



DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING YOUR  
**EMERGENCY  
PROCEDURES  
PLAN**

**Guidelines and Roles for the Emergency  
Procedures Teams**

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**APPLICABLE TO:** STATE OF VERMONT EXECUTIVE BRANCH EMPLOYEES  
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## PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Department of Buildings and General Services (BGS) of the Agency of Administration is committed to providing State employees with the necessary training and competencies to react appropriately when any emergency arises in the workplace.

In accordance with 29 V.S.A. (Vermont Statutes Annotated) §§ 171; Responsibility for Security:

“(a) The Commissioner of Buildings and General Services shall be responsible for ensuring the security of all State facilities, ...the lands upon which those facilities are located, and the occupants of those facilities and places...”

“(b) The Commissioner of Buildings and General Services shall develop a security plan for each facility, except for those under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and of the Sergeant at Arms, and shall regularly update these plans as necessary and be responsible for coordinating responses to all security needs...”

“(e) ...the Commissioner of Buildings and General Services is responsible for the protection of State facilities, the lands upon which the facilities are situated, and the occupants of those facilities, which is vital to sustaining the essential services of government in an emergency. The Commissioner shall develop plans for continuity of government and continuity of operations as an addendum to the State emergency operations plan maintained by the Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management...”

The Department of Buildings and General Services has tasked the Office of Security to:

1. Provide leadership in coordination with agencies and departments to develop all State security plans, policies, and protocols, update plans as necessary, and coordinate responses to all security needs.
2. Serve as the single point of contact for all State Agencies and Departments to receive reports of threats to the safety or security of State personnel and facilities, assess threats, determine appropriate protective measures, and coordinate the implementation of protective measures.
3. Develop procedures and provide training for emergency drills at State buildings. Create and communicate a framework to establish and maintain a Facility Safety Committee and an Emergency Procedures Plan (EPP) for each State office building. Provide training and guidance in the development of procedures to ensure the completion of training and participation in emergency drills by all State employees assigned to each State office building at least annually.

For questions or concerns on any element of the content presented in this booklet, please contact:

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## OVERVIEW

Each State of Vermont building shall have a Facility Safety Committee who is responsible for the development and maintenance of an Emergency Procedures Plan (EPP). The Office of State Security will provide leadership and technical guidance to assist in this effort. Once created and exercised, this EPP will provide all-hazards guidance intended to preserve life, protect property, and manage an incident in order to continue the State's mission essential services.

An emergency incident is defined as "an occurrence or event, natural or human-caused, which requires a response to protect life and/or property." An emergency incident may cause a significant disruption of normal State business in all or a portion of the State. Emergency incidents can range from a small utility failure or criminal act that can be managed locally to a major winter storm, flood event, or chemical/biological release that may exceed internal capabilities and requires external response support.

These guidelines and roles for developing your EPP establish an incident management structure for managing emergency incidents. *Nothing in this guidance, or any element thereof, should be construed as limiting the use of good judgment and common sense in matters not foreseen or addressed here.*

## THE EMERGENCY PROCEDURES PLANNING PROCESS

Ideally, before the process can begin for an Agency, department, or building, all employees should take the *Emergency Procedures for the Individual State Employee* training found online in the State of Vermont Learning Management System. This will establish a foundation of knowledge in understanding the State's concept in managing an emergency event affecting State employees and how individual employees should react.

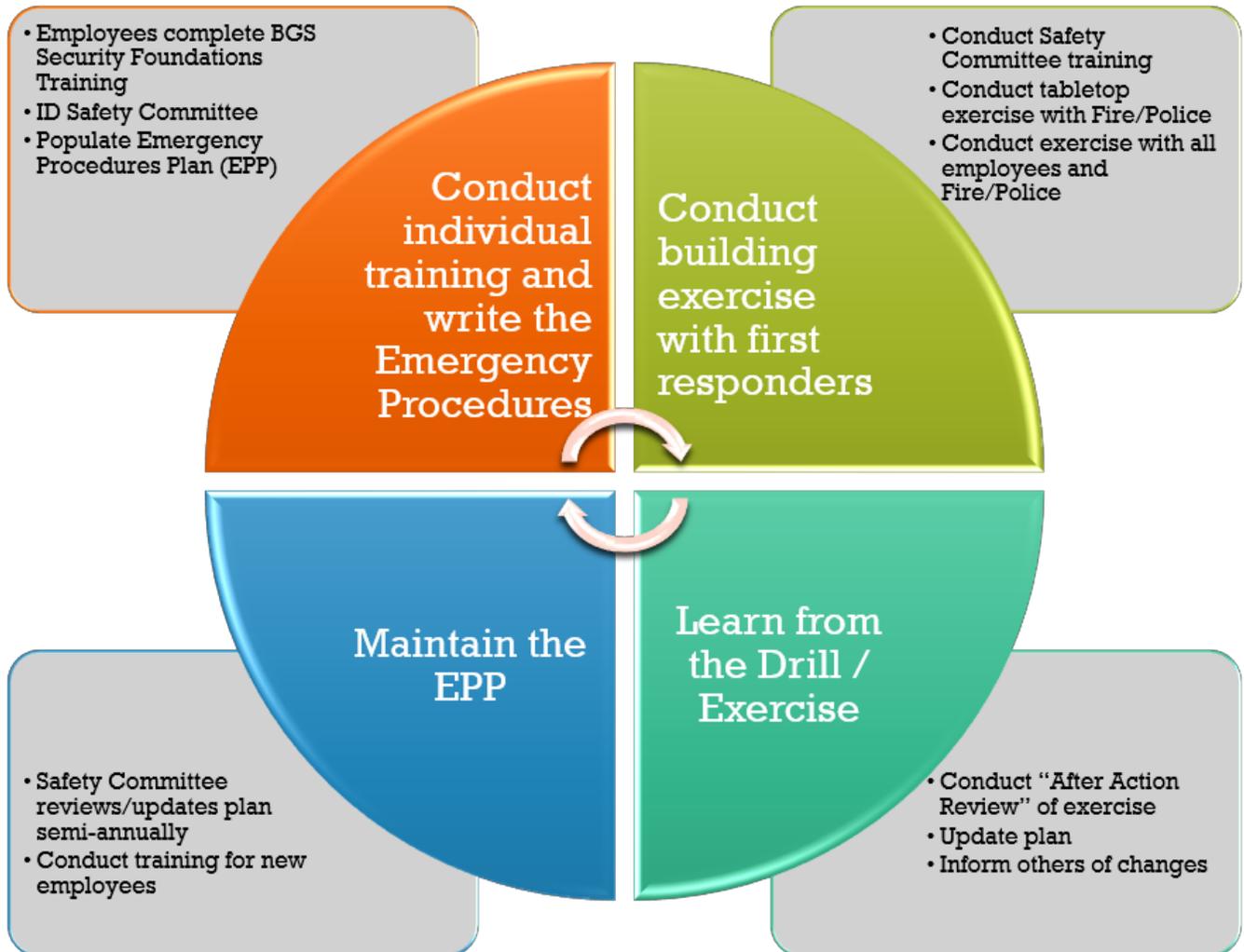
**Phase 1:** The leadership for each State office building will designate certain employees to serve in positions as the Emergency Coordinating Manager, Safety Wardens, and other positions as necessary who will serve as a Facility Safety Committee. If the building has multiple State organizations as tenants, all of the organizations will have members on the Committee. With assistance and technical guidance from the Office of State Security, this committee will create a single Emergency Procedures Plan (EPP) specific to the building that the Committee occupies. The Office of State Security will ensure the drafted EPP includes the response requirements and expectations of law enforcement and fire/medical officials geographically local to the State Office Building. The training of the emergency procedures planning process to building employees will occur during this phase of the planning process.

**Phase 2:** With assistance from the Office of State Security, the Facility Safety Committee will conduct a “tabletop exercise” with local police, fire, and/or medical first responders to improve and validate the plan and collectively educate all involved in the plan. Once validated by the tabletop exercise, they will conduct a drill during business hours.



**Phase 3:** Once the drill is complete, the Facility Safety Committee will incorporate lessons learned to improve and update the EPP.

**Phase 4:** The Facility Safety Committee, with support from the Designated Official, will meet at least semi-annually and review the EPP to ensure all information remains accurate. Annual training opportunities for all employees will continue throughout the year.



## FACILITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

A highest-ranking supervisor, usually the Agency Secretary or Department Commissioner, will designate themselves or select a subordinate supervisor to act as the Designated Official (DO) as described below. The DO will then select individuals within the building to fulfill the role of Emergency Coordination Manager (ECM) and Safety Wardens (SW). The DO will coordinate these efforts with the other tenant organizations in the same building. These individuals form the building's "Facility Safety Committee".



The Facility Safety Committee (FSC) is composed of at least one representative from every department that occupies a specific State building (leased or owned). Each of the departmental representatives shall act as a liaison between their department and the FSC. The FSC is specific to one building not a department or agency.

### **The Facility Safety Committee protects the employees in their building by:**

- Convening, at a minimum, twice annually and within 30 days after occupancy or an alteration in the floorplan.
- Appointing a primary and alternate Emergency Coordinating Managers (ECM).

Developing and maintaining the building's EPP in conjunction with the Office of State Security and local emergency First Responders.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES PLAN

The Emergency Procedures Plan (EPP) addresses natural and man-made emergencies which may threaten life-safety and may occur in or around your building. Awareness, planning, and training for all employees are critical components of effective security management during an emergency.

### **Key aspects of the EPP include:**

- Pre-designated Evacuation Rally Points outside the building.
- When and how to evacuate the building.
- Procedures for notifying local emergency first responders of an emergency.
- Procedures for Shelter-In-Place and Secure-In-Place.
- Procedures for reacting to an active shooter/hostile threat.
- Any unique hazards located in the building where you work.

## DESIGNATED OFFICIAL

The Designated Official (DO) is the highest-ranking State official of the primary or largest Agency or Department occupant located in a State Office Building. The DO may or may not be located at the facility/building.

The DO provides leadership and oversight to ensure all three phases of emergency procedures planning are completed and that employees are trained and prepared for an emergency incident. In accomplishing this, the DO will facilitate communication flow between all organizations that occupy the building, including non-state tenants.

### THE SPECIFIC DUTIES OF THE DESIGNATED OFFICIAL:

#### Before an Emergency Incident:

- Communicates with the leadership of all tenant organizations within the building.
- Ensures the Facility Safety Committee (FSC) is properly staffed and meets at least semi-annually.
- Ensures all FSC members are properly trained on their duties and the Emergency Procedures Plan (EPP).
- Ensures all State employees who work in the building are fully trained in their respective roles and responsibilities.
- Ensures maximum participation in the building's exercises and drills.
- Observes or participates in building exercises and drills, when available.

#### During an Emergency Incident:

- Makes the decision to activate the Emergency Procedures Plan, in concert with the ECM.
- If on scene during an emergency, wears a blue vest.
- Approves all building-wide security alerts, ensuring they are disseminated to all tenant employees and participating subcontractors located in the State building.
- Alerts executive leadership to emergency incidents, as appropriate.
- Provides any assets/resources required by the on- scene Emergency Coordinating Manager.
- As needed, provides the appropriate State Public Information Officer (PIO) with updates.



# EMERGENCY COORDINATING MANAGER

The Emergency Coordinating Manager (ECM) coordinates the emergency preparedness and planning efforts in a state occupied building. When a building is occupied by multiple Departments/Agencies, building-wide communications can be difficult during an emergency event. The ECM acts as liaison to local First Responders.

The ECM disseminates pertinent emergency preparedness information and plans throughout their building. In addition, they provide local emergency first responders with a single, knowledgeable point of contact who can assist in contacting appropriate departmental personnel and state officials during an emergency.

An Alternate ECM should fulfill the same role.

## THE SPECIFIC DUTIES OF THE ECM INCLUDE:

### Before an Emergency Incident:

- Chairs the Facility Safety Committee (FSC).
- Is the point of contact for safety and emergency preparedness information; receives and monitors emergency communications as provided; and distributes relevant information to the building occupants.
- Coordinates the development of and maintains the EPP with the Facility Safety Committee.
- Coordinates annual exercises and drills.
- Coordinates with the Office of State Security on emergency exercises or drills as necessary.
- Ensures the Alternate ECM is trained to ensure a continuity of effort in case of absence during an incident.

### During an Emergency Incident:

- Makes the decision to activate the Emergency Procedures Plan, in concert with the DO if available.
- Wears the orange vest.
- Disseminates all building-wide security, weather, and other emergency alerts.
- If the building does not have a fire alarm system, coordinates emergency notification procedures to support evacuation as needed.
- Conducts accountability of all State employees and other occupants once at the Evacuation Rally Point.
- Reports any injuries or fatalities to First Responders and State leadership.
- Serves as the liaison between First Responders and building occupants.
- Conducts timely notifications and updates to State leadership of a developing incident.



## RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT FOR THE ECM COULD INCLUDE:

- Orange Vest with “ECM” listed on the front and back
- Emergency backpack
- Cell phone
- Phone charging cord
- List of important telephone numbers and contact names
- Hard copy of the Emergency Procedures Plan (EPP)
- Copies of the floorplan of the building (all floors)
- Clipboard, pen, and paper
- Magic marker
- Flashlight
- Roll of Caution Tape
- Roll of duct tape
- First aid items
- Colored and white “chem light” glow sticks
- Megaphone (only for larger employee populations)
- Whistle
- Master keys/key card
- Cold/wet weather clothing
- Handheld two-way radio
- Any additional items that aid in the ECM’s duties



Coordinate with the Office of State Security to purchase vests and radios.

## SAFETY WARDENS

Safety Wardens (SW) are volunteers within the building that provide leadership to personnel on their floor/wing/section during an emergency or other incident requiring employee movement. Buildings with less than 15 employees and in a single-story building are not necessarily required to fill this position. Buildings with multiple floors and/or sections/wings should identify one Safety Warden per floor/wing/section/cluster.



The Safety Warden guides occupants out of the building, performs a visual sweep of the area as they evacuate and reports the status of the evacuation to their ECM (i.e. were there any people with disabilities or injuries and where they were located).

Personal safety is of the utmost importance. Safety Wardens should not place themselves at risk. Rather, they should note any issues during evacuation to report them to the after they have safely evacuated the building. A Safety Warden will never reenter a building once evacuated nor allow others to reenter.

## THE SPECIFIC DUTIES OF THE SAFETY WARDENS INCLUDE:

### Before an Emergency Incident

- Serves as a member of the Facility Safety Committee.
- Becomes knowledgeable of all aspects of the building's Emergency Procedures Plan.
- Assists in the training of all State employees and contractors that work in your section.
- Obtains and maintains rosters of staff employees within their assigned floor/section/wing.

### During an Emergency Incident

- Wears the yellow "SW" vest.
- Quickly sweeps the area and alerts occupants that evacuation is required.
- Knocks loudly on doors, informing occupants to evacuate.
- Closes open doors while evacuating the building. This aids in containing the fire, smoke, and heat.
- Instructs any lingering occupants to evacuate the building. If persons refuse to exit, notify the ECM once outside the building.
- Instructs occupants to use the stairwells, not the elevators, to evacuate the building.
- Conducts an accountability of all personnel at the Evacuation Rally Point.
- Coordinates with the ECM at the Evacuation Point and reports pertinent emergency information, any injuries, and employee accountability results.



## BUILDING SAFETY ALERTS

The DO is responsible for developing a facility communications plan. This plan can include the use of email, phone trees, public address systems, text messages, or VTAAlert.

Safety alerts shall be disseminated by the DO and/or ECM to all employees, in all Agencies, Departments, and Divisions located in the building where the alert is issued. The Office of State Security and Department of Human Resources (DHR) must also receive the safety alerts as they are issued.

In the event of an emergency, the DO (or their designee) will issue a safety alert when it's safe to do so. They will inform facility occupants of the nature of the emergency and what action to take.

Safety alerts which are deemed to be appropriate to disseminate beyond a single building to an entire Department or Agency shall be first approved for dissemination by the Commissioner or

Secretary of the requesting Department or Agency. These expanded Safety Alerts shall be disseminated by the requesting DO to all employees, in all Agencies, Departments, and Divisions located within the State Office Building where the alert is issued, as well as the recipient Department. The Office of State Security and DHR must also receive the safety alerts as they are issued.

Safety alerts which are deemed to be appropriate to disseminate to *all State employees* shall be first approved for dissemination by the Secretary of Administration. These state-wide Safety Alerts shall be disseminated by the requesting DO to all employees, in all Agencies, Departments, and Divisions in the state government. The Office of State Security and Department of Human Resources (DHR) must also receive the safety alerts as they are issued.

## INDIVIDUAL EPP TRAINING

All new employees are required to take the Emergency Procedures for the Individual State Employee training provided online at the State of Vermont Learning Management System. All employees should review this training annually, at a minimum.

The State of Vermont has established the following protocol for training, instruction, and information for all State employees as it concerns workplace safety and security:

- Each State Office Building will maintain a written record of employees that have completed emergency procedure training.
- The ECM is responsible for recording all trainings, drills, and exercises.
- The Office of State Security is responsible to provide all Managers and Directors with initial ECM and SW training and refresher training every calendar year.
- When a new employee is hired or transferred, their new supervisor is responsible to ensure that, as part of the employee's initial orientation, they are informed on what actions to take during an emergency event, to include but not limited to, egress route, the name of their Safety Warden, and the location of their assembly area after an evacuation.
- Each calendar year, all State of Vermont classified, exempt, appointed and temporary employees will be provided with instruction on emergency procedures as approved by the Office of State Security.
- At a minimum, training will address the following emergency situations and events:
  - Fire
  - Toxic Fumes and Vapors
  - Active Shooter(s) or Hostile Person (ALICE)
  - Workplace Violence/Bullying
  - Medical Emergency
  - Suspicious Packages
  - Bomb Threat
  - Power Outage
  - Assisting visitors and those with mobility challenges with evacuation

## EXERCISING THE EPP

- All state occupied office buildings will practice a minimum of one evacuation drill or functional exercise every year and one active shooter / hostile intruder drill or functional exercise at least every two years, if resources allow.
- Training events or drills will never be conducted as a surprise/no-notice event for any employee due to the undo stress and risk that it would otherwise create.
- If a building's Facility Safety Committee's planned training event involves all occupants of the building, the DO or ECM should extend an invite to the local police and fire departments to either observe or participate in the training.
- For training events or drills involving the entire building's occupants, the FSC will conduct a pre-exercise meeting or a tabletop exercise to collectively visit each step of the exercise to ensure for a synchronized and safe event. If the local police and/or fire department are attending the exercise, they should be encouraged to attend this pre-exercise meeting/tabletop exercise.
- A record of these emergency drills will be documented in writing by the designated ECM after the drill, listing the following:
  - a summary of the training event at the building
  - what agencies and organizations participated
  - what lessons were learned that can be used to improve the EPP or a future training event.
- The Facility Safety Committees will meet within 14 calendar days after drills/exercises to review the After-Action Report, identify an Improvement Plan, and update their EPP accordingly.
- The ECM will ensure a copy of the written record is provided digitally to BGS Office of Security so that the lessons learned can be shared with other Safety Committees across the State.
- The ECM will provide the updated version of the EPP to the Office of State Security annually.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

First Responder: A paid, on-call, or volunteer emergency official such as a Firefighter, Police Officer, Emergency Medical Service employee, Security Officer/Guard, or an Emergency Management official that oversees or coordinate the efforts of other First Responders.

State Building: Any building, building annex, structure, or cluster of buildings that are physically connected to each other with construction materials other than sidewalks or roadways that is owned, borrowed, leased, or rented by any Agency or organization of the State of Vermont and occupied by Vermont State Employees.

Weather Watch: Conditions are favorable for the development of severe weather. Closely monitor the situation in case it gets worse.

Weather Warning: Severe weather has actually been observed. Listen closely to instructions provided by weather radios/emergency officials.

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