

DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING YOUR BUILDING'S
**EMERGENCY
PROCEDURES
PLAN**

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

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APPLICABLE TO: ALL EMPLOYEES OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF THE STATE OF VERMONT
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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 work environment.

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 BGS Office of 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 of the respective employees should have attended the BGS Security Division's Emergency Procedures training. 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 BGS Office of Security, this committee will create a single Emergency Procedures Plan (EPP) specific to the building that the Committee occupies based on the State template model. Building clusters will share the same EPP only if they share the same fire alarm system. The Office of Security will ensure the drafted EPP is nested with 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 BGS Office of 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 on the plan. Once validated by the tabletop exercise, they will then conduct a training event to practice the EPP that includes, at a minimum, a full evacuation of the building during business hours.



Phase 3: Once the collective training drill/exercise for the building is complete, the Facility Safety Committee collects all lessons that were learned from the drill/exercise, update the EPP, then notify affected employees of the changes as appropriate.

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 senior level supervisor, usually the Agency head or 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. If a department occupies space in more than one State building, the department will then have multiple FSC representatives serving on their respective buildings' FSC.

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

- Convening, at a minimum, twice annually and within 30 days after any State tenant groups in a State building change or there is 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 BGS Office of 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 which may occur in or around your building. All employees are to be trained on the EPP and the building's Facility Safety Committee is tasked to maintain that document. Awareness, planning, and training are critical components of effective security management during an emergency.

Each building in which State employees work will have an EPP for that building. In the situation where there are a cluster of buildings and there is a question if an EPP can cover multiple buildings, the deciding factor will be based on the building's fire alarm system. If a group of buildings are tied into the same system, then the cluster will maintain just one EPP and one Emergency Coordinating Manager (ECM) to oversee the EPP. Otherwise, each building will maintain their own EPP and have a separate ECM.

Key aspects of the EPP include:

- Evacuation routes, exit points, and pre-designated emergency assembly areas 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.
- Procedures for threatening weather conditions, watches, and warnings.
- 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 occupant Agency or Department located in a State Office Building, who may or may not be located at the facility/building. A Deputy to the DO can operate under the authority of the DO with the DO's authorization.

An alternate DO can be designated when it is more practical and only if agreed on by all State tenant agencies within the building in writing. Such an example would be a Regional Director assuming the DO role who is co-located with a cluster of State occupied buildings vs. a Commissioner located hours away.

The DO will provide leadership and oversight to ensure that all three phases of the emergency procedures are conducted, resulting in the publication of the building's Emergency Procedures Plan (EPP) and that the building's State employees are trained and prepared for an emergency incident. In accomplishing this, the DO will work with all agencies in the building to facilitate communication flow between agencies that occupy the building, including non-State Agency tenants.

THE SPECIFIC DUTIES OF THE DO INCLUDE:

Before an Emergency Incident:

- Communicate with the leadership of all tenant organizations within the State building.
- Ensure that the Facility Safety Committee (FSC) is properly staffed and meets at least semi-annually.
- Ensure that all FSC members are properly trained on their duties and the Emergency Procedures Plan (EPP).
- Ensure that all State employees that work in the building are fully trained on their respective elements of the EPP.
- Ensure maximum participation in the building's drills and exercises.
- Personally observe or participate in building drills and exercises, when available.

During an Emergency Incident:

- Make the decision to activate the Emergency Procedures Plan, in concert with the ECM.
- If on scene at the emergency incident, don and wear a blue vest.
- Approve all building-wide security alerts, ensuring they are disseminated to all employees in all Agencies, Departments, Divisions, and participating subcontractors located within the State building.
- Alert the senior levels of the State Government to the emergency incident as appropriate.
- Provide any assets/resources required by the on-scene Emergency Coordinating Manager.
- As needed, provide the appropriate State Public Information Officer (PIO) with updates.



EMERGENCY COORDINATING MANAGER

The Emergency Coordinating Manager (ECM) position is created to coordinate the emergency preparedness and planning efforts among all Vermont State occupied buildings. Typically, a state building is occupied by multiple Departments/Agencies, making building-wide communications difficult during an emergency event. The ECM is the “work horse” during an emergency incident. The ECM serves to assist local emergency first responders by developing a common, building-wide “plan of action” for emergencies that threaten life safety.

ECMs serve as an extension of managers and supervisors in the preparedness, response, and recovery phases of an emergency. ECMs disseminate 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 officials in case of an emergency event.

Ideally, an ECM should plan on serving a term of no less than a year with no limit to the number of consecutive terms. ECMs are expected to provide multiple forms of contact, including methods reachable outside of normal business hours.

An Alternate ECM should fulfill the same role.

THE SPECIFIC DUTIES OF THE ECM INCLUDE:

Before an Emergency Incident:

- Chair the Facility Safety Committee (FSC).
- Be the point of contact for safety and emergency preparedness information; receiving and monitoring emergency communications as provided; and distributing relevant information throughout the building.

- Coordinate the development of, and maintaining the EPP in conjunction with the Facility Safety Committee.
- Coordinate for annual fire drills for the building.
- Coordinate with Emergency Management on emergency exercises or drills as necessary.
- Ensure the Alternate ECM is trained to ensure a continuity of effort in case of your absence during an incident.

During an Emergency Incident:

- Make the decision to activate the Emergency Procedures Plan, in concert with the DO if available.
- Don and wear an orange vest and/or orange hat.
- Disseminate all building-wide security, weather, and other emergency alerts.
- If the building does not have a fire alarm system, coordinate emergency notification procedures throughout the building to support evacuation as needed.
- Conduct accountability of all State employees and other occupants once at the assembly area(s).
- Identify any injuries or fatalities to local emergency first responders and State leadership.
- Serve as the primary contact between local emergency first responders and building occupants.
- Conduct timely notifications and updates to State leadership of the developing incident.
- Once accountability and notifications are complete, move from the assembly area to the local emergency first responders' Command Post and liaison with their leadership.



RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT FOR THE ECM WOULD INCLUDE:

- Orange Vest with “Emergency Coordinating Manager” listed on the front and back
- Emergency backpack
- Cell phone
- Phone charging cord (12v)
- List of important telephone numbers and contact names
- Hard copy of the Emergency Procedures Plan (EPP)
- 10+ 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 BGS Security Office on the purchase of some of these items.

SAFETY WARDENS

Safety Wardens (SW) are volunteers within the building that provide leadership to personnel on their floor/wing/section for evacuation of the building in the case of a fire/fire alarm or other incidents 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 will identify one Safety Warden per floor/wing/section/cluster.



It is recommended that managers or other supervisors or leads are the ones designated as Safety Wardens, but this is not a requirement.

The Safety Warden guides occupants out of the building, perform 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 to the ECM or emergency response personnel 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

- Serve as a member of the Facility Safety Committee.
- Become knowledgeable of all aspects of the Building's Emergency Procedures Plan.
- Assist in the training of all State employees and contractors that work in your section.
- Obtain and maintain rosters of staff employees within their assigned floor/section/wing.

During an Emergency Incident that Requires Controlled Evacuation:

- Don and wear a yellow reflective vest and/or yellow hat.
- Quickly sweep the floor and alert occupants that a fire alarm has sounded and evacuation is required, if necessary.
- Knock loudly on doors, informing occupants to evacuate.
- Close open doors as you leave the building. This aids in containing the fire, smoke, and heat.
- Instruct any lingering occupants to evacuate the building. If persons refuse to exit, notify the ECM once outside the building.
- Instruct occupants to use the stairwells, not the elevators, to evacuate the building.
- Once at the Assembly Area, conduct a count of all personnel.
- Link up with the ECM at the assembly area and report pertinent emergency information, any injuries, and employee count results.



PROTOCOL FOR ISSUING BUILDING SAFETY ALERTS

The State of Vermont has established the following protocols concerning Safety Alerts. Safety Alerts shall be issued by the Designated Official (DO) at the request of leadership from any Agency, Department, or Division.

Safety Alerts shall be disseminated by the DO to all employees, in all Agencies, Departments, and Divisions located within the State office building where the alert is issued. BGS Office of Security and 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 if required. They will inform facility occupants of the nature of the emergency and what action to take. 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 in extreme situations, the VTAlert system.

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. BGS Office of 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 within the State of Vermont. BGS Office of Security and Department of Human Resources (DHR) must also receive the safety alerts as they are issued.

CONDUCTING INDIVIDUAL EPP TRAINING

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 BGS Office of 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 BGS Office of Security. All training will be reported by the employee's immediate supervisor to the ECM no later than 14 calendar days after the employee has completed the training.
- Training will address at a minimum 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 with evacuation

EXERCISING THE BUILDING'S EPP

- All owned and leased State office buildings occupied by State employees will practice a minimum of one evacuation fire drill or full-scale exercise every year and one active shooter / hostile intruder drill or full-scale exercise at least every two years if resources allow.
- An active shooter /hostile intruder training event of any type 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 the Facility Safety Committee's planned training event at their building is involving all occupants of the building, the ECM will notify BGS Office of Security who will then extend invite to the local police and fire department to either observe or participate in the training.
- For full-scale training events 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 full-scale exercise, they will be highly encouraged to attend this pre-exercise meeting/tabletop exercise first.
- 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, and
 - 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 discuss, critique, and analyze the drill, identify the lessons learned, and update their building's Emergency Procedures Plan accordingly.
- The ECM will ensure that a copy of the written record is provided digitally to BGS Office of Security so that the lessons learned can be used to assist others across the State in applying the lessons learned in their own exercises, training events, and EPPs.
- If the Facility Safety Committee makes any changes to the EPP, they will then be communicated to the building's occupants as appropriate. The ECM will also provide the updated version of the EPP digitally to the BGS Office of Security.

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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