CHAPTER 11 – APPENDICES

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Appendix 4  Emergency Evacuation Policy for the Disabled

Division of Public Safety
Emergency Evacuation Policy
And Procedures for Persons with Disabilities

This policy concerns the emergency evacuation of people from buildings. Accessible Areas of Refuge will be made available to protect persons with disabilities during an evacuation.

4.1 Emergency Evacuation Procedures

4.1.1 When a fire alarm is activated, all persons must leave the building as promptly as possible via the nearest available exit. In buildings without an alarm system, all persons must leave whenever it becomes clear that an emergency exists which necessitates evacuation for their own safety. Do not use elevators.

4.1.2 Department heads should develop plans to gather staff together outside the building after an evacuation.

4.1.3 No one is expected to endanger him/herself in order to assist with the evacuation of others, but each person should ensure that other occupants are aware of an emergency. Individuals should aid anyone requiring assistance to safely exit.

4.1.4 Accessible Areas of Refuge will be provided in buildings to offer shelter or protection for persons with disabilities (persons with mobility impairments) during an emergency evacuation (91 NFPA 101/6-1.2.1).

4.1.5 On-campus emergencies should be reported as soon as possible by dialing 911 on any campus telephone to contact University Police, 24 hours a day. The Police non-emergency number is 532-6412.

4.1.6 Questions pertaining to emergency procedures should be referred to the Department of Environmental Health & Safety, 532-5856.

4.1.7 Questions on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations and/or compliance for physically disabled persons should be referred to:

- Disabled Student Services: 532-6441
- University Compliance Office: 532-4392

4.2 Arrangements for Evacuation of Individuals with Special Needs

4.2.1 Arrangements with the department office must be made to reasonably ensure that directions for evacuation are provided to anyone who requires it.

4.2.2 Persons with disabilities may not be readily identifiable. Anyone with a disability should inform the department office of evacuation requirements. Assistance arrangements are private and should not be made public.

4.3 Responsibilities for Arrangements for Evacuation of Individuals with Special Needs
4.3.1 Arrangements for assistance are best accomplished by establishing a personal relationship between the individual requiring assistance and one or more of his or her peers in the form of a “buddy” plan. Redundant arrangements should be made to ensure that assistance would be provided if the primary provider is absent during an emergency. Assistance with making arrangements should be sought from the department office.

4.4 Evacuation and Alternatives

4.4.1 The emergency evacuation alarm systems in most University buildings include visual and audio signaling devices. In residential facilities, signaling components may be added or modified within individuals units to accommodate a resident with a disability.

4.4.2 Elevators must not be used for emergency egress. Many elevators are programmed to cease operation when a fire alarm is activated. A wheelchair can constitute an unacceptable impedance to evacuation, and may have to be abandoned. There are specific techniques to enable two persons to safely carry a third while descending stairs, but these must be learned and practiced prior to an actual emergency.

4.5 Area of Rescue Assistance

4.5.1 An Area of Rescue Assistance will be provided on each level in a number equal to that of inaccessible required exits. Exception: An Area of Rescue Assistance is not required in buildings that have a supervised automatic sprinkler system. (ADA 4.3.11.4)

4.5.2 Areas of Rescue Assistance will be identified within each University building that wheelchair users can reach on their own. While waiting for assistance, emergency egress paths must not be impeded. Emergency service personnel must be made aware of anyone needing assistance. On campus, the stairway landing in most buildings is large enough to accommodate at least one wheelchair occupant and still be viable as a means of emergency egress for others.

4.5.3 While not all stairways fully qualify as “Areas of Rescue Assistance” as defined by fire code, they are usually substantially safer than any other area of the building. Such areas are preferable to remaining in an area where exposure to heat, smoke, and other products of combustion are a hazard. Predetermining and testing an “Area of Rescue Assistance” is an acceptable alternative to assisted evacuation.

4.5.4 Every attempt must be made to provide each Area of Rescue Assistance with appropriate signage, emergency warning devices and a two-way communication system.

4.6 Definitions

4.6.1 AREA OF RESCUE ASSISTANCE: An area which has direct access to an exit, where people who are unable to use stairs may temporarily remain in safety to await further instructions or assistance during emergency evacuation proceedings.

4.6.2 AREA OF REFUGE: An area of refuge is a space protected from the effects of fire, either by means of separation from other spaces in the same building or by
virtue of location in an adjacent building, thereby permitting a delay in egress
travel from any level.

4.6.3 TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION: A method of two-way communication, with
both visual and audio signals, will be provided between each area of rescue
assistance and the primary entrance. The state marshal may approve a location
other than the primary entry.
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