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Erie County Department of Health

EMPLOYEE EMERGENCY

Response Guide



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INTRODUCTION

The Employee Emergency Response Guide provides instructions for employees in emergency situations. A link to this guide will be included in the Orientation Manual given to new hires. An electronic copy of this guide can also be found on the server in "Health Department/ All Staff Info." All employees should become familiar with procedures to handle different types of emergencies and understand the emergency evacuation process.

Employees should become familiar with the information contained in this guide **prior** to emergencies. Extra copies should be easily accessible in every office.

Notification Process

The Erie County Department of Health (ECDH) has two ways of notifying employees of an emergency. The notification could be for a variety of events (weather alerts, building/computer issues, emergencies, etc.).

1 **Text Alert**
The Text Alert system is used to notify staff of any significant event that may affect their work location and/or workday. The ECDH Director (or designee) can send mass text alerts to ECDH staff. This system ensures immediate and clear messaging using prescripted or uniquely drafted messages.

2 **Recall Roster/Call Down**
As a secondary method, ECDH has a recall roster call down system. The ECDH Director (or designee) begins by calling each department supervisor who then makes calls to each of their staff. The ECDH recall roster is updated regularly and when there are staffing changes.

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EVACUATION

1. When the fire alarm sounds or an evacuation is announced, all individuals are to evacuate the building immediately.
2. Before leaving, conduct a quick visual inspection of your area. **Do not touch or open** a suspect item. Report suspicious activity or objects to your Department Head at the evacuation site.
3. Close, but do not lock, doors. Leave the lights on.
4. Immediately proceed to the evacuation site (unless instructed to go home).
5. Those who are unable to use the stairs should wait by the stairwell until most evacuees have exited the building. When it is clear, move into the stairwell and await trained personnel who will help you evacuate.
6. Any injured employees should proceed to the evacuation site for medical treatment. If unable to relocate, move away from the building and await medical assistance.

Evacuation Sites

ECDH Evacuation Locations

Primary Location
West Erie Presbyterian Church
621 West 2nd Street
Contact: Marc Miller
westeriepca@gmail.com

Secondary/Inclement Weather Location
Electrical & Mechanical Systems Inc.
316 Cherry Street
Contact: Cara Herbstritt
fax@eandmsi.com

Please note: Reporting to the evacuation site is mandatory and will be enforced. It is against County policy for any employee to remain in the building when an evacuation is announced. The alarm system or public announcement system tells staff when to evacuate. You may also be instructed to evacuate verbally by a supervisor, by phone or email, or with the fire alarm.

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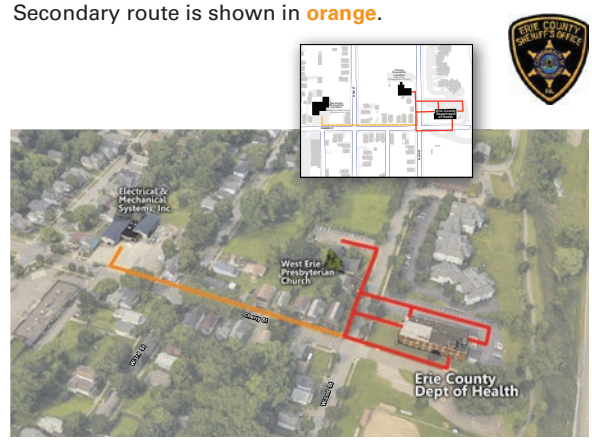
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Steps to Take

1. Leave the building immediately through the nearest exit. **Do not return to your office.**
2. Walk to the evacuation site.
3. Check in with your supervisor. Missing persons will be reported to the Sheriff/first responders.
4. Employees are paid during an evacuation and must remain at the evacuation site until released by a supervisor.
5. Employees returning to the building who find an evacuation in process must immediately report to the evacuation site.

Evacuation Site Map

Evacuation routes from 606 West 2nd Street
Primary route is shown in **red**.
Secondary route is shown in **orange**.



TAB 2

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LOCKDOWN/ SHELTER IN PLACE

A lockdown/shelter-in-place order is received by phone, email, text, verbally, or based on observations. Response options include:

Evacuate (Run)

- Know where exits are and have multiple plans to exit depending on the situation.
- Leave belongings behind (your cell phone is an exception).
- Keep your hands empty and visible.
- Attempt to assist others, if possible.

Shelter in Place (Hide)

- Move to the least visible/most secure location within your workspace.
- Lock all doors and turn off the lights. Consider barricading the entrance to your workspace.
- Remain as quiet as possible.
- Do not exit unless it is safe **or** you are directed by a known person/authority.
- Call **911** and/or a supervisor. Provide your location, a description of your situation, and the names of others located with you.

Take Action (Fight)

- Use only as a last resort if an attacker enters your workspace.
- Utilize any improvised weapon within your vicinity.
- Act with aggression to distract, deter, and/or disable an attacker, enabling you to evacuate.

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CALL FOR HELP

Types of Emergencies & Who to Call

1 When immediate evacuation is necessary due to fire, explosion, or serious threat to more than one office:

RESPONSE: PULL FIRE ALARM.

2 When immediate assistance is needed from law enforcement, medical responders, Maintenance, or Operations:

RESPONSE: CONTACT APPROPRIATE OFFICE AS LISTED IN THE CONTACTS SECTION.

3 When the situation is suspicious or the need to evacuate is unclear:

RESPONSE: CALL 911.

Provide the following information:

- Your name
- The phone number you are calling from
- Your location
- A description of the incident

Phone System Failure

If a phone system fails, determine if the problem is with the one phone or is widespread.

- Report the issue to the Administrative Office Coordinator.
- Call the Telecommunication Manager at: 814-451-6328
- Send an email to Operations.
- Physically report the problem to Operations.
- Report the problem to the Department Head.

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POWER FAILURE

During an electrical failure, emergency lighting is automatically turned on in critical locations only. Employees in interior offices must relocate to lit areas. Flashlights may be available. **The use of candles is prohibited.**

- If you are caught in the dark, await assistance from someone with a flashlight. Do not attempt to relocate if you cannot see. Consider using the flashlight on your cell phone.
- If the outage is local, call **814-451-6219** to report it. If the outage appears widespread, report it to your Department Head.
- Departments located near elevators should check the elevator for trapped occupants (pound on the door, call, and listen). Place an "Out of Order" sign over the buttons. Maintenance will remove the sign when elevators are deemed safe.
- Await further instructions. If the outage is expected to be long term, the administration will announce a building closing via Department Heads.

MAIL HANDLING

If you are suspicious of a mailed/delivered item, **do not handle or open it.** Call **911** immediately. You may contact the Sheriff at **814-451-6005** as a secondary option. Pay special attention if the item has:

- A poorly typed or handwritten address.
- Foreign or special delivery markings.
- Misspellings of common words.
- Inaccurate titles or addresses.
- Excessive postage (usually stamps).
- Oily stains, discoloration, or a peculiar odor.
- Excessive binding material or use of unusual tapes/twine.
- Excessive or uneven weight distribution.

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UNKNOWN SUBSTANCE

If an unknown substance falls from/is found in an envelope or package:

- Stay calm. Do not touch the package or substance. If you have the object in your hands, gently set it down and move away from the area. Do not smell, touch, taste, or further handle the item or any material that falls from it.
- Immediately call **911** and alert the Sheriff at **814-451-6005**. Keep phone lines open and remain available for an interview with law enforcement.
- Have a coworker notify the Department Head.
- Remove yourself and others from the immediate area (away from direct contact with the substance) and isolate yourself. Allow access to no one except law enforcement. Do not leave the vicinity until instructed to do so by law enforcement or hazardous materials (hazmat) responders.
- Employees and visitors in surrounding areas cannot leave the area unless instructed by law enforcement or hazmat.
- Prepare a list of the names of all persons who are isolated or evacuated from the area.
- If evacuation is necessary, the alarm will signal that the building is closing. Persons who were in the contaminated area will be restricted from leaving for health and safety reasons. If you are held in the building, remain calm and follow law enforcement's instructions.
- Evacuated employees must take their belongings and go to the evacuation site. Local media will broadcast updates and inform employees and the public of the time of reopening. If the building reopens later the same day, employees will be expected to return to work.
- If you witness or suspect the release of any chemical or biological agent, immediately leave the area, call **911**, and notify your supervisor.

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SEVERE WEATHER

The Erie County Department of Health does not close due to inclement weather. If dangerous weather threatens county buildings, the County Executive (or designee), in consultation with appropriate authorities, will determine and announce the county's course of action.

Building Collapse/Earthquake

- If inside the building, take cover under a sturdy piece of furniture or counter, or brace yourself against an inside wall. Protect your head and neck.
- Stay away from windows, skylights, and objects that may fall.
- Exit the building if it is safe to do so and report to the evacuation site. **Do not use elevators.**
- If you are unable to leave the building, remain in a protected position until help arrives. Further building movement may occur.
- If outdoors, move away from the building, street-lights, and utility wires. After quaking or collapse has ceased, report to the evacuation site.

Tornado

- Turn off computers, locate your cell phone/flashlights, and prepare to evacuate to shelter areas in the base-ment or interior rooms/hallways away from doors and windows. **Do not use elevators.**
- Stay away from windows and objects that may fall. Report to the evacuation site if the building has been damaged.

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FIRE PLAN

The Erie City Fire Department automatically responds to a fire alarm. All employees must immediately leave the building through the nearest exit and report to the evacuation site.

Steps to Take



1. Pull the nearest fire alarm.
2. Stop all work and direct people to the nearest exit. Close, but do not lock, doors and leave the lights on.
3. People who are unable to use the stairs should wait outside of stairwells until traffic has died down. When it is clear, wait on the stairwell landing for trained personnel who will assist you in leaving the building.
4. Report to the evacuation site and check in with your supervisor.
5. If injured, move away from the building and await emergency medical treatment.
6. Report pertinent information to emergency response personnel and your supervisor at the evacuation site.
7. Remain at the evacuation site until you are released by a supervisor.

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ASSAULT/HOSTAGE SITUATION

Witness to an Incident

1. Do nothing that increases danger to you or others. Shout for help.
2. Seek shelter in interior rooms. Bring others into an office that is safe. Close and lock doors, and consider barricading the entrance to the room you are in.
3. Stay away from windows and doors.
4. If the attacker is armed, do not interfere unless trained to do so or you have no other option.
5. Do not attempt to evacuate or leave an area unless instructed to do so by authorities or the area has become unsafe to stay.
6. Call **911**. Provide the following information:
   - Location of the attack and attacker(s)
   - Description and number of attacker(s)
   - What sort of weapons are being used
   - What happened
   - Your name
   - Office and extension you are calling from
7. Access, or have someone else access, the public address system. (Dial **50** and speak into the phone to page the entire building.)

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Taken as a Hostage

1. Remain calm. Professionals are working on your rescue, but hostage situations can be lengthy.
2. Comply with your captor's requests in a friendly fashion. Do not argue or volunteer suggestions.
3. Be silent if instructed.
4. Do not attempt to escape unless it is totally safe or you have no other option.
5. Inform the captor if another hostage needs medical attention. Do not attempt to assist unless the captor gives you permission.
6. Be alert for signals from outside.
7. When released, do not make fast or sudden moves that would confuse you with a captor.
8. Prepare to speak with law enforcement.

Situational awareness, planning, and preparation are our best defenses in identifying and reacting to a violent encounter in the workplace.

- Paying attention will help us identify a potentially violent incident before it occurs.
- Always having a plan will enable us to respond more efficiently/effectively.
- Preparing for uncommon or violent encounters will allow us to better meet the significant challenges we face during an incident.

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BIOLOGICAL & CHEMICAL THREATS

Biological and chemical substances range from low or no hazard to highly hazardous. The incident may be accidental or intentional. The following guidelines will help determine the correct response.

Accidental Contamination

Low-Hazard Substance

(Small, contained spill/leak; inflammables; no fumes; unlikely to come into contact with electricity, cause slippage, or pose immediate threat)

- Call **911**, contact the Sheriff, Maintenance, and/or Operations. (Flip to the Contacts tab for contact details.)
- Report the incident to your supervisor.

High-Hazard Substance

(Large, uncontained spill/leak; harmful/dangerous substance)

- Leave the area where the spill or leak is present.
- Call **911**. You may also contact the Sheriff or Operations to make them aware of the situation.
- Report the incident to the Department Head and explain what steps have been taken.
- In the event of a large gas leak or threat that affects the entire building, activate the nearest fire alarm and evacuate. Immediately report the situation to emergency personnel, a Department Head, or the Sheriff's representative at the evacuation site.

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Intentional Contamination

(IMMEDIATELY CALL 911 IN ALL SITUATIONS)

Intentional actions that threaten the safety of employees, the public, or the facility must be reported immediately.

- Call **911** and follow their instructions.
- If hazard level is low, also contact Maintenance and Operations.
- If hazard level is high, also follow the instructions listed under "Accidental Contamination."
- If the threat is an unknown substance, follow the instructions in the "Substance" tab.



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BOMB THREAT

A bomb threat may be received by phone, mail, delivery, or in person.

Phone

- Check the caller ID and record the incoming phone number (if applicable).
- Be aware of the caller's voice, background noises, or any other identifying factors.
- Do not hang up. Try to get the caller to give you more information (Where is the bomb? Why did they plant a bomb? When will it go off?).
- Listen attentively to the caller's words.
- After the caller has hung up, immediately go to another phone and call **911**.
- Provide your name, extension, and location.

Mail/Delivery

- Do not touch the item, or put the item down immediately. Avoid fingerprinting.
- Call **911** immediately and provide your name and location.

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Personal Threat

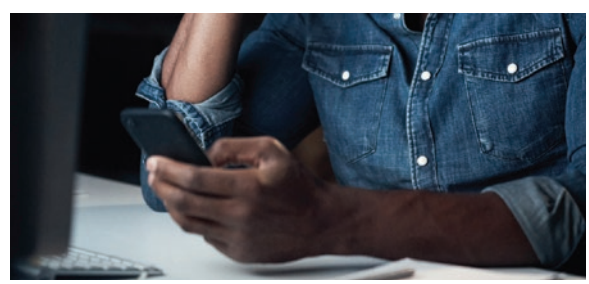
- Signal a coworker to call **911**.
- If that is not possible, call **911** as soon as you are safely able to do so.

Email Threat

- Leave the message open on the computer.
- Call **911** immediately.
- Print, photograph, and/or copy the message and subject line.
- Note the date and time of the threat.

Next Steps

- Contact your supervisor.
- Immediately fill out the Bomb Threat Checklist below (if you had personal or voice contact).
- Wait for a responding law enforcement officer.



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Bomb Threat Checklist

DATE: _____ **TIME:** _____

TIME CALLER HUNG UP: _____ **CALL WAS RECEIVED:** _____

Ask Caller:

- Where is the bomb located? (building, floor, room)
- When will it go off?
- What does it look like?
- What kind of bomb is it?
- What will make it explode?
- Did you place the bomb? ☐ Yes ☐ No
- Why?
- What is your name?

Exact Wording of Threat:

_____

_____

_____

Information About Caller:

- Where is the caller located? (background/level of noise)
- Estimated age:
- Is the voice familiar? If so, who does it sound like?

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Bomb Threat Checklist Cont'd

Other Observations:

Caller's Voice

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Accent
- ☐ Angry
- ☐ Calm
- ☐ Clearing throat
- ☐ Coughing
- ☐ Cracking voice
- ☐ Crying
- ☐ Deep
- ☐ Disguised
- ☐ Distinct
- ☐ Excited
- ☐ Heavy breathing
- ☐ Laughter
- ☐ Lisp
- ☐ Loud
- ☐ Nasal
- ☐ Normal
- ☐ Ragged
- ☐ Rapid
- ☐ Raspy
- ☐ Slow
- ☐ Slurred
- ☐ Soft
- ☐ Stutter

Background Sounds

- ☐ Animal noises
- ☐ House noises
- ☐ Kitchen noises
- ☐ Street noises
- ☐ Booth
- ☐ PA system
- ☐ Conversation
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Motor
- ☐ Clear
- ☐ Static
- ☐ Office machinery
- ☐ Factory machinery
- ☐ Local
- ☐ Long distance

Threat Language

- ☐ Incoherent
- ☐ Read message
- ☐ Taped message
- ☐ Irrational
- ☐ Profane
- ☐ Well-spoken

Other Information:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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IMPORTANT CONTACTS

LAW ENFORCEMENT/SHERIFF

- **911** or **814-451-6005**

MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT

814-451-6219

OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

814-451-6328

MEDICAL FIRST RESPONDERS

TO BE USED AFTER 911 HAS BEEN CALLED

1. Use the public address system to page first responders. (Dial **50** and announce three times **"Medical assistance needed"** plus the office location.)
2. Report the situation to the Department Head.
3. Have someone go to the entrance door or parking lot (if safe) and wait for first responders.

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Employee Emergency Response Guide

This guide provides instructions for employees in emergency situations. Employees should become familiar with the information in this guide **prior** to emergencies.

- Evacuation instructions
- Who to call for help
- Lockdown and shelter-in-place procedures
- Fires and severe weather
- Bomb threats and hostage situations







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