

Events



Many organisations hold concerts and public performances, as well as a diverse range of fund-raising events (including fêtes, firework displays, charity walks etc.).

Most of the time, such activities represent little or no additional risk. However, larger events or unusual fund-raising activities can present more significant ones. These will need to be properly managed to ensure people remain safe. This may involve detailed planning before the event starts and monitoring some of the precautions that have been put in place during it.

Because of the diverse nature of the events that can be held, this information is only intended to provide some insight into the types of things that might need to be considered. It also sets out a general approach that could be adopted. You may need to look at more detailed guidance provided by others, depending on the nature of the event you intend to hold. We have signposted some additional resources that may be of use to you below.

Obviously, any action you take needs to be proportionate. This will reflect the size and nature of the event; the size and location of your premises or other venue; the numbers of employees and volunteers who will be involved; the number of visitors you expect to attend; and the nature of the activities involved in the event itself.

Legal requirements

If you are an employer hosting an event, you must comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations. Other, more specific health and safety regulations may also be relevant depending upon the nature of the event you intend to hold.

Generally, you will need to ensure that the event is properly managed so that people remain safe. You may need to:

- complete risk assessments to identify the precautions you need to take
- implement those precautions, providing information and training for any employees and volunteers on what they need to do
- document your arrangements and responsibilities for hosting events, perhaps as part of your health and safety policy
- keep records of what you have done.

Even if you are not an employer, you may still have to comply with certain aspects of the Act or with other related law. For example, if you control non-domestic premises. Here, you may need to make sure that premises are safe during any event. Beyond this, you also need to meet your common-law duty of care, ensuring that any event does not cause injury to another because you have acted negligently.

Moving away from health and safety, some events may require a license from your local authority. Further advice and guidance is available from:

- your local council - www.gov.uk/apply-hold-street-party
- the Department of Culture, Media and Sport - www.gov.uk/guidance/entertainment-licensing-changes-under-the-live-music-act
- the Scottish Government - www.gov.scot/Topics/Justice

Hazards to look out for

Here are just some of the hazards you may need to consider:

- large or unsupervised crowds
- unsafe pedestrian or vehicular access to the event site or building
- the provision or sale of alcohol
- attractions including bouncy castles or fairground rides
- hazardous materials or equipment
- fire, bonfires and fireworks
- car parking facilities
- the preparation and sale of food
- security and cash handling
- temporary demountable structures (e.g. stages, seating, tents, marquees)
- temporary gas appliances
- manual handling
- electrical installations and portable electrical appliances
- animals and animal exhibitions (e.g. donkey or pony rides; pet shows, obedience trials)*.

*This list is not exhaustive



Making a start

ACTION	GUIDANCE
<p>1. Consider the viability of hosting the event you want to hold, given the venue, resources and expertise available to you.</p> <p>Plan the event, completing any necessary risk assessments if you are required to do so.</p> <p>If the scale and nature of the event warrants it, prepare a specific event safety plan.</p>	<p>To do this, you will need to think about the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ scale, type and scope of the event■ type and size of the crowd or audience you expect to attend■ numbers of employees, volunteers and others (e.g. contractors) who will be involved in it■ characteristics of the event location (e.g. size, terrain etc.)■ duration of the event■ time of day and year it will be held■ type of activities or equipment involved in the event itself. <p>Having done this, you may then want to decide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ if you have enough knowledge about health and safety to organise the event properly yourself. Usually, this will be the case for smaller events involving normal activities. However, for some much larger or complex ones, you may want to seek further advice■ who will have overall responsibility for health and safety during the event, making sure that everyone is clear on this■ if the venue is suitable e.g. considering its size; numbers of entrances/exits; safety signage; fire precautions; safe access and egress; car parking facilities; other traffic implications; the need to comply with the terms of any lease, tenancy or similar agreement and so on■ what event activities or equipment could present additional or unusual hazards (e.g. bouncy castles, fireworks, fairground rides etc.)■ if there are any specific precautions required where people are setting up or breaking down the event■ if you need to complete risk assessments and prepare a safety plan, identifying what health and safety procedures, arrangements and checks will be required■ if you need to liaise with other agencies (e.g. venue owner/ management, the Police, emergency services or Local Authority)■ if you need to obtain a license to run the event■ if you will need to use contractors and how you will determine if they are suitable/competent and have adequate insurance cover■ what welfare facilities will need to be provided (e.g. toilets)■ what emergency arrangements will be required (e.g. in the event of an accident, fire or other emergency requiring and evacuation of the site or building). <p>Considering these points will help you identify what resources, precautions, arrangements and facilities will be required for the event. If you are an employer, you must complete appropriate risk assessments. These will also help you with this.</p> <p>You can then translate this information into an event safety plan if you need one.</p>

ACTION	GUIDANCE
<p>2. Check that your insurance cover and that of others is adequate for the event.</p>	<p>If you are planning any unusual or hazardous events, you should check to confirm adequate cover is in place.</p> <p>Where specific activities at your event are to be managed and under the control of another person or organisation, you should check that they have adequate Public Liability cover.</p> <p>Where the activities are of a hazardous nature, it is also essential that you check the competency of the third party provider.</p>
<p>3. Check other contract arrangements.</p>	<p>You should carefully check any contractual agreements before entering into them. These could be with attraction providers or relate to the hiring of premises or equipment.</p> <p>Some contracts may attempt to make you responsible for any damage or injury, regardless of how this was caused. Where this is the case, these should be challenged. If, for example, whilst you are using premises belonging to others, a fire occurs, perhaps because of faulty wiring, there is no reason why you should be made responsible for the cost of repairing the building or for injuries to others. The organisation's own property and liability insurances should apply. We advise you not to sign such documents. When challenged, many organisations are willing to amend terms.</p> <p>You should seek legal advice if you are in any doubt about your contractual obligations.</p>
<p>4. Plan for incidents and emergencies, so that you can respond promptly and appropriately.</p>	<p>You must have plans in place to respond effectively to any incident or emergency that might occur at an event. This will reflect the level of risk presented by it and the people attending.</p> <p>Most events are modest affairs with few risks, in static venues with established procedures in place. Here, the normal arrangements for dealing with incidents and emergencies may be adequate. For larger or unusual events though, you may need additional arrangements and resources. You may have to develop an emergency plan if the event is very large, discussing this with the emergency services where appropriate.</p> <p>Normally, you will need to include contingencies to deal with a fire; an accident; a security alert; adverse weather; or the unavailability of key event staff.</p> <p>You will need arrangements for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ raising the alarm ■ a safe evacuation of the premises ■ contacting the emergency services for assistance ■ providing medical treatment and first-aid ■ providing training for staff and volunteers so that they know what to do.

ACTION	GUIDANCE
<p>5. Implement your arrangements to ensure the event runs safely.</p>	<p>Depending on the nature of the event being held, you may need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ check that all necessary precautions and arrangements are in place ■ ensure that all welfare and emergency facilities are in place ■ ensure co-operation and proper co-ordination between various parties (e.g. contractors) ■ provide your staff, volunteers and others with relevant health and safety information ■ provide specific training for staff and volunteers. <p>It is a good idea to review how things went after the event has finished. This will help you identify if any improvements can be made for future events.</p>
<p>6. Document your arrangements and responsibilities for managing health and safety at events.</p> <p>Review these where necessary, particularly if you suspect that they are no longer valid.</p>	<p>If you need to prepare a health and safety policy, you could record your arrangements as part of it.</p> <p>In the event of a claim, paperwork will be important. So, where events are held, you should retain appropriate records. This could include any records of accidents or their investigation; risk assessments, event safety plans; training records etc.).</p>

Want to know more?

Other useful health and safety information is available on our [website](#).

Further guidance and resources are also available at: www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety/ and from RoSPA at: <http://www.rospace.com/>.

Helpful guidance aimed at volunteers organising community events is provided by the Cabinet Office in their 'Can Do' Guide. This is available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/can-do-guide-for-organisers-of-voluntary-events/the-can-do-guide-to-organising-and-running-voluntary-and-community-events.

Note: if you are in Ireland, Northern Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man, then regional variations might apply. In this instance, you should check the guidance provided by the Enforcing Agency for your region. This will be freely available on their website.

Need to contact us?

If you are an Ecclesiastical customer and would like to speak to someone about health and safety, either call us on **0345 600 7531** (Monday to Friday, 09.00 to 17.00, excluding Bank Holidays) or e-mail us at risk.advice@ecclesiastical.com and one of our experts will call you back within 24 hours.

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