effective anti-slip or other effective stability devices, or
 - (iii) any other arrangement of equivalent effectiveness,
- (f) a ladder used for access is long enough to protrude sufficiently above the place of landing to which it provides access, unless other measures have been taken to ensure a firm handhold,
- (g) no interlocking or extension ladder is used unless its sections are prevented from moving relative to each other while in use,
- (h) a mobile ladder is prevented from moving before it is used,
- (i) where a ladder, or run of ladders, rises a vertical distance of 9 m or more above its base, sufficient safe landing areas or rest platforms are provided at suitable intervals, where reasonably practicable, and
- (j) a ladder is used in such a way that -
 - (i) a secure handhold and secure support are always available to the employee, and
 - (ii) the employee can maintain a safe handhold when carrying a load unless, in the case of the step ladder, the maintenance of a handhold is not practicable when a load is carried, and the risk assessment has demonstrated that the use of a stepladder is justified because -
 - (i) the level of risk is low, and
 - (ii) the duration of use is short.

Planning an event

The organisation of events has long been a method used by charities and not-for-profit organisations for fund-raising and in the main, has proved to be very successful.



Persons who are not members of your organisation, but who are asked to run side-shows such as rides, stalls, displays and the like, should provide their own public liability insurance.

However, without adequate planning and organisation, the running of such activities can lead to accidents and injuries.

The following is designed to give some insight into the areas to be considered when organising such events, but should not be considered exhaustive.

Legislation

All entertainment events are classed as work activities and therefore are subject to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act (2005) and the various regulations passed under it. In addition, licensing legislation may also apply.

An event organiser has a duty to ensure that any premises (including grounds or other open spaces), has a means of access and egress, and any plant, equipment and substances are safe and without risks to the health of any employees, volunteers or visitors.

A common duty of care also arises under the Occupiers Liability Act 1995 to ensure that visitors will be reasonably safe in carrying out the activities for which they were invited or permitted to be at the event.

Remember that the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) now regard persons who make use of volunteers as employers, and volunteers as employees. The same level of training, information and protection must be provided to both employees and volunteers

Insurance

The cover provided by your policy is only intended for mainstream fund-raising, such as social activities or events, but not those where there is a high risk of serious injury.

If you are planning any event that includes activities of a hazardous nature such as abseiling or bungee jumping then you must notify your insurers and ensure that adequate cover is in place before the event takes place.

If outside contractors are employed to provide major attractions, the event organiser should check with the attraction provider that he holds adequate public liability insurance with an indemnity limit not less than that of the organiser's own insurance, and that the event organiser is indemnified as a "principal" under the contractor's policy. A copy of the attraction provider's policy should be obtained.

Persons who are not members of your organisation but who are asked to run side shows, such as rides, stalls, displays and the like, should provide their own public liability insurance to cover both property damage and accident or injury to members of the public.

Contractual agreements

You should carefully check any contractual agreements in connection with attraction providers or the hiring of premises or equipment. Despite the Unfair Terms in Consumer Contract Regulations 1995, some conditions observed recently have endeavoured to place onerous responsibilities upon the event organiser, which should have been catered for by the suppliers' own liability insurance.

Communications

There should be clear lines of communication between those involved in organising an event and individuals who should have clearly defined areas of responsibility.

If the event is spread over a large site, or over more than one floor of a building, the establishment of a central control point could prove useful, with a specified person to take overall control and with responsibility to summon the emergency services.

The location of the nearest accessible telephones should be known, or a fully charged mobile telephone should be provided.

Consideration needs to be given as to how the organiser will communicate with the public attending the event, particularly if the event is in the open air.

Planning the venue

Organisers need to consider the suitability of the proposed venue. Whilst the owners of any buildings and land that are used have a responsibility to ensure that their property is safe, it is the organisers who have a primary responsibility for initially choosing venues that are suitable in terms of size and access.

The following need to be considered:

-
- Are buildings large enough with sufficient entrances and exits for the numbers anticipated?

 - Are the exits clearly marked?

 - Are sufficient fire extinguishers provided?

 - Do exhibitors or stallholders need to bring in equipment?

 - Are doorways wide enough to accommodate such equipment?

 - Are there awkward steps or corridors to negotiate?

 - Are there sufficient numbers of people to help unload?

 - Will vehicles need to be brought close to the entrance and what are the traffic implications?

The local Fire Prevention Officer should be contacted to ensure that the proposed use is acceptable and that there is no breach of any fire regulations. The owners of the property should confirm that there is no breach of any lease, tenancy or any similar agreement.

Manual handling

A risk assessment must be carried out of all manual-handling tasks. Manual handling must be avoided if at all possible or mechanical handling aids such as trolleys used for moving heavy equipment.

If chairs and tables need moving or setting up, there should be sufficient numbers of able-bodied people to assist. The poor handling of loads is one of the major causes of back injuries and permanent disablement. People with a history of back problems should not undertake heavy lifting activities.

The erection of temporary staging and lighting gantries must only be undertaken by trained professionals.



The provision of food and drink at an event may not be considered hazardous by many; however, food poisoning is on the increase.



Electrical installations

All electrical installations must comply with the Energy (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 (to be commenced by the Minister in 2007) and the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007. These must be installed by a recognised authorised and qualified electrical contractor. The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007 require that all existing electrical installations are inspected and tested annually, that the advice of an inspector or competent person is acted on and defects rectified promptly.

Only electrical contractors enrolled with the Electrical Contractors Safety and Standards Association (ECSSA) or the Register of Electrical Contractors of Ireland (RECI) should be employed.

Persons bringing portable electrical appliances onto the site must be able to show that the equipment is correctly maintained and has been subject to routine inspection and testing.

Crowd control

Crowd control is an important factor in accident prevention and attention to detail during the planning stage will assist in a smooth, accident-free event.

Consideration should be given to the following:

- Parking facilities for both entertainers and visitors.
- Vehicle and pedestrian entrances and congestion.
- One-way systems, pressure points, queues etc.
- Adequate means of escape including checking fire exits are unlocked.
- Cordoning off of hazardous areas.
- Provision of adequately trained marshals.
- Emergency evacuation procedures.
- Crowds of 5,000 or more will need to be licensed under the Planning and Development (Licensing of Outdoor Events) Regulations 2001.

First Aid

A risk assessment must be undertaken as to the extent of First Aid provision required.

This will be based on the numbers attending and the nature of the activities. Provision may range from a simple First Aid box to a number of trained First Aiders or attendance by St John Ambulance Brigade of Ireland or the Order of Malta Ireland. All marshals and others in control must be made clearly aware of the extent and location of First Aid facilities. An emergency plan must also be in place in the event of someone having to be taken to hospital or needing to receive emergency treatment.

Food and drink

The provision of food and drink at an event may not be considered hazardous by many; however, food poisoning is on the increase, and food hygiene and the requirements of the Food Safety Authority of Ireland Act 1998 and the European Communities (Hygiene of Foodstuffs) Regulations 2006 must be considered. The FSAI provides guidance notes for training on these requirements. This will include guidance for moveable and/or temporary premises such as marquees, mobile sales vehicles and premises used occasionally for food preparation such as churches and village halls.

Where cooking takes place, a check should be made on the method of heating, i.e. bottled gas, and its associated hazards. Mobile food vans and trailers must not be located where they could be a hazard, or put children at risk from moving traffic. Particular care needs to be taken with deep fat frying.

Alcohol

Alcohol is a major contributor to many serious accidents. If the event features potentially hazardous activities, the sale of alcohol should be restricted or banned altogether.



All entertainment events are classed as work activities and therefore are subject to the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005.

Animals

If animals feature as part of the event (donkey rides, pet shows, obedience trials, for example), there needs to be adequate separation between the public and the animals, and provision must be made for the welfare of the animals and their separation and supervision. Consideration should be given as to whether visitors (as opposed to competitors or those displaying) should be allowed to bring dogs and how they should be controlled.

Fairground rides

An organiser of a funfair or an owner of fairground equipment shall not make available for use by the public any fairground equipment unless such equipment has a valid certificate of safety in accordance with the Planning and Development Act 2000 (section 239).

Cash handling

Consideration must be given before the event to the handling of cash and the security of those involved in collecting and banking money. Every stall or attraction should be provided with a cash box of some kind in which to collect entry charges and payments. A float will be required for each cash collection point at the start of the event and takings must be removed on a regular basis during the course of the event so that large sums of cash do not build up. If admission and other charges are set at a round amount this avoids the need for large amounts of small change. Selling tickets in advance will reduce the amount of cash you have to handle on the day itself. A secure place must be decided upon in advance in which to collect cash and count it prior to banking. A safe should be used to keep cash in overnight before banking the next day. Check with Ecclesiastical that your safe is suitable for the amount you wish to keep. If it is considered safe to do so, you could make use of a bank night safe facility. Ideally, a professional security company should be used to collect cash on the same day. Remember the safety of people is always more important than the protection of money.

Dangerous activities

It is incumbent upon the event organisers to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of participants as far as possible.

Many of these activities are operated through Codes of Practice, HSA Guidelines, Trade Association Guidelines, Government Regulations and Health & Safety Authority Guidance Notes.

A check should be made with the operator to establish if such controls exist and if so, that they are followed. Where there is any doubt, the activity should be abandoned.

In the event that any dangerous activity is to be organised, your insurer must be advised as public liability cover will not be automatic.

The following is a list of potentially dangerous activities:

Rock climbing

Abseiling

Canoeing

Jet-skiing

Water-skiing

Swimming

Pony-trekking

Sub-aqua diving

Dry slope skiing

Clay-pigeon shooting

Archery

Horse-riding

BMX cycling

Assault course

Barfly jumping

Bungee jumping

Pole climbing

Caving

Parachute jumping

Ballooning

Gliding

Flying

Driving of any vehicle by persons who would not be allowed to drive such a vehicle on the public highway.

This list is not exhaustive and any other activity which you consider may be dangerous must be notified to your insurers.

Fire safety

Outdoor events come under the scope of The Planning and Development (Licensing of Outdoor Events) Regulations 2001. A responsible person will be required to ensure that a fire risk assessment is carried out and appropriate fire safety measures put in place.

Licensing

Under Section 231 of the regulations you may be required to apply for a licence. Please refer to your Local Authority.

Further information

Guidance is provided through local authorities

Visits and outings

Visits and outings play an important part in the life of many charities, giving people the opportunity to undertake activities away from their normal surroundings. Outings can range from a simple trip to the shops, to a day out, to holidays lasting for a week or more.



Children will be unfamiliar with their surroundings, and additional staff will be required to deal with any emergency.

Whilst outings can be extremely beneficial, they must be carefully planned to ensure that all eventualities have been considered and things go smoothly and according to plan.

Risk assessment

Visits and outings are no different to any other activity and the undertaking of a risk assessment is the starting point to ensure that potential risks are identified and the appropriate control measures put in place.

Whilst a desk exercise could be undertaken for the simplest of visits, where the assessor is familiar with the trip to be undertaken, there is no substitute for a practical exercise. In most cases it will be necessary for the assessor, accompanied by colleagues where appropriate, to carry out a "test run" in order to identify all of the potential hazards which may be encountered.

The findings of the risk assessment will need to be recorded and the procedures which are put in place will then need to be monitored and adjusted as necessary based on the actual experiences of the trip itself.

Areas to be considered when undertaking the risk assessment

When carrying out the risk assessment, the following areas will need to be considered and the findings recorded. Some of these will be generic in nature and will apply in all cases irrespective of the nature of the trip. In other cases, however, the specific nature of the trip will need to be considered and the control measures modified accordingly.

Staff-volunteer / client ratios

It is of the utmost importance that there are sufficient members of staff and/or volunteers to cope with the numbers of clients bearing in mind that, as a general rule, a higher ratio of staff to clients will be required for trips away. Clients will be unfamiliar with their surroundings and additional staff will be required to deal with any emergency while remaining staff look after the other clients.

Clients' behaviour may also be affected by being away from their usual surroundings and consideration must be given to the needs of those clients with learning difficulties or who may exhibit challenging behaviour.

The journey

Consideration must be given to the mode of transport and a decision taken as to the most appropriate mode depending on the length of the journey. For short trips for a small number of people, private cars may be suitable, whereas for longer journeys, the use of public transport will probably be required.

Checks need to be made that, where appropriate, vehicles are fitted with seat belts and that access is possible for wheelchair users. Luggage space on some trains is now limited and it is essential that checks are made that all equipment needed for the visit can be accommodated.

The length of the journey, together with the need for refreshment and toilet breaks, must be taken into account. The provision of adequate and suitable facilities along route is essential.

Medication and First Aid facilities

The length and nature of the trip must be taken into account when deciding the level of First Aid skills required and the First Aid equipment that needs to be carried. Clients' medication will also need to be taken and a safety factor should be built in if, for some reason, the return journey is delayed. As a basic rule, the party should be self-sufficient and should not have to rely on obtaining medical supplies on route.

A thorough investigation must be undertaken of the proposed destination, particularly bearing in mind clients with physical disabilities, including wheelchair users. The presence of uneven surfaces, large numbers of steps and stairs, and difficult access for wheelchairs needs to be noted and avoided if possible.

General hazards also need to be considered, bearing in mind the particular client group. This would include such features as busy roads and unprotected areas of water.

Contingency planning

The risk assessment needs to take account of things not all going according to plan. This would include vehicle breakdowns or trains being delayed. Alternative means of transport or means of looking after clients whilst delayed need to be considered.

It is essential that members of staff have adequate means of communication such as mobile phones, and that there are members of staff remaining at the organisation's own premises who can be contacted and asked to put emergency plans into operation.

Documentation

Following the risk assessment, detailed plans and procedures need to be produced noting exactly how the visit or outing is to be undertaken. This should include a check list of all the items which will need to be taken, including medication, emergency supplies, and contact names and telephone numbers.

Bouncy castles

There is little Irish research on injuries sustained on bouncy castles, despite the increased use and growing number of injuries presented to hospital Emergency Departments. UK Government statistics indicate that annually there are approximately 10,000 accidents involving bouncy castles which result in injuries to children. Some 4,000 were caused by bouncy castles being used at home, and 6,000 at locations away from the home.



Many of the injuries were serious, including broken bones and severe lacerations. Most of the injuries are caused by children bouncing off the inflatable onto the ground, being hit by other children or just falling awkwardly. Many of these accidents could be avoided by effective adult supervision.

These notes are intended to give some guidance to those proposing to hire inflatable bouncy castles as part of a fundraising event, a fete or a private function such as a birthday party.

The equipment should be hired from reputable hire companies, and wherever possible, set up, operated and supervised by the hire company's own staff. This is particularly important if substantial numbers of children are likely to be present.

Before hiring

Before hiring a bouncy castle, ensure that the hire company:

- fully complies with the safe use and operation of play inflatables. A useful guidance tool is issued by the Inflatable Play Inspector Scheme in the UK. This guidance can be downloaded from www.pipa.org.uk
- employees are suitably experienced and well-trained adult personnel, where the company is responsible for the setting up, operation and supervision of the bouncy castle
- provides evidence of a current public liability insurance policy with a limit of indemnity of at least €1.3 million. This insurance is to cover the liability of the hire company. It is unlikely to extend to cover the hirer of the equipment.

Self operation

If you are to operate the bouncy castle, in addition to items 1 and 3 below, ensure that you are provided with written instructions about the safe setting up, operation and supervision of the equipment, and that the name and address of the manufacturer or supplier is clearly marked upon it.

Safety instructions

The safety instructions should include the following points:

- 1 Children should not be allowed to use the bouncy castle if there is a high wind or in wet weather (inflatables can flip over, and slippery surfaces may cause injury)
- 2 The castle must be adequately secured to the ground
- 3 The castle should not be positioned close to any structures or hazards that could injure users who hit them
- 4 Soft matting covering hard surfaces must be placed adjacent to the front or open sides
- 5 There must be responsible adult supervision, paying close attention to the children at play at all times during its use
- 6 The number of children using the bouncy castle must be limited to the number recommended in the hire company's safety instructions. There must be no overcrowding
- 7 A rota system for different age or size groups should be operated, together with the observance of any age limit of users. (It is suggested that adults are not permitted to use the equipment)
- 8 All children must be made to remove footwear, hard or sharp objects such as jewellery, buckles, pens and other similar pocket contents. Eating while bouncing or performing acrobatics must not be allowed



Responsible adult supervision ensures children have fun in a safe environment.



Parades and charity walks

Large numbers of people walking along roads obviously creates a hazard, and unless adequate precautions are taken to safeguard walkers, there is a high risk of death and injury.



The start and finish should be off the road.

In hours of darkness, the danger is even greater and therefore The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA in the UK) discourages walks at night. Whereas in the past the Gardaí would take control of walks and parades, close roads, stop traffic and provide general marshalling, they are now much less likely to be prepared to do so. This means that there is a much greater responsibility on the organisers to provide the necessary stewarding.

Initial planning

The following should be done prior to the event:

- Contact the Gardaí for guidance and give them full details of the route, numbers involved, times and nature of the walk or parade
- Ask the Gardaí if they are able to marshal the event. They may still be prepared to do so in your area
- Assess if any official road closures are required for the event. If so, contact the local authority. Note there is normally a charge for this application
- Carefully plan the route to avoid dangerous junctions and minimise the number of roads which need to be crossed
- Restrict walkers to a single side of the road
- Recruit sufficient numbers of safety marshals so they can be positioned at all key points; at road junctions, at the front and rear of the walkers and alongside on the offside of the road
- Provide marshals with high visibility jackets
- Remember that members of the public do not have any legal powers to stop or direct traffic. However, drivers do have a duty of care and should stop if someone in a high visibility jacket is helping children to cross a road

RoSPA advice for charity walks

The following precautions have been devised by RoSPA to minimise the risk of accidents:-

- 1** A minimum age of at least 16 years is preferable
- 2** Where younger persons are included they should be adequately supervised by responsible adults
- 3** Suitable walking footwear should be worn
- 4** Bright clothing should be worn by walkers to help drivers to see them. During the day, wearing something fluorescent is best. In the dark walkers should wear retro-reflective materials
- 5** The Gardai should be asked for their advice on choice of route, time and day and their directions should be obeyed
- 6** In any event, heavily trafficked roads should be avoided, especially at night
- 7** Walkers should be started at intervals; mass starts are dangerous
- 8** The start and finish should be off the road
- 9** RoSPA advice refers walkers to the UK Highway Code, please refer to the Irish Rules of the Road - specifically to Rules for other Road Users - Pedestrians and Signaling (hand signals)
- 10** Where there is no footpath, participants should walk on the right hand side of the road, facing oncoming traffic
- 11** Any vehicles used in a supervisory capacity should not travel at a slow speed and thus cause obstruction to other traffic
- 12** In rural areas, walkers should be sure to close any gates they have to pass through, so that animals cannot stray onto the highway
- 13** There should be a follow-up system so that no participant is left behind needing help

(Please note that the ROI Rules of the Road should be referred to under point 9 above)

Candles

The use of candles to create a special atmosphere is now very common. However, it is important to remember that they can be the cause of major fires and serious injuries if not used correctly. Simple precautions should mean that candles can be used safely.



Fire extinguishers must always be readily available where candles are being used.

Choice of candle

Good quality slow-burning candles are best. Cheaper, catering-quality candles will burn down quickly, and the flame may soon get dangerously close to foliage or decorations.

Hand-held candles

Great care needs to be taken where people are given candles to hold, especially where large numbers are involved. Apart from the risk of igniting flammable materials, molten wax can cause damage to clothing and is very hot. Purpose-made candles are available, and should be used with proper slide-on card drip trays.

Where children are involved, even greater care is necessary. Children should be properly supervised and care taken to ensure that they do not stand too close together and in particular not too close behind one another as there is a risk of both clothing and hair being set alight.

Placing of candles

Candles must be kept clear of all combustible materials including flammable decorations, foliage and electrical equipment. Ideally, candles should be placed in metal holders on non-combustible surfaces such as stone or brick.

Fire extinguishers

Fire extinguishers must always be readily available where candles are being used. Water extinguishers are the most suitable for dealing with burning foliage, paper and wood. Staff must know where the extinguishers are and how to use them. Training can be provided either by your fire extinguisher supplier or the local fire brigade. Water must not be used on electrical equipment.

Fire blanket

A fire blanket may be a better way of dealing with certain fire situations, and you should have at least one available. They are particularly suitable for dealing with burning clothing.

Means of escape

If a fire should start, you must be certain that people can get out of the building quickly. All doors must be unlocked and be capable of being opened quickly. Regular fire drills should take place with identified Fire Marshalls. Fire escape routes should be made clear to all staff and visitors and prior to the start of a special event.



Ideally candles should be placed in metal holders on non-combustible surfaces such as stone or brick.

First Aid

No matter what type of premises you have and irrespective of the nature of your activities, First Aid facilities should be provided for employees and visitors in the event of illness or injury whilst on your premises.

Type of facilities

The type of facilities required depends on a variety of factors. Issues to consider are:

- Nature of activities undertaken (high or low risk)
- Number of people involved
- Distribution of those people
- Location of nearest doctor and ambulance station
- Accessibility in the event of an emergency

First Aid arrangements

All staff and volunteers should be aware of the arrangements for administering First Aid and the location of any First Aid kits or room. This is particularly important if your activities are potentially hazardous or are carried out away from your normal place of work.

First Aid kits

First Aid kits should be identified by a white cross on a green background. They should contain sufficient quantities of the required materials and be replenished as soon as possible after use. The items should include only those that the nominated First Aider has been trained to use and must be appropriate for the circumstances of use.

There is no mandatory list of items that should be included in a First Aid container. The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) operating under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, provide the following guidelines, where no special risk arises in the workplace, a minimum stock of First Aid items for a workplace with up to 25 staff would normally be: -

-
- a leaflet giving general advice on First Aid;
-
- 20 individually wrapped adhesive plasters;
-
- 2 sterile eye pads (bandage attached);
-
- 6 Individually wrapped triangular bandages;
-
- 6 safety pins;
-
- 6 medium-sized individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings – approximately 10cm x 8cm;
-
- 2 large sterile individually wrapped unmedicated wound dressings – approximately 13cm x 9cm;
-
- Extra large individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings – approximately 28cm x 17.5cms;
-
- 8 Individually wrapped wipes;
-
- 1 x Paramedic shears;
-
- 2 pairs of latex gloves;
-
- Additionally, where there is no clear running water, Sterile Eye Wash;
-
- First Aid kits should be stored in an area where conditions will not readily contribute to their deterioration and be checked on a regular basis;
-
- They should be sited in the workplace at the closest proximity to the area of which has the highest likelihood of an accident occurring.

First Aid training

All First Aiders should be trained and certificates of competence obtained. Training should include specialised training on hazards specific to the activities undertaken.

First Aid co-ordination

Where First Aiders are not available, appointed persons may be nominated to take charge of the co-ordination of activities in the event of an emergency occurring.

Appointed persons are only responsible for summoning trained personnel or professional assistance and should not administer First Aid treatment other than emergency treatment, and then only when specifically trained.

Records

Records of First Aid treatment provided should be maintained and be made available when requested by a Health and Safety Inspector. The records should contain the following information:

- Name and address of person treated;
- Occupation;
- Date of entry;
- Date and time of incident;
- Place and circumstance of incident;
- Details of injury and treatment given;
- Signature and address of person making entry.



Volunteers

Whilst charities make extensive use of volunteers they are often overlooked when it comes to health and safety.

Responsibilities and accountabilities are often confused and contradictory. Controls can be minimal, ad hoc and unpracticed. Older volunteers may be unfamiliar with modern health and safety practices and are often reluctant to accept change.

It is of the greatest importance that the same level of health and safety information, instruction training and protection should be provided to volunteers as to employees.

A detailed record should be maintained of all volunteers and a formal system should be introduced to ensure that volunteers are regularly appraised to ensure that they are able to undertake their duties without risks to their health, safety and welfare and that they do not endanger the health, safety and welfare of others.

Volunteers should have regular reviews in the same way as if they were employed to ensure that they are aware of exactly what their duties comprise, the procedures that are in place to perform them and that they have the necessary instruction, information and training, and protective equipment in order to carry these out safely.

The appraisal is not a substitute for the training, instruction etc. itself, but is a formal meeting to give the volunteer the opportunity to confirm that they do understand what is expected of them and that they have everything they need to carry this out safely. By the same token of course, the volunteer can use the opportunity to say that they are not sure what they are meant to be doing and

that they feel they need more training, instruction etc. and a timetable can then be agreed to put this in place.

The health of the volunteer should be discussed to ensure that they are still able to undertake their duties and that they are still happy to continue doing so. With increasing numbers of older volunteers it is possible that persons may be undertaking duties for which they are no longer suited, such as jobs involving manual handling or climbing stairs.

In summary, the appraisal is really an opportunity for both parties to agree that they are happy with the current situation or if any changes are required.

It could be that a volunteer is no longer keen to be involved with carrying cash, or undertaking activities which require a large amount of physical effort. Without an opportunity to raise such concerns persons may feel obliged to continue duties that could result in an accident or injury.

A formal record should be kept of the meeting ideally signed by both parties.

The appraisal should be carried out by the Head of the Department, Personnel Officer if there is one, or the person with overall responsibility for volunteers.

Ideally this exercise should be undertaken on an annual basis.

How to carry out a risk assessment and create a safety statement



The risk assessment should be overseen and co-ordinated by the person who has overall responsibility for health and safety.

The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) provides the publication Guidelines on Risk Assessments and Safety Statements available to purchase a hard copy version or download free from their website www.hsa.ie.

Carrying out risk assessments, preparing and implementing a safety statement and maintaining both will not in themselves prevent accidents and ill health but they will reduce the likelihood of an occurrence.

Under Section 19 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005, employers and those who control workplaces must identify any hazards in their control and assess the risks associated by these hazards. A risk assessment is the ideal way to produce this analysis.

Section 20 of the Act, requires that an organisation produce a written programme to safeguard the safety and health of employees while they are at work and also the safety and health of other people who may be at the workplace including customers, visitors and members of the public. This takes the form of a Safety Statement.

The HSA recommends the following steps are taken in a risk assessment and documented in a safety statement:

- 1** Safety and Health Policy – This should start with a declaration signed by senior management to give a commitment to ensuring that a workplace is as safe and healthy as is reasonably practical and that all statutory requirements are complied with. It should also state the duties of the employer.
- 2** Identify Hazards – A hazard is anything that could cause harm – although in this scenario it should be work-place generated. Hazards can be related to materials, equipment, work activities, untidy workplaces, chemicals etc. Hazards that are not so obvious tend to be working temperatures, unsuitable lighting, noise, violence and unpredictable clients. A good place to start would be to review the accident records at the workplace.
- 3** Assess Risks – A risk is the likelihood, great or small, that someone may be harmed by the occurrence of the hazards identified. Risk depends on the number of people exposed to the hazard, the likelihood of the risk causing injury to workers or others, how serious the injury would be should the risk occur, and the current levels of controlling the risk.

4 Decide Precautions – Precautions can be reviewed once the hazards/risks have been identified. These precautions should prevent the risk from occurring, or at least minimise the effects of it. It may not be reasonable to prevent a risk from occurring entirely, but there should be some methods of controlling the risk – eg, providing adequate training and supervision.

5 Record the Findings – The Safety Statement should record the findings of the Risk Assessment. It should also record how the precautions are to be organised and responsibilities assigned. It may include specific procedures, for example, the operating instructions or health and safety procedures, and also outline the responsibilities of certain members of staff with regards to health and safety (for example risk assessments or monitoring).

6 Review and Update – As the Safety Statement needs to be relevant at all times it is extremely important that it is reviewed regularly and updated. It should also be available for inspection.

The guidance notes provided by the HSA provide a risk assessment proforma to assist in completing this process.

Risk assessments are not difficult, but they do take time. It is sensible, therefore, to spread the load as far as is possible and for people to carry out risk assessments in their own particular area, where they best know about any hazards.

Because charities vary so much, it is difficult to be specific as to who should do what. However, as an example, the office manager should look at offices, the catering manager or head chef the supply of food and drink, the sales manager any retail outlets, the distribution manager the warehouse etc. The process should be overseen and co-ordinated by the person who has overall responsibility for health and safety. Systematically look at each area of the premises and note all of the hazards and risks, and any existing safety measures. Note also any person who may be specifically at risk. You must then note any additional safety measures or 'controls' which will reduce those risks as far as possible. As well as the interior of the buildings, you must also look at the yards, car parks and other external areas and also events and activities away from your premises.

In order to help you, a checklist is given on the next page, of common hazards which you should look for in each area being assessed. If any of these hazards are present, then record them and what you need to do about them. Look for any other hazards which may not be included in the checklist, such as specific activities or pieces of equipment which may cause harm.

You can calculate a risk rating in order to prioritise the implementation of the additional safety measures required.

It is not necessary to do this if you don't want to. Just leave the likelihood, severity and risk rating columns blank and note any existing safety measures and any additional ones that you decide to implement.

However, any risk, which could result in a fatality, must receive priority attention.

Risk assessment checklist

Accidents and First Aid

- Provision of First Aid equipment
- Persons with First Aid training
- Procedures to deal with accidents
- Transport arrangements to hospital
- Examine existing arrangements and assess what is needed
- Accident report book

Fire safety

- Combustible materials, flammable liquids and accumulations of waste
- Heaters, smoking and other sources of heat
- Provision of fire exits, escape routes and signage
- Provision of fire detection equipment and fire fighting equipment
- Evacuation plans and training

Note: Regulation 19 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 requires every employer and every person controlling a workplace to identify the hazards of the place of work under his or her control and to assess the risks presented by those hazards. The employer must be in possession of a written assessment of the risks as they apply to employees, including any single employee, group, or groups of employees who may be exposed.

Electrical safety

- Condition of fixed electrical installation, including switches and sockets
- Condition of portable electrical appliances, including leads and plugs
- Use of unauthorised electrical appliances and temporary wiring
- Mechanical damage to wiring

Gas safety

- Condition and maintenance arrangements for fixed gas boilers and heaters
- Condition and arrangements for use, including storage and changing of cylinders for portable Liquid Petroleum Gas heaters

Control of hazardous substances

Internal

- Cleaning materials
- Paints, solvents, adhesives and other chemicals
- Types, amounts, storage arrangements
- Fumes and dusts
- Provision of personal protective equipment

External

- Pesticides, herbicides, petrol
- Types, amounts, storage arrangements
- Provision of personal protective equipment

Plant and machinery

Internal

- Woodworking machinery
- Metalworking machinery
- Lifts, hoists and other lifting equipment
- Ladders and scaffolds including storage and accessibility
- Display screen and computer equipment
- Any other machinery and equipment

External

- Forklift trucks
- Lawnmowers, gangmowers, strimmers, etc.

Slips, trips and falls*Internal*

- Loose carpets, rugs, mats and other floor coverings
- Loose and uneven tiles, stone paving and floorboards
- Trailing leads and other obstructions
- Spillages of water and other liquids
- Worn, steep and uneven steps and stairs
- Inadequate lighting, lack of handrails

External

- Uneven and poorly maintained yards, car parks, paths and steps
- Potholes, tree roots and unprotected drops
- Long grass and undergrowth
- Poor drainage of paths and growth of algae
- Inadequate lighting and lack of handrails

Lighting*Internal*

- Adequacy of lighting
- Pay particular attention to stairs, steps, cellars and basements

External

- Paths, steps, drives, car parks, boiler room steps and entrances

Falls from a height*Internal*

- Arrangements for light bulb changing
- Mezzanine floors
- Use of unsecured ladders
- Unprotected openings and walkways at high level

External

- Clearing of gutters and valleys
- Low parapets and balustrades

Food hygiene

- Extent of food preparation
- Nature of foods to be prepared and stored
- Areas used for food preparation
- Facilities for washing and preparation of foodstuffs
- Facilities for storage of foodstuffs
- Experience, training and competence of food handlers

Manual handling

- Moving and lifting of stock, plant and other equipment
- Numbers required
- Specialist equipment needed

Display screen equipment

- List all computer equipment
- Who uses it and for how long
- Check seating, workstation, screen, software

Hazardous buildings/glazing

- Loose brickwork, stonework, falling masonry, slates, tiles, gutters, flagpoles
- Detail any glass in windows below waist height and in doors or beside doors below shoulder height that is not of safety material or protected against breakage
- Narrow panes up to 250mm need not be included
- Check if any asbestos present

Personal safety

- Lone working
- Handling of cash
- Means of raising an alarm, summoning assistance

Other activities and hazards

- Events, exhibitions, work away, etc.
- Age-related hazards (children/elderly)
- Disability access/provision
- Fêtes, sponsored walks, fundraising activities
- Look for and note any other hazards that could cause someone harm, which are not included in the above checklist

Risk assessment calculator

You need to grade both the likelihood and severity of each risk from 1 to 3. The grades are then multiplied together to give a risk rating.

Likelihood

The likelihood of something happening can be graded as:

- 1** = Low (seldom)
- 2** = Medium (frequently)
- 3** = High (certain or near certain)

Severity

The severity of injury if something does happen can be graded as:

- 1** = Low (minor cuts and bruises)
- 2** = Medium (serious injury or incapacitated for 3 days or more)
- 3** = High (fatality or a number of persons seriously injured)

Having assessed both likelihood and severity, a risk rating can be calculated by multiplying the likelihood by the severity.

This will give a rating from 1 to 9.

Risk rating matrix

	3	3	6	9
Likelihood	2	2	4	6
	1	1	2	3
		1	2	3
				Severity

The implementation of additional controls can then be prioritised as follows:

Risk rating:

1 – 2 = low priority

3 – 4 = medium priority

6 – 9 = high priority

- With low priority, no action at all may be required
- With medium priority additional control measures or a change to systems of working may be required
- With high priority, it may be necessary to stop the particular activity or restrict access to the area until action has been taken

A risk assessment form is included in the enclosure section at the back of these notes.

Notes

Notes

Charity
Care sector
Heritage
Education
Commercial bespoke
Property Owners
Apartment blocks
Schemes
Shops
Offices
Faith

For further information on any
of our products or services, please speak
to your broker.

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