Standard operating procedure (SOP) · ENV-SOP-003 · Version 1.1 · Approved by the ASF Expert Committee

Supports: 2B.8

At a glance

- Sign every evacuation route, emergency exit, restroom, and department or procedure door, not only the entrance.
- Use one signage style across the building, with the same words and symbols.
- Survey the whole building against the sign list each quarter, with photos.
- Replace missing or damaged signs within 14 days.
- Stop and get help straight away if: an evacuation route or emergency exit is unsigned or blocked by a sign or object.

1. Purpose

To make evacuation routes, emergency exits, restrooms and department doors clearly signed throughout the facility, so that people can find them without help [EC].

2. Scope

Applies to	Facilities, fire safety, reception and department managers
Locations	All internal and external routes at the facility
When	At design, at any change, and quarterly check
Does not apply to	Wayfinding from the entrance, covered separately under the access standards

3. Definitions

Term	Meaning
Evacuation sign	A sign showing an escape route or exit, lit or reflective as the fire rules require (EC)
Signage survey	A list of every sign in the building, with its location, condition and photo

4. Background

Evacuation drills alone do not show that signs exist throughout the building. A survey and quarterly check do. Criterion 2B.8 asks for complete signage, not only at the entrance.

5. Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility	Competence
Facilities manager	Owns the survey and sign plan; arranges repairs	Facilities competence
Fire safety officer	Confirms evacuation signs meet fire rules	Fire safety competence
Department heads	Report missing or damaged signs in their area	Induction

6. Materials and equipment

Item	Requirement	Condition
Sign plan (list of every required sign)	Current; locations marked on floor plans	Current
Sign stock	Standard design and language set by the committee (EC)	Stocked for replacement

7. Safety

- Never block an exit sign or evacuation route with another sign or object.
- Use signs with the lighting and reflectivity the fire rules require.

8. Before you start

- Use the latest floor plans and the sign plan.

9. Procedure

Step 1. Make the sign plan.

- List every required sign: evacuation routes, exits, assembly points, restrooms, and every department and procedure door.
- Mark each location on the floor plan.

Key point: A sign that is not on the plan is missed at every check.

Step 2. Survey the building.

- Walk the whole building against the plan.
- Record each sign: present, missing, damaged or blocked, with a photo.

Key point: The survey is the evidence. Photos show what the sign looks like in use.

Step 3. Replace and fix.

- Replace or repair any missing, damaged or unreadable sign within 14 days.
- Remove any sign that is no longer correct.
- Clear any blocked sign at once.

Key point: A missing exit sign is a fire risk on the day it is needed.

Step 4. Check quarterly.

- Repeat the survey every quarter.
- Record the result on ENV-FRM-005.

Key point: Quarterly checks catch the signs that are removed by cleaning, works or moving furniture.

Step 5. Check on change.

- After any change of use, refit or new door, check the signs within 14 days.

Key point: Changes are when signs are most often lost.

10. Decision points

- If an evacuation sign is missing, the fire safety officer is informed the same shift, and a temporary sign is fitted.

11. Special situations

Situation	Action
Temporary works or closures	Fit temporary signs for the diversion and remove them at completion.

12. Escalation

- Missing evacuation signage is reported to the fire safety officer at once.

13. Monitoring

Measure	Target	Frequency	Owner	If not met
Signs present against the sign plan	100%	Quarterly	Facilities manager	Replace within 14 days
Missing signs replaced within 14 days	100%	Monthly	Facilities manager	Escalate to chief executive
Evacuation signs checked by fire safety officer	100%	Quarterly	Fire safety officer	Immediate correction

14. Records

Record	Kept in	Retention
Sign plan	Facilities file	Current, plus history for the period set by the facility’s records policy years
ENV-FRM-005 Signage Survey and Quarterly Check	Facilities file	the period set by the facility’s records policy years

15. Training

- Facilities staff are trained in the sign standard and survey method (EC).

16. Related documents

ID	Title	Use

ENV-FRM-005	Signage Survey and Quarterly Check	Used in step 4
EMG-SOP-001	Fire Safety and Evacuation	Evacuation routes
SOP-N22	Disability Inclusion and Accessibility Policy	Accessible signage

17. Evidence

Reference	Note
E-009	ASF Expert Committee consensus. Sign standard and lighting to be checked against national fire and accessibility rules.

18. Change history

Version	Date	What changed	Approval
1.0	the date of approval	First version	Approved by the ASF Expert Committee
1.1	the date of approval	Internal quality review: corrected cross-references, status wording and document control	Approved by the ASF Expert Committee

E-learning for this document

- Access & Arrival: Getting Patients Through the Door (H-01)

Planned course: Facility signage. New course planned.

References

- Accréditation Sans Frontières (2026). ASF Expert Committee consensus on Standard 1. (E-009)

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Related standard

- **Standard 2: Governance and Safety Culture**

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