



Fire Manual

Keeping you safe in case of fire emergencies.

Providing practical guidance on fire prevention, evacuation, and emergency procedures tailored to the needs of people with disability in SDA Living Australia properties.

SDA Living Australia residents have varying levels of disability, some of whom may have mobility, sensory, cognitive or communication impairments and complex behaviours. Fire safety protocols must be tailored to meet their specific needs while complying with relevant fire safety standards, building codes, and disability support guidelines. This Fire Safety Manual is designed to ensure the safety and well-being of residents, staff, and visitors in SDA Living Australia properties.

> General Fire Safety Principles

General Fire Safety Principles in SDA Living Australia properties must be prioritised to reduce risks and ensure the protection of all residents and staff. The primary principles of fire safety include:

- **Prevention:** Eliminate fire hazards and reduce the likelihood of fire starting.
- **Protection:** Implement systems and procedures to protect people and property in case of fire.
- **Response:** Ensure quick and effective action during a fire event.
- **Escape:** Provide safe and efficient evacuation routes and procedures for all staff and residents, including those with complex disabilities.

> Roles and Responsibilities

Clear roles and responsibilities are essential to ensure fire safety within a SDA Living Australia property. These roles include:

SDA Living Australia

- Oversee all fire safety protocols, ensuring they are up-to-date and in line with current legislation.
- Manage fire safety equipment, including maintenance and inspections.
- We provide a list of dwelling safety features and a copy of fire evacuation plans at the commencement of each tenancy.
- Seek annual attestation from Support Providers that confirms that the following have been completed and documented:
 - Weekly Fire Safety Checklists.
 - Regular fire drills conducted and documented.
 - Fire Evacuation backpack has been checked and is up to date.

Support Provider

- Familiarise themselves with the property's dwelling safety features and fire evacuation plans provided by SDA Living Australia.
- Assist residents during an event of a fire.
- Develop in conjunction with the resident a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan.
- Ensure all their staff are fully trained in fire safety.
- Fire Evacuation backpack has been checked and has up to date information and all items are in good working order.
- Regular fire evacuation drills are expected as part of emergency preparedness.
- Ensure documentation of drills in line with emergency and disaster management requirements.
- Respond promptly and appropriately to fire alarms and emergencies.
- Conduct weekly fire safety checks and report any potential fire hazards or concerns to SDA Living Australia.
- Arrange for the provision of an annual PEEP and provide a copy to SDA Living Australia.

Residents

- Participate in the development of their own Personal Emergency Evacuations Plans.
- Familiarise themselves with dwelling safety features and fire evacuation plans.

> Fire Prevention and Hazard Reduction Tips

Preventing fires and reducing hazards is crucial in ensuring the safety of residents in SDA Living Australia properties. General measures should include:

- Regular inspections and maintenance of electrical equipment.
- Conduct fire risk assessments of the property to identify potential hazards, including faulty wiring, flammable materials or blocked escape routes.
- Ensure electrical systems and appliances are properly maintained and inspected regularly including annual Test and Tag. Avoid overloading power outlets or using faulty wiring.
- Safe storage of flammable materials away from heat sources.
- Clear access to exits and fire fighting equipment and ensure they are free of obstructions. Ensure emergency evacuation diagrams are displayed clearly outlining correct emergency exits and evacuation points.
- Smoking policy is included in house rules ensuring smokers only use outdoor areas away from the building.
- Regular housekeeping to reduce fire risks.
- Ensure the fire evacuation backpack has up to date information on residents, fresh batteries in the torch and other equipment is in good working order.

> Resident-Specific Risk Management

- Individual risk assessments for each resident.
- Person Centered Emergency Management Plans (PCEMP)/ Personalised Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP).
- Fire retardant bedding and furniture as required.
- Accessible alert systems (flashing lights, vibrating pads).

> Fire Safety Equipment

As per SDA Design requirements:

- Smoke detectors (visual and audible alerts).
- Fire extinguishers and fire blankets - place fire extinguishers in easily accessible areas especially near kitchens, common areas, and exits.
- Emergency lighting and illuminated exit signs and keep fire blankets in kitchens where there is a risk of small fires.
- Some High Physical Support dwellings may have fire sprinklers for automatic fire suppression.

> Inspection and Maintenance

- Weekly Fire Safety Checklists completed by Support Provider to check fire safety equipment including smoke alarms, extinguishers, emergency lighting and sprinkler systems.
- Bi-annual inspection by licensed fire technician of safety equipment provided by SDA Living Australia.
- Maintain a fire safety log book to record inspections, maintenance and drills and this documentation must be retained for 7 years.

> Fire Safety Training

- All support staff must undergo fire safety training during induction provided by the Support Provider.
- Refresher training every 12 months.
- Training includes:
 - Use of fire extinguishers and fire blankets.
 - Evacuation procedures.
 - Handling specific needs of residents (mobility assistance, communication aides).

> Resident Education

All residents must be educated on fire safety procedures, including:

- Recognising Fire Evacuation alarms and their meaning.
- Fire evacuation plan and dwelling safety features.
- Familiarity with escape routes and exits.
- How to alert staff if they see a fire or need assistance to evacuate.

> Fire Drills

- To be conducted by the Support Provider on a regular basis and documented ensuring they are held on different days of the week and at different times of the day.
- Document each fire drill with a report and staff feedback.
- Include all participants where possible and adapted to the needs of the residents as required.
- Review outcomes to improve procedures if required.

> Record-Keeping Requirements

SDA Living Australia:

- Document dwelling fire safety features.
- Provide up-to-date fire evacuation plans.
- Maintain records of fire equipment checks and maintenance.

Support provider:

- Maintain records of staff training.
- Maintain records of regular fire drills and weekly fire safety checks.
- Maintain up-to-date PCEMP/PEEPS and individual Risk Assessments.

> Evacuation Procedures

Evacuation procedures must be tailored to the needs of all residents, including those with mobility, sensory, cognitive, or communication impairments.

- **PCEMP/PEEPS:** Develop a Personalised Emergency Evacuation Plan for each resident based on their specific needs. These plans should include:
 - Preferred evacuation routes
 - Equipment needed (e.g., wheelchairs, mobility aids).
 - Assistance required from staff members.
 - Safe spaces for those who cannot evacuate immediately.
- **Escape Routes:** Ensure that all residents are familiar with evacuation routes and exits. Create accessible pathways, including ramps and wide doorways, to accommodate mobility aids.
- **Evacuation Drills:** Conduct regular fire evacuation drills that include the participation of staff and residents. Modify the drills to reflect the different needs of residents.
- **Safe Areas:** Designate and clearly mark safe areas where residents can wait for help if they are unable to evacuate immediately. These areas should be equipped with communication systems to allow staff to maintain contact with residents.

> R.A.C.E Protocol

- **Rescue:** Assist anyone in immediate danger.
- **Alarm:** Alert others and activate the fire alarm.
- **Contain:** Close doors/windows to contain the fire.
- **Evacuate:** Follow the Personalised Emergency Evacuation Plan.

> Emergency Communication and Support

Clear communication is essential during a fire emergency, especially in SDA facilities where residents may have communication challenges.

- **Emergency Contact Information:** Maintain up-to-date emergency contact information for all residents and staff. Ensure this information is included in the Fire Evacuation Backpack.
- **Assistive Devices:** Ensure that communication systems (e.g., intercoms, phones) are accessible to all residents, including those with hearing or speech impairments. Provide alternative methods of communication (e.g., text-based alerts, visual signals).

To notify SDA Living Australia of an emergency, please refer to the below contact information:

Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm

Phone: 1300 469 939

Email: contact@sdalivingaustralia.com.au

Afterhours Contact

Phone: 0483 933 912

For immediate assistance during an emergency, call Emergency Services on 000.

> Post-Incident Procedures

After a fire incident, SDA Living Australia will convene a meeting to review the response and make improvements where necessary.

- **Incident Report:** Document the details of the incident, including the cause (if known), evacuation times, and any issues that arose during the evacuation.
- **Debriefing:** Conduct a debriefing with staff to identify any areas for improvement in the fire response or evacuation procedure.
- **Resident Support:** Provide any additional support for residents affected by the fire, including access to counselling services.
- **Repairs:** SDA Living Australia will organise repairs as a matter of urgency and if the house is not liveable, will refer to SDA Living Australia's Emergency & Disaster Management Plan.