



Protection - COVID-19 Quarantine Hotels

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The use of hotels for the purposes of quarantine

Introduction

This advice note is to provide general information that should be considered by Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) in their dealings with hotels where they are being used for the purposes of quarantine.

From 15 February, visitors to England, Wales and Northern Ireland must quarantine in a managed quarantine hotel if they have travelled from or passed through a country where travel to the UK is banned. In Scotland, all visitors from outside the Common Travel Area will be required to stay in a managed quarantine hotel. They are required to stay in quarantine for a period of at least 10 days. Existing hotels which are near international airports are being used for this purpose. The Government has issued general information regarding [staying in a managed quarantine hotel](#).

This note is only intended to cover specific risks which have come about as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. It represents non-statutory guidance in order to provide FRSs with general advice to assist with a consistent, standardised approach across all services. The guidance does not constitute legal advice. FRS legal duties will remain those specified by law, in particular article 26 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO), during the COVID-19 pandemic, but if any fire and rescue services consider that difficulties arise in relation to compliance with those duties, they should take legal advice.

COVID-19 Measures

As the premises being used for the purpose of quarantine are operating hotels, there is already a need for them to provide a COVID Secure environment in accordance with government guidelines. The implementation of such measures can affect the existing fire safety measures that are in place. As a result, it is important that responsible persons (RPs) consider any impact and they are managed in order to maintain compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO), by reviewing their Fire Risk Assessment (FRA). This may include impact on:

- Staffing levels and training
- Means of Escape limitations due to obstructions
- Extended travel distances due to one-way systems
- External access for use in emergencies

NFCC have already produced a range of guidance which will assist ensuring RPs are given consistent advice including:

- Advice to Premises

- Scenario based guidance (in particular, Section 8 – Repurposed Premises)

This guidance is available at the [NFCC COVID-19 webpage](#).

Security

Where a hotel is classed as a managed quarantine hotel, it will have specific requirements with regard to security. Hotel residents, for example, are not permitted to leave their hotel room unless in specific circumstances. It should be noted that evacuation in cases of emergency is a specified exemption.

It is not currently known what the specific security requirements will entail, but government has stated that the security of premises and the management of those in quarantine will be the responsibility of the host. It is anticipated this will be a mixture of hotel staff and employed security personnel.

There are several areas of concern with regards to the impact of increasing the security of such premises, in addition to the general COVID Secure measures:

- Restriction of movement of persons
- Lack of staff training for fire safety
- Security measures impacting provision for evacuation

Actions

Where you have a managed quarantine hotel in your service area, you should contact the premises and identify the RP. You should make enquiries that show the premises is meeting the requirements of the FSO. Particular areas of note should be, although are not limited to:

- Ensure a review of the existing FRA is carried out to assess any introduced risks e.g. altered guest and staff instructions; any investigation period before AFD sounds; escape routes discharging into a restricted area to meet security requirements.
- Actions required have been implemented
- Staff training to be in place for all staff (including security staff) to show understanding of their role in evacuation and the need to minimise impact of security measures on fire safety.
- Co-operation and communication between the hotel and security staff.
- Imported risks as a result of persons staying for prolonged periods including smoking or communication difficulties due to language.

Consideration should be given to the fact that the building is still being used for the purpose for which it was designed. As a result, there should be no issues around the building structure, fire protection and detection and warning unless procedures differ from those that would normally be expected. An example would be a staged or stay put evacuation strategy (due to security reasons) which may conflict with the building design and construction.

If there are any comments, feedback or questions related to this document, please contact the NFCC Protection Policy and Reform Unit at PPRUAdmin@nationalfirechiefs.org.uk.