

# Starting a new business

BUSINESS SAFETY

9



Have you included fire safety in financial plans for your business?



**Kent** Fire &  
Rescue Service

**You may think that the cost of these measures is off-putting, but compared to the cost of shutting your business down, even temporarily, it makes sense to be prepared.**

## **Do you know what legislation requires you to do?**

If you're becoming a business owner or have control over a business then you are probably regarded as a **responsible person**.

Under the **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005** the responsible person: "Has a duty to provide and maintain suitable and sufficient fire precautions and comply with the Fire Safety Order".

Every business must carry out a **Fire Risk Assessment** to ensure there are suitable and sufficient fire safety precautions in place.

## **What is a fire risk assessment?**

It is a thorough look at your premises and the people who are likely to use them. It considers the risk of fire breaking out and what measures you need to put in place to prevent it and keep people safe.

In the UK during 2013-2014 there were:

- over 22,000 fires in non-domestic buildings
- 17 people killed and over 1,000 people injured

20 per cent of all businesses will suffer a major disruption, and 80 per cent of these businesses will fail after a major incident (Government statistics).

## **Don't become a statistic, talk to the Business Engagement Team**

Contact us for more information and guidance to help keep your business safe. With our advice, you can manage risks to help your business thrive and survive.

## Why should you include Fire Safety in your financial planning?

Once you are aware of your responsibilities under the Fire Safety Order it will help you when looking for premises.

- Check the lease or tenancy agreement – what are you responsible for?
- Is everything suitable for the type of business you are starting or will you have to change or add anything? How will this impact on budgeting?
- Make sure you understand the maintenance regimes – how often and by who?

You can do your research into the initial and ongoing costs and include it in your budget.

Your insurance provider will need to know that you have fulfilled your legal requirements. If you have not then your policy may be rendered invalid if you have to make a claim.

## What could happen if you do not comply?

You are committing an offence and you could be putting people's lives at risk. We may inspect your premises as part of our responsibility to enforce the law. A customer or someone working for you may report you to us if they feel at risk. This could result in:

- Enforcement
- Legal fees/ fines
- Loss of business
- Imprisonment
- Loss of life



## Complete your fire risk assessment

### STEP 1

Identify fire hazards

### STEP 2

Identify people at risk

### STEP 3

Evaluate, remove or reduce and protect from risk

### STEP 4

Record, plan, inform, instruct and train

### STEP 5

Review your fire risk assessment regularly

## Further information

For free practical business safety advice or information visit **Your safety > Business safety** on our website at [www.kent.fire-uk.org](http://www.kent.fire-uk.org) or contact the Business Engagement Team. Our fire safety offices are open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday and an answer phone is in place for out of hours messages.

### **Business Engagement Team**

For free, friendly advice on making your business compliant with fire safety regulations.

Email [bet@kent.fire-uk.org](mailto:bet@kent.fire-uk.org)

### **North Kent Fire Safety Office**

2 St Michaels Road,  
Sittingbourne ME10 3DN

Phone 01622 212 413

Email [tfs.northgroup@kent.fire-uk.org](mailto:tfs.northgroup@kent.fire-uk.org)

### **Mid Kent Fire Safety Office**

Maidstone Fire Station, Loose Road,  
Maidstone ME15 9QB

Phone 01622 212 430

Email [tfs.midgroup@kent.fire-uk.org](mailto:tfs.midgroup@kent.fire-uk.org)

### **West Kent Fire Safety Office**

Dartford Fire Station, Watling Street,  
Dartford DA2 6EG

Phone 01622 212 427

Email [tfs.westgroup@kent.fire-uk.org](mailto:tfs.westgroup@kent.fire-uk.org)

### **South Kent Fire Safety Office**

Folkestone Fire Station,  
Park Farm Road, Folkestone CT19 5LT

Phone 01622 212 474

Email [tfs.southgroup@kent.fire-uk.org](mailto:tfs.southgroup@kent.fire-uk.org)

### **East Kent Fire Safety Office**

Canterbury Fire Station,  
Upper Bridge Street,  
Canterbury CT1 2NH

Phone 01622 212 451

Email [tfs.eastgroup@kent.fire-uk.org](mailto:tfs.eastgroup@kent.fire-uk.org)

If you would like this information in another format or language, please ask for your local **Fire Safety Office** on **01622 692 121** or email [bet@kent.fire-uk.org](mailto:bet@kent.fire-uk.org)