

SINGAPORE CIVIL DEFENCE FORCE
GUIDELINES FOR FIRE EMERGENCY PLAN
FOR INSTITUTIONAL HOMES

1 INTRODUCTION

An institutional home is characterised by having stay-in staff and inmates who may have impaired mobility and/or senses. Impaired mobility inmates include those who are bedridden, or wheelchair bound or need crutches. Impaired senses inmates include the blind, the deaf/dumb or the intellectually disabled. These inmates need assistance or close supervision in a fire emergency situation, first to be alerted of the emergency and then to be evacuated to safety. As such, the role of the staff is very critical.

2 OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 The objectives of a Fire Emergency Plan/Fire Drill are:
- a. To prevent panic and ensure a safe, orderly and speedy evacuation of all the occupants in case of fire emergency.
 - b. To get occupants attuned to react rationally when confronted with a fire emergency within the premises.

3 PRE-FIRE DRILL ACTIONS

3.1 Fire Fighting Equipment

These must be checked, properly maintained and in serviceable condition at all times. They include fire extinguisher, alarm system, bells, hosereels, beacon lights (preferred where the inmates are deaf/dumb, but able to see) etc;

3.2 Escape Routes

All evacuation routes such as staircases and corridors; must be kept free of any obstruction at all times.

3.3 Fire Safety Committee

- a. A Fire Safety Committee should be formed by the officer-in-charge or head of the institutional home. The committee must

include the following appointments (number of persons in each appointment is at the discretion of the officer-in-charge/head):-

<u>Appointment</u>	<u>Duties</u>
Supervisor	To take command and control during a fire emergency.
Deputy Supervisor	To assist the supervisor to control the whole incident and to act for him in his absence.
Fire-Fighting Team	To fight incipient fire. To marshal and evacuate the occupants to the designated assembly area.
Telephone Operator	To announce messages through public address system or loud hailers as directed by the supervisor (where applicable) and to make emergency calls to the SCDF.

- b. The appointment holders must be by specifically named individuals. For institutional homes with stay-in inmates, either the supervisor or his deputy must be one of the stay-in staff. There must be specifically named individuals covering those absent, such as on leave, MC etc.

3.4 Sounding of the Alarm

- a. The fire alarm signal can be raised by breaking the manual break glass call-point or alarm bell and by switching on the beacon lights if provided
- b. All staff must know how to operate the alarm and to sound it immediately when an outbreak of fire is discovered.
- c. The alarm must be audible and the beacon lights activated, if provided must be visible throughout the premises.
- d. The signal for 'fire' must be different from any other signal used in the building and must not be used for any other purpose.
- e. Should the electric warning system fail to activate the alarm, a fire bell will be used.

3.5 Fire Drills

- a. A fire drill involving all occupants shall be held at least once in every 3 months since the inmates may be slow in their learning process. Drills should alternate between day and night time to give occupants familiarity over fire emergencies occurring during daytime and nighttime.
- b. Depending on individual situation, more frequent practices may be necessary to familiarise the inmates with the correct procedures to evacuate safely from the building in an orderly manner within the minimum possible time.
- c. All staff must be acquainted with all possible evacuation route throughout the building
- d. All the inmates guided by the staff should be immediately evacuated by using the nearest exit and proceed to the assembly point. Lifts are not to be used.
- e. Plan showing evacuation routes will be explained to the inmates and will be prominently displayed at several strategic locations throughout the building.
- f. Inmates with any particular difficulty to respond to a fire emergency, such as those who are bedridden, shall be given closer attention by the staff.

4 PROCEDURES FOR FIRE DRILLS/OUTBREAK OF FIRE

4.1 Discovering the Fire

The person who discovers the fire shall immediately.

- a. Raise the alarm by activating the nearest fire alarm call-point through break glass or ringing the alarm bell and switching on beacon lights, if any.
- b. Attempt to extinguish any incipient fire with the available fire fighting equipment without taking undue personal risk.
- c. Inform the designated telephone operator to call "995".
- d. Call "995" himself if the operator is not available.

4.5 Record of Fire Drills

Written record of fire drills shall be maintained. These records will indicate the total evacuation time taken in each drill. (Total evacuation time is the time taken from the time the alarm is initiated to the last warden reporting at the assembly point.) One staff member should be assigned by the fire safety committee to time the whole exercise.

4.6 Roll Call

At the assembly area, roll call for all the occupants must to carry out. Any person who cannot be accounted for must be reported at once to the supervisor.

4.7 Checking the Building

The appointed wardens in the Fire Safety Committee are to check to ensure that all occupants in the areas under their charge have been evacuated before proceeding to the assembly area.

4.8 Fighting Fire Team

All the fighting fire team members will be mobilised and detailed to put out or control the fire with the available fire-fighting equipment, without any undue personal risk pending the arrival of the CD Officer.

5 ALL CLEAR SIGNAL

The CD officer in attendance will give the all clear signal for en-entry to the building,

6 SITE PLAN

In the formulation of the FEP by the officer-in-charge or Head of the Home, a floor plan showing the escape routes, assembly area and locations of alarm bells, fire extinguishers, hosereels and telephone etc. is to be property drawn up.

7 CONCLUSION

The guidelines in this generic plan are meant for the Officer-In-Charge such as Head of the Home to formulate the FEP to cater for his/her respective needs.