

RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES/TEMPLATE

WHAT: Every event, however big or small, requires a risk assessment. As well as being a legal stipulation under the Health and Safety At Work Act 1974, having one in place also underpins the planning of a safe event. Croydon Borough Council also has a legal duty to ensure that all events taking place on council land have a risk assessment in place.

WHO: Anyone can write a risk assessment, but ideally it needs to be written by a person experienced and competent to do so, and who has full detailed knowledge of not only the event itself, but the build and derig periods. The event risk assessment must be signed and dated by the person who has written it, and it should always be noted that a risk assessment remains dynamic, being amended as and when the event details change.

HOW: The following guidance notes will assist you in writing a detailed event risk assessment. Also included is a template which can be used to get you started.

A risk assessment is the identification of hazards at your event, and then the assessment of the likelihood and severity of the risk that the hazards cause harm to individuals attending your event, both as members of the public and as people working on the event or passing through the event site.

Writing a risk assessment isn't a test, and there are no right or wrong answers. It also needs to be noted that Croydon Borough Council cannot comment on a risk assessment submitted with an event application, it can only acknowledge that there is a risk assessment in place.

Croydon Council's Events Office is happy to offer guidance alongside this document, and it is recommended that event organisers refer to the HSE website.

Writing a risk assessment is a FIVE STEP process.

STEP ONE IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS:

A hazard is a condition or physical element that has the potential to cause harm. Below are some examples of hazards that could be common at events. This list is not exhaustive and should only be used as guidance.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fire• Generators• Vehicles• Temporary Structures• Crowds• Fireworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slips, Trips & Falls• Toilets• Machinery• Adverse/extreme weather• Funfair rides• Noise
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STEP TWO DECIDE WHO MIGHT BE HARMED AND HOW

For each hazard identified, the next step is to identify who might be harmed and how they might be harmed. This isn't a list of individuals, but more of an identification of groups of people. Knowing who might be harmed will assist you to work out how to reduce the risk to this group of people/groups of people. Please note that some hazards will affect a small number of people, even one individual whereas other hazards could affect everyone on site, such as adverse/extreme weather.

Please use the information below as guidance. The types of people affected will depend on what type of event is being organised. This section can also include animals, for example if you're organising a dog show.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractors • Event employees • Members of public • Stewards & security staff • Disabled people • Expectant mothers • Overnight staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers • Traders • Performers • Local residents • Children • Elderly • Animals
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STEP THREE EVALUATE THE RISKS AND DETERMINE CONTROL MEASURES

This is probably the most important section of the risk assessment as it is where you are establishing how you are going to protect any harm being caused to those people you have identified in the previous step. Ideally, you want to remove the hazard completely because then it poses no risk. However, it is recognised that this isn't always practical. For example, you can't remove marquees from an event, which are temporary structures. Therefore, the next step is to reduce the risk of harm to as little as possible.

Some people find it useful to use a matrix, such as the one shown below. This is known as a quantitative risk assessment. This can also be used alongside a more narrative risk assessment.

0 – 5 = Low Risk		Severity of the potential injury/damage				
		Insignificant damage to Property, Equipment or Minor Injury	Non-Reportable Injury, minor loss of Process or slight damage to Property	Reportable Injury moderate loss of Process or limited damage to Property	Major Injury, Single Fatality critical loss of Process/damage to Property	Multiple Fatalities Catastrophic Loss of Business
6 – 10 = Moderate Risk		1	2	3	4	5
11 – 15 = High Risk		1	2	3	4	5
16 – 25 = extremely high unacceptable risk		1	2	3	4	5
Likelihood of the hazard happening	Almost Certain 5	5	10	15	20	25
	Will probably occur 4	4	8	12	16	20
	Possible occur 3	3	6	9	12	15
	Remote possibility 2	2	4	6	8	10
	Extremely Unlikely 1	1	2	3	4	5

The following table highlights some of the areas for consideration when writing an event risk assessment

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event capacity • Audience/attendee profile • Ticketed or free event? • Time of day/length of event • Time of year • Type of event • Existing site hazards • Location of event • Amusements & attractions • Working at height • Type of venue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste management • Manual handling • Build/derig schedule • First Aid • Fire safety provisions • Access/egress • Welfare facilities • Temporary structures • Animals • Power/Lighting on site • Outside event site
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Once a venue has been visited, or an event site has been identified and a site plan drawn up, it soon becomes clear what hazards exist and how to mitigate the risk of these hazards. It is recognised that hazards such as inclement weather, or overcrowding at a free event can't always be predicted, but a risk assessment is a way of showing the HSE that these hazards have been considered and can be dealt with accordingly.

Once the extent of the risk arising from hazards has been identified, it must be evaluated and existing control measures should be considered. Areas include the training of staff, health and safety measures already in place in a venue, protection methods in place such as guards, fencing and clothing for individuals, monitoring systems for the weather and crowd management. Consider choosing a less risky option for something, or finding an alternative solution. Health and safety doesn't always need to come as an additional expense, sometimes simply thinking through the situation and the hazard will create an obvious solution.

STEP FOUR RECORDING THE RISK ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

There are many different templates for recording a risk assessment, the choice is yours. It doesn't matter what it looks like or how it is written up but it needs to be suitable and sufficient, and always up to date.

Having a written record of the risk assessment is proof that one was carried out, and can be used during the event and after as part of the event debrief. This doesn't need to be arduous or a 50-page document; the most important factor is to focus on the control measures being put in place.

If a risk assessment has identified many hazards (which is usual for events) then the hazards must be recorded in order of severity.

Risk assessments should be kept for future reference. A copy needs to be given to the venue owner or landowner (such as Croydon Borough Council), as well as a copy to everyone working at the event. The risk assessment should form part of the event management plan, and we would always recommend having a section which explains who has written the risk assessment, their credentials and how it has been written (quantitative, qualitative or both).

STEP FIVE REVIEW AND REVISE THE RISK ASSESSMENT

Events can take days, weeks or months to plan, and will continuously change. Therefore, a risk assessment must reflect this accordingly. A risk assessment should be submitted once most the planning has taken place, and it needs to be recognised that it will be updated if the nature of the risks change.

A risk assessment should also be reviewed and revised once the event is taking place; for example, if an accident or near miss occurs, how could this have been avoided?

Always ensure your risk assessment is up to date.

Further guidance can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/>