

EMERGENCY EVACUATION GUIDE

Version	Date	Comments
1	December, 2009	Initial <i>Emergency Evacuation Guide</i>
2	July, 2012	Routine review
3	January, 2013	Routine review
4	February, 2015	Routine review

A. INTRODUCTION

This Guide is designed to help familiarize university employees and students with building emergency evacuation procedures. This guide should be used in conjunction with other guides such as the *Unit Fire Safety Plan*, *Power Outage and Utility Failure Guide*, and *Suspicious Package Guide*.

B. SCOPE

The fire alarm system will serve as the primary notification system used to initiate a building evacuation. During an active shooter scenario, severe weather, or earthquake, building occupants should seek shelter until instructed to exit the building by first responders or until safety permits a safe exit.

Whenever a fire alarm is activated, all individuals must begin exiting the building and proceed to the Designated Assembly Area(s). It is against the law to not vacate a building during a fire alarm. For additional information about fire safety please refer to the *George Mason University Fire Safety Plan* and *Unit Fire Safety Plan* on the Environmental Health and Safety Office (EHS) web site (ehs.gmu.edu).

C. EMERGENCY EXIT ROUTES

Emergency exit route signs are posted in conspicuous locations throughout university buildings. Each sign identifies primary exit routes, alternate exit routes, fire safety equipment, and Designated Assembly Areas. Emergency exit route signs also provide the building's physical address and name. Students, faculty, and staff should familiarize themselves with primary and alternate exit routes and Designated Assembly Areas for the building(s) in which they work.

D. DESIGNATED ASSEMBLY AREAS

Designated Assembly Areas are locations outside of a building in close proximity to emergency exits that are used to assemble and account for building occupants following an evacuation. Designated Assembly Areas are used to ensure that evacuees remain a safe distance from the building during an emergency, do not interfere with emergency response operations, and to facilitate communication during an emergency.

Each unit or department should complete the following table to identify the Designated Assembly Areas for your work area and review this information with faculty and staff to ensure that they are familiar with evacuation procedures. EHS has conducted a survey of campus to identify and Designate Assembly Areas. For a complete list of Designated Assembly Areas, please visit the [Fire Safety Programs](http://ehs.gmu.edu) web page on EHS web site (ehs.gmu.edu).

Unit/Department Information	
Unit:	
Campus:	
Building:	
Area Location	
Primary Designated Assembly Area:	
Alternate Designated Assembly Area:	
Comments/Additional Information	
Completion Date: _____	Review Date: _____

Alternate Designated Assembly Areas: In the event that the Designated Assembly Areas are unavailable, select an appropriate place to assemble until emergency response personnel arrive. Alternate Designated Assembly Areas should meet the following conditions and be identified in the form above:

- At least 50 feet away from the building;
- Upwind from the building to avoid any possible smoke/fume inhalation;
- Sheltered, if possible, to protect against the elements; and
- Away from fire lanes or other areas that must remain unobstructed to allow emergency response personnel and vehicles access to the building.

E. AREAS OF ASSISTANCE

An Area of Assistance is a location in a building that, due to its construction, offers protection from fire or damage and can provide temporary shelter for individuals unable to exit a building until emergency response personnel arrive. Accepted Areas of Assistance include enclosed stairwell landings, exterior rooms with windows and fire-rated doors, elevator lobbies, and “fire rated” corridors. All Areas of Assistance must be approved by EHS. For help identifying Areas of Assistance, please contact EHS.

Complete the following table to identify the Areas of Assistance for your work area and review this information with faculty and staff to ensure that they are familiar with these locations. Depending on the specific area that your unit occupies, more than one Area of Assistance may be required. Each Primary Area of Assistance should have at least one Alternate Area of Assistance associated with it in the event the primary location is not available during an emergency. Identify Primary and Alternate Areas of Assistance on the form below:

Unit Areas of Assistance	
Unit:	
Campus:	
Building:	
Area Location	
Primary Area of Assistance:	
Alternate Area of Assistance:	
Alternate Area of Assistance:	
Comments/Additional Information	
Completion Date: _____	Review Date: _____

F. GENERAL EVACUATION PROCEDURES

To prepare individuals for possible building evacuations, supervisors, faculty, and staff should ensure that employees and students are familiar with:

- Building fire alarm features and other evacuation signals
- Assigned duties, if any, in the event of an alarm or emergency
- Primary and alternate evacuation routes
- Designated Assembly Areas
- Areas of Assistance
- Procedures for personnel accountability using staff roster, etc.
- Procedures for reporting missing employees to first responders
- Other work area specific procedures related to emergency evacuation

The following procedures should be followed when a building must be evacuated:

- If you become aware of a dangerous situation that warrants an evacuation, activate the fire alarm by using a manual pull station.

- Notify University Police by dialing 911 from a university landline phone or (703) 993-2810 from any phone and report the situation and associated details if known.
- Do not use elevators during a fire or evacuation.
- Assist individuals with special needs and those unfamiliar with evacuation procedures. See Section E and H of this Guide for more information on evacuation procedures for individuals with special needs.
- Exit the building by way of the nearest exist.
- Assemble at the Designated Assembly Area (see section D of this Guide) and await further instruction from emergency response personnel.
- Report missing persons to emergency response personnel.
- Do not re-enter the building until authorized to do so by University Police or emergency response personnel.

Maps and location information identifying Designated Assembly Areas for each building are provided on fire evacuation signage posted throughout university buildings and are available upon request from EHS.

G. STUDENT RESIDENTS

When the fire alarm sounds, residents must immediately evacuate the building, report to the Designated Assembly Area, attempt to report to their Resident Advisor (RA), and follow the instructions of emergency response personnel and/or Office of Housing and Residence Life (OHRL) staff. Residents who do not evacuate in a timely manner, or fail to adhere to instructions given by emergency personnel and/or OHRL staff, may be subject to disciplinary action. Residents are responsible for their guests while in the residence halls and should familiarize guests with fire alarm and evacuation procedures.

To aid in the safety of resident individuals with access or functional needs, either permanent or temporary, residents should report their needs or conditions to their Area Director and RA. A list of residents who may require assistance when evacuating is provided to University Police and City of Fairfax Fire & Rescue to adequately prepare for special rescue, if necessary.

Residents with access or functional needs who are unable to safely exit a building during an emergency evacuation must follow these procedures:

- Remain in your room, close the door and windows, and contact University Police by dialing 911 from a university landline phone or 703-993-2810 from any phone.
- Inform University Police that you are an individual with an access or functional need and that there is a fire alarm sounding in your building. Provide your name, building name, floor, room number, and state that you need assistance evacuating the building.
- The dispatcher will inform the responding University Police Officers and/or fire department of your location.
- If you are in a room other than your own, a common area, or bathroom when the alarm occurs, remain in place and follow the steps outlined in the previous bullets.

- Many buildings have Areas of Assistance; see section E of this guide. Individuals with access or functional needs are encouraged to know these areas and occupy them during an evacuation when possible. For help identifying an Area of Assistance contact EHS.
- If safety permits, remain in your room until assistance arrives.

H. PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Persons with access or functional needs may have difficulty evacuating a building without assistance. Student residents must follow the general procedures outlined in Section H of this guide. Individuals who are mobility challenged and unable to exit the building should proceed to the Areas of Assistance to await aid from emergency response personnel, see section E of this Guide. The following procedures are acceptable alternatives for employees, students, and visitors with special needs:

Evacuation Assistant: An *Evacuation Assistant* is a volunteer, co-worker, classmate, suite mate, or friend who can lend assistance to individuals with access or functional needs during an emergency. *Evacuation Assistants* provide instruction during an evacuation, help individuals with access or functional needs relocate to Areas of Assistance, notify first responders or emergency personnel of individuals with access or functional needs that are unable to evacuate a building, and provide support as necessary to ensure a safe evacuation. *Evacuations Assistants* are NOT responsible for physically evacuating an individual from a building. Carrying a person down a set of stairs or out of a building should only be done by trained emergency response personnel.

Mobility Challenged: Individuals who are mobility challenged should use horizontal evacuation or relocate to an Area of Assistance. Mobility challenged individuals and their *Evacuation Assistants*, if identified, are encouraged to know the Areas of Assistance for their work area (see section E of this guide) and go to these locations during an evacuation when possible. The *Evacuation Assistant* should then self-evacuate and immediately relay the location of the mobility challenged person(s) to emergency response personnel. Persons occupying an Area of Assistance should call 911 and provide their exact location to the dispatcher.

Hearing Impaired: An *Evacuation Assistant(s)* should be designated or selected to immediately alert a person with a hearing impairment of any alarm or order to evacuate.

Visually Impaired: Individuals with visual impairment should be familiar with their immediate surroundings, frequently traveled routes, and emergency evacuation routes. However, since an evacuation route may be different from a commonly traveled route, a visually impaired person may need assistance. *Evacuation Assistant(s)* should be identified and provide assistance as necessary during an evacuation.

I. ACCOUNTABILITY

Immediately following an evacuation, occupants should attempt to identify missing persons and relay the names and suspected location to first responders.

J. EMERGENCY EVACUATION AND FIRE DRILLS

Emergency evacuation and fire drills are required for most university buildings, depending upon occupancy and use, and must be conducted in accordance with the Virginia State Wide Fire Prevention Code and International Fire Code. All emergency evacuation drills are scheduled and conducted by EHS. The frequency and required participation of fire drills is as follows:

Group or Occupancy	Frequency	Examples
Assembly Buildings Group A	Quarterly	Patriot Center, Center for the Arts, Johnson Center
Educational / Business Group B	Annually	Innovation Hall, Research I, Thompson Hall
Adult and Child Care Group E	Monthly	Child Development Center
Residence Halls Group R-2	Four Annually	Northern Neck, Commonwealth Hall, Wilson Hall