

## A Duty Holder's Guide to Fire Safety (RRO 2005)

What the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires of the responsible person, in plain English.

### What it is

The Fire Safety Order is the main fire safety law for non-domestic premises in England and Wales, including workplaces, common areas of flats, and most buildings the public can access. It is built around a fire risk assessment and keeping fire precautions in good order.

### Who the duty holder is

The duty falls on the "responsible person", usually the employer, owner or whoever is in control of the premises. Where more than one person has control, they must cooperate and coordinate.

### What it requires of you

- Carry out a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment, and keep it up to date, recording the findings.
- Put in place and maintain appropriate fire precautions: detection and alarm, extinguishers, emergency lighting, signage and fire doors.
- Plan for an emergency, including means of escape and clear evacuation procedures.
- Provide staff with fire safety information, instruction and training.
- Appoint competent people to help meet the duties, and review the assessment whenever things change.

### How often

Fire risk assessment	Reviewed regularly and whenever the premises, use or risks change
Fire alarm system	Tested weekly, serviced periodically (typically quarterly and annually)
Emergency lighting	Monthly function test, annual full-duration test
Fire doors and extinguishers	Doors checked at least every 6 months; extinguishers serviced annually

### What happens if you don't

Fire safety is enforced by the local fire and rescue authority. Failures can lead to enforcement and prohibition notices, prosecution and unlimited fines, and in the most serious cases imprisonment.

Sources: [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)

This guide is general guidance, not legal advice, and is a summary only. Duties and intervals can change and depend on your circumstances. Always check the current regulation and take competent-person advice. Last reviewed June 2026.