

Emergency Safety Procedures for Houses of Worship



This manual contains quick reference information and check list procedures on how to report an emergency; what to do; and who will assist you during an emergency.

Emergencies and disasters are unpredictable and strike without warning. Failure to heed emergency preparations in advance could result in death, injury, and potential loss or damage to facilities, property, and equipment.

In the interest of safety, it is important for everybody to review this guide and be familiar with emergency procedures.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Emergency Phone Numbers (All Hours):

Fire Department 911

Police Department 911

Ambulance 911

Cook County DHSEM Duty Officer: 312-603-8180

Suspicious Activity Reporting: 855-777-8274

Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222

Suicide Hotline: 1-800-273-8255

Internal Emergency Contacts:

Organization Leadership

(Name and numbers)

Property Management

(Name and numbers)

Emergency Phone Numbers

Power Failure

In the event of a power failure:

1. If possible, call the Utility Company and advise them of your location and nature of the problem.
2. Assist others in your immediate area who may be unfamiliar with the building.
3. Turn off the equipment such as computers and monitors to avoid potential damage once the power is restored.
4. If you are in a dark area, proceed cautiously outside or to an area that has emergency light.
5. If you are on an elevator. Use the elevator emergency alarm button to alert help.

Remain calm and await further instructions.

Power Failure

Natural Hazard

In the event of severe weather or a tornado warning, it is necessary to remain calm.

1. Move to the basement or as close to the interior of the building as possible.
2. Follow instructions to proceed to the safe areas of the interior if given.
3. Stay away from windows, mirrors, glass and large unsecured objects.
4. Remain in the safe area until an "All-Clear" has been issued.

Natural Hazard

Workplace Violence

Workplace violence include verbal assaults, stalking, threats and physical assaults. If you experience or witness a workplace violence situation do the following:

1. If any kind of weapon is involved or a threat of physical violence, call Police at 911.
2. Remain calm and do not aggravate the situation.
3. Keep as far from the hostile individual(s) as possible.
4. Limit hostile individual(s) access to interior building areas.
5. Save any evidence of threats (i.e. voicemail messages notes and etc).
6. If needed, arrange for a security escort for any threatened individuals when they leave the building.

Types of Threats:

- **Electronic Threats:** Telephones, voicemail, cassette tapes, e-mail etc.
- **Stalking:** Following a person on or off site, repeatedly being in the same area when requested not to, etc.
- **Harassment:** Unwelcome acts, gestures, verbal communication or physical contact not resulting in physical harm.
- **Overheard threats:** Threats overheard which are directed against an employee, visitor, or sabotage to property.

Workplace Violence

Suspicious Material

Suspicious materials can be found by any person at any time. Use these steps to identify whether or not the material might be dangerous.

1. ***Do not touch*** the package.
2. Stay clear of the material/item, advise others in the area to do the same.
3. ***Call 911***, if you believe the suspicious materials can be a harmful agent.
4. Make your leadership immediately aware of item.
5. Follow leadership instructions.
6. When in a safe area, remove any contaminated clothing and wash hands.
7. Inform police of any suspicious individuals in the area where suspicious material/items was found.

Suspicious Material

Medical Emergencies

In the event of an accident or illness to a building occupant or employee, try to ascertain as much information about the inquiry and injured person as possible.

1. Do not attempt to move the person.
2. **Call 911** to request an ambulance.
3. Provide dispatch the following information:
 - Building address
 - Location within the building
 - Any details about the accident or illness
 - Injured person's name
 - Your name
4. Follow dispatcher's medical instructions for first aid.
5. Comfort victim and assure them that medical assistance is on the way.

Be aware of hazards associated with Bloodborne Pathogens. Do not come into contact with bodily fluids.

Fire/Visible Smoke

In the event of a fire visible smoke the following procedures should be adhered to:

1. Pull the fire alarm.
2. Initiate evacuation. **Do not use elevators.**
3. **Call 911** and provide the following information:
 - Building address
 - Your name
 - Location of fire if possible
4. If trained to do so and if possible, attempt to extinguish a small controllable fire.
5. Quickly move from the exit to your designated assembly area, where you will not interfere with Emergency Personnel and we'll be safe from falling debris.
6. Do not attempt to re-enter the building until advised by the Fire Department.

If you smell an unusual odor (electrical, chemical, other) and do not suspect a fire immediately, notify the building maintenance supervisor.

Explosive Devices/Threats

Telephone threats can be received by any person at any time.

Mail bombs or bomb threats may be received by a number of means including standard mail, package delivery service or truck. *Always err on the side of safety.* If you feel that the parcel may indeed be an explosive device, calmly alert individuals in your area to leave quietly and contact security immediately.

- 1.** If you receive a telephone threat, remain calm and attempt to ascertain as much information from the caller as possible.
- 2.** If you receive a telephone threat or suspected dangerous letter/package, call the police at 911.
- 3.** Evacuate the area. Never disturb a suspicious object or package or use cell phones, radios or any other electronic device in the area.
- 4.** Keep this information as confidential as possible, and follow the instructions of the authorities.

Do not re-enter the area until advised by the authorities.

