



# Emergency Action Plan

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Office of Emergency Management and Safety

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*The mission of the Office of Emergency Management and Safety (OEMS) is to provide guidance, direction, and training to the College and its faculty, staff, students, and visitors in the prevention, protection, response and recovery from all incidents or events.*

# Preface

Faculty members provide a valuable leadership element to students' safe and efficient reaction to an emergency situation. The instructor is an authoritative figure for the student and can influence how the student responds in an emergency. Calm, collected, and clear directions by the instructor will have a reassuring effect on the students. Therefore, it is very important for faculty to be prepared for emergencies and to familiarize students on proper procedures.

Review this *Emergency Action Plan* periodically and know who to contact in the event of an emergency. You should also know:

- The two safest and most direct evacuation routes.
- The location of first aid kits, Automated External Defibrillators (AED), and fire extinguishers.
- The location of the designated Assembly Areas outside the facility.
- Locations to shelter-in-place for a severe weather event.
- Appropriate procedures to follow in the event of an emergency, to include an active shooter/violent incident.

Faculty should:

- Provide his/her class or audience with general information relating to emergency procedures and advise them of the evacuation routes, emergency exits and Assembly Areas. This information should be shared during the first week of class and throughout the semester.
- Assure that persons with disabilities have the information they need. The instructor should be familiar with the disabled student's plan and be able to direct visitors with disabilities.
- Take responsible charge of the classroom and follow emergency procedures for all alarms and emergencies.
- Attempt to account for all students. Accounting for students can be very difficult; however, an attempt must be made. Faculty who take attendance should keep rosters with them. Faculty who do not regularly take attendance should work with students to develop some method of accounting for all students.
- Encourage students to sign up for NOVA Alert at <http://alert.nvcc.edu> .

## Warden Program

NOVA has established a Warden Program, consisting of Faculty and Staff, who assist during emergencies. Wardens are appointed by the Provost at each Campus. Training sessions for appointed Wardens are provided by the Office of Emergency Management and Safety.

**Plan Information** -- For further information relating to this Plan, please contact the Office of Emergency Management and Safety at 703-764-5043 or email [oem@nvcc.edu](mailto:oem@nvcc.edu).

## Change Record

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1/4/2012	001	Initial Document	William Flagler
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# Medical Emergencies

Medical emergencies will occur at NOVA and it is important that members of the College community understand how to respond to protect human health and safety. Medical emergencies can occur at any time and may be the result of traffic accidents, slips or falls, pre-existing health conditions, workplace accidents, etc.

## Preparation

To prepare for a potential medical emergency, consider the following:

- Receive CPR, First Aid Training, and Stop-the-Bleed Training.
- Know the locations of Automatic External Defibrillators (AED) and receive AED Training.
- Maintain an adequate supply of prescription medication(s) with you, if necessary.
- Update your emergency contact information – in the event that someone must be contacted in an emergency.
- Notify your supervisor and/or co-workers of health conditions, if you are comfortable doing so and it is necessary for your safety in the event of an emergency.
- Know or maintain contact information for your primary care physician and the location of hospitals near your work and home.

## Procedures/Response

If someone requires immediate medical attention:

- Immediately call or have someone call 911 and report the emergency. Provide the following information:
  - Type of emergency
  - Building address and the exact location of the victim (building, floor, and room number)
  - Condition of the victim
  - Identity of the victim
  - Suspected or known cause of the injury or illness
  - Any dangerous conditions
- Provide first aid and medical assistance as necessary, if trained.
- Follow instructions of the Emergency Dispatcher.
- Do not move the victim, unless they are in immediate danger.

- If the victim is conscious, try to comfort him/her and obtain medical information (i.e. medical problems, medications, etc.). Any medical information will assist medical personnel if the victim loses consciousness.
- If the victim is unconscious and not breathing, locate an AED if available, turn it on and follow the instructions provided by the unit.
- Have someone meet the ambulance at the building entrance or at a safe location and direct emergency personnel to the victim.
- Contact Campus Police at 703-764-5000 to advise them of the situation.

# Evacuations

A building may need to be evacuated due to a fire or another unforeseen emergency such as chemical spill, structural damage, or violence. In these situations, the fire alarm system or other alert notification systems (text messaging system through NOVA Alert, desktop computer pop-up alert on networked computers, telephone alert in classrooms and offices, automated or live broadcast calls, and/or digital signage on flat panels) may be used to initiate a building evacuation; however, verbal commands from staff, faculty, police or other emergency response personnel may also be used. Whenever a fire alarm is activated or verbal commands are given, all individuals must begin exiting the building and proceed to their designated Assembly Area(s). It is unlawful to not vacate a building during a fire alarm.

All buildings must have continuously unobstructed exit paths to permit prompt evacuation and allow immediate access for emergency response personnel. Students, faculty, and staff should familiarize themselves with the exit routes and Assembly Areas.

It is the responsibility of supervisors, faculty and staff to ensure that employees and students are familiar with evacuation signals, evacuation routes, exterior designated Assembly Areas, and other procedures related to evacuation.

## Definitions

- Emergency Response Personnel - Includes law enforcement personnel, fire and rescue personnel, hazard materials units, ambulance services, emergency public safety personnel, etc.
- Assembly Area – An exterior area designated by the Office of Emergency Management and Safety for each facility, which has been determined to be inherently safe due to its location. The area is used to assemble and account for building occupants following an evacuation. These areas ensure that evacuees remain a safe distance from the building, do not interfere with emergency response operations, and facilitate communication.
- Area of Assistance – An Area of Assistance is located 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.
- Exit Path – A continuous and unobstructed way of exit travel from any point in a building or structure to a point outside of the building or structure. All facilities must have continuously unobstructed exit paths to permit prompt evacuation and allow immediate access for responding emergency personnel. An exit path consists of:
  - Corridors, stairways, and/or aisles leading to an exit door.
  - An exit door.



- The path or way outside of the exit door that leads away from the building.

Emergency exit route signs are posted in conspicuous locations throughout Campus buildings. These signs identify primary exit routes and alternate exit routes. Alternate exit routes have been identified in case the primary evacuation route is obstructed by a hazard, is occupied by emergency response personnel, or cannot otherwise be used. All individuals should familiarize themselves with exit routes for the building(s) they occupy.

## During an Evacuation

- Remain calm.
- **Immediately** stop what you are doing.
- If time, conditions and safety permit, take important personal items with you (i.e. car keys, purse, medication, glasses, etc.). Leave everything else. Instruct students to do the same.
- Walk directly to the nearest exit, assisting students and visitors with evacuation procedures. Move quickly; however, do not run, push or crowd.
- Check doors for heat before opening by touching it near the top with the back of your hand. Do NOT open a hot door.
- If smoke is present, stay low and crawl to your exit.
- Do NOT use elevators.
- Use handrails in stairwells, stay to the right.
- Keep noise to a minimum so you can hear emergency instructions.
- Assist people with disabilities/special needs and those unfamiliar with evacuation procedures. (See below for more information on evacuation procedures for individuals with disabilities/special needs).
- Once outside, move quickly away from the building and to your Assembly Area, unless otherwise instructed.
- Report missing persons to emergency response personnel.
- Actively assist in keeping roadways and walkways clear for emergency response personnel.
- Do NOT return to the building until instructed to do so.

## Considerations for Individuals with Disabilities/Special Needs During Evacuations

Persons with special needs, disabilities, or are mobility challenged may have difficulty evacuating a building without assistance. Individuals who are mobility challenged and unable to exit the building should proceed to an Area of Assistance to await aid from emergency response personnel. 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, or friend who can lend assistance to persons with disabilities/special needs during an emergency. *Evacuation Assistants* provide instruction during an evacuation, help individuals with special needs to relocate to an Area of Assistance, notify first responders or emergency personnel of persons with special needs that are unable to evacuate a building, and provide support as necessary to ensure a safe evacuation. *Evacuation 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 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.

Employees needing assistance during an emergency are encouraged to contact Human Resources to make the appropriate arrangements in developing an emergency evacuation plan.

Students with disabilities should become familiar with their surroundings as soon as they visit a campus or new building. They are encouraged to identify Areas of Assistance and develop a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP). This PEEP should be shared with close friends and family as well as with their instructors.

## **Accountability**

Faculty are responsible for developing procedures for student accountability and Administration is responsible for developing procedures for personnel accountability. Immediately following an evacuation, attempt to identify missing persons and relay the names and suspected location to emergency response personnel.

## **Emergency Evacuation and Fire Drills**

Emergency evacuation and fire drills are required and must be conducted in accordance with the Virginia State-Wide Fire Prevention Code and the International Fire Code.

# Fire

Deaths and damages caused by fires can be mitigated if proper preparation and response procedures are taken by individuals during a fire. This Plan provides information to help individuals plan, prepare, and respond to a fire and should be used in conjunction with the *Evacuations* Section. It is the responsibility of supervisors and faculty to ensure that employees and students are familiar with evacuation signals, evacuation routes, exterior designated Assembly Areas, and other procedures related to fire safety and evacuation.

Students, Faculty, and Staff shall participate in fire drills. Whenever a fire alarm is activated, it is mandatory that all persons evacuate the building. Practicing evacuation procedures during drills and alarms is the best way to prepare for a real fire.

When a fire alarm is activated, all individuals must begin exiting the building and proceed to the designated Assembly Area. The building shall be completely evacuated. It is unlawful to not vacate a building during a fire alarm.

## Procedures

If you discover or become aware of a fire in your building or work area:

- Remain calm.
- Activate the building fire alarm using a manual pull station located near an exit door.
- Call 911 from a safe location. Prepare to give the following information:
  - Exact location of the fire (campus, building address, building name)
  - Location of the fire or smoke within the facility
  - Cause of fire (if known)
  - Number and type of injuries (if known)
  - Your name
  - Any other information that you think would be beneficial
- If you are confident you can control the fire with a portable fire extinguisher and have been properly trained in the use of portable fire extinguishers, attempt to extinguish the fire if it is safe to do so.
- EVACUATE the building as quickly as possible, using the primary or alternate exit routes. Exit route signs are posted in conspicuous locations throughout Campus buildings. Alternate exit routes have been identified in case the primary evacuation route is obstructed by a hazard, is occupied by emergency response personnel, or cannot otherwise be used.
- Assist individuals with disabilities and those who appear to need direction.

- For larger fires, GET OUT and close doors as you leave to confine fire as much as possible.
- If clothing catches fire, STOP.....DROP.....ROLL. Stop immediately, drop to the ground, and cover your face with your hands. Roll over and over or back and forth until the fire is out. If you or someone else cannot stop, drop, and roll, smother the flames with a blanket or towel. Get medical help right away by calling 9-1-1.
- Do not allow the fire to come between you and the exit.
- Follow the evacuation procedures found in *Evacuations*.
- Proceed to the Assembly Area and verbally warn others to evacuate the building as you exit the building. Direct students and visitors to the Assembly Area.
- If you are unable to exit the building due to fire, mobility challenge, or other hazard, notify a person that is exiting the building, notify police by dialing 911, shout for assistance, drop an object to the ground from an exterior window, or hang a highly visible object from a window to get the attention of emergency response personnel.
- Do NOT re-enter the building until authorized by emergency response personnel.

## Evacuation Tips

- Feel doors with the back of your hand for heat. Do NOT open the door if it is hot. If the door is not hot, open it slowly and cautiously. Stand behind the door and to one side; be prepared to close it quickly if fire is present.
- If smoke is present, stay as low as possible and crawl to an exit door. Keep one shoulder against the wall as you exit the building to avoid becoming lost.
- Do NOT use elevators.
- Knock on closed doors as you leave and yell “Fire!” on your way out.
- Make note of the location of anyone who may have been unable or refused to evacuate. Notify emergency response personnel.
- If trapped in a room:
  - Retreat. Close as many doors as possible between you and the fire.
  - Call 911 and report your location. Cover vents and cracks around doors with cloth or tape to keep smoke out.
  - Be prepared to signal from a window with a light-colored cloth, if available. DO NOT BREAK THE GLASS unless absolutely necessary (outside smoke may be drawn in).
  - Open the window a few inches for fresh air and hang a highly visible object from the window.

Additional Information: [www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/).

## **Identification of Personnel Responsible for Rescue or Emergency Medical Aid**

College Police respond to emergencies and provide or coordinate rescue and medical aid. In addition, local fire, rescue and police respond as necessary and assume their respective area of expertise.

# Severe Weather

Weather emergencies can pose serious threats to employees and students. Severe weather includes high winds, thunderstorms, lightning storms, hail, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, extreme heat or cold, and other weather systems that have the potential to create safety hazards or cause property damage.

## Definitions

- Watch – A “watch” is used when the risk of a hazardous weather event has increased significantly, but its occurrence, location, and/or timing is still uncertain. It is intended to provide enough lead time so that those who need to set their plan in motion can do so.
- Warning - A “warning” is issued when a hazardous weather event is occurring, is imminent, or has a very high probability of occurring. A warning is used for conditions posing a threat to life or property. If you are in the affected area you should seek safe shelter immediately.
- Advisory – Highlights special weather conditions that are less serious than a warning. They are for events that may cause significant inconvenience, and if caution is not exercised, it could lead to situations that may threaten life and/or property.
- Severe Thunderstorm – A thunderstorm that produces a tornado, winds of a least 58 mph, and/or hail at least one-inch in diameter.
- Tornado Watch – A tornado watch is issued when severe thunderstorms and tornadoes are possible in and near the watch area. When a tornado watch is issued, stay tuned to local radio, TV, or NOAA weather radio for further information and possible warnings. Consider shelter options and be prepared to take cover if necessary.
- Tornado Warning – A tornado warning is issued when a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. When a tornado warning is issued, seek safe shelter immediately.

## Severe Weather Shelter Areas

An appropriate shelter area capable of providing protection from severe weather should have the following characteristics:

- Be located in an interior room of hardened structure (e.g. conference room, classroom, hallway, bathroom, or office). Seek shelter in a hardened structure if you are located in a modular, prefabricated, or temporary structure.
- Be free of windows and other glass structures.
- Be at the lowest level possible in the building.

## Tornado

Tornadoes are violently rotating columns of air that extend from a thunderstorm to the ground.

Tornadoes can:

- Happen anytime and anywhere;
- Bring intense winds, over 200 MPH; and
- Look like funnels.

If the area is under a Tornado WARNING, seek shelter immediately! Direct students and visitors.

- Go IMMEDIATELY to:
  - The nearest Severe Weather Shelter Area OR
  - An appropriate area capable of providing protection from the event:
    - Hardened structure
    - Interior hallway or room
    - Free of windows or other glass structures
    - At the lowest level possible in the building – use stairs, do NOT use elevators
- Go to the center of the room, away from corners, doors and outside walls.
- If possible, get under a sturdy table. Use your arms to protect your head and neck. Protect your body from flying debris with any available furniture or sturdy equipment.
- Do NOT open windows.
- Take account of your co-workers and/or students and attempt to locate missing persons if safety permits.

Contingency Plans – If you are outside with no shelter: there is no single research-based recommendation for what last-resort action to take because many factors can affect your decision. Possible actions include:

- Immediately get into a vehicle, buckle your seat belt and try to drive to the closest sturdy shelter. If your vehicle is hit by flying debris while you are driving, pull over and park.
- Take cover in a stationary vehicle. Put the seat belt on and cover your head with your arms and a blanket, coat or other cushion – if possible.
- Lie in an area noticeably lower than the level of the roadway and cover your head with your arms and a blanket, coat or other cushion – if possible.



In all situations:

- Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location.
- Never try to outrun a tornado in urban or congested areas in a car or truck. Instead, leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter.
- Watch out for flying debris. Flying debris from tornadoes causes most fatalities and injuries.

Additional Information: [www.ready.gov/tornadoes](http://www.ready.gov/tornadoes)

## **Hurricane**

Potential threats from hurricanes include powerful winds, heavy rainfall, storm surges, coastal and inland flooding, rip currents, tornadoes, and landslides. They can affect areas more than 100 miles inland. If a hurricane is likely in the area, listen and stay vigilant for alerts. Evacuate if instructed to do so. If a hurricane strikes and you have not evacuated:

- Stay indoors during the hurricane and away from windows and glass doors.
- Close all interior doors – secure and brace external doors.
- Keep blinds/curtains closed.
- Take refuge in the nearest Severe Weather Shelter Area OR a small, interior room or hallway on the lowest level.
- Lie on the floor under a table or another sturdy object.
- Avoid elevators.
- If trapped in a building by flooding, go to the highest level of the building.

Additional Information: [www.ready.gov/hurricanes](http://www.ready.gov/hurricanes).

## **After a Severe Weather Event**

- Watch out for and stay away from fallen power lines.
- Stay out of the damaged area.
- Help injured persons if you can do so without putting yourself in risk of injury. Provide first aid if you are trained. Do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Get medical assistance immediately.
- If you are trapped, try to attract attention to your location.
- Use the telephone only for emergency calls.

- Be aware that utilities such as gas, power, and water lines may be damaged. If you are aware of a gas leak, power outage, utility failure, or other building damages, report the issue.
- Wait for instructions from Wardens, Officials, Police and/or Security Guards.

For more information, visit <https://www.ready.gov/severe-weather>.

## Preparation/Planning

When a severe weather warning is issued, many times you only have a few minutes to respond. For this reason, it is essential that employees and students, as well as their family members are prepared. Severe weather can strike anywhere and anytime. Develop a safety plan for you and your family for home, work, school and when outdoors. Following is a list of some basic items that every emergency supply kit should include:

- Emergency Supply Kit:
  - ✓ Bottled water – one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days
  - ✓ Non-perishable food – three day supply
  - ✓ Battery-powered /hand-crank radio, preferably a NOAA weather radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
  - ✓ Flashlight and extra batteries
  - ✓ First aid kit and essential medications
  - ✓ Whistle to signal for help
  - ✓ Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
  - ✓ Moist towelettes, garbage bags, and plastic ties for personal sanitation
  - ✓ Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
  - ✓ Manual can opener for canned food
  - ✓ Items for infants/toddlers (formula, diapers, etc.)
  - ✓ Items for pets (food, water, etc.)
  - ✓ Personal hygiene items

- ✓ Matches in waterproof container
  - ✓ Local maps
  - ✓ Cell phone with chargers and a backup battery
  - ✓ Important documents (i.e. copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records saved electronically or in a waterproof, portable container)
- Home and family:
- ✓ In your emergency supply kit, include instructions on how to turn off your home's utilities (power, water, and gas).
  - ✓ Develop a communications plan with your family members in the event that phone service fails or family members are separated by a severe weather event. A pre-determined meeting location and alternate method for contacting family members (e.g. out-of-town contacts) should be agreed upon in advance.
  - ✓ If your community has an evacuation plan, become familiar with it and understand its direction and impact on your family.
  - ✓ Review your plan with your family and practice it. Children and the elderly need to know what to do.
- Employees are encouraged to sign up for weather alerts in your home and work areas. Signing up is quick, easy, and free. Visit the following website to choose and sign up for alerts in any jurisdiction within the National Capital Region. Each offers text alerts specific to their region, including major emergencies, traffic updates, weather reports, and school and government closings. You can pick what kind of text alerts you want, as well as how and when you get them.
- <http://www.capitalert.gov/signup/sign-up.html>

Additional Information: <https://www.ready.gov/>

# Earthquake

An earthquake is a sudden and rapid shaking of the ground caused by the shifting of rocks deep underneath the earth's surface. They can happen without warning and result in injuries and damage to property and roads. Since an earthquake cannot be forecasted, it is best to be prepared at all times. They can seriously damage buildings and their contents; disrupt gas, electric and telephone services. Aftershocks can occur for weeks following an earthquake. In many buildings, the greatest danger to people in an earthquake is when equipment and non-structural elements such as ceilings, partitions, windows and lighting fixtures shake loose.

## Response

- If you are indoors, stay there until the shaking stops. Do not run outside. Do not get in a doorway as this does not provide protection from falling or flying objects, and you may not be able to remain standing. Minimize your movements to a few steps to a nearby safe place. Stay calm and take precautions to protect yourself from potential debris: If an earthquake happens, protect yourself right away.

### **Drop, Cover, and Hold On:**

- **DROP:** Drop wherever you are on to your hands and knees. If you're using a wheelchair or walker with a seat, make sure your wheels are locked and remain seated until the shaking stops.
- **COVER:** Cover your head and neck with your arms. If a sturdy table or desk is nearby, crawl underneath it for shelter. If no shelter is nearby, crawl next to an interior wall (away from windows). Crawl only if you can reach better cover without going through an area with more debris. Stay on your knees or bent over to protect vital organs.
- **HOLD ON:** If you are under a table or desk, hold on with one hand and be ready to move with it if it moves. If you can't find a table or desk, cover your head and neck with both arms and hands. If seated and unable to drop to the floor, bend forward, cover your head with your arms, and hold on to your neck with both hands.

## Protect Yourself During Earthquakes!



- Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls, and anything that could fall, such as light fixtures or furniture.
- Do not use a doorway except if you know that it is a strongly supported, load-bearing doorway and it is close to you. Many inside doorways are lightly constructed and do not offer protection.
- Be aware that the electricity may go out or the sprinkler systems or fire alarms may turn on. Stay inside until the shaking stops and it is safe to go outside. Do not exit a building during the shaking.
- Do NOT use elevators.
- If you are outdoors, stay there. Move away from buildings, overhangs, streetlights, trees, and power lines to a clear area such as a large open public area or field.
- If you are in a moving vehicle, stop as quickly as safety permits and stay in the vehicle. Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses, and utility wires. Proceed cautiously once the earthquake has stopped. Avoid roads, bridges, or ramps that might have been damaged by the earthquake.

## After the Earthquake

Once the shaking has stopped:

- Look around. If there is a clear path to safety, cautiously leave the building and go to the designated Assembly Area. There can be serious hazards such as damage to the building, leaking gas and water lines, or downed power lines.
- Direct students and visitors.
- If you are trapped, protect your mouth, nose, and eyes from dust. Do not move about or kick up dust.
  - If you have a cell phone with you, use it to call or text for help.
  - Bang on a pipe or wall or use a whistle, if you have one, so that rescuers can locate you.
- Expect aftershocks – be prepared to “Drop, Cover, and Hold On”.
- Text messages may be more reliable than phone calls. Save phone calls for emergencies.
- Be aware that utilities such as gas, power and water lines may be damaged. If you aware of damaged utilities, report the issue.
- Help injured or trapped persons, if you can do so without putting yourself in risk of injury. Do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Get assistance immediately.
- Wait for instructions from Wardens, Officials, Police and/or Security Guards.

Additional Information: [www.ready.gov/earthquakes](http://www.ready.gov/earthquakes)

# Active Shooter Incident

An active shooter is an individual or individuals actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined space or other populated area. In most cases, active shooters use firearms and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims. Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims. Active shooters usually will continue to move throughout a building or area killing people until stopped by law enforcement, suicide, or other intervention. Active Shooters generally do not negotiate with potential victims or take hostages. Since it may take a few minutes for police to arrive and active shooters kill or wound a victim every 20 seconds, on the average, prompt decisive action by police and potential victims is imperative.

## Response

Do NOT activate the fire alarm! The building will not be evacuated using this method. You should quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your own life. You should:

- **RUN:** If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises. *This is your best chance of survival.* Be sure to:
  - Warn individuals not to enter an area where the active shooter may be.
  - Have an escape route and plan in mind.
  - Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow.
  - Leave your belongings behind.
  - Help others escape, if possible.
  - Keep your hands visible and raised above your head.
  - Follow the instructions of any police officers.
  - Do not attempt to move wounded people.
  - Call 911 or College Police (703-764-5000) when it is safe to do so.
  
- **Hide:** If safe evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find you. Your hiding place should:
  - Be out of the active shooter's view – away from doors/hallways and behind solid objects, if possible. You can sit on the floor, out of common view, away from doorways and windows.
  - Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction (i.e. in a room with a closed and locked door).
  - Not trap you or restrict your options for movement.

- To prevent an active shooter from entering your hiding place or hearing you:
  - Lock the door.
  - Blockade the door with heavy furniture
  - Close, cover, and move away from windows.
  - Silence your cell phone and/or pager (even the vibration setting can give away a hiding position) and turn off any source of noise (televisions, computers, radios, etc.).
  - Turn off lights.
  - Remain quiet.
  
- **Fight:** As an absolute last resort, and **only when you feel your life is in imminent danger**, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter:
  - Act as aggressively as possible to subdue the shooter.
  - Throw items and improvise weapons.
  - Yell.
  - Commit to your actions. Your life will depend on it.

## Reporting the Incident

When possible, call 911 or College Police (703-764-5000) and provide the following information:

- Location (or last known location) of the active shooter.
- Direction of travel, if known.
- Number of shooters, if more than one.
- Physical description of the shooter(s).
- Number and types of weapons held by the shooter(s).
- Number of potential victims at the location.
- Your location.

## Law Enforcement Role/Response and Your Actions

The primary goal of law enforcement is to eliminate the threat and stop the active shooter as soon as possible. Officers will proceed directly to the area in which the last shots were heard. As the first responders' primary responsibility is to eliminate the threat, they will NOT stop to help injured persons. Other first responders will do so once the environment is safe. Officers will need to take command of the situation. Expect to experience officers shouting orders and



even pushing individuals to the ground for their safety. When they arrive, it is important that you:

- Remain calm and follow instructions.
- Put down any items in your hands and do not carry backpacks, handbags or any items that may lead officers to think you are carrying a firearm.
- Immediately raise your hands and spread your fingers.
- Keep hands visible at all times.
- Avoid making any sudden movements.
- Avoid pointing, screaming, and/or yelling.
- Do NOT ask officers for help while you are being evacuated. Rescue personnel will be in a safe area to provide assistance.

## **Information and Assembly Points**

After you have reached a safe location or assembly point, you will likely be held in that area by law enforcement until the situation is under control, and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Do NOT leave the safe location or assembly point until law enforcement authorities have instructed you to do so.

# Bomb Threat/Suspicious Package

All bomb incidents and suspicious packages should be treated seriously and responded to appropriately. You should assume they are real until proven otherwise. A quick and organized response to an incident can minimize the risk of injury to students, employees, and visitors. All threats received by faculty, staff, and students must be reported immediately. Employees should print a copy of the Bomb Threat Checklist and keep it near their phone, for quick access.

## Critical Safety Rules

- DO NOT TOUCH OR MOVE any unusual or suspicious items.
- DO NOT ACTIVATE THE FIRE ALARM.
- If directed to evacuate, scan your immediate work area for any unusual or suspicious items as you leave the area.
- All suspicious items should be treated as a bomb until proven or deemed otherwise.
- NEVER use a radio, cellular telephone, or other transmitter during a bomb incident.
- BE AWARE OF SECONDARY DEVICES. Assembly areas should be thoroughly searched for suspicious items immediately.

## Bomb Threat – Procedures

A calm response to the bomb threat caller could result in obtaining additional lifesaving information. This is especially true if the caller wishes to avoid injuries or deaths. If told that the building is occupied or cannot be evacuated at the time, the bomb threat caller may be willing to give more specific information on the bomb's location, components, or methods of initiation, as well as the motivation for placing the bomb.

- When a bomb threat is **CALLED-IN**, perform the following actions:
  - Remain calm.
  - Attempt to keep the caller on the line as long as possible. Ask him/her to repeat the message.
  - Use the Bomb Threat Checklist. Obtain as much information as possible from the caller.
  - If possible, write down every word spoken by the person.
  - If you have caller ID, write down the caller's phone number. If you do not have caller ID or if the number did not appear, **do not hang up the phone**. The telephone where the bomb threat is received should not be hung up and should not be used again until after law enforcement arrives on the scene.
  - Remember --- the caller is the best source of information you have.

- Immediately after the caller hangs up, use a different phone to report the threat to College Police (703-764-5000).
- Remain available, as College Police will want to interview you.
- Wait for further direction from them.
- When a **WRITTEN** threat is received, perform the following actions:
  - Remain calm.
  - Avoid handling it unnecessarily in order to preserve possible evidence.
  - Call College Police (703-764-5000) and follow their direction.
- When a bomb threat is received by **EMAIL**, perform the following actions:
  - Remain calm.
  - Print the message.
  - Do not close the email message.
  - Call College Police (703-764-5000) and follow their direction.

### **Suspicious Item or Package – Procedures**

- When a suspicious item or package is **RECEIVED** (i.e. by mail, courier, UPS, FedEx, etc.), perform the following actions:
  - Remain calm.
  - If the object or package is un-opened, do NOT open, disturb or move it.
  - If the object or package is opened, do NOT further disturb or move it. Do NOT try to clean up the substance.
  - Clear all persons from the immediate vicinity.
  - Call College Police (703-764-5000).
  - Close any door or section off the area to prevent others from entering.
  - Move to a safe distance.
  - Be available to provide the whereabouts of the suspected object and its description to the Police.

Some physical characteristics of suspicious packages and letters include, but are not limited to:

- Excessive postage
- Handwritten or poorly typed addresses
- Incorrect titles
- Title, but no name
- Misspellings of common words
- Oily stains, discoloration or odor
- No return address
- Excessive weight
- Lopsided or uneven envelope
- Protruding wires or aluminum foil
- Excessive securing material, such as masking tape, string, etc.

- Visual distractions
- Ticking sound
- Marked with restrictive endorsements, such as “Personal” or Confidential”
- Shows a city or state in the postmark that does not match the return address
- Foreign mail, air mail and special delivery

NOTE: These are only *some* of the physical characteristics. A package containing certain characteristics may not warrant further action. Much should be based upon your own knowledge and experience of the packages and letters you normally receive.

- When a suspicious item or package is **FOUND**, perform the following actions:
  - DO NOT handle/touch the suspicious item/package.
  - DO NOT use a cell phone, radio or other transmitter.
  - All suspicious items should be treated as a bomb until proven or deemed otherwise.
  - Persons should be evacuated from around the item.
  - Retreat to a safe location and call College Police (703-764-5000).
  - It is important that employees and students are always cognizant and do not leave brief cases, backpacks, handbags, etc. unattended. These items could be construed as suspicious and cause undue time, energy and expense to determine that the item is “safe”. They may be destroyed.

## **Explosive Device Found– Procedures**

- DO NOT TOUCH – MOVE AWAY IMMEDIATELY to a safe distance. More distance is always better. As a rule of thumb, go to a point where you can no longer see the device. Stay away from glass structures.
- Advise others to evacuate.
- Immediately call College Police (703-764-5000) – DO NOT USE A CELL PHONE!
- Use cover that will provide protection from a bomb’s blast and shrapnel. More is always better.
- STAY AWAY!

## **Evacuation Decisions**

Bomb threats require a slightly different approach compared to other emergencies requiring evacuation. Often, the bomb may be in public areas, such as foyers and stairways. There are places in a building where the bomber has the easiest access and any evacuation of the building may lead people directly into a hazardous area. All bomb threats must be taken seriously and carefully analyzed. The bomb threat should be treated as genuine until the search and investigation are completed.

The decision making process begins by gathering as much information as possible – about the bomb report, current situation and recent events – locally, nationally, and internationally. Once the information has been gathered, there are three possible alternatives:

- Conduct a low profile search of the exterior grounds and public areas of the building.
- Conduct a comprehensive search having all employees search their work area, in addition to the grounds and public areas so the entire building is covered.  
NOTE: If a device is found, the evacuation can be accomplished expeditiously while at the same time avoiding the potential danger areas of the bomb.
- Evacuate immediately.

Evacuating immediately is an alternative that on face value appears to be the preferred approach; however, under certain circumstances evacuating may increase rather than decrease the risk of injury. Bombs are more likely to be placed outside buildings than inside. A bomber wishing to cause personal injuries could place a bomb in the shrubbery near an exit. Public areas inside the facility are the second most frequent place devices are located. Any evacuation that requires individuals to move through public areas such as halls, public restrooms, lobbies or parking lots may increase the risk of injury during any detonation.

Information must be gathered quickly in order to implement a proper plan.

## Telephone Bomb Threat Checklist

**INSTRUCTIONS: Be Calm and Courteous, Listen. Do Not Interrupt the Caller. Try to keep the caller on the phone as long as possible. Do *not* use the phone with which you answered the caller again after the call. Remain available to be interviewed by police.**

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number from Caller I.D.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Caller's Identity:  Male  Female ~  Adult  Juvenile ~ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_

**If possible, keep caller talking. Ask the following questions:**

When will it go off? \_\_\_\_\_ Where is it located? \_\_\_\_\_

What kind of bomb is it? \_\_\_\_\_ What does it look like? \_\_\_\_\_

What will cause it to explode? \_\_\_\_\_ Who placed the bomb? \_\_\_\_\_

Why was the bomb placed? \_\_\_\_\_ What is your name? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your address? \_\_\_\_\_ Are you a NOVA student or staff member? \_\_\_\_\_

Exact Wording of Threat:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Vocal Characteristics:**  Loud  High Pitched  Raspy  Intoxicated  Soft  Deep  
 Pleasant  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Speech:**  Fast  Distinct  Stutter  Slurred  Slow  Distorted  Nasal  Lisp  Disguised  
 Familiar/Who? \_\_\_\_\_  Other (e.g., use of "ah, umm, you know") \_\_\_\_\_

**Grammar:**  Excellent  Fair  Foul  Good  Poor  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Accent:**  Local  Middle Eastern  Hispanic  African  Slavic  Southern  
 Northern  Midwestern  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Manner:**  Calm  Rational  Coherent  Deliberate  Righteous  Angry  Caller read message  
 Irrational  Incoherent  Emotional  Jovial  Laughing  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Background Noises:**  None  Machines/Type \_\_\_\_\_  Music/Type \_\_\_\_\_  Office  
 Factory  Street/Traffic  TV/Radio  Trains  Animals  Quiet  Voices  Airplanes  
 Party  PA System  Static  Long Distance  Static  Other \_\_\_\_\_

End Time of Call: \_\_\_\_\_ Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

**Further Instructions: Use another phone to call College Police at 703-764-5000. On a separate sheet of paper, write any further remarks/comments. For example: Did the caller appear familiar with the building (by his/her description of the bomb location)? Is the voice familiar? If so, who does it sound like? If you saw, or think you might have seen the bomber, provide a physical description. Attach this information to this checklist.**