

## **Emergency Guidelines for Individuals with Disabilities**

The safety of individuals with disabilities is a shared responsibility. The College is committed to developing and implementing procedures to assist individuals with disabilities during an emergency. Likewise, individuals with disabilities should create a personal emergency plan which addresses their needs before and during an evacuation.

### **Development of a Personal Emergency Plan**

The development of a personal emergency plan should include the following steps:

#### Step 1: Register

Students with disabilities who need assistance should register with a campus office of Disability Support Services (DSS) regarding the nature of assistance they will need during an emergency. Employees requiring assistance should register with the Disability Services Coordinator for Faculty and Staff in Human Resources.

#### Step 2: Develop Personal Evacuation Instructions

Assistance required during an evacuation should be written down on a card and carried by the individual with disabilities at all times. The card should instruct others on the best ways to assist and the number of persons needed to help.

#### Step 3: Develop a “buddy system”

Prepare for emergencies in advance by establishing a primary and an alternate “buddy” for each class or office location. A “buddy” could be a classmate, instructor, supervisor, or co-worker. An individual’s personal evacuation instructions should be shared with their “buddies”. A “buddy” will assist individuals with disabilities to an evacuation assembly area outside the building or to a safer area within a building (e.g. stair landing, room away from imminent danger, another wing, opposite end of corridor). A second person should immediately notify emergency personnel where an individual is located. Police or Fire/Rescue personnel will decide if individuals are safe where they are or evacuate them as necessary. A “buddy” should stay with an individual until the emergency is over.

If an individual with a disability is alone during an emergency, they should contact the campus security office and provide their present location. The security office can be contacted by a cell phone, a campus emergency telephone, or an office telephone.

#### Step 4: Know Your Environment

Become familiar with emergency exits, evacuation routes in campus buildings, and campus evacuation assembly areas. Elevators are not to be used as an emergency exit unless instructed by emergency personnel. Determine the building exit nearest your classroom or office. In the event that this exit is blocked, be familiar with alternate exits.

#### Step 5: Telephone Numbers

##### Campus Safety and Security

Germantown	240-567-7777
Rockville	240-567-5111
Takoma Park	240-567-1600

##### Disability Support Services for Students

Germantown	240-567-7770
Rockville	240-567-5058
Takoma Park	240-567-1480

##### Montgomery County Fire/Rescue or Police

Call 911

## **Guidelines for Assisting Individuals with Disabilities**

If an individual wants to help a person with a disability, always ask how you can help before giving assistance. The following guidelines should be used for assisting individuals with specific disabilities.

### Deaf and Hard of Hearing Disabilities

Individuals with a hearing disability may not be able to distinguish audible warning alarms or respond to voice communications. Convey the need to communicate by turning the room lights on and off and indicate through hand gestures or writing what is happening and where to go. Escort individuals during an evacuation as they may not be able to follow oral commands issued by authorities. Individuals who cannot speak loudly should carry a whistle or have other means of attracting attention of others.

### Mobility Disabilities

Individuals with a mobility disability should not be evacuated by untrained personnel unless the situation is life-threatening. If located on an upper floor, individuals may be assisted to a stairwell landing to await evacuation or further instructions from Fire/Rescue or Police. If individuals can walk with assistance, a “buddy” should assist and accompany the individual when descending the stairs.

### Visual Disabilities

Individuals with a visual disability may prefer to hold on to a sighted person’s elbow during an evacuation. If possible, someone should follow behind to protect the individual from being pushed down in the event of crowding.

## **College Procedures for Assisting Individuals with Disabilities**

A copy of these Guidelines is available on My MC, the DSS website, and will be provided to employees at new employee orientation. Administrative aides in College departments will disseminate the Guidelines to part-time faculty and temporary staff.

DSS will provide a list of students each semester to Safety and Security specifying classroom locations and class schedules for all students requesting assistance in an emergency evacuation. DSS will provide updates to Safety and Security as warranted.

HR will provide a list of employee office locations to Safety and Security of all employees requesting assistance in an emergency evacuation. HR will provide updates to Safety and Security as warranted.

Safety and Security will keep a copy of the DSS list and HR list in the Safety and Security Office’s Emergency Handbook as well as in all Campus Response Team “go bags.” For off-campus locations, the lists will be kept with the Site Emergency Coordinator.

DSS will send a formal memo to all faculty and staff requesting that announcements, regarding procedures for individuals with disabilities, be made at the beginning of each semester class. Faculty should also put this notice in their syllabi asking those students that need assistance in an emergency to register with DSS or notify them directly.

When a Campus Response Team is activated as a result of a communications alert, Team members will review the DSS list and HR list in their “go bags” for the location of all students and employees who may need evacuation assistance should the need arise. Site Emergency Coordinators at off-campus locations will review their lists during an emergency and provide assistance as necessary.

If an alert demands an evacuation, Campus Response Team members or Site Emergency Coordinators will interact with Fire/Rescue to evacuate buildings including all individuals with disabilities.