

# 10: Safety and Security

## This chapter will help you to:

- Understand the safety and security features in the hotel.
- Review the legislation to ensure the safety of the housekeeping staff and the guests.
- Learn about the comprehensive health and safety programmes and their considerations.
- Know how to deal with emergencies.

The safety and security of the hotel and its guests are always paramount and any guest arriving at a hotel expects that they and their belongings will be safe and secure throughout their stay. The hotel must implement measures to protect and secure their assets. Staff are valued and should also be protected. There must be safety and security of systems, equipment, food poisoning and against any criminal activity, such as theft, abduction, murder, etc. The safety and security of guests are vital for maintaining positive reviews, as weak safety and security measures at a hotel may pose a threat to the life of the guests and staff and can tarnish the reputation of the hotel.

The hotel needs to formulate strict safety and security policies and guidelines which needs to be communicated thoroughly to the staff, as well as briefly to guests on arrival to showcase the hotel's duty for care. Regular checks and inspection will ensure any items or any processes causing threats to safety are identified in a timely manner and removed to prevent any mishap.

It is essential to keep the guests and staff informed by planning regular drills and training, and placing signages where they are clearly visible to guests. Actions that may result in a threat must be banned and regular monitoring by the security department and housekeeping team needs to be carried out.

## Security and safety features include:

- Access control is essential. Only authorised guests and staff should be able to access anywhere other than public areas.
- CCTV cameras should be present to monitor all vulnerable areas and detect potential threats.
- Room safety measures include a safe (for valuables), a peephole in the entrance door and a safety door lock (unlock when handle is turned manually).
- In some hotels, guests can access CCTV surveillance of their room from a smartphone or tablet.
- Slip-strips or other slip-proof surfaces are required on bathroom floors.
- Hand rails must be fitted in baths.
- The temperature of the hot water outputs should be regulated at not more than 55 degrees to prevent burns and scalds.
- A hairdryer in the room is the common reason for short circuits and therefore measures need to be exercised to ensure safe wiring and placement.
- Any balcony should be structurally solid and should not have any climb points.
- Windows may be kept closed, or have restricted opening to prevent any accidents. It is up to the hotel whether visitors can open their room windows, and if so, to what degree.
- All in-room safety features should be checked regularly by the housekeeping staff.
- Signs indicating the emergency evacuation route (fire escape) must be put behind the bedroom door, as well as at meeting spots.
- Fire alarms, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, sprinklers, and fire extinguishers must be installed and in excellent working condition. They must be checked on a regular basis and replaced as needed.
- Swimming pools should not be accessible by unaccompanied children, and should have lifebelts or safety flotation devices, and lifeguards and/or signages notifying guests that they swam at their own risk.
- To safeguard against the spread of viruses like Covid, chemicals such as sodium hypochlorite (NaClO) and products based on ethanol should be used while cleaning the floor.

