

EVACUATION PLAN
FOR THE
CLINTON COUNTY OFFICE
BUILDING

James R. Langley, Jr.
Chairman, Clinton County Legislature

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SECTION I: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND PLANNING GUIDELINES

A. INTRODUCTION

This plan outlines responsibilities and procedures for evacuating the Clinton County Office Building. The three-story facility is occupied by approximately 200 county employees. In addition, up to 200 visitors frequent the facility each day, with as many as 50 at any given time. Three emergency stairways and two elevators serve the three stories.

B. PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to provide for the safe, rapid, and efficient emergency evacuation of all occupants of this facility. The plan establishes a concept of operations, strategy, and tactics to guide building response personnel in effectuating an evacuation.

C. SCOPE

This evacuation plan outlines overall responsibilities in three areas:

Risk Reduction efforts focus on identifying the complexities of evacuation, and the steps taken to prevent or mitigate problems that may impede evacuation.

Response involves the implementation of the plan to ensure that all building occupants have been safely, rapidly, and efficiently evacuated and accounted for.

Recovery efforts may include strategies to facilitate building re-entry, and correct any apparent problems that may have been identified in an evacuation.

D. PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

1. Emergency evacuation does not apply in all emergency situations.
2. Some emergencies may require evacuation, while others may require sheltering in-place. i.e. if toxic materials are present in outside air.
3. The Clinton County Office Building has been properly inspected and found in accordance with applicable state and local fire prevention and building codes.
4. Certain, identified staff will be called upon to ensure the safe, rapid, and efficient coordination of evacuation, and to ensure that no occupants have been left behind.
5. The building management has identified known potential hazards within the building.

6. The facility may have persons with special needs (e.g., wheelchair-bound, hearing-impaired) that will require special provisions to be safely evacuated.
7. There may be a disruption of power to the building or other damage to the building rendering elevators inoperable, and necessitating the use of emergency generators and battery-powered lighting.
8. As result of an emergency, occupants in the building may be injured and require medical treatment.

E. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The Building Emergency Coordinator may be known by various titles, such as Emergency Director, Building Director, or Facility Manager. Regardless, this person represents the building management, and is responsible for internal building emergencies.

1. Upon receipt of an emergency, the Building Emergency Coordinator will make the determination to implement any and all protective actions, including evacuation.
2. If appropriate, the Building Emergency Coordinator will order the evacuation to commence, and will communicate this through the fire alarm system and to the Floor Marshall(s).
3. Each Floor Marshall will facilitate the evacuation throughout his/her responsible floor, and coordinate with the Floor Wardens, Floor Searchers, and Evacuation Aides assigned to each floor.
4. Building occupants will follow the evacuation order, and proceed directly to the pre-designated assembly area.
5. Upon completion of each floor evacuation, Floor Warden, Floor Searchers, and Evacuation Aides will inform their Floor Marshall of completion, and all will leave the building and go directly to the assembly area.
6. The Floor Marshall will inform the Building Emergency Coordinator of the status of his/her floor.
7. Upon reaching the assembly area, the Building Emergency Coordinator and the Floor Marshall(s) will conduct a roll call of his/her staff, identify that all have been accounted for, or any missing, and report any missing to the local emergency response agencies (Police, Fire, etc).

8. The Building Emergency Coordinator will serve as the liaison to the local emergency response agencies.
9. All staff will remain in the assembly area until otherwise directed by the Building Emergency Coordinator.
10. Once local responders deem that the evacuation can be terminated, and the building is safe to re-enter, all staff will be allowed to re-enter their work area only after being directed to do so by the Building Emergency Coordinator.

F. PLAN MAINTENANCE AND UPDATING

1. The Building Emergency Coordinator is responsible for maintaining and updating this plan.
2. This plan shall be reviewed and updated at least annually, with revised pages distributed by February 1st of each year.

Outdated plans are dangerous. It is just as important to update a plan as it is to develop one. Specify in your planning effort when a thorough review will be undertaken.

SECTION II: RISK REDUCTION

A. IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL HAZARDS

1. The Building Emergency Coordinator has identified the known hazards in the building, and has communicated such hazards to all building occupants.
2. The building Emergency Coordinator has taken every effort to mitigate such hazards in accordance with applicable state and local fire codes.

B. CONTINUITY OF EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

1. Primary and replacement emergency staff has been identified.
2. All primary emergency staff has identified two replacements or augmentees for his/her position.
3. In the event that the primary emergency staff are out of the building for any reason, primary staff will notify their augmentee and the Building Emergency Coordinator, or Floor Marshall, of their situation.

C. BUILDING MAINTENANCE

1. Building maintenance staff will ensure that means of egress, including all stairways, are clear, dry, well lit, and free from clutter and garbage, and will notify the facility engineer of any obvious problems.
2. The facility engineer will ensure that the emergency lighting/back-up generators and the public address (PA) and fire alarm systems are in proper working condition.

D. TRAINING/EXERCISE

Training and exercising can increase Response capability and provide for the initial Training for new employees.
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1. Every employee will be orientated in the emergency procedure for the building, and will be required to participate in any drills.
2. A floor plan indicating the evacuation paths will be posted in key locations throughout each floor and distributed to each employee.
3. Each employee will be given the name of their floor emergency staff to be kept in his/her assigned work area. Copies of the Evacuation Plan will be posted at each work station and at the lobby desk.

4. All staff will be trained in the procedures for emergency evacuation, and will receive refresher training at least annually.
5. New employees will receive their initial training on evacuation procedures, and then will receive refresher training as prescribed above.
6. Designated emergency response staff (e.g., floor wardens, searchers) have been trained in their emergency positions, and will receive refresher training on a quarterly basis.
7. Drills will be held at least semi-annually, and will require the participation of all building occupants and the local fire departments.

SECTION III: RESPONSE

A. ALERT AND NOTIFICATION

1. The initial notification of an emergency situation may come from a variety of means:
 - a. From within the facility
 - Visual, from an employee or visitor
 - Internal fire alarm
 - b. From outside the facility via
 - Emergency Alert System (EAS)
 - Local Emergency Official i.e. Plattsburgh Police, Fire or Emergency Management
 - Electronic means (phone, e-mail)
2. Any and all staff who receives such information will transmit any such notification to the Building Emergency Coordinator at his/her phone extension.
3. The Floor Marshall will notify the Building Emergency Coordinator of any emergency conditions.
4. Upon notification of an emergency, if appropriate, the Building Emergency Coordinator will activate the building alarm and notify the Floor Marshall.
5. Each Floor Marshall will alert the other emergency staff, and initiate the evacuation on his/her respective floor.

B. EVACUATION POLICY/GUIDELINES

Evacuation stairways should be identified and assigned ahead of time. If the choice to use a stairway is left up to the employee, the potential does exist to overuse one stairway, and under-utilize the other. To reduce the evacuation time, stairway usage must be balanced. This can only be accomplished by assigning employees to stairways according to their work area. The purpose of this is to ensure equal usage of the stairways according to their capacity. Studies have shown that by doing this, the evacuation time can be reduced by 30%.

1. All building occupants will evacuate as follows:

The purpose of the floor plan is to let everyone know how they are to evacuate. The floor plan will identify the stairways assigned to a particular section of the floor. This is usually done by color coding the sections. The assignment of stairways is done according to the stairways' capacity. The floor plan should also identify the location of the fire doors and fire extinguishers.

- a. All occupants will evacuate on the order to do so.
- b. Occupants are to proceed directly to the exit assigned by means of the floor plan.
- c. If an employee is not at his/her work area at the time of the evacuation order, he/she is not to return to their work area to retrieve personal possessions or belongings.
- d. Evacuees will not bring any food, beverages, or large objects with them due to the potential that such items may hinder the evacuation.
- e. All evacuees will proceed in a single file, in an orderly manner.
- f. Elevators will not be used to evacuate except as noted below.
- g. All evacuees will exit the building, and immediately proceed to the designated assembly area.
- h. Persons with special needs may utilize the elevators as directed if they are deemed operable and safe.
- i. Occupants are not allowed to re-enter the facility until deemed appropriate by Emergency Responder Incident Commander i.e. Police or Fire Department.

2. Assembly Area

The Assembly Area should **not** be just outside the building. It should be at least 500 feet away, possibly indoors in the event of cold weather. The 500 feet distance is to avoid the effects of an explosion or structural failure, and to avoid interference with emergency responders.

- a. St. Peter's Church is the primary Assembly Area for all occupants of the Clinton County Office Building.
- b. Upon arrival of the assembly area, evacuees will organize with their coworkers in their assigned department or section.
- b. The results of the roll call will be disseminated to the Building Emergency Coordinator, and successively to the local emergency response agency, as appropriate.

C. ASSIGNMENT OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Although the emergency staffing may appear to be excessive, it will make the evacuation more efficient and uncover problems before they impede the evacuation. Considering that the purpose of evacuation is to save lives, this staffing is clearly justified.

1. The Role of the Building Emergency Coordinator
 - a. Receives/disseminates the initial notification of an emergency situation.
 - b. Orders the evacuation of the facility.
 - c. Serves as the facility liaison with the local emergency response agencies.
 - d. Determines from Floor Marshall if all the evacuees have safely exited the facility.
2. The Role of the Floor Marshall
 - a. A Floor Marshall is assigned to each floor.
 - b. Responsible for emergency coordination and reporting of any potential or actual emergency condition on a particular floor to the Building Emergency Coordinator.
 - c. Responsible for organizing his/her emergency team members and making sure emergency procedures are carried out correctly.
 - d. Appoints personnel to the emergency team and fills vacant positions.
 - e. Maintains an updated roster of all Floor Wardens, Searchers, Stairwell Monitors, Elevator Monitors, Evacuation Aides and alternates.
 - f. Supervises the activity and training of all key emergency team members.
 - g. Plans/coordinates the evacuation of persons with special needs.
3. The Role of the Floor Wardens (1 per 20 employees)
 - a. Responsible for the orderly evacuation of all personnel in his/her assigned area, via designated exits, to the assembly area.
 - b. Ascertains that persons with special needs are being assisted.
 - c. Responsible for the control of people in his/her area.
 - d. Remains with the group throughout the evacuation period and leads them to predetermined assembly area.
 - e. Assists in training of all personnel in his/her work area.

4. The Role of Evacuation Aides: Evacuating Persons with Special Needs

Among the occupants of the County Office Building, several employees would require assistance to evacuate. This could include mobility-impaired and sight-impaired individuals as well as people with medical conditions, people with special needs, and the frail elderly. In addition, some visitors to the building may require assistance in evacuating.

Evacuating persons with special needs can be the most challenging and difficult part of a building evacuation. If the elevators are inoperable, the mobility-impaired will need maximum assistance. Devices are available to help the mobility-impaired evacuate using stairs, and were utilized during the World Trade Center Disaster. In addition, federal law requires that people with disabilities have an equal chance of safe egress in an emergency evacuation.

- a. At the initiation of the evacuation, Evacuation Aides provide assistance and escort to persons with special needs, and will ensure that all persons needing assistance convene on each floor's lobby adjacent to the elevator bays.
- b. If according to the Building Emergency Coordinator or the Floor Marshall, the elevator is operational and safe, it will be the primary means of egress for those requiring evacuation assistance.
- c. Evacuation Aides will accompany each elevator trip and ensure that the persons arrive at the assembly area.
- d. If the elevators are not operational or safe, then the stairways will be used for evacuation.
- e. To ensure that both the special needs people requiring assistance and other people evacuating all evacuate in the shortest possible time, the evacuation of persons needing assistance should begin after the preponderance of the evacuating people have passed their floor.

SECTION IV: RECOVERY/RE-ENTRY

A. RE-ENTRY

1. The facility will remain evacuated until the local emergency response agency has determined that it is safe to re-enter.
2. Evacuees will be told they may re-enter from the Building Emergency Coordinator.
3. Evacuees will re-enter the facility utilizing interior stairwells as well as elevators.
4. If, upon return, any occupant identifies any personal belonging missing, they are instructed to report such findings to their immediate supervisor/section head.

B. MITIGATION INTO THE RE-ENTRY PROCESS

Management wants to know the concerns of all employees, and strongly encourages any feedback from the evacuation process. The purpose of the feedback is to identify ways to improve the evacuation process.

1. All personnel are encouraged to report any problems they may have experience during the evacuation process. Additionally, personnel are encouraged to report any malfunctioning equipment, devices, or building construction in an effort to repair such equipment. Reports may be made to the Floor Warden or Floor Marshall.
2. After each drill, emergency staff will be asked to attend a critique to be held the following day of the drill. The critique will allow for some of the above issues to be identified, and to address any other issue that may arise. A draft of the critique will be provided, and will be available for all employees to view upon request.
3. Building maintenance staff will conduct a post-drill inspection of the facility, and address any mechanical issues that may have resulted from the critique.