Fire Safety Policy

PRN-64: Fire Safety Policy
Company Name: AI Auto-Tech Ltd
Trading/Business Name: CAREHOPES
Company Registration Number: 15556946
SIC Code: 88100 – Social Work Activities Without Accommodation for the Elderly and Disabled
Email: admin@carehopes.com
Version Number: V01 20260815
Date of Review: (August 2026)

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1. Policy Introduction

CAREHOPES, the trading name of AI Auto-Tech Ltd, is committed to ensuring the safety of service users, companions, volunteers, and staff in all environments where companionship services are delivered. Fire safety is a critical component of safeguarding, risk management, and operational responsibility.

Companions frequently work in private homes, community settings, and unfamiliar environments. This policy outlines how CAREHOPES prevents, identifies, and responds to fire risks to ensure the safety of all individuals involved.

2. Key Principles

- **Safety first:** Fire safety is a non-negotiable priority.
- **Prevention:** Proactive identification and reduction of fire hazards.
- **Preparedness:** Companions must know how to respond quickly and safely.
- **Awareness:** Understanding fire risks in diverse home environments.
- **Accessibility:** Fire safety information must be clear and easy to follow.
- **Collaboration:** Work with families, carers, and external agencies when needed.
- **Compliance:** Adherence to UK fire safety regulations and best practices.
- **Professional boundaries:** Companions do not perform fire-fighting duties beyond safe evacuation.

3. Policy Statement

CAREHOPES ensures that all companions are trained, equipped, and supported to identify fire risks, respond appropriately to fire emergencies, and protect service users from harm. Companions must follow fire safety procedures, maintain vigilance, and report hazards immediately.

Companions must never:

- Attempt to extinguish large fires
- Enter dangerous environments
- Ignore fire hazards
- Block exits or escape routes
- Use unsafe electrical equipment

4. Purpose

- Protect service users, companions, and families from fire-related harm
- Establish clear fire safety procedures
- Ensure companions can identify and report fire hazards
- Promote safe evacuation practices
- Strengthen compliance with fire safety legislation
- Support multi-agency coordination during emergencies

5. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Agency workers

It covers fire safety in:

- Private homes
- Community settings
- Transport environments
- Overnight companionship
- Holiday companionship
- Digital or remote support contexts (awareness only)

6. Related Policies (Selected ONLY from relevant categories)

Safety, Health & Risk Management

- **PRN-046** Health and Safety Policy
- **PRN-126** Infection Prevention and Control Policy
- **PRN-128** Manual Handling Awareness Policy
- **PRN-069** Risk Assessment Policy
- **PRN-100** Environmental Safety & Home Condition Policy

Safeguarding & Protection

- **PRN-003** Adult Safeguarding Policy
- **PRN-136** Safeguarding Children Policy
- **PRN-144** Child Abuse Policy
- **PRN-070** Safeguarding Reporting and Escalation Procedure

Lone Working & Multi-Agency Work

- **PRN-054** Lone Working Policy
- **PRN-053** Lone Working and Community Visits Procedure
- **PRN-145** Working in Pairs Policy
- **PRN-146** Working with Other Social Workers and Carers Policy
- **PRN-147** Proxy Working Principle

Conduct, Ethics & Behaviour

- **PRN-014** Code of Conduct Policy
- **PRN-015** Code of Ethics
- **PRN-099** Professional Boundaries Policy

Digital & Information Governance

- **PRN-112** Data Protection and GDPR Policy
- **PRN-023** Confidential Information Management Policy
- **PRN-024** Confidentiality Policy

7. Definitions

Fire Hazard: Any condition that increases the likelihood of fire.

Evacuation: Safe movement of individuals away from danger.

Fire Emergency: Any situation involving smoke, fire, or imminent risk requiring immediate action.

DSL: Designated Safeguarding Lead responsible for managing fire-related safeguarding concerns.

8. Companion Responsibilities

8.1 Fire Awareness

Companions must be able to:

- Identify fire hazards
- Recognise unsafe electrical setups
- Notice blocked exits
- Identify flammable materials stored improperly
- Observe smoking risks or oxygen equipment hazards

8.2 Prevention

Companions must:

- Encourage safe practices
- Report hazards immediately
- Avoid using unsafe appliances
- Ensure escape routes remain clear
- Avoid leaving cooking unattended

8.3 Evacuation

In case of fire:

- Stay calm
- Evacuate service users safely
- Avoid lifts
- Do not re-enter the building
- Call emergency services
- Follow the service user's home fire plan if available

8.4 Communication

Companions must:

- Inform the office immediately
- Document the incident
- Support service users emotionally
- Cooperate with emergency responders

8.5 Professional Boundaries

Companions must **not**:

- Fight fires beyond small, manageable flames
- Use fire extinguishers unless trained
- Move heavy furniture
- Perform rescue operations beyond safe capacity

9. Identifying Fire Hazards

Common hazards include:

- Overloaded sockets
- Damaged wiring
- Candles left unattended
- Smoking indoors
- Clutter blocking exits
- Oxygen tanks near flames
- Faulty heaters
- Cooking left unattended
- Excessive use of extension leads

Companions must report hazards immediately.

10. Fire Safety in Different Settings

10.1 Private Homes

- Respect the home environment
- Encourage safe practices
- Identify risks discreetly
- Report concerns sensitively

10.2 Overnight Companionship

- Ensure escape routes are known
- Keep phone charged
- Maintain awareness of fire alarms
- Avoid using high-risk appliances

10.3 Holiday Companionship

- Familiarise with hotel fire exits
- Follow local fire safety rules
- Avoid cooking in unsafe spaces

10.4 Transport

- Ensure vehicles are safe
- Report mechanical issues
- Avoid transporting flammable materials

11. Safeguarding Considerations

Fire safety concerns may indicate:

- Neglect
- Cognitive decline
- Mental health issues
- Domestic abuse
- Environmental risk factors

Companions must report safeguarding concerns immediately.

12. Training Requirements

Companions must receive training in:

- Fire hazard identification
- Safe evacuation
- Emergency communication
- Lone-working fire safety
- Risk assessment

- Safeguarding during fire emergencies

13. Documentation & Record Keeping

Companions must document:

- Fire hazards
- Fire incidents
- Evacuation details
- Safeguarding concerns
- Communication with emergency services

Records must be stored securely.

14. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required due to:

- Legislative changes
- Fire safety updates
- Organisational changes
- Feedback from staff or regulators