



Safety at Sports Grounds Application Procedure for Sports Grounds Safety Certificate

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Application Procedure for Sports Grounds Safety Certificate

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Application Procedure for Sports Grounds Safety Certificate

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A safety certificate is required for spectators to be admitted for sporting or other spectator events within sports grounds. There are two statutes that stipulate that a safety certificate is required for grounds or stands that meet the specific criteria.
- 1.2 The Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 stipulates that a General Safety Certificate is required for sport grounds that are 'Designated' grounds. Under the 1975 Act, a 'Designated Ground' is defined as 'Any sports ground that has accommodation for more than 10,000 spectators, or 5,000 in the case of Premier League and Football League grounds in England and Wales'. It is 'designated' as such by the Secretary of State.
- 1.3 Sports grounds that are not 'Designated' may still require a General Safety Certificate if the Sports Ground provides covered accommodation (stands) and are determined to be a Regulated Stand. Part III of the Fire Safety and Places of Sport Act 1987 requires a General Safety Certificate to be issued for each individual Regulated Stand. Under the 1987 Act, a 'Regulated Stand' is defined as 'Any covered stand with accommodation for 500 or more spectators, whether seating or standing'. The determination calculation for Regulated Stands is outlined in the Home Office Circular 97/88.
- 1.4 Leicestershire County Council ('the Council') is the issuing authority for General Safety Certificates for sports grounds within the County of Leicestershire that are Designated Grounds or have a Regulated Stand.
- 1.5 A Safety Certificate contains terms and conditions as required by the Council, according to the relevant legislation and national guidance, stating the specified activities permitted at the sports ground, maximum capacities allowed and any other specific requirements to ensure public safety.

2.0 Do I require a Safety Certificate?

- 2.1 There are two types of Safety Certificates which are required by law to be issued under the following criteria:
- 2.2 General Safety Certificate
 - a) For the whole ground where a sports ground/stadium holds a designated sporting event (football, rugby, and cricket) and provides accommodation for more than 10,000 spectators (more than 5,000 in the case of association football matches in the Premier League or the Football League). This is known as a Designated Ground under the Safety of Sports Grounds Act 1975 and requires a General Safety Certificate.
 - b) For a stand at any sports ground/stadium which provides covered accommodation in stands for 500 or more spectators (and is not within a designated sports ground as in a) above). Stands that meet these criteria are known as Regulated Stands and require a General Safety Certificate.

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- c) Both these certificates as referred to in both A and B above will contain the specified activities permitted to be held at the ground e.g., football, rugby, speedway, cricket, athletics, motor/horse racing, etc. for an indefinite period and will stipulate the maximum number of spectators allowed. For all other sports grounds/stands a Safety Certificate is not required to be issued.

2.3 Special Safety Certificate

- d) To hold a special one-off event such as set out in the examples below at a designated sports ground/stadium or involve a regulated stand, other than those listed as a specified activity in the General Safety Certificate already in force at a Designated Sports Ground or ground that has a Regulated Stands.

2.4 The special event can be a 'one off' event or a series of events.

2.5 These events might be activities which are in addition to the specified activities listed within the General Safety Certificate, for which a Special Safety Certificate application is required, Examples include:

- The playing of music or singing, or pop concert.
- Any firework, pyrotechnic, special effects, or similar display.
- Carnival, circus, fair, fun day, or similar open day event.
- Any events involving the display or exhibition of vehicles or animals.
- Any other sporting event, apart from the specified activities above, involving
- Track or field, athletics, ball games, physical prowess, or competitions of any description.
- Any other use in addition to a specified activity which may require the prior approval in writing of the Council e.g., public meetings, etc.

2.6 A General Safety Certificate must be already in force for a Designated Ground or a ground that has a Regulated Stand(s) before a Special Safety Certificate can be issued by the Council for this type of event.

2.7 **Note:** The Council only determines applications for General Safety Certificates which do not relate to Designated Grounds.

3.0 The Applicant

3.1 General Safety Certificate

3.1.1 The person to whom the General Safety Certificate is issued will be known as the Holder. Any person can apply for a General Safety Certificate, subject to the following:

- For a designated ground, the holder of the safety certificate should be able to prevent contravention of the terms and conditions of the safety certificate. Prior to issuing the Certificate, this person must provide their name, address, and

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date of birth to the Council, and consent to it being shared with the police to ascertain that the applicant is of good character and would be unlikely to contravene the terms and conditions of the Certificate.

- For a regulated stand(s), the holder of the safety certificate should meet the above criteria and be the person responsible for managing the ground.

3.1.2 In determining to grant the certificate, the Council may make preliminary enquiries and inspections with the applicant, following which the Council will issue its final determination.

3.2 Special Safety Certificate

3.2.1 The Holder of a General Safety Certificate is the person who should apply for a Special Safety Certificate at a Designated Ground.

3.2.2 The person who is responsible for organising the activity is the person who should apply for a special safety certificate at a ground that has Regulated Stand(s).

3.2.3 Where an event promoter wishes to hold an event at a designated ground or regulated stand, they should approach the ground management and seek their consent before applying to the Council.

3.2.4 In the case of an application for a Special Safety Certificate the applicant should give at least 2 months' notice in writing to the Council, preferably more, to allow for site visits etc. before the Certificate is issued. It is important to allow enough time for any conditions on the Certificate to be met before the event takes place.

3.3 Procedure

1. The applicant should decide what type of Certificate is required as detailed above i.e., General Safety Certificate or a Special Safety Certificate.
2. Discuss and agree the event/application with the venue management.
3. Once a decision to proceed has been made, complete the Safety Certificate application form to apply to the Council for a safety certificate. Please complete only the sections relevant to your type of application. The form can be found at on the Leicestershire County Council website.
4. In the case of an application for a Special Safety Certificate, the applicant should give at least 2 months' notice to the Council.
5. In the case of an application for a new General Safety Certificate, the applicant should give at least 4 months' notice to the Council. In the case of a new designated ground, the Council will need to engage with the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport as the Secretary of State is responsible for designated sports grounds in this category – this will take longer than 4 months.
6. The council will review the application and consult with other regulatory bodies such as the Leicestershire Police, Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service, East Midlands Ambulance Service, District or Borough Councils. The council may call Safety

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Advisory Group meetings, arrange site visits, request further documentation before a certificate is approved and issued.

3.4 Appeal

- 3.4.1 Any applicant that is refused a certificate by the Council has a right of appeal against the refusal to a Magistrates Court, within 28 days in the case of a General Safety Certificate and 7 days for a Special Safety Certificate.

3.5 Fees

- 3.5.1 Where a new General or Special Safety Certificate is issued, a fee will be charged for 'commensurate work actually and reasonably done' by the Council. As each application is different, this fee will be discussed with the applicant following receipt of the application form.

3.6 Application time

- 3.6.1 We would encourage any potential applicant to contact the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service to discuss the application and timeframe at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.6.2 Following receipt of a completed application form, the applicant will receive an acknowledgement within 10 working days. This acknowledgement is the start of the application process and does not indicate anything about the eventual outcome of the application.
- 3.6.3 Prior to issue, it is likely to be necessary for application details to be confirmed through dialogue and discussion with the applicant, meeting(s) or onsite inspections where applicable.
- 3.6.4 Following verification of the above to the satisfaction of the Council, a safety certificate will be issued to the applicant. This document will contain such terms and conditions that the applicant will have to abide by to meet the requirements of the certificate.
- 3.6.5 Please note that each application is different, and the time between the commencement of the application process and final issue of the certificate will vary between applicants. However, during this period, contact and dialogue will be maintained between the applicant and the Council, and time allowed for the applicant to carry out any remedial work required.
- 3.6.6 If you have not heard from Leicestershire County Council within the 10 working days of sending in an application, please contact us using the details below.

3.7 Contact

For further information or advice, or applying for a Safety Certificate, contact:

Colin Jones

Call: 0116 3055 515

Email: healthandsafety@leics.gov.uk