FIREPLAN

Guide for apartment associations

Preparing a sheltering plan for an apartment building

The Estonian Crisis Situations and National Defence Act and Government Regulation No. 50 of 8 May 2026 require larger apartment buildings to have a sheltering plan. This guide explains whether the requirement applies to your building, what the plan contains and how to complete it step by step.

1 Jul 2027
Buildings with an occupancy permit must have a sheltering plan (§ 185(13)).

1 Jul 2028
If there is no shelter, a shelter space is adapted where possible.

0.75 m²
of floor area per person in a shelter space, where possible.

1 Does the requirement apply to your building?

A sheltering plan is required for existing buildings that meet the criteria for buildings with a shelter requirement. For apartment buildings, under Annex 1 of the regulation, this means **a building with three or more flats and a net enclosed area of at least 1,200 m²**.

The requirement does not apply to terraced houses or to one- and two-dwelling houses.

> **Where to find the data?** The building use and net enclosed area are in the Estonian building register (ehr.ee). A sheltering plan is required even if sheltering in the building is not possible – the plan then describes how to act in an immediate threat.

2 Key terms

Shelter

A building or part of one built for sheltering, protecting against explosions and blast waves, flying objects and air pollution, including ionising radiation. Mandatory when erecting new buildings; may be built voluntarily in existing ones.

Shelter space

A structure or part of one, or a temporary structure – such as a basement room – adapted for sheltering, protecting at least from objects scattered by an explosion. Intended for stays of up to 12 hours.

Sheltering plan

A document describing the building's sheltering arrangements: assessment of options, layout of the shelter or shelter space, how it is brought into use and the person responsible.

3 Step by step

1 Check the data and appoint a lead

The plan is organised by the building's possessor – in an apartment association, the board.

- Check the building use and net enclosed area in the building register.
- Agree who leads the work and who keeps the plan up to date.

2 Assess sheltering options

Review basement rooms and other rooms that could be suitable for sheltering.

- How many people can be accommodated (at least 0.75 m² per person where possible)?
- How is the room reached, and can people stay there safely?
- A shelter space may be adapted for some of the residents – this is recorded in the plan.

3 Prepare the sheltering plan

The plan describes at least:

- whether the building has a shelter or shelter space, whether it is public or non-public and how many people it is intended for;
- a layout of the shelter or shelter space and the route to it;
- how it is brought into use, step by step: who does what.

4 Adapt a shelter space

If there is no shelter, a shelter space must be adapted where possible by 1 July 2028.

- The Rescue Board's recommendations are on olevalmis.ee ("Varjumiskoha ettevalmistamine").
- For example, it recommends allowing at least 3 litres of water per person per day.

5 Add signage

The shelter space is marked under Annex 2 of the regulation (see section 5).

- For a non-public shelter space, the information panel shows the address.
- Direction signs show the distance to the entrance in metres.

6 Inform residents and keep it current

A plan only helps if residents know about it.

- Share the key information, for example on the stairwell notice board or the association's channels.
- Review the plan whenever the building or the sheltering arrangements change.

4 Example calculation

An apartment building has 48 flats and 110 residents. If the shelter space is planned for all residents, the recommended floor area is:

110 residents	×	0.75 m² per person	=	82.5 m² floor area

If there is not enough suitable space, the plan states how many people can be accommodated and how the others act in an immediate threat.

5 Signage under Annex 2



Example: non-public shelter space sign with the address ("elanikele" = for residents)

The sign has a blue equilateral triangle in the centre of an orange square, with the word "VARJUMISKOHT" (shelter space) below it; the square has a thin white border. The sign and direction signs may be supplemented with a white information panel with blue text.

PROPERTY	REQUIREMENT
Colours	orange #ed7004 (CMYK 0/66/100/0) blue #2a245b (CMYK 100/100/30/22) white #ffffff
Typeface	Tiresias LPfont regular; alternatively Open Sans bold
Material	Reflective material recommended
Information panel	Public place: "AVALIK" (public). Non-public place: the address. Direction sign: as a rule, the distance to the entrance in metres (rounded).
Sizes	Public space: short side as A2, visible up to 100 m Façade: short side as A4, up to 50 m Entrance, protective or shelter space door: short side as A6, up to 15 m

6 Checklist for the board

- [ ] Checked the building use and net enclosed area in the building register
- [ ] Appointed a person responsible for the plan
- [ ] Assessed basement and other rooms
- [ ] Calculated how many people can be accommodated
- [ ] Prepared the sheltering plan (by 1 Jul 2027)
- [ ] Adapted a shelter space where possible (by 1 Jul 2028)
- [ ] Installed signage under Annex 2
- [ ] Informed residents about the plan
- [ ] Agreed when the plan will be reviewed

Fireplan can help

We assess the building on site, propose a shelter space solution, prepare the sheltering plan and signage plan, and hand them over to the association board.

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Sources. Estonian Crisis Situations and National Defence Act (§§ 95–97). Government Regulation No. 50 of 8 May 2026 on buildings required to have a shelter, requirements for shelters and sheltering plans, principles for adapting shelter spaces and the procedure for preparing sheltering plans (RT I, 13.05.2026, 4; version from 1 Oct 2026), Annexes 1 and 2. V1-class shelter design guide RT 103898-et (version 2, 30 Sep 2026). Estonian Rescue Board, olevalmis.ee “Varjumiskoha ettevalmistamine”.

This guide is a general overview as of October 2026 and does not replace legislation. Official texts: riigiteataja.ee (in Estonian).