




**OCEAN CITY FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE**  
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**MEMORANDUM**

Subject: Life Safety Evaluation Requirements for Outdoor Special Events, Carnivals and Fairs	Memo #: 2021-005
	Effective: July 28, 2021 Revised: February 27, 2024
Authority: Deputy Chief Josh Bunting, Fire Marshal 	Internal (FMO Staff) External: Special Events Staff, Applicants & Promoters

**Overview**

This memorandum contains excerpts selected from the National Fire Protection Association NFPA 1 *Fire Code* and NFPA 101 *Life Safety Code* and is provided to assist promoters and special event managers with compliance with the requirement to develop and submit a formal Life Safety Evaluation for special outdoor events, carnivals, and fairs where:

1. The expected occupant load exceeds 6000 people -OR-
2. The *reduced* egress capacity factors in NFPA 101 for “Outdoor Smoke-Protected Assembly Seating” are utilized, regardless of expected occupant load.

The Office of the Fire Marshal may consider and approve excluding larger events in outdoor facilities with a maximum occupant load calculated at 15ft<sup>2</sup>/person in accordance with NFPA 101, 2018: 13.1.7.4. This document should not be considered exhaustive of the various code requirements for the event.

Some of the requirements below are specific to events/facilities where the event occurs within a structure; promoters or managers are encouraged to contact and work with the Office of the Fire Marshal to determine what facilities-based requirements may be present for their specific event.

**Life Safety Evaluation Requirements**

The life safety evaluation shall be performed by persons acceptable to the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ):

**For events with occupant loads exceeding 6000 people, the Life Safety Evaluation shall be performed by persons with formal, documented experience in crowd management and/or fire/life safety.**

**For fully outdoor events under 6000 people wishing to utilize reduced egress capacity factors, where all other aspects of the event are otherwise compliant with the prescriptive requirements of the *Code*, the submission by the event promoter or designee and approval of the event layout and written event emergency operations plan may suffice to meet the requirement for a life safety evaluation if found to address the pertinent requirements outlined below.**

(2) The life safety evaluation shall include a written assessment of safety measures for conditions listed in 10.14.3.2 and of the building systems and facility management in accordance with 10.14.3.3.

(3) The life safety evaluation shall be approved annually and shall be updated for special or unusual conditions in accordance with the provisions of 13.4.1 of NFPA 101 for existing assembly occupancies. NFPA 1, 2018: 10.14.3.1.

As part of their initial Special Event permit application, applicants should forward appropriate documentation (*Name, agency, contact information, training, certification, related experience, etc.*) to the Office of the Fire Marshal for consideration of the person/agency they are proposing to complete the required Life Safety Assessment.

While Life Safety Evaluations will be reviewed by the Office of the Fire Marshal and/or other Town of Ocean City Departments regardless of formatting and organization, consideration should be given to organizing the Life Safety Evaluation in the following manner for ease of review:

1. Event/Facility Overview & Description
2. Life Safety Floorplan & Life Safety Narrative
3. Facilities Management and Operational Plans  
(broken down into annexes addressing all of the conditions to be assessed)

**Where required to be submitted for evaluation, completed Life Safety Evaluations shall be submitted at least 30 days prior to the event.**

The completed Life Safety Evaluation will be maintained confidential ("*For Official Use Only*") and will be shared only with Town of Ocean City staff and/or approved personnel tasked with preparing and responding to emergency incidents related to the event or facility, in accordance with the public records exemptions for response plans outlined in Maryland Code GP §4-352(a)(1).

#### **Life Safety Evaluation Components**

The Life Safety Evaluation should include pertinent information within the four (4) sections noted below. If items are not applicable to the event, they may be excluded from the evaluation.

##### **1. Conditions to Be Assessed (1: 10.14.3.2)**

Life safety evaluations shall include an assessment of all of the following conditions and related appropriate safety measures:

1. Nature of the events and the participants and attendees
2. Access and egress movement, including crowd density problems
3. Medical emergencies
4. Fire hazards
5. Permanent and temporary structural systems
6. Severe weather conditions
7. Earthquakes
8. Civil or other disturbances
9. Hazardous materials incidents within and near the facility
10. Relationships among facility management, event participants, emergency response agencies, and others having a role in the events accommodated in the facility

## 2. Life Safety Narrative (101: 12.4.1.4.2)

A life safety narrative shall be provided describing the following, as applicable:

1. Building occupancy, construction type, and intended uses and events
2. Building area and population capacity of the proposed facility
3. Principal fire and life safety features/strategies for the building, including, as applicable, the following:
  - (a) Egress
  - (b) Access control
  - (c) Fire barriers, smoke barriers, and smoke partitions
  - (d) Fire suppression systems
  - (e) Smoke control/protection
  - (f) Fire detection and alarm
  - (g) PA system
  - (h) Emergency elevator operation
  - (i) Emergency power and lighting
  - (j) Provisions for patrons with disabilities
  - (k) Fire department access
  - (l) Fire/emergency command center
4. Exterior construction design parameters used/applied

## 3. Life Safety Floor Plans (101: 12.4.1.4.3)

Life safety floor plans of each level shall be provided, as applicable, with the following:

1. Occupant load, exit location, egress capacity, main entrance/exit, horizontal exits, travel distance, and exit discharge
2. Fire barriers, smoke barriers, and smoke partitions
3. Areas of smoke-protected assembly occupancy
4. Separate smoke-protected areas or zones
5. Areas of other occupancy type and separations
6. Unprotected vertical openings
7. Event plans for each anticipated type of event depicting the following:
  - (a) Seating configuration
  - (b) Exhibit booth layout
  - (c) Stage location
  - (d) Occupant load, egress capacity required, exits provided, and travel distance
  - (e) Any floor or stage use restrictions
  - (f) Plan and/or section drawing indicating where sprinkler protection is omitted
  - (g) Areas of refuge — interior and exterior

## 4. Facility Management and Operational Plans (1: 10.14.3.5.2)

Facility management and operational plans shall address the following, as applicable:

1. Best practices adopted or recognized
2. Emergency plans
3. Evacuation plans
4. Shelter-in-place plans, including capacities and protection considerations
5. Crowd management training plan (1 trained crowd manager per 250 occupancy)  
(Free online basic training available at: <http://oceancitymd.gov/crowdmanager>)
6. Safety plans, which include the following:
  - (a) Training plans
  - (b) Safety equipment plans

7. Fire alarm, smoke control system protocol and testing plans
8. First aid or medical treatment plans, which include the following:
  - (a) Defined levels of service (Promoter supplied or Town supplied)
  - (b) Standing orders adopted
  - (c) Supply and equipment plan
9. Housekeeping plans — biological, medical, hazardous materials cleaning
10. Emergency communication plans, which include the following:
  - (a) Chain of authority and incident command system employed
  - (b) Contact information for the following:
    - (i) Venue personnel
    - (ii) Emergency management and response organizations (such as fire, police, medical, utility, transportation, and key stakeholders)
  - (c) Communication systems
  - (d) Standard announcement for incidents or emergency situations
11. Risk and threat assessment for venue and surrounding area for the following:
  - (a) Severe weather
  - (b) Hazardous materials
  - (c) Terrorism
  - (d) Hostile intruder (active shooter/killer/vehicle assault)
12. Operating procedures and protocols for risks, such as the following:
  - (a) Severe weather preparedness and monitoring plans
  - (b) Hazardous materials incidence response plans
  - (c) Terrorism response plans
  - (d) Hostile intruder response plans
13. First responder response/arrival routes plans (Fire/EMS/Law Enforcement)
14. Alcohol management plans
15. Food safety plans
16. Rigging and temporary performance structure, which includes the following:
  - (a) Design and safety review plans
  - (b) Emergency action plans
17. Chemical and hazardous materials information and data
18. Barrier and wall protection plans for motor sports or similar events

The Life Safety Evaluation should mirror or integrate with the Event's Emergency Operations Plan.