

Responding to a Crisis at the St. Petersburg Campus

General Evacuation and Relocation

The building will have posted a site specific map, for the purpose of evacuation and relocation of people that are affected by the incident. This map will identify evacuation routes and locations for safe areas and assembly areas within the building and outside of the building. If necessary, people will be instructed on where shelter and assembly may be obtained if the primary shelter/assembly points are inaccessible.

Evacuation Plan for Persons with Disabilities

Students/Visitors

Emergency personnel are usually available to assist with any evacuation. However, this may not always be the case. It may not be possible to know the exact locations of all disabled students, staff and visitors to the University at a given time. Those with mobility concerns or other concerns that would make an independent evacuation difficult are encouraged to discuss alternate plans and arrangements with their instructors and/or supervisors in advance. This will increase the likelihood that individuals will be able to exit the building safely in the event of an emergency.

Pre-Planning (students)

Notify the instructor and/or supervisor of your capabilities and what type of assistance you will need in the event that an emergency situation arises and evacuation is necessary. Become familiar with your area by locating exits, stairwells, elevators, fire-fighting equipment, fire alarms and telephones. Establish areas of refuge if you are unable to get out of the building.

During an emergency (students)

Immediately leave the building using the available exit or pre-designated exit route posted in the classroom or area you are in.

If unable to leave the building, call the **Pinellas County Sheriff's Department (911)** and give your location and type of assistance needed.

If unable to leave a room/building due to fire or because of smoke in the hallway, alert someone by waving a light colored cloth or blowing a whistle.

In an earthquake, stay where you are and take cover, avoiding windows. In a tornado or severe weather, proceed to designated safe area. Advise the person assisting you the best way to transport you.

Pre-Planning (faculty/staff)

Faculty should make an announcement at the beginning of class each term to advise students of the procedures to take in an emergency situation and to discuss accommodation needs with disabled students. Faculty should assist the student in arranging for volunteers who are willing to assist the disabled student.

Faculty need to be familiar with all exits, ramps, stairwells, emergency telephones in the building that they occupy.

During an Emergency (staff)

Persons confined to a wheelchair

Persons confined to wheel chairs, with the assistance of a pre-designated co-worker faculty member or student will proceed out of the building via the nearest exit or pre-designated evacuation route.

No student *under any circumstances* is to be left alone.

Persons with visual impairments

Tell the person the nature of the emergency and offer to guide him/her. As you walk, tell the person where you are and advise of any obstacles. Offer your arm as guidance. Do not grasp his/her arm.

Persons with hearing impairments

Write a note telling what the emergency is and the nearest evacuation route/safe area. Tap the person on the shoulder or turn the light switch on and off to gain attention. Then indicate through gestures or in writing what is happening and what to do. Escort the person.

Do not use this if you smell gas in the air.

Persons using crutches, canes or walkers

If the person is having difficulty exiting quickly, treat him/her as if injured for evacuation purposes. Carrying options include two-person, lock arm position or having the person sit in a chair with arms.

Non-ambulatory persons

The needs and preferences of non-ambulatory persons will vary. Most will be able to exit safely without assistance on the ground floor. Always consult the person as to his/her preference with regard to:

1. Ways of being removed from a wheelchair.
2. The number of people necessary for assistance.
3. Whether moving extremities is painful.
4. Whether a seat cushion should be brought along if removed from the chair.
5. Whether he or she should be carried forward or backward on a flight of stairs.

All emergency situations, while not all the same, may require that people evacuate to a specific location. This manual identifies two types of evacuation procedures to follow in the event of a catastrophe.

Evacuation to safe areas

Certain emergency situations may require personnel to evacuate to a *safe area* within a building. These are areas that students, staff and visitors to the campus should take shelter in when circumstances dictate that evacuation outside the building/area is not advisable. These situations include, but are not limited to, tornados, severe weather and chemical attack. Routes and

locations to pre-designated safe areas are posted in each classroom, office and work area on campus on an 8"x 11" laminated map. Safe areas have been identified in **blue**. Students, staff and visitors that frequent areas on campus should take a couple of minutes to review these maps in the event of an emergency.

Building evacuation/assembly points

Certain situations, however, may require that personnel evacuate a building to a specific location out-side and away from the building. These situations include, but are not limited to; fire, earthquake (after tremors) and gas leak.

Routes and assembly points have been identified in **red** and are contained within the same map as the designated safe areas. These routes and assembly areas are posted in each classroom, office and work area on campus. Students, staff and visitors that frequent areas on campus should take a couple of minutes to review these maps in the event of an emergency.

Faculty/Staff Responsibility

Faculty and staff should take a few moments at the beginning of the first class each term to point out the map locations and to advise the class of where the safe area is, how to evacuate the building and where to assemble.

Tornados

Tornados usually occur during the spring and summer months, but may occur anytime, provided the conditions are right. Tornados can sweep through an area, causing severe damage and destruction, serious physical injury and death. They can change direction and strike again. Other potential hazards that can occur in the wake of a tornado may include, fire, electrical damage, structure damage and gas leaks.

There are two types of Tornado Alerts:

Tornado Watch

Weather conditions are considered favorable for creating a tornado and all employees should be alert to weather conditions.

Tornado Warning

A tornado funnel has been sighted or identified by radar. It is imperative that everyone takes shelter immediately. Tornados can and will move quickly. Therefore, time is of the essence. Keep in mind that since tornados can spring up in a moments notice, there may not be time for ample warning. It is therefore recommended that if severe thunderstorms occur, be alert to the fact that these storms may trigger a tornado.

Tornado Procedures

If the national weather service issues a tornado warning, the Weather Alert radio located in the lobby will sound. If the announcement is made that a tornado warning has been issued, a tornado has touched down, or we are in the path of a tornado, notifications will be made, and all personnel will move to the nearest designated safe area/shelter for that area.

If an actual tornado hits without warning

1. Remain calm.

2. Go to an area of safety designated for the area you are in, if possible. If not, go to rooms and corridors in the innermost part of the building. Stay clear of windows, corridors with windows or large free-standing expanses. Do not use the elevators.
3. Close all doors.
4. Crouch near the floor.
5. Stay alert for hazards in the aftermath of the tornado.

Earthquakes

An earthquake safety plan is more than just developing a response plan, it is an ongoing plan that includes identifying hazards, conducting drills, and developing plans to provide care and shelter to students, faculty and visitors until help arrives.

The need for a sound and effective plan is based on the following assumptions:

1. A major earthquake can occur without warning.
2. The event could cause widespread damage, serious injury and death.
3. The event could cause fire, explosions and release of toxic chemicals.
4. Transportation, communications and other services will be interrupted.
5. Outside medical, fire and police personnel will be extremely busy and probably will not be able to assist our campus for several hours or even days. The accepted rule is that we would have to be self sufficient for at least 72 hours.

What to expect during an earthquake

There will be a gentle shaking or a violent jolt. Or you may hear a low rumbling sound. Shortly, you will really feel the shaking and it will be difficult to move around.

Earthquake Procedures

If indoors

1. Stay indoors, remain where you are.
2. Move away from the windows, shelves and heavy objects.
3. Take cover under a desk, table or strong doorway.
4. If unable to get to a designated safe area, move to an interior wall.
5. Turn away from any windows, kneel alongside the wall, cover your head with elbows and clasp your hands behind your neck.
5. Stay alert.

If outdoors

1. Move to an open space.
2. Stay away from telephone poles and power lines.
3. Move away from buildings.

4. Lie down or crouch low to the ground.
5. Stay alert.

After the earthquake

1. Do not light fires or smoke.
2. Do not touch wires, and do not enter buildings until they have been checked.
3. Evacuate the area via the evacuation routes posted for that area.
4. Assemble at the designated assembly area and await further instructions from emergency personnel
5. Faculty and staff should make sure that everyone is accountable for.

Fire

Fire in a building can occur for a variety of reasons and can occur at anytime and spread very quickly.

Fire Procedure

1. Anyone seeing a fire, observing or smelling smoke should immediately go to the nearest fire alarm pull station and activate the fire alarm. Extinguish the fire only if you can do so safely and quickly.
2. They should then notify **911**.
3. Faculty members shall assume responsibility for those people in their charge and evacuate their classrooms and offices in an orderly manner to the nearest designated evacuation route and assembly point.
4. Faculty are responsible for keeping all students in the assembly area until recalled to the building or advised by emergency personnel of where to go.
5. If students want to leave, or are dismissed, it is the responsibility of the instructor to obtain their name and log it down.

Department heads are responsible for keeping a head-count of their employees.

Fire Safety Tips

If your clothing catches fire:

Stop, drop and roll to extinguish the flames.

If trapped in a room:

1. Place cloth material around the bottom of the door to prevent smoke from entering.
2. Close as many doors as possible between you and the fire.
3. Do not break glass unless necessary. Outside smoke may enter.

4. Signal from a window if possible.

If caught in smoke:

1. Drop to your hands and knees, and crawl.
2. Hold your breath as long as possible.
3. Breathe shallowly through your nose and use clothing as a filter

If forced to advance through flames:

1. Hold your breath.
2. Move quickly.
3. Cover your head and hair.
4. Lower your head and close your eyes often.

Civil Protest/Civil Disturbance

A civil protest/disturbance will usually take the form of an organized public demonstration of disapproval with a particular action, idea or incident. The civil protest/disturbance does not necessarily have to be from any action taken by Webster University. It could be from any action or event worldwide.

Most of the time, protests are of peaceful means and of non-destructive or non-obstructive nature.

However, protests and civil disturbances can crop up at a moment's notice. It is the policy of Webster University to uphold the rights of all individuals, which includes the right to free speech and the right to peaceably assemble on public property.

These rights will not be interfered with, provided that the expressive activity does not disrupt the educational mission or involve substantial disorder and/or invasion of the rights of others.

Immediate action must be initiated if the following occur:

1. Disruption of normal operations.
2. Obstruction of access to offices, buildings or other facilities.
3. Willful demonstrations within the interior of any building or structure, except as authorized, to protect the rights and safety of other persons and to prevent damage to property.
4. Un-authorized entry into, or occupation of, a classroom, building, or area of the campus, including such entry or occupation at any unauthorized time and/or any unauthorized or improper use of school property, equipment or facilities. If the above occurs, **Pinellas County Sheriff's Department (911)** will be notified as well as the vice president of Finance and Administration and the dean of students. Depending upon the nature of the protest, the appropriate procedures should be followed

Peaceful, Non-Obstructive Protest

Peaceful protests should not be interrupted, unless violations of conditions above occur. If protesters are asked to leave, but refuse to leave by regular facility closing time:

1. Arrangements will be made by the campus director to monitor the situation during business hours, or
2. Determination will be made to treat the violation of regular closing hours as a disruptive protest.

Non-Violent, Disruptive Protest

In the event that a protest blocks access to facilities or interferes with the operations of the campus:

1. The campus director or his/her designee will go to the area and ask the protesters to leave or to discontinue the disruptive activities.
2. If the protesters persist in disruptive activity, a statement will be read by a selected University administrator as circumstances permit, advising the protesters that they are in violation of University policy and those individuals may be subject to disciplinary action, up to expulsion from the University. Individuals may also be subject to arrest.

Violent, Disruptive Protest

In the event that a violent protest in which injury to persons or property occurs or appears imminent, the following will occur:

1. **Pinellas County Sheriff's Department (911)** will be notified immediately and take immediate steps to secure the situation.
2. School administration officials will be notified.
3. The regional director, in consultation with the associate vice president, dean of students, university president, and other administrative staff, will determine further action.

Bomb Threat

A bomb threat may come to our attention in a variety of ways. It is important to compile as much information as possible. In the case of a written threat, it is vital that the document be handled by as few people as possible. This evidence should be turned over to the **Pinellas County Sheriff's Department (911)**. If the threat comes through e-mail; save the information on the computer. If, the threat is obtained by voice mail; save the message. In all cases of bomb threats, notify the **Pinellas County Sheriff's Department (911)** immediately. Most bomb threats, however, are made over the telephone. Therefore, the following instructions are provided.

Remain calm and immediately refer to the bomb threat checklist. Pay attention to your telephone display (if applicable) and record the information shown in the display window.

Keep the caller on the line as long as possible to attempt to gather as much information as possible. Try not to anger the caller at any time. Pay attention to background noises and distinctive sounds, such as machinery, traffic, other voices, music, television, etc. Note any characteristics of the caller's voice (gender, age, education, accent, etc). Attempt to obtain a location of advice (building, floor, room, etc). Attempt to obtain information on the time and type of detonator.

*Immediately after the call has ended, notify the **Pinellas County Sheriff's Department (911)** and the campus director. Keep the information confidential.

Once the **Pinellas County Sheriff's Department (911)** is notified, notify the regional director and associate vice president and advise them of the situation.

If the location of the bomb is known, staff most familiar with the location's normal appearance will conduct a search of the area quietly and without fanfare.

If suspicious packages or items are found, they will not be moved or touched. **Pinellas County Sheriff's Department (911)** will be notified to investigate.

Decision to Evacuate

The decision to evacuate a building and/or the campus shall be made after a thorough evaluation of the information that is available. That information shall include, but is not limited to:

1. The nature of the threat
2. The specific location and time of detonation
3. Circumstances related to the threat
4. The discovery of a device or unusual package, luggage, etc.

Bombs by Mail

Receiving a bomb in the mail is remote. Unfortunately, over the years a small number of explosive devices have been mailed that have resulted in injury and/or death. Mail bombs can be enclosed in a letter, package or envelope and may appear to be safe. However some unique characteristics may assist in identifying bombs:

1. Mail bombs may bear restricted endorsement, such as "Personal or Private."
2. Addressee's name or title may be inaccurate.
3. Return address may be fictitious or not available.
4. The package may be addressed with distorted handwriting or cut and-paste lettering.
5. Protruding wires, aluminum foil, oil stains, or a peculiar odor may be present.
6. Cancellation or postmark may show a different location than the return address.
7. Mail bombs may have excessive postage.
8. Mail may feel rigid, uneven or lopsided.

If you are suspicious

1. Do not open mail.
2. Isolate mail and evacuate the immediate area.
3. Do not put in water or in a confined space.
4. Open windows in the immediate area.
5. Contact campus director, who will notify the **Pinellas County Sheriff's Department (911)** after evaluating the situation.

Explosion

An explosion is caused by a rapid expansion of gas from chemical reactions or incendiary devices.

Signs of an explosion may be a very loud noise or series of noises and vibrations, fire, heat or smoke, falling glass, debris or building damage.

Immediate action

1. Get out of the building as quickly and as calmly as possible.
2. Call **911**.
3. If items are falling off of bookshelves or from the ceiling, get under a sturdy table or desk.
4. If there is fire, stay low and exit the building.
5. If you are trapped in debris, tap on a pipe or wall so that rescuers can locate you.
6. Assist others in exiting the building and move to designated evacuation areas.

Hazardous Materials Incident.

A Hazardous Materials Incident may be a spill or a release of chemicals, radioactive materials or biological materials inside a building or to the environment. Most of the time, a small spill can be managed by the user. Major spills or emergencies require assistance from outside agencies that are trained and capable of handling the spill.

These are known as Haz-Mat Teams.

Chemicals and solvents

For accidents posing an immediate fire hazard or requiring medical attention:

1. Call the **Pinellas County Sheriff's Department (911)** immediately.
2. Evacuate the area.
3. Assist others with first aid and evacuation.

If the spill does not pose immediate danger

1. Isolate the spill.
2. Evacuate the scene.
3. Limit access.
4. Notify the campus director.

For life threatening exposure to hazardous materials

1. Call the **Pinellas County Sheriff's Department (911)** immediately.
2. Perform rescues and emergency first aid.
3. Keep all persons as far away from the accident scene as possible.
4. Avoid contamination.
5. Keep all persons isolated until they can be examined.

Armed Intruder

In the event that a hostile/armed intruder is actively causing danger or serious bodily injury or the threat of imminent death or serious bodily injury to person(s) within a building, the following procedures shall be implemented

1. Faculty should immediately lock the students and themselves in the classroom. If possible, cover any windows or openings that have a direct line of sight into the hallway.
2. Call **911** immediately, if possible.
3. Do not sound the fire alarm. A fire alarm would signal people to evacuate the building and thus place themselves in potential harm as they attempt to exit.
4. Lock the windows and close blinds and curtains.
5. Stay away from windows.
6. Turn off lights and all audio equipment.
7. Remain calm.
8. Keep everyone together.
9. Keep classroom secure until police arrive.
10. If you are not in a classroom, try to get to one.
11. Stay out of open areas.
12. If you are caught in the open, you must decide what you will do.

This is a very crucial time and it can mean life or death. You can try to hide, but make sure you are well hidden. If you think you can make it safely out of the area by running, and then do so. If you decide to run, do not run in a straight line, zigzag. Use cover such as desks, cabinets, etc.

If you feel you are unable to run or hide, you may chose to play dead if other victims are around you.

Your last option if caught in the open is to fight back. This is dangerous, but depending upon your situation, could be your last option.

If you are caught by the intruder and are not going to fight back, obey all commands and don't look the intruder in the eyes. Once the police arrive, obey all commands. This may involve your being handcuffed, or keeping hands in the air. This is done for safety reasons. Once circumstances are evaluated by the police, they will give you further instructions.