

**Guide on the duty to notify in
accordance with section 42 of the
rescue act 379/2011 for workers in the
social- and health sector**

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Introduction

This guide is intended for people who carry out home visits to help them observe and identify fire and accident risks in the apartments. The pictures show examples of fire risk areas. The guide also provides guidance on making a notification to the rescue service in accordance with section 42 of the rescue act 379/2011. The employee has a legislative obligation to notify the rescue services if they detect an obvious fire hazard or other accident risk that cannot be removed during the visit.

At the same time, the guide explains what to do to reduce the risks as one's own actions and to whom the notification must be made if resolving the identified risk factor is not a part of the rescue service's duties. If you can remove the risk factor by guiding and instructing the customer or through your own actions, do that first and then think about whether a separate notification still needs to be made and to whom it should be made.

The guide has compiled the ten most typical reasons for fire and accident risk notifications and instructions for identifying them. The information on the reasons for the notifications was collected from two rescue services for the five-year period 2018–2022. There were a total of 1686 reports.

1. AMOUNT OF GOODS

- a. There are so many items next to the walls of the apartment that there is only a small path left to walk along.
- b. There is a lot of items in the apartment that catches fire or burns easily.

In picture 5 and onward of the image series below, make a notification to the rescue services.

Clutter Image Rating: Living Room

Please select the photo below that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in your room.



Image source: Pelastustoimi.fi

- Guide and instruct the resident or relatives to remove the extra items and arrange sufficient, safe exit ways to the space.
- Assist them in removing the items yourself according to the circumstances.

2. EVACUATION SAFETY

- a. The large amount of goods in the apartment prevents a safe evacuation.
- b. Doors and escape routes do not open from the inside without a key or tools.
- c. The apartment has only one functional escape route.
- d. The resident gets locked inside the apartment.



- Guide and instruct the resident or relatives to reduce the amount of goods, so that the access routes are unobstructed.
- Instruct them to install any missing fixed handles on the windows and to ensure the opening and usability of the escape routes.
- **REMEMBER!** Residents must not be locked inside so that they cannot safely leave the apartment in the event of a fire, even if they are at risk of getting lost outside.
- Do not cause danger by your own actions by gathering items in front of emergency escape routes or exits.
- If the resident does not know how or is unable to leave their apartment, a safer housing option should be sought for them through an assessment of service needs. You should also request an assessment of service needs when the EVAC trigger alarms in the RAI assessment.

3. STOVE SAFETY (stove refers to all stoves, hotplates and ovens)

- a. There are burnt cookware or dishes on the stove.
- b. There is flammable material on and around the stove.
- c. Items other than the oven's own trays are stored in the oven.
- d. The stove is forgotten on or gets turned on while empty.



- Guide and instruct the resident or relatives in the safe use of the stove. Recommend stove safety equipment to them. With safety devices one can for e.g. prevent the stove from heating up for too long and getting turned on accidentally.
- Instruct them to clean or replace the cooker hood filter regularly when it has collected a lot of grease. Instruct the resident to wash the filter either in the dishwasher or by soaking it in water with dishwashing liquid in the sink.
- If necessary, switch off the stove by removing the fuses or switching them to the OFF position.

NOTE! The dirtiness of the stove is not a reason for making a notification.

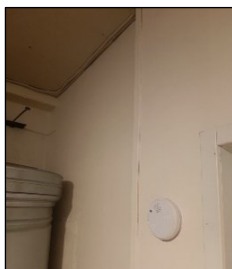
- 4. FIRE HANDLING** (fireplaces refer to different fireplaces and wood-burning stoves and ovens)
- a. The resident closes the dampers of the fireplaces too early before the fire chamber is completely dark.
 - i. The carbon monoxide alarm warns of carbon monoxide gas accumulating inside.
 - b. The resident burns too big wood in the fireplaces so that the doors of the fireplace do not close.
 - c. There is flammable material or items in front of the fireplaces.
 - d. Yearly sweeping of the fireplace has not been done and the fireplaces are being used.
 - e. The resident burns candles unsupervised or on flammable surfaces.
 - f. The resident burns large amounts of candles at the same time.



- Guide and instruct the resident or relatives in safe fire handling or agree with the relatives to remove fire-making equipment and candles.
- Advise the relatives to make or have a hole made in the dampers for carbon monoxide gas, if possible, and to replace the candles with LED candles.
- If the resident has a safety bracelet, switching it to a model with a carbon monoxide alarm can improve the resident's safety.
- As your own action, move the items near the fireplaces to a safer place if possible.
- Ensure that the dampers are closed at the right time.

5. SMOKE DETECTORS

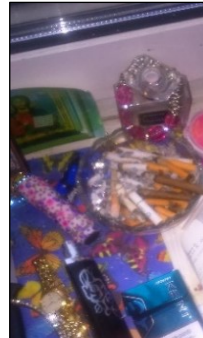
- a. The battery of the smoke detector does not work, and the test sound is not heard when the test button is pressed.
- b. The smoke detector is at the border between the wall and the ceiling, on the wall or on top of furniture.
- c. The smoke detector is old or broken (the lifespan of the smoke detector is 5–10 years, the lifespan and the date of manufacture are marked on the device).
- d. The resident cannot hear or understand the test sound.



- Guide and instruct the resident or relatives on renewing smoke detectors and in installing them in the correct places, if necessary.
- Check the operation of the smoke detector by pressing the test button. You can use, for example, the handle of a mop or a shoe spoon as an aid.
- The smoke detector must be attached to the ceiling, half a meter from walls or other obstacles affecting the flow of smoke.
- An outdated smoke detector or a malfunctioning battery must be replaced.
- The housing company must take care of the batteries of electric smoke detectors and the replacement of their batteries.
- Separate battery cases are available for smoke detectors, which allow the battery to be attached down on the wall where it can be easily replaced.
- Separate smoke detectors have been developed for the hearing impaired, where in addition to the sound of the smoke detector, the alarm is signalled by light or vibration. If the resident's hearing loss is sufficient enough, they have the option of purchasing a hearing-impaired smoke detector system from the disability services based on the hearing nurse's statement.
- If the resident does not understand or is unable to leave when hearing the test sound, another type of living environment could be safer for them. For example, a more aided form of living with an automatic smoke detector and sprinkler system.

6. SMOKING INSIDE

- a. The resident smokes inside while lying on a bed or couch.
- b. The resident smokes inside while sitting on a padded chair.



- Guide and instruct the resident to smoke outside in a designated smoking area.
- If the resident is not willing or is unable to smoke outside, recommend using fire-resistant textiles (smoking apron), sheets and pillowcases.
- The ashtray must be non-flammable and preferably closable. There cannot be any flammable items near it.
- A fire blanket spread over a chair or bed that serves as a smoking area can prevent a fire starting from cigarette ashes or cigarette butts.

7. BURN MARKS

- a. There are burn marks on the floor, furniture or textiles in the apartment.



- Guide and instruct the resident or relatives to remove things that cause fire marks. Help the resident and relatives in doing so.

8. ELECTRIC SAUNA

- a. Items are stored in the electric sauna.



- Guide and instruct the resident or relatives to remove the items from the sauna. If they cannot be removed, the fuses of the sauna's stove must be removed or switched to the OFF position, or an electrician must be called to disconnect the stove from the electrical network.
- Do not put caretaking supplies or laundry in the electric sauna. If that is the only place to store them, remove or switch the fuses in the sauna to the OFF position.

9. ELECTRIC AND GAS APPLIANCES

- a. The resident uses broken electrical equipment, where, for example, the wires or power switches are broken.
- b. Electrical devices are used incorrectly, for example an electric oven or stove is used to heat the apartment.
- c. There are suspicious electrical connections in the apartment, such as multiple extension cords connected together, hanging electrical cords, or missing socket covers.
- d. Rechargeable devices are charged unsupervised or with broken chargers.
- e. There is flammable material near devices that heat up.
- f. The gas pipes and connectors of the gas appliances are broken. Gas appliances are used incorrectly or are used unsupervised. The gas bottles are broken and out of shape.



- Guide and instruct the resident or relatives in the safe use of electrical devices.
- Extension cords must be connected directly to the wall socket, not to another extension cord or splitter.
- Broken electrical devices are taken out of use.
- The right devices for heating are used, they are not covered, and sufficient safety distances are taken care of.
- If gas appliances are used in the apartment, there should be a carbon monoxide alarm.
- Instruct the relatives to check that the gas pipes and connectors of gas appliances are intact.
- See that gas appliances are used correctly and under supervised conditions, and that the gas bottles are intact and have retained their shape. Malfunctioning equipment and defective bottles should be removed.
- Guide and instruct the resident or relatives to charge the different rechargeable devices according to the instructions with suitable, intact chargers, supervised, on a non-flammable surface.
- Remove textiles from on top and near devices that heat up.
- Do the actions that you can during your visit.

10. ADDRESS MARKINGS AND EMERGENCY ACCESS ROADS

- a. The house number is not clearly visible to the road.
- b. The stairwell number/letter is not clearly visible when approaching it.
- c. Emergency access roads are unusable or serve as a parking lot.



- Notify the property manager or apartment owner of incomplete address markings. If the repair does not happen, contact the rescue services.

Making a notification

The notification is recommended to be made through the national form:

Through the nationwide notification channel <https://pelastustoimi.fi/en/online-services/notifications/notification-of-an-obvious-fire-or-accident-risk>

If something is unclear while making the notification, you can also call the fire inspector on duty in your area or visit the local rescue service.

Disclose the author of the notification, contact information of the notifier; telephone or e-mail and the time when the notifier can be contacted.

In the notification the reason for the notification is stated, the object is described and possible attachments, for example, pictures of the object are included. The address or name information of the subject of the notification is not provided via the national form, but will be asked for later. This is why it is important to include your contact information and the time when you are available.

If the apartment is dirty, has odour nuisance or vermin, a notification is made to the environmental health authorities of the wellbeing services county.

If there are animals in the apartment whose well-being you are concerned about, contact the veterinary inspector.

If you are concerned about the resident's ability to cope or their well-being, submit a notification of concern with the wellbeing services county's social services.

If you are troubled by the condition of the building, contact the local building control.

If there are children living in the apartment whose treatment or conditions cause concern, file a child welfare notification.

Notifications can be made anonymously, but in order to increase the credibility of the notifications, they should always be made under one's own name whenever possible.

INSPECTION OBJECT	YES	FIXED	NOTIFIED
There is plenty of items in the apartment, see image series (from picture 5 and onwards a notification needs to be made).			
It is difficult to move around in the apartment.			
The apartment has only one escape route.			
The doors or escape routes do not open without keys or tools or cannot be accessed.			
The resident gets locked inside.			
The stove is forgotten on or gets accidentally turned on.			
Items are stored on the stove or in the oven.			
There are burnt cookware or dishes on the stove.			
A lot of candles are burned at a time, the burning tray is not fireproof, or the burning of the candles is not supervised.			
Trash or wood that is too big are burned in the fireplaces.			
The fireplaces are broken or the protective dampers in front of them are missing.			
The dampers of the fireplaces are closed too early.			
There are items in front of the fireplaces or in areas that get very hot.			
The smoke detector is missing, does not work or is old.			
The resident cannot hear or understand the sound of the smoke detector.			
The resident smokes inside on a couch, bed or padded chair.			
The apartment has burn marks on textiles such as clothes.			
The apartment has burn marks on hard surfaces such as the floors.			
Items are kept in the electric sauna while the stove is in working order.			
The apartment has suspicious electrical or gas connections.			
Electrical devices are used incorrectly.			
The electrical devices are broken.			
Gas appliances are broken or are used incorrectly.			
The address markings are incomplete.			
The emergency access road is blocked.			



Fire safety

Fire and accident risk apartment notifications via the national notification channel
<https://pelastustoimi.fi/en/online-services/notifications/notification-of-an-obvious-fire-or-accident-risk>

or alternatively

Päijät-Häme rescue services, fire and accident risks

Mannerheiminkatu 24, 15100 LAHTI

Fire inspector on duty 0440–773 222, palotarkastaja@paijatha.fi

Personnel: firstname.lastname@paijatha.fi

Housing health, vermin and health hazards of apartments

Health protection engineers

Hollola, Kärkölä, Orimattila and Iitti

Mira Ikonen + 358 44 480 1163

Asikkala, Hartola, Heinola, Padasjoki and Sysmä

Jari Ahonen + 358 44 480 1135

Lahti

03 733 4577, terveydensuojelu@lahti.fi

Animal welfare, maltreatment of production animals and pets

Veterinary inspectors e-mail is elainsuojelu@hollola.fi

veterinary inspector + 358 44 480 1184

in Lahti elainlaakari@lahti.fi, or office hours + 358 44 416 4598 or + 358 44 482 6974

Building control, poor condition of buildings, amount of goods in yard areas

Asikkala ja Padasjoki henri.vidgren@asikkala.fi

Heinola ja Hartola rakennusvalvonta@heinola.fi

Lahti asiakaspalvelu.rakennusvalvonta@lahti.fi

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Iitti petri.miettinen@iitti.fi

Kärkölä olli.vilen@karkola.fi

Sysmä tapio.tonteri@sysma.fi

Notification of concern for the elderly and child welfare notification

Notifications of concern and child welfare notifications are made by phone or electronically through:

<https://www.hyvis.fi/web/paijat-hame/asioi-sosiaalipalveluissa>

(notification of the need for social care is at the bottom of the page)