

[Insert Your Company Logo Here]

Emergency Procedures

IN TIMES OF DISASTERS

[Insert Company Name]

[Insert Date]

Responsible Party: [Insert name]

Provided by



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Introduction

The following sections provide a summary of some of the emergency situations which [insert company name here] may face during business hours. The materials are intended to assist employees in understanding what to expect and how to respond during an emergency. All employees should read these procedures and be familiar with them. Regular review is highly recommended.

Details of any type of incident covered in the following sections should be kept confidential.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, CALL 911.

[Insert contact information of security, if your business has it.]



Special thanks to the Washington SBDC for curating and sharing the Small Business Disaster Preparedness Guide and templates for modification by the Florida SBDC Network. The contents of the guide and templates were compiled from multiple sources including, but not limited to the, Department of Homeland Security, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Institute of Standards and Technology, U.S. Small Business Administration, and DisasterAssistance.gov.

Customized Emergency Procedures for Your Business

These emergency procedures are meant to be customized to best suit your business. Any disasters left out that you think your business could face should certainly be added. This document and OSHA have resources that can help you develop procedures. Spaces with [] are spaces meant to be customized. You should add in additional steps if needed to make these procedures fit your business.

Emergency Procedures are referred to by OSHA as Emergency Action Plans. The minimum requirements for these plans are:

- means of reporting fires and other emergencies;
- evacuation procedures and emergency escape route assignments;
- procedures for employees who remain to operate critical plant operations before they evacuate;
- accounting for all employees after an emergency evacuation has been completed;
- rescue and medical duties for employees performing them; and
- names and job titles of persons who can be contacted.

It is also suggested to have the following:

- a description of the alarm system to be used to notify employees (including disabled employees) to evacuate and/or take other actions;.
- the site of an alternative communications center to be used in the event of a fire or explosion; and
- a secure on- or offsite location to store originals or duplicate copies of accounting records, legal documents, your employees' emergency contacts lists, and other essential records.

Please note: These procedures need to be customized to suit your business. The procedures provided are meant to provide guidance; they are not set in stone.

Infectious Diseases: Outbreak, Epidemic, Pandemic

An infectious disease is an illness caused by the presence of disease-causing agents or germs, including viruses, bacteria, fungi and parasites, and other microbes. These diseases are called communicable diseases or transmissible diseases due to their potential of transmission from one person to another.

1. Assign a person or a team who will be responsible for coordinating actions.

[Insert name/s of responsible individual/s.]

2. Stay informed about the local situation.

3. Implement policies recommended by the CDC to protect workers and others, such as social distancing, flexible sick-leave policies, virtual events, remote working, handwashing practices, daily medical checks, stay at home if sick, travel restrictions, quarantine/isolation policy for those who develop symptoms at work, facility shutdowns, etc.

[Insert policies adopted.]

4. Promote the daily practice of everyday preventive actions at all times. Develop posters and collateral with health messages; share with workers and hang on the walls.

[Insert the list of the health messages and materials that will be developed, how they will be distributed, where they will be hung. Ensure that credible sources are utilized, such as the CDC.]

5. Provide sanitizing supplies such as soap, 60% alcohol hand sanitizer, disposable facemasks, Lysol spray, tissues, gloves, etc.

[Insert supplies that will be provided.]

6. Have a plan for worker absences and ensure you have back up employees to keep your business running.

[Insert plan and back-up employees here.]

7. Have procedures in place in the event an employee comes down with symptoms while at work (e.g. where will the individual wait if they are unable to drive, how will you disinfect, will you have to close down the business to keep others from contracting, etc.).

[Insert procedures here.]

8. Implement your Communication Plan. Share information about how your business is responding to the situation.

Chemical Spills and Chemical Fires

If a chemical spill occurs:

1. If toxic chemicals come in contact with your skin, immediately flush the affected area with clean water for 15 minutes. Use chemical showers, if available.
2. **If possible, have someone call 911 IMMEDIATELY.**

[Insert contact information of security if your office has it.]

3. If there is any possible danger, evacuate the area.
4. Notify your supervisor of the extent and location of the spill, if possible.

If a chemical fire occurs:

1. **If possible, have someone call 911 IMMEDIATELY.**
2. Do not attempt to save possessions at the risk of personal injury.
3. Do not return to the emergency area until instructed to do so by safety personnel.

Power Outage

If a power outage occurs:

1. Contact power company.

[Insert contact information of security, if your office has it. They should be notified of outage.]

2. Look around your current area and note whether any critical equipment is in imminent danger.
3. If you are in an unlighted area, proceed cautiously to an area that has emergency lights (if you have emergency lights).

[If you have emergency lights, describe where they are here.]

4. Provide assistance to people in your immediate vicinity.
5. Turn off computers and other electronic equipment at the power source.
6. If you are in an elevator, stay calm. Attempt to use the emergency alarm. If the power outage has taken this out, remain calm. Help will come.
7. Stand by for instructions by supervisors. If instructed to evacuate, proceed to the appropriate assembly location (see map on last page).

Flooding and Water Damage

Serious water damage can occur from a number of sources: burst pipes, clogged drains, broken skylights or windows, or construction oversights.

If a water leak occurs:

1. Remain calm.
2. If the leak is severe call 911, and notify a supervisor. Advise the exact location and severity of the leak. Indicate whether any supplies, material, or equipment involved is in imminent danger.

[Insert contact information of security, if your office has it.]

3. If there are electrical appliances or electrical outlets near the leak, **use extreme caution**. If there is any possible danger, evacuate the area. **Do not step on standing water**.
4. If you know the source of the water and are confident of your ability to stop it (i.e., unclog the drain, turn off water, etc.), do so cautiously.
5. Be prepared to assist in protecting objects that are in jeopardy. Take only essential steps to avoid or reduce immediate water damage: Cover large objects with plastic sheeting; carefully move small or light objects out of the emergency area.

Medical Emergencies

When you observe a person who appears to be seriously ill or injured:

1. **Call 911.**

[Insert contact information of security, if your office has it.]

2. Do not touch the accident site. The Police Department may need to investigate.
3. Personnel certified in First Aid will respond and determine if First Aid or additional treatment is necessary.

[Someone in your office should be certified in first aid for this emergency. Insert name here.]

4. After emergency personnel are called, send someone to the entrance of the building to meet the emergency personnel and guide them to the ill or injured person.
5. Unless it is a life-threatening situation or you are trained in First Aid, do not attempt to render any First Aid yourself before personnel certified in First Aid arrive.
6. Do not attempt to move a person who has fallen and appears to be in pain.
7. Avoid unnecessary conversation with or about the ill or injured person, or members of his/her party. You might increase the person's distress or fears and thereby contribute to medical shock. Limit your communication to quiet reassurances.
8. Do not discuss the possible cause of an accident or any conditions that may have contributed to the cause. Do not spread rumors.
9. After the person's needs have been taken care of, and the incident is concluded, remain-on-site to assist the investigating personnel or supervisors with pertinent information for the report.
10. See biohazards page for more information.

Earthquake

Florida is tied for first place as having the fewest earthquakes of any U.S. state. Because Florida is not located near any tectonic plate boundaries, earthquakes are very rare, but not totally unknown.

If an earthquake occurs:

1. Remain calm.
2. Drop to the floor. Cover yourself. Crawl under a table or desk away from windows. Hold on to your shelter. Place your head between your knees to protect your face from flying glass or debris.
3. Stay where you are. Do not enter or exit a building during shaking.
4. Stay away from windows, mirrors, overhead fixtures, filing cabinets, bookcases, and electrical equipment.
5. Do not use matches, lighters, candles, or electrical switches. Use flashlights.
6. If an evacuation is ordered, proceed to the appropriate assembly location (see map on the last page).
7. Do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in obvious immediate danger (of fire, building collapse, etc.).
8. Open doors carefully. Watch for falling objects.
9. Do not use elevators.
10. Avoid using telephones except to report severe emergencies.
11. Do not spread rumors.
12. Inform emergency/rescue personnel of the location of any trapped person(s).

Bomb/Explosion

Chemical accidents, bombs, faulty broilers, or even motor vehicles could all be the cause of life-endangering explosions.

If a bomb/explosion occurs:

1. Remain calm. **Call 911.**

[Insert contact information of security, if your office has it.]

2. Be prepared for possible further explosions.
3. Leave, if possible.
4. If unable to leave, crawl under a table or desk.
5. Stay away from windows, mirrors, overhead fixtures, filing cabinets, bookcases, heavy objects, and electrical equipment.
6. If evacuation is ordered, proceed to the appropriate assembly area (see evacuation map on the last page).
7. Do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in obvious immediate danger (of fire, building collapse, etc.).
8. Open doors carefully. Watch for falling objects.
9. Do not use elevators.
10. **Do not use matches or lighters.**
11. Do not spread rumors.
12. Be prepared for fire or power failure to follow explosions.

Fire

If a fire occurs in your area:

1. Remain calm.
2. Notify the Fire Department @ **911 IMMEDIATELY**. Provide your name and location of the fire. If it is a safe location, stay on the line with the dispatcher until told you may hang up.

[Insert contact information of security if your office has it.]

[Is there someone else your business should contact, perhaps a landlord or close neighbor?]

3. If the fire is small, you may attempt to put it out with a fire extinguisher if you have been properly trained. Do not jeopardize your personal safety.
4. Know alternative exits from your work area. Never allow the fire to come between you and the exit.
5. Evacuate your area if you are unable to put out the fire. Close doors behind you to confine the fire. Proceed to the appropriate assembly location (see map on the last page).
6. Do not break windows unless it is the **ONLY** means of escape. Oxygen feeds a fire.
7. If opening a door seems unavoidable, use the back of your hand to feel the top of the door, the doorknob, and the crack between the door and the doorframe to make sure that the fire is not on the other side. If it feels hot, use your secondary escape route. Even if the door feels cool, open it carefully. If the door is hot, or if smoke is visible, do not open the door. If you have to move through a burning or smoke filled area stay low to the ground. Use a damp cloth to breathe through if it is available.
8. Do not use elevators.
9. Do not attempt to save possessions at the risk of personal injury.
10. Do not return to the emergency area until instructed to do so by safety personnel.
11. If you hear an evacuation alarm, proceed to the appropriate assembly location (see map on the last page).

Workplace Violence

When confronted with a problem person:

1. Get assistance from a colleague when in doubt regarding your safety. If the person verbalizes or engages in any physical violence, have someone call **911 immediately**.

[Insert contact information of security, if your office has it.]

2. Be calm and polite, but firm. Maintain an outward appearance of composure. This helps defuse tension.
3. Separate the person/co-worker from others, but remain in the public eye; get help from other employees.
4. Evaluate the situation and think carefully before responding.
5. Try to remain attentive, concerned, and avoid using a tone of voice that is loud, condescending, or moralistic. Empathize with the patron; acknowledge their feelings.
6. Listen carefully for clues as to the person's/co-worker's motivation and likely causes of behavior.
7. Use "we" rather than "I" or "they" when explaining rules. Remember you are speaking for [insert business name here] when dealing with patrons/co-workers.
8. Do not argue with the person. Don't be sidetracked into their personal issues such as deadlines. Suggest alternatives. If their complaint is legitimate, do something immediately to rectify the situation such as referring them to a supervisor or other authority.
9. Be firm and consistent when explaining your position.
10. Don't physically touch, crowd, or confront a person/co-worker.
11. Be aware of your surroundings. Do not let the patron/co-worker put you in a corner or position from which you can't flee. Keep the person/co-worker at least a leg-length away so they can't reach you.
12. The **last resort** in some situations is self-defense. Florida State law permits the "justifiable use of force" in certain circumstances (Title XLVI CRIMES, Chapter 776).

Threats, Bomb Threats & Suspicious Objects

If you receive a threatening telephone call or letter or receive a suspicious parcel or discover a suspicious object somewhere on the premises, follow these procedures.

If you receive a telephone threat:

1. Remain calm.
2. Follow instructions on the Bomb Threat Card kept beside your telephone.
[Have to have one of these.]
3. Listen carefully. Be polite and show interest. Try to keep the caller talking, so that you can gather more information.
4. **Trap the call.**
[Trapping a call only applies if you have this service. Phone companies offer it for a fee. By pressing *57 during a call, the caller's information will be immediately sent to the police. If you have this, indicate here.]
 1. **During the call, press *57.**
 2. After you hang up from the caller, then
 3. Call the police at **911** IMMEDIATELY to report the threat.
[Insert contact information of security, if your office has it.]
5. Complete the Bomb Threat card on both sides as quickly as possible.
[again have to have one of these>
6. Try to get the attention of other staff members to help you.
7. If Evacuation is ordered, proceed to the appropriate assembly location (See map on last page).

If you receive a written threat or suspicious parcel, or find a suspicious object anywhere on the premises:

1. Keep anyone from going near it or handling it.
2. Call **911**.
3. If an evacuation is ordered, proceed to the appropriate assembly location (see map on last page).
4. Promptly write down everything you can remember about receiving the letter or parcel or finding the object. This information will be needed by the police interviewers.
5. Remain calm. Do not discuss the threat with other staff members. Do not spread rumors.

Biohazards

Biohazardous agents are bacteria, viruses, or parasites which cause disease. These could be body fluids such as blood or vomit.

If you are exposed to biohazards:

1. If human blood and/or body fluids are encountered, DO NOT CLEAN THEM UP.
2. Contact your supervisor.

[Insert phone number here.]

[Insert contact information of security, if your office has it.]

3. Secure the area to the best of your ability without touching anything contaminated. Your supervisor can help access the needs for the clean-up.
4. If direct skin contact with blood/body fluids does occur, immediately wash the affected skin with hot water and soap, and report it to your supervisor.
 - a. If the skin area is intact (no cuts, abrasions, etc.) this is not considered an “exposure” and there is no danger of being infected with a pathogen.
 - b. If the affected skin area does have cuts, abrasions, etc., a post-exposure evaluation should be performed immediately.
5. Personnel who injure themselves and cause a blood spill should clean up the spill themselves, if possible, with a 10% bleach solution.

Person with Weapon/Gun

If you observe someone with a weapon:

1. Call 911 immediately.
2. If you observe someone whom you believe might be in possession of a weapon, you may still want to call 911. Trust your instincts and do the following:

[Insert contact information of security, if your office has it.]

3. Observe at a distance and remember or jot down unique or significant information that is available to you.
4. Be prepared to provide the following information to the police department:
 - a. A description of the person you are viewing.
 - b. Distinguishing characteristics such as mustache, ear rings, tattoos, or scars.
 - c. A detailed description of the clothing worn by the person.
 - d. A description of the person's mode of transportation and license number if available.
 - e. A description of the weapon seen and how it was seen or used or why you believe the person may be involved.
 - f. Under no circumstances should you confront a person who you believe to be armed.
 - g. Do not look the person directly in the eye.
5. If you are in harms' way of a person with a weapon, you should take cover as quickly as possible, such as behind doors, under furniture, etc. If you are outside a building, try to move away from the situation as quickly as possible and take cover. **Call 911** as soon as you have access to a phone.

Building Evacuations: Employee Procedures

In advance, each staff person should:

1. Understand this evacuation plan.
2. Recognize the sound of the evacuation alarm.
3. Know at least **two** ways out of the building from your regular workspace, and practice using those exits.

When you hear the evacuation alarm or are told to evacuate the building:

1. Remain calm.
2. Leave quickly.
3. Floor captains present in each department shall be responsible for ensuring all members of their department evacuate the area. In addition, every employee should check all others in that workspace are leaving as instructed.
[A floor captain should be designated to responsible for the evacuation of different areas of your office, their names should be listed here. The floor captains need to be well-versed in their responsibilities.]
4. As the floor captains exit, they should quickly check nearby restrooms, copier rooms, closets, etc.
5. Accompany and assist disabled persons and any co-worker who appears to need calm direction or assistance. If disabled person(s) are unable to leave the building, please assist them.
6. If you are at a work station, take personal items such as keys, purse and/r briefcase, and coat. Don't attempt to take large heavy objects or attempt to save possessions at the risk of personal injury.
7. Shut all doors behind you as you go. Closed doors can slow the spread of fire, smoke, and water.
8. Do not use elevators, but proceed as quickly as possible, in an orderly manner, to stairways.
9. Hold handrails when you are walking on stairs.
10. Do not push or shove.
11. Once out of the building, move out of the structure.
12. Go to the appropriate assembly location (see map on the last page).
13. Meet with other members of your department and remain in the assembly location. Wait for further instructions.

Assembly Locations

[This is where a picture of your offices and spaces around it should be provided. The map should be clear to where the assembly locations are designated.]

[This could also include a map of your offices with multiple routes to exits.]