



نظام الشارقة للسلامة والصحة المهنية
Occupational Safety & Health Sharjah

حكومة الشارقة
هيئة الوقاية والسلامة
Government of Sharjah
Prevention And Safety Authority



Code of Practice

Occupational Safety and Health in Workers Accommodation

OSHJ-CoP-25



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1 Introduction

There is a range of different types of employer supplied accommodation depending on the requirements of the entity, including but not limited to:

- Residential villas, compounds, apartments;
- Multi-purpose/tenanted buildings;
- Residential cities developments;
- Hotels, serviced apartments;
- Other residential units or buildings.

Providing a minimum good standard of accommodation requires the entity to ensure that:

- Accommodation is maintained in a safe and healthy condition;
- Employees are not exposed to hazards in the accommodation.

Ministerial Resolution No. 591 of 2016 states that: establishments with 50 or more employees, where the wage of each employee is less than AED 2,000 per month, must provide accommodation for its employees.

The entity must decide what type of accommodation they will provide for employees and how they will manage the accommodation to ensure their safety and health.

2 Purpose and Scope

This Code of Practice (CoP) has been developed to provide information to entities to assist them in complying with the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health System in Sharjah.

This Code of Practice (CoP) defines the minimum acceptable requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health System in Sharjah, and entities can apply practices higher than, but not lower than those mentioned in this document, as they demonstrate the lowest acceptable level of compliance in the Emirate of Sharjah.

The scope of this document includes the following accommodation within the Emirate of Sharjah:

- Employees that are provided a shared bedroom unit in a workers residential city;
- Employees that are provided a shared bedroom unit in worker accommodation or a labour camp;
- Employees that are provided with a bedroom or shared bedroom in a residential tower, compound or block;
- The communal areas of buildings used to provide shared accommodation to employees from the same entity.

Exclusions: This document does not cover:

- Employees that are provided with accommodation in hotels or serviced apartments;

- Accommodation obtained by the employee with the provision of the accommodation allowance paid by the entity as part of the benefits of employment contract allowances.

3 Definitions and Abbreviations

Employer:	Every natural or legal person, whether public or private, who employs one or more workers in return for a wage of whatever type.
Risk:	Is the combination of likelihood of the hazard causing the loss and the severity of that loss (consequences).
Risk Assessment:	The systematic identification of workplace hazards and evaluation of the risks associated. This process takes existing control measures into account and identifies and recommends further control measures where required.
Employer Supplied Accommodation:	Accommodation which is provided without cost to the employees, which is either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owned and managed by the entity or; • Owned and managed by a third party who is contracted by the entity.
AMAN:	An advanced fire detection system allows 24-hour monitoring of fire alarms, boosting the capability of Sharjah's General Directorate of Civil Defence to immediately respond to fire incidents, Aman system can be installed in commercial, government, and all buildings which are not classified as Independent private homes and villas for residential purpose.
Emergency Plan:	Specifies systematic instructions and procedures that have to be followed before and after the time of an anticipated emergency event.
Evacuation Plan:	A diagram showing the safest emergency exit routes from a building and clearly indicating the places of the emergency equipment including firefighting and first aid equipment.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Entity Responsibilities

- Undertake accommodation risk assessment, identify hazards, employees at risk and introduce control measures;
- Ensure all accommodation complies with:
 - UAE Fire and Life Safety Code of Practice;
 - AMAN requirements;
 - Any other applicable requirements.
- Have an emergency plan;

- Have a system to report injuries, illness and hazards;
- Provide employee wellbeing initiatives.

4.2 Employee Responsibilities

- Not endanger themselves or others;
- Report any activity or defect relating to accommodation which they know is likely to endanger the safety of themselves or that of any other person.

5 Requirements

Occupational safety and health applies to employee accommodation in the same way as it does to employees conducting work activities. The entity should manage the risks to employees by ensuring that the accommodation is adequately maintained, operated and managed.

The types of accommodation that this document refers to, includes but not limited to:

- Workers residential city;
- Worker accommodation units;
- Labour camps;
- Residential villas or compounds;
- Residential apartments, blocks or units;
- Other types of buildings used for accommodation purposes.

The entity should when identifying accommodation suitable for employees, ensure that safety and health is considered when selecting the appropriate accommodation type and building. The requirements provided in this document are the minimum that the entity should implement.

5.1 Risk Assessment

The entity should identify hazards related to the provision of accommodation through use of risk assessment and introduce effective control measures to reduce the exposure of accommodation related injury and illness to employees.

Accommodation identified as being suitable for employees should have a risk assessment conducted during the selection process, and any control measures identified are implemented, prior to employee occupancy.

Accommodation that is already occupied by employees should have regular risk assessment reviews, at a minimum annually, and any improvements to control measures identified and introduced to further reduce risk to employee's safety and health.

The risk assessment shall take into consideration of the following factors, including but not limited to:

- Fire safety;
- Emergency planning and preparedness;

- First aid;
- Medical service room;
- Bedrooms;
- Bathrooms;
- Kitchens;
- Dining Room;
- Restrooms;
- Laundry;
- Other services;
- Waste management;
- Ventilation and air conditioning;
- Lighting;
- Pest control;
- Employee wellbeing initiatives.

Further information on risk assessments can be found in OSHJ-CoP-01: Risk Management and Control.

5.2 The Safety and Health of Employees in Accommodation

5.2.1 Emergency Preparedness and Response

The entity should ensure that accommodation has an emergency plan in place to address all foreseeable emergencies, including the potential outbreak of contagious disease or illness. This plan should include the ability to isolate employees that have contagious disease or illness, such as: COVID 19, chicken pox, flu, etc.

The entity shall ensure that all sites providing accommodation have an emergency response plan which is tested periodically and at a minimum annually. Employees are also required to know:

- The emergency evacuation routes of the building they occupy;
- Where the location of the emergency evacuation assembly point areas;
- How to report a fire emergency;
- The location of, and how to use fire extinguishers.

Further information on risk assessment can be found in OSHJ-CoP-18: Emergency Preparedness and Response.

5.2.2 Fire Safety

The entity should ensure that the requirements of UAE Fire and Life Safety Code of Practice are implemented and maintained, including but not limited to:

- Accommodation identified as being suitable for employees must have a fire risk assessment conducted during the selection process and any control measures identified are implemented, prior to employee occupancy;
- Fire risk assessment is reviewed at a minimum annually and any improvements to control measures implemented to reduce fire risks to employees;
- Monthly inspections are conducted to confirm the fire fighting system and equipment is adequately maintained;
- Fire fighting systems comply with UAE Fire and Life Safety Code of Practice;
- Fire fighting systems integrated with AMAN system;
- Smoke detectors, fire alarms and fire protection shall be fitted to each building;
- Fire extinguishers shall be provided and distributed in each building;
- There are specific fire evacuation plans for each building, which shall be prominently displayed;
- Regular evacuation drills are conducted, at a minimum annually.

5.2.3 First Aid

The entity should ensure that the first aid box should be provided in every accommodation facilities. This requirement is applicable to all employer supplied accommodation facilities. The entity should provide a dedicated first-aider who should be available at the accommodation when it is occupied.

First aid requirements include but are not limited to:

- Undertaking a first aid risk assessment as part of the planning process;
- Identifying the type and quantity of first aid/medical equipment and/or facilities required;
- Identifying the number of nurses required;
- Providing information to the employees on the first aid/medical arrangements;
- Providing resources for the implementation of first aid/medical requirements.

Further information on first aid can be found in OSHJ-CoP-16: First Aid at Work.

5.2.4 Medical Service Room

Each employee supplied accommodation facility with more than 50 resident employees must have a first aid room with a nurse. This room should be equipped with suitable furniture, tools and a medicine box. There must be provision of a quarantine room equipped with suitable furniture and tools.

5.2.5 Bedrooms

The entity should ensure that the following bedroom specifications are implemented and maintained:

- The area allocated for each employee should be not less than 3 square metres;
- The maximum number allowed for one bedroom is 8 employees, while maintaining the minimum area allocated to each employee. Dormitories shall maintain the same minimum allocated area;
- Bedroom ceiling height should be not less than 7 feet;
- A bed space should be available for each employee, even during working hours;
- Each employee must be provided with a bed, side table and a lockable cupboard of 2 metre height;
- The distance between each bed should be not less than 36 inches from all sides. The height of the bed must be not less than 12 inches;
- The distance between each bunk bed should be not less than 48 inches from all sides, provided that the distance between the upper and lower bed is not less than 27 inches and should provide a safe access to the upper bed. Three level bunk beds are not allowed;
- Shoe racks must be fitted at the entrance of each room, so that employees can keep their shoes outside the bedroom;
- Cooking stoves, hotplates and washing machines are not allowed to be used in bedrooms.

5.2.6 Bathrooms

The entity should ensure that the following bathroom specifications are implemented and maintained:

- Employees must have easy access to bathroom facilities without the need to move from one bedroom to another;
- For shared bathrooms, one toilet must be allocated for each 8 employees. The number of toilets should be not less than 2 in each shared bathroom. Dormitories shall maintain the allocation of toilets, one toilet for each 8 employees;
- One urinal must be allocated for each 25 persons. Urinals must have sufficient quantity of water required for flushing and cleaning purposes;
- One place for bathing and one washbowl must be provided for each 8 employees;
- Hot and cold water must be available in bathrooms;
- There should be sufficient quantity of tissue paper in each toilet;
- Bathrooms and toilets must be kept clean and hygienic. They must be cleaned at least once per day. Sterilisers must be used for sanitisation.

5.2.7 Kitchens

The entity should ensure that the following communal kitchen specifications are implemented and maintained:

- Each accommodation unit must have a kitchen that conforms to the requirements of relevant authorities;
- The kitchen must be managed by a licensed company or by the food staff of the employee accommodation unit;
- The kitchen shall have washable tables;
- The kitchen must have a drainage system, ventilation hole and/or chimney, the chimney must be 2 metres higher than the nearest building;
- Gas cylinders must be stored outside the building and protected from direct sunlight;
- The kitchen must be equipped with pest control materials and equipment;
- The kitchen must be kept clean;

Cooking on stoves, hot plates, etc is not allowed in bedrooms.

5.2.8 Dining Room

The entity should ensure that the following dining room specifications are implemented and maintained:

- The dining room must be positioned near the kitchen and equipped with chairs, tables and washbowls supplied with hot and cold water, soap and hand towels;
- An area of 1.4 square metres should be allocated for each employee in the dining room. It should be designed to accommodate one third of the employees living in the accommodation unit;
- Notices of meal times must be fixed at the entrances of the dining rooms;
- The dining rooms must be kept clean at all times.

5.2.9 Restrooms

The entity must provide a restroom for employees in the accommodation unit. It should be equipped with a sufficient amount of seating and a television.

5.2.10 Laundry

The entity should ensure that the following laundry room specifications are implemented and maintained:

- Laundry services can be outsourced to an external company;
- If laundry services are not outsourced to an external company, the entity must provide laundry services that are appropriate for the total number of employees living in the accommodation unit; and

- Laundry utilities must be located on the ground floor of the accommodation unit and include the provision of hot and cold water supplies, ventilation holes, air conditioning, drainage networks and lighting.

5.2.11 Waste Management

The entity should ensure that the following waste management specifications are implemented and maintained:

- Waste disposal procedures must be compliant with the environmental and health criteria set by relevant authorities;
- Sealed waste containers must be provided in sufficient numbers;
- Waste containers must be cleaned and emptied daily;
- Housing units must be cleaned daily.

Further information on waste management can be found in OSHJ-CoP-19: Waste Management.

5.2.12 Ventilation and Air Conditioning

The entity should ensure that the following ventilation and air conditioning specifications are implemented and maintained:

- All rooms, kitchens, dining rooms, corridors, offices and lounges must be provided with ventilation systems and central air-conditioning;
- An exhaust hood must be installed to pull air from bathrooms;
- A window/vent in the lower part of each bedroom and bathroom door must be installed for ventilation;
- Bathrooms, stores, photocopying rooms, computer rooms, kitchens, toilets and other areas of probable contamination must have efficient ventilation systems;
- Temperature, humidity and air speed must be controlled in all air conditioned places;
- Relative humidity must range from 30 to 60 per cent in all air conditioned places.

5.2.13 Lighting

The entity should ensure that the following lighting specifications are implemented and maintained:

- All lighting units fixed in occupied areas and other areas must provide a sufficient amount of lighting;
- The external lights must enable pedestrians to identify corridor borders, turns, cross roads and any other obstacles or potential risks;
- All potential risk places must have a level of lighting higher than corridors;
- Lamp posts should not block pedestrians, road traffic or emergency services.

Further information on lighting can be found in OSHJ-CoP-15: Employee Welfare and Wellbeing.

5.2.14 Pest Control

The entity should make provision for the control of pests and should appoint a licenced pest control company to manage pest control on their behalf. The entity should supervise the pest control company to ensure the following, including but not limited to:

- The application of any chemicals are controlled;
- Pest control is applied when occupants are not present;
- The treated areas are isolated to prevent access;
- The treated areas are adequately ventilated, where required;
- A competent person assesses that the premises are safe for occupants to re-enter after application of pest control chemicals.

Fumigation of pests is not a recommended method to eradicate pests in accommodation.

The entity should record and retain pest control records.

5.2.15 Employee Wellbeing Initiatives

The entity should in addition to the requirements of first aid and emergency planning and preparedness have a duty of care to educate employees in languages and in a format that employees understand on their health, including but not limited to:

- Safety in heat – education for employees exposed to excessive heat during work activities; and
- Worker wellbeing – education for employees on health and wellbeing in the workplace.

The entity shall record and retain employee wellbeing initiative records.

6 References

OSHJ-CoP-01: Risk Management and Control

OSHJ-CoP-15: Employee Welfare and Wellbeing

OSHJ-CoP-16: First Aid at Work

OSHJ-CoP-18: Emergency Preparedness and Response

OSHJ-CoP-19: Waste Management

UAE Fire and Life Safety Code of Practice.

Ministerial Resolution No. 591 of 2016 concerning the Commitment of Establishments

Ministerial Decree No. 212 of 2014 on Approval of the General Standards Guideline of Labour Accommodation

7 Document Amendment Record

TITLE	Occupational Safety and Health in Workers Accommodation		
DOCUMENT AMENDMENT RECORD			
Version	Revision Date	Amendment Details	Pages Affected
1	15 SEP 2021	New Document	N/A
2	26 JUN 2024	The document changed from a guideline to a code of practice. The document code was changed from OSHJ-GL-05 to OSHJ-CoP-25.	2,4
2	26 JUN 2024	Risk Register Added	14
2	26 JUN 2024	Checklist Added	17

8 APPENDIX 1. Example of a Risk Register

Some manuals within Sharjah Occupational Safety and Health System include a sample risk register as an advisory document that entities can emulate. The examples listed in this sample may not be directly applicable to every entity; however, they serve as illustrative cases to enhance understanding of the methods used to evaluate activities within the entity, potential risks, and possible consequences. The sample demonstrates how to assess risks by calculating their likelihood and consequences.

Some manuals present this sample to emphasize the importance of risk monitoring, evaluation, and the implementation of appropriate control measures. It is unacceptable for an auditor from the Prevention and Safety Authority to find any entity engaging in hazardous activities without a thorough risk assessment process. We can anticipate and prevent workplace risks, and the risk monitoring process is not complex. Therefore, this appendix aims to provide a sample that aids in the monitoring, evaluation, and implementation of control measures, monitoring residual risks, and defining tasks and responsibilities for managing hazards.

Every government entity or private establishment has its unique nature of work and environment, which contain risks specific to its operations. Hence, each entity should develop its monitoring procedures based on this appendix. We can develop more detailed assessment tools beyond what this sample presents. As stipulated by Executive Council Resolution No. (15) of 2021 regarding the Sharjah Occupational Safety and Health System, employers are required to identify all foreseeable workplace hazards, assess the risk of injury or illness to workers, and implement consistent preventive measures to ensure workers' safety, health, and well-being. The same resolution also holds employers responsible for their employees, contractors, visitors, and anyone affected by the employer's activities. Therefore, this sample recommends including these individuals in the risk assessment process.

Activity/task	Dangers	Consequences	Existing control measures	Risk			Additional control measures	Residual risks			Executing person	Administrator: Date:
				L	C	R		L	C	R-R		
Cooking in accommodation bedroom	Fire hazard due to unattended devices	Fire outbreak, smoke inhalation, property damage	-	[1-5]	[1-5]	L x C	Prohibit the use of cooking devices in bedrooms, and provide designated cooking areas.	[1-5]	[1-5]	Existing control measures – risk (R) = residual risk (R-R)	Housing Manager	[Date]
	Overloading of electrical circuits Inadequate ventilation Obstruction of escape routes	Electrical fires, electric shock	-	[1-5]	[1-5]	L x C	Ensure that electrical circuits are designed for household appliances, and conduct regular inspections.	[1-5]	[1-5]	Existing control measures – risk (R) = residual risk (R-R)	Maintenance Technician	[Date]
	Overloading of electrical circuits Inadequate ventilation Obstruction of escape routes	Carbon monoxide poisoning	-	[1-5]	[1-5]	L x C	Install carbon monoxide detectors, and ensure proper ventilation in cooking areas.	[1-5]	[1-5]	Existing control measures – risk (R) = residual risk (R-R)	Safety Officer	[Date]
	Overloading of electrical circuits Inadequate ventilation Obstruction of escape routes	Obstruction in escape routes, inability to exit in case of fire	-	[1-5]	[1-5]	L x C	Keep fire escape routes clear, and conduct regular fire drill training.	[1-5]	[1-5]	Existing control measures – risk (R) = residual risk (R-R)	Fire Safety Officer	[Date]

9 APPENDIX 2. Checklist

The checklist is used by Prevention and Safety Authority to monitor compliance levels during audit and inspection operations; it is not intended for use by government entities or private establishments.

Every code of practice or guideline published by the Prevention and Safety Authority within the Sharjah occupational safety and health system contains requirements that employers in the Emirate of Sharjah must comply with. Each manual includes an inspection checklist that summarizes the essential items used by the SPSA auditor to verify that government entities or private establishments comply with the manual's requirements. Auditors can add additional essential items as necessary. The inspection checklist also includes a manual reference for each essential item, as well as a sample of acceptable compliance evidence for each item. The SPSA's auditor may request additional compliance evidence based on the item's condition, as well as the severity and potential impact of non-compliance.

The SPSA's auditor uses the inspection checklist to provide a comprehensive report on the entity's status. We will use the same checklist to monitor manual standard violations. Non-compliance with these standards constitutes a violation of Executive Council Resolution No. 15 of 2021 regarding the Sharjah Occupational Safety and Health System. If the SPSA's auditor detects non-compliance, they can issue violations based on the approved violation list.

In this manual, the SPSA provides information and standards that employers conducting activities in the Emirate of Sharjah must adhere to. This is to ensure the safety of workers, property, and the environment. Adhering to the requirements of this manual helps improve the level of occupational safety and health at the workplace, and it shields private establishments from potential violations or financial penalties for non-compliance.

The Emirate of Sharjah's Executive Council Resolution stipulates that employers must exercise due diligence to ensure the safety and health of workers, contractors, visitors, and all those affected by the employer's activities. To avoid non-compliance, employers must ensure adherence to the Sharjah Occupational Safety and Health System requirements. Entities should develop their procedures and inspection checklists according to their activities, nature of work, and risk level.

Depending on recorded or reported incidents, and as necessary, the SPSA may amend the requirements in this manual. As a result, the attached inspection checklist may change. Occupational safety and health practitioners must stay up-to-date on published standards and any changes to the inspection checklist attached to each manual.

Audit/Inspection Checklist

Code Title	Employer Supplied Accommodation	Code No.	OSHJ-CoP-25	Rev. No.	1.0
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Sr.	Checklist Item	Clause in the Code	Acceptable means of compliance
1.	Are the risks related the employer supplied accommodation identified, assessed and periodically reviewed?	5.1: Risk Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Check Risk assessment. – Verify the suitability of the employer supplier accommodation.
2.	Is there an emergency response plan for employee accommodation?	5.2.1:Emergency Preparedness and Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Copy of the emergency plan
3.	Are there fire detection, firefighting and AMAN device installed, inspected and maintained?	5.2.2: Fire Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Copy of fire risk assessment. – Copy of regular inspection documents. Visual verification of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Availability of AMAN fire fighting system. – Smoke detectors, fire alarms and fire protection are fitted to each building. – fire evacuation plan displayed.
4.	Are there First Aid boxes available in prominent places and First Aiders certified?	5.2.3:First aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Verify first aid boxes are distributed. – Check Approved first-aiders documents – Verify the first aid room with a nurse.
5.	Is there a dedicated first aid room available with necessary supplies and MOH approved nurse, if accommodating more than 50 employees?	5.2.4:Medical Service Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Verify first aid boxes are distributed. – Check Approved first-aiders documents – Verify the first aid room with a nurse.
6.	Are the bedrooms and bathrooms meeting the requirement?	5.2.5, 5.2.6: Bedrooms, bathrooms	<p>Verify the suitability of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – bedroom – bathrooms

Sr.	Checklist Item	Clause in the Code	Acceptable means of compliance
7.	Are all specifications for the accommodations room implemented and maintained?	5.2.5, 5.2.6, 5.2.8, 5.2.10 : Bedrooms, Bathrooms, Dining room, Laundry	Verify the suitability of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – bedroom – bathrooms – dining room – laundry room
8.	Is there a waste disposal procedure for the accommodations?	5.2.11: Waste Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Visual verification of waste management actions and procedures. – Documents related to waste management, e.g.: contacts / policy / checklists.
9.	is the HVAC implemented and maintained in the accommodation?	5.2.12: Ventilation and Air Conditioning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Verify the ventilation system in all areas of probable contamination – Verify the Air conditioning system in all the areas
10.	is the Lighting specifications implemented and maintained in the accommodation?	5.2.13: Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Verify the lighting in all occupied areas (internally and externally)
11.	Is there a pest control system for the accommodation done by a licensed pest control company?	5.2.14: Pest Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Check Pest control contract with a licensed pest control company.
12.	Is the entity educating the employees on health and safety related topics?	5.2.15: Employee Wellbeing Initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Copy of employee wellbeing initiative records