EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Emergency Response and Preparedness

Recognizing the importance of emergency preparedness, Columbia College Chicago has created a written document, "The Emergency Operations and Management Plan," outlining the college's response and recovery to any emergency or crisis that "threatens the college populations, programs, properties, reputation, and viability." Training on the plan is conducted on an annual basis for the Emergency Policy Group and may include table-top exercises, along with tests of the emergency notification systems. Business continuity planning may be conducted by individual departments. Chicago campus buildings are equipped with life safety equipment, including AEDs, fire and intrusion alarms, and emergency call boxes. The Emergency Call Box is a two-way communication system located throughout Chicago campus buildings that connects directly to Security. In addition, the college utilizes an emergency mass notification system that delivers email, cell phone, and/or text messages pertaining to information and responses critical to incidents occurring on campus. Students register their contact information and preferences in the MyColumbia portal and employees through the Intranet. Detailed instructions on updating contact information can be found at:

Students
[Updating Everbridge Security Notification Preferences](#)

Employees
[Updating Everbridge Security Notification Preferences](#)

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

As a matter of public safety, the college elicits the support of volunteer staff trained as Floor Wardens in fire safety, emergency evacuation procedures, and security awareness. Fire drills are conducted in student housing facilities and are recorded for assessment purposes.

Individuals should become familiar with emergency exits, stairwells, and locations of Emergency Call Boxes in each Chicago building and actively participate in all evacuations. Emergency response procedures and evacuation maps are posted on every floor, identifying the evacuation routes and areas of rescue assistance.

Individuals unable to safely and expeditiously maneuver the stairs or fire escapes due to permanent or temporary disability may need additional response assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation. These individuals are encouraged to voluntarily disclose by registering in OASIS if they are a student or self-identify in advance with Human Resources that they are a faculty or staff member. The college's certified Fire Safety Director (FSD) obtains an official list of persons that have self-identified as requiring special assistance every semester. Additionally, each building's security station has a copy of this list. In the event of an actual emergency, this list will be furnished to first responders for purposes of safely and quickly evacuating such individuals in emergency situations. Furthermore, these

persons with specials needs are strongly recommended to prepare for emergencies in advance by familiarizing themselves with the location of emergency evacuations routes.

In the event of a fire or smoke condition, activate the building fire alarm system. Do not attempt to extinguish a fire unless it is impeding your exit. If you hear the fire alarm, always assume a fire exists and leave the building immediately.

In the case of an emergency evacuation:

- Cease all activity and immediately proceed to the nearest exit.
- Check the surface of the door and/or doorknob for heat and the bottom of the door for signs of smoke before opening it and exiting a room. Slowly open the door, keeping the door between you and the corridor. Make a visual observation of the corridor for fire or smoke and proceed to the nearest exit.
- Ensure all doors are closed behind you.
- Follow the direction of the Floor Warden, and leave the building via the safest and nearest available stairway exit.
- If you are an individual requiring assistance, call 911 and advise the first responders of your location.
- Do not use elevators.
- Evacuate away from the building and await direction from first responders and security personnel.

In the event all exits are blocked:

- Notify 911.
- Go to the nearest room and close the door.
- Place cloth under the door to prevent smoke from entering the room.
- Hang a cloth or other object out of the window to signal that the room is occupied.
- Stay as close to the floor as possible when smoke enters a room.
- Use the fire escape as a last resort if other exits are blocked.

For more detailed procedures regarding emergency evacuations and procedures, visit the Campus Safety and Security website at colum.edu/safety.