

Fire Safety Signs and Notices



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As a care home operator or care home manager do you have all the necessary and required fire safety signage displayed throughout your premises? This blog will highlight where signage may be required.

Fire escape directional arrow signs are a series of signs that direct occupants along escape routes towards the final exit. The signs should provide clear and unambiguous information to allow the building occupants to safely leave in an emergency. Every escape route should be signed, where necessary, and should incorporate a directional arrow and text. An arrow should not be used on its own. If the escape route to the nearest exit is not obvious it should be indicated by a sign. The signs should be displayed so that occupants escaping will always have the next escape sign in sight. The signs should be fixed above the door in the direction of escape. They should not be fitted to the doors themselves as they will not be visible if the door is open.

Other signs that should be displayed can include:

“Fire Door - Keep Shut” – fire doors fitted with self-closing devices should have this sign displayed on both sides.

“Fire Door – Keep Locked” – fire resisting doors fitted to electrical riser cupboards, etc that are not self-closing because they are routinely kept locked should have this sign displayed.

“Push bar to open” – all doors fitted with push bars should have this sign permanently displayed.

“Fire Escape – Keep Clear” – The external face of all final exit doors should permanently display this sign at eye level.

Fire Assembly Point – Your fire assembly point should have a sign indicating this.

Locations of manual call points / break glass points – Signs should be displayed to locate manual call points.

Locations of fire extinguishers – Signs should be displayed to locate the positions of your fire extinguishers. In addition, fire extinguisher signs should detail the type of fire extinguisher and what class of fire it is suited to.

Action in case of fire notices – these signs should be displayed on escape routes adjacent to all manual call points. They should contain the following information:

- How to raise/sound the alarm
- How to summon the fire and rescue service
- Method of evacuation – for example leave by your nearest exit
- Location of fire assembly point
- You may wish to detail any instructions, for example do not use the lifts or stop to collect belongings

We can look to Article 14(2)(g) of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 which details that emergency routes and exits must be indicated by signs.

In addition, the HM Government fire safety risk assessment guides provide further guidance on signs and notices and contains information on the positioning of escape signs and the design of escape signs.

Further guidance on fire safety signs can also be found in BS 5499-4 and BS 5499-5. Published guidance on compliance with health and safety legislation on signs is also available. Guidance about photo-luminescent fire safety signs and notices can be found in BS 5266-6.

If you are a responsible person under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 then you will have duties to ensure that suitable and sufficient fire safety signs and notices are displayed in your premises. As a reminder responsibility for complying with the Order rests with the 'responsible person'. In a workplace, this is the employer and any other person who may have control of any part of the premises, e.g., the manager or owner. In all other premises the person or people in control of the premises will be responsible. If there is more than one responsible person in any type of premises (e.g., a multi-occupied complex), all must take all reasonable steps to co-operate and co-ordinate with each other.

Fire Action

1. Operate nearest fire alarm call point

2. Call the Fire Brigade by dialling _____

3. Leave the building by the nearest available exit

4. Report to assembly point

If you have any queries or are in need of specific Health & Safety advice, please use the contact form in the Health & Safety policy section of our system to contact a member of the AfterAthena team (part of the Napthens Group) who are able to offer your advice via email and a FREE virtual Health & Safety Audit.