

# WEDDING, CONFERENCE AND HOSPITALITY VENUES

Conversion of old rural buildings can provide a desirable and often remote location for events such as weddings and conference facilities. By inviting people to the site, you have a duty to ensure that any members of the public are in a safe environment as well as any people who may be working at the venue.

## FIRE SAFETY

You must carry out a fire risk assessment. It is important that this is thorough and detailed as there may be large amounts of people congregating in one place. You should systematically identify all sources of ignition, fuel / combustible material and oxygen as part of this process and where possible separate these or put suitable controls in place to reduce the possibility of a fire occurring.

As well as preventing a fire, it is important that you have measures in place to identify a fire should one occur and that people on site can get away quickly and safely. The following should form part of the fire safety measures in place at the venue:

- An installed automatic fire detection system and associated alarms
- Manual call points for occupants to raise the alarm
- Fully maintained and appropriate fire extinguishers at suitable locations
- Clear exits to provide access to a place of safety
- Signage to guide occupants towards a safe exit route from the site.

Other measures including emergency and escape lighting as well as an ongoing maintenance plan for all installed equipment.

## ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Maintenance of electrical systems is important as a control in managing fire risks but also as part of general safety on site and occupants are likely to be using electrical equipment such as computers, overhead projectors, microphones and amplifiers.

All electrical work should be carried out by a competent electrician, ideally one which has some form of trade association (NICEIC, ECA etc.). Maintenance of the electrical installation should be carried out frequently as recommended by your electrician, however, a full condition report is likely to be required every 3 - 5 years.

## VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION

Any employee working on site should be trained in how to deal with violence and aggression. The likelihood of people showing signs of violence and aggression at most types of venue are unlikely although may be higher where alcohol is served. However at any venue, complaints such as double booking, can result in situations escalating.

## OTHER SAFETY ISSUES

The types of risks present in a venue will depend on the types of events held.

- Cellar safety - the handling of cellar gases and management of cellars requires training. Risks can include explosion, fire, release of hazardous gases and consumption of chemicals (from the cleaning of beer lines)
- Noise - where the venue has live entertainment, staff noise exposure needs to be considered and assessed to determine if exposure is at a level which legally requires you to take action
- Slips and trips - this risk must be assessed in all venues however the risks may be greater within venues where lighting levels are reduced and where people are handling drinks.



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## FOOD PREPARATION

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All food businesses must produce a food safety management plan. To help small catering establishments comply with the Hygiene Regulations, the Food Standards Agency have developed a food safety management pack called 'Safer Food Better Business'. For further information please click on the Food Standards Agency link in the useful links section below.

If you supply food as part of the hire of the venue, you must make sure that the facilities available are suitable and that it is prepared by people who have been trained in safe food handling. Facilities should include:

- Sufficient refrigeration to store the amount of high risk food handled without cross contamination
- Preparation surfaces and structures which are capable of being effectively cleaned
- Facilities for effective hand washing
- Facilities separate from food storage areas for the storage of cleaning chemicals
- Equipment which is in good condition and can effectively be cleaned

### Food handlers should:

- Be effectively trained and supervised according to their responsibilities and understand the food safety risks
- Wear clean clothing, and remove any jewellery
- Wash hands before food preparation, after handling raw meat or eggs, and pets, and after going to the toilet etc.
- Not carry out any food preparation activities when suffering from sickness and / or diarrhoea, including the 48 hours after the last bout of symptoms.

Effective cleaning must be carried out, and it is recommended that a suitable disinfectant / sanitiser is available for use.

## USEFUL LINKS

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HSE – Safety in Entertainment:  
[www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment](http://www.hse.gov.uk/entertainment)

Food Standards Agency:  
[www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk)

### The Next Step

The information provided in this guidance is a brief overview of a diverse work activity. This activity may require further assessment and consultancy work completing to ensure statutory compliance.

NFU Mutual Risk Management Services (RMS) can provide additional support in this area using one of its specialist in-house consultants who are based around the UK.

Please contact RMS on **0800 132 029**, where we can discuss your requirements further.

Alternatively please contact your local NFU Mutual office to discuss any requirements or visit the NFU Mutual website to view our RMS services [www.nfumutual.co.uk](http://www.nfumutual.co.uk)



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