



Office of
Mental Health

Fire Safety Reference Guide for Supervised Community Residences

Booklet 3: *Fire Drills*



FIRE SAFETY REFERENCE GUIDE FOR SUPERVISED COMMUNITY RESIDENCES

Booklet 3: *Fire Drills*

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This is Booklet 3 in a series of 5 booklets.

Other booklets include:

Booklet 1: *Self-Preservation*

Booklet 2: *Evacuation Planning*

Booklet 4: *Fire Prevention*

Booklet 5: *Fire Safety Equipment*

*Developed by the NYS Office of Mental Health
Available online at www.omh.ny.gov*

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**Please note that this booklet is
a supplement to Basic Fire Safety Training.**

Staff are expected to participate in fire safety training before they use this booklet. This booklet is designed to reinforce materials presented during training and to provide samples/templates of forms associated with the topics discussed. It is recommended that fire safety training be provided at least annually.

The Office of Mental Health (OMH) in conjunction with the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) and the Office of Fire Prevention and Control (OFPC) developed an on-line training program that can be used by agencies as a core for Basic Fire Safety Training. This training program for staff of supervised community residences is located at OMH.NY.GOV.

BOOKLET 3:

Fire Drills



What is the purpose of conducting fire drills?

- To make sure house staff and residents know how to correctly respond to a fire emergency.
- To confirm that residents are capable of self-preservation.
- To help determine if the home's fire evacuation plan works.

What are OMH's requirements for conducting fire drills?

Part 594 (Children CRs) and Part 595 (Adult CRs) require fire drills to:

- Be conducted monthly.
- Occur at varying times of the day and night.
- Involve the actual evacuation of all residents to a designated meeting place. (Note: There may be an exception to this in NYC with high-rise buildings.)
- Provide residents and staff with experience in exiting through all designated exits. During a fire drill residents may be instructed to open designated fire escape windows and signal for help. Residents should not attempt to exit from windows.
- Be documented.
- Identify residents failing to exit the residence within the required time.

Are there any pre-fire drill activities that help make a fire drill successful?

Yes, there are some basic pre-fire drill activities to ensure staff and residents are prepared for a fire drill. They include:

- Staff and residents being familiar with the home and knowing the location of exits and the meeting place.
- Training staff on how to conduct a fire drill, including observation of fire drills at the home.
- Instructing residents what they need to do during an emergency evacuation. (e.g. do not grab coats or personal items, close bedroom doors)
- Staff knowing specific resident needs.



What steps should be followed to conduct a successful fire drill?

- Fire drills should be scheduled in advance to ensure that all staff on all shifts have an opportunity to participate in a fire drill. This is important to make sure the requirement for monthly fire drills occurring at various times of the day and night is met.
- For most fire drills staff can inform the residents that there will be a fire drill sometime later that day or night. However, during the year there should be fire drills scheduled that are not announced.
- Staff need to follow directions for contacting fire department and/or alarm company to give them advance notice that a fire drill will take place at the home.
- Staff need to plan in advance if they are going to block an exit route. Resident's should not be informed if an exit will be blocked. It should be clear to the residents when an exit is blocked and cannot be used (cardboard fire, stairway roped off).
- The fire alarm system should be sounded to begin each fire drill. It is important for residents to know the sound of the fire alarm.
- Staff need to treat all fire drills as a real fire emergency. This helps residents learn that they must exit the home whenever the alarm goes off.
- If a fire drill is conducted with 2 or more staff, one staff person should be designated to time the fire drill. Remember: They should note the time when the alarm goes off and ends when all residents reach the meeting place.
- Staff need to record the results of the fire drill right after the drill has been completed. This is important because this information needs to be accurate as it will be used to determine if any issues need to be addressed.
- Staff should meet with residents after the fire drill to review results. The goal is to help individual's understand what went right and what went wrong. This meeting should be a positive interaction and be used as an opportunity to improve fire drill skills.
- Supervisory staff need to review the fire drill results to see if any follow-up is required.

Note: It is recommended that, at least annually, the local fire department be invited to observe a fire drill at the home.

What needs to be evaluated to determine the results of a fire drill?

There are three components that should be reviewed:

- **Length of time to evacuate the home.** If time is within the acceptable range there is nothing further to do. If not, staff need to analyze where the delays occurred and if these delays can be prevented in future drills. For example: ensure staff check recreation room or teach resident's not to grab possessions.
- **Performance of specific individuals.** Comments on the fire drill report should note if any particular residents had difficulty getting out of the home. If so, staff need to determine if this issue was likely a one-time occurrence or could be reoccurring. Also, staff need to determine what is needed to correct or improve individual's performance. For example: moving resident to a 1st floor bedroom or installing an alarm in a bedroom.
- **Concerns regarding the environment or fire alarm system.** Any concerns noted should be reviewed to determine what correction is needed and what needs to be done to prevent a reoccurrence. For example: fire alarm was not heard on the 2nd floor or a box of garbage was blocking the back door.

Note: Some concerns identified during a fire drill may require changes in the home's evacuation plan.



TEMPLATE

Fire Drill Report

Name/Address of Community Residence:

Date of fire drill: ____/____/____ Time of drill: _____ a.m. p.m.

Fire Drill was:

Announced Unannounced- planned Unannounced- unplanned (e.g.: false alarm)

Drill participants:

Residents (first name only)

Staff (full name)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Total time to evacuate the residence: _____ minutes _____ seconds

Were any residents not home during the fire drill? Yes No

If yes, please list name(s):

Was an exit route blocked? Yes No

If yes, identify blocked exit:

Was a simulated fire used? Yes No

If yes, identify location of simulated fire:

Was fire alarm used and did it work correctly? Yes No

If no, identify the method used to alert residents and/or explain any problem noted with fire alarm system: _____

Name of resident(s) not exiting in 3 minutes:

Fire drill comments or problems: (use additional pages as needed)

Did local fire department observe fire drill? Yes No

If yes, did they provide feedback? Yes No

House Manager Signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Template: Fire Drill Report (Continued)

Supervisory Review

Fire Drill Date: ____/____/____

Reviewed by (supervisor's name): _____

Title: _____ Date reviewed: ____/____/____

- My review indicates that there were no major issues noted during this fire drill.
- My review indicates there were areas of concern as described below:

Concerns/problems:

Corrective action to be taken:

Residents to be retested within 14 days of original fire drill date:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

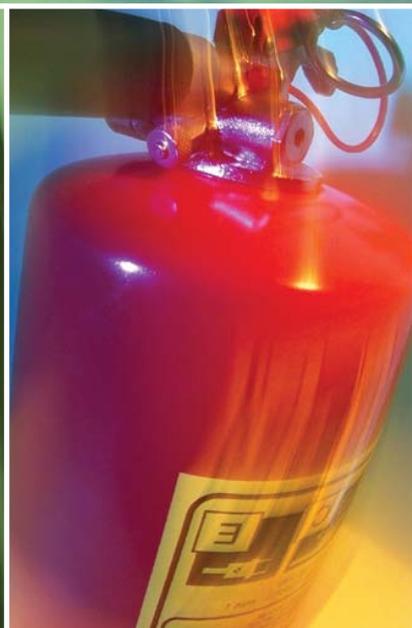
Supervisor's Signature: _____

cc: House Manager
Director of physical plant
House File

**A complete copy of the Fire Drill Report Template is located at:
www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/firesafety/**



**Additional copies of this brochure are located at:
www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/firesafety/**



Developed by the NYS Office of Mental Health
Available online at www.omh.ny.gov