

# Independent Guide

## What can I do to make sure of a quick and safe evacuation for staff with a disability in my building?



Independent workplace compliance

### Introduction

It is the responsibility of the appointed responsible person, under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, for the building to provide a fire risk assessment that includes reference to any vulnerable persons on site.

### What is a PEEP?

The responsible person should also have a separate emergency evacuation plan for all people likely to be in the premises. This should include any persons who require assistance in the form of a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP). This type of evacuation plan should be specific to the individual and provide a suitable plan for the safe evacuation of this persons whilst not relying upon the intervention of the Fire and Rescue Service to make it work. You should have a PEEP template available, even if not currently applicable, should this situation change, or a person were to visit your building which this would apply to.

### What kinds of impairments do I need to cater for?

There may be individuals with visual or hearing impairments for which the common sounders or audible alarm systems may not be a sufficient means of raising the alarm. In this circumstance further aids such as personal trembler alarms for visual impairments or flashing beacons for hearing impairments may be required.

A buddy system is also an effective means of raising the alarm and aiding with evacuation in which another member of staff is allocated the task of helping the vulnerable individual. Tactile/braille signs may also be used so long as the person can easily locate the signage to read the braille, though these are less common.

### What do I need to do for those with mobility impairments?

Personnel with mobility impairments may require further assistance for safe evacuation and temporary PEEPs may need to be implemented for staff with non-permanent impairments, such as a person with a broken leg, or expectant mothers for example. Evacuation lifts that will remain in operation once the fire alarm has been raised are a common means, as are evacuation chairs.

### Can I use a refuge point?

Refuge points are also popular in buildings whereby the individual can wait safely in a fire protected area (up to 30-minute protection) which offer a temporary place of relative safety for the individual to await assistance. Again, the support of a buddy system will be the best way to achieve safe evacuation.

It is important to note that a refuge point is **NOT** a place where a vulnerable person should be left to be rescued by the Fire & Rescue service as it is their duty to preserve life and property. The fire risk assessment/emergency evacuation plan should be sufficient enough for **ALL** people to be safely evacuated from the premises.

**This guide is of a general nature; specific advice can be obtained from Assurity Consulting.**

**Assurity Consulting is the UK's leading independent compliance consultancy specialising in workplace health, safety and environmental solutions. We have over 35 years' experience of helping customers of all sizes, from across all sectors, manage their compliance responsibilities, making sure that their organisation is compliant, their employees are safe, their processes are cost effective and their management team is in control.**



FS 24510

EMS 84550

OHS 590676

### Assurity Consulting Limited

26 Redkirk Way Horsham West Sussex RH13 5QH

t +44 (0)1403 269375 e info@assurityconsulting.co.uk

w [assurityconsulting.co.uk](http://assurityconsulting.co.uk)

Registered in England and Wales Reg. No. 2227268

Corporate Member of IWFM