INTRODUCTION

This document has been provided to you by The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Division of Security and Campus Affairs in conjunction with UTRGV Police, Department of Environment Health, Safety & Risk Management and the Office of Emergency Preparedness.

In this document, you will find procedures for a wide array of incidents which may transpire at any given time while on campus. These procedures outline the recommended practices for certain events and follow the University's Emergency Operations Plan.

It is imperative that this document be within hand’s reach, as it can only be useful when it is easily accessible and not filed away. It is recommended that it be placed underneath your closest telephone for accessibility.

It should also be noted that this document can assist in the event of an emergency only if it has been read thoroughly before an incident arises.

Preparedness is the key to a positive outcome in an emergency.

This guide was prepared as a reference resource by members of the University’s Incident Management Team.

If you have any suggestions or comments, please contact:

The Office of Emergency Preparedness

Emergencypreparedness@utrgv.edu

Or call: (956) 665-2658
## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

On campus, all **landline** 911 calls are routed through The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley’s Police Department.

Any **cell phone** 911 calls are routed through the local city’s emergency dispatch.

If you have questions concerning a unique situation not covered in this *Emergency Desk Reference Guide* or need additional emergency information, please contact the University’s Office of Emergency Preparedness at (956) 665-2658 or visit [www.utrgv.edu/emergencypreparedness](http://www.utrgv.edu/emergencypreparedness).

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* Area code (956)
Evacuation

The type of emergency and location on campus will dictate the specific steps that are needed for evacuation. In most cases, complete evacuation of the campus is not necessary; however, in the event of a hazardous materials release or other major incident, it may be necessary.

- In preparation for evacuation, always know two ways out of the building.
- If time permits, secure your office and take personal items such as phone, wallet, purse, etc.
- Observe emergency notifications.

Evacuating for a Building

1. Walk, do not run, to nearest exit.
2. Do not use elevators.
3. Persons with disabilities are to move to a safe stairwell landing and summon assistance from first responders.
4. If you see someone with a disability in a stairwell, exit immediately and inform first responders of location and status of individual.
5. Once outside, move a safe distance (at least 150 ft.) from building and report any special circumstances to EVAC Assistant or Emergency Personnel.
6. **Do not** return to the building until instructed by UTRGV Emergency Personnel.
Shelter in Place

In some instances it is safer to stay within the confines of the building, which will afford you a higher level of protection from a variety of situations such as severe weather, hazardous conditions, chemical releases, or criminal activity.

1. If the hazard is fire or smoke see “Fire Emergencies” section of this guide.
2. If the hazard is not immediately known:
   - Close all doors.
   - Seal gaps in exterior doors or windows that may allow air flow.
   - Check for adverse medical symptoms and request medical attention if needed.
   - Standby for instructions.

Shelter in Place: Severe Weather

This is the act of seeking refuge in an area inside a building that offers occupants an elevated level of protection during a tornado or other severe weather emergency. This is usually the inner most (core) area of the building free of windows and exterior doors.
Violence

Personal Threat or Assault
Personal threat or assault includes threatening behaviors or statements that are deemed threatening or harmful by another individual.

1. Call the University Police Department.
2. If you witness an assault, remain calm and stay within the area of the victim until emergency assistance arrives, provided it is safe to do so.

Civil Disturbance
Civil disturbance includes riots, demonstrations, threatening individuals, crimes in progress, or assemblies that have become significantly disruptive.

1. Call the University Police Department.
2. Avoid disturbance.
3. Avoid provoking or obstructing demonstrators.
4. Secure your area (lock doors, safes, files, vital records and expensive equipment).
5. Continue with normal routine as much as possible.
6. If the disturbance is outside, stay away from doors or windows. Stay indoors.
7. Prepare for evacuation or relocation.
Armed Subjects

If you witness any armed individual on campus at any time or if an individual is acting in a hostile or belligerent manner, immediately contact the University Police Department.

Outside building

If an armed subject is outside the building:

1. Turn off all the lights and close and lock all windows and doors.
2. If you can do so safely, get all students on the floor and out of sight.
3. Barricade the door if possible.

Inside Building

If an armed subject is inside the building:

1. Remain calm.
2. Turn off all light sources and close/lock all windows and doors.
3. If you can do so safely, get all students on the floor and out of sight.
4. Barricade the door if possible.
If an active shooter incident occurs on campus, and if it is safe to do so, move away from the immediate path of danger and take the following actions:

1. Notify anyone you may encounter to exit the building immediately.
2. Evacuate to a safe area away from danger and take protective cover.
3. Stay there until assistance arrives.

Call the UTRGV Police and provide the following information:

1. Your name.
2. Your location and location of incident.
3. Number of shooter(s), if known.
4. Description of person(s) that may be involved.
5. Injuries to anyone, if known.

Individuals not immediately impacted by the situation are to shelter in place and take protective cover. Cover is an object that will stop a bullet from hurting you. Stay away from windows and doors until notified by the University Police of an “All Clear”
If you cannot exit safely

If you are directly involved in an incident and exiting the building is not possible, the following actions are recommended:

1. Go to the nearest office/room.
2. Close and lock the door behind you, if possible.
3. Barricade the door, if possible.
4. Turn off the lights.
5. Silence your cellular phone.
6. Seek protective cover.
7. Keep quiet as if no one is in the room.
8. Do not answer the door. Police officers will announce their presence and will open/unlock door.

When safe, contact the University Police and provide the dispatcher with the following information:

1. Your name.
2. Your location and location of incident.
3. Number of shooters, if known.
4. Description of persons involved, if known.
5. Injuries and location, if known.

When Police arrive on scene, they will assume on scene command of the situation and will direct all action to neutralize the threat. Wait for the University Police to assist you out of the building.
Violence

Hostage Incident

In the event of a hostage situation on campus, the University Police Department should be notified immediately.

If possible evacuate the area where the event is taking place. Avoid a panic, but relay as much factual information as possible. This should include information such as:

1. Location of incident.
2. Number and identity of hostages and perpetrators.
3. Type and number of weapons and/or communications devices observed.
4. As much descriptive information as possible concerning the perpetrators.

When Police arrive on the scene, they will assume on scene command of the situation and will direct all actions to counter the threat.
Terrorism

Suspicious Package/Object

Immediately call the University Police Department.

If you receive or discover a suspicious package or a foreign device, DO NOT TOUCH IT, TAMPER WITH IT OR MOVE IT!

Letter and Parcel Bomb Recognition Checklist

Be cautious of foreign mail, air mail and special deliveries with the following:

1. Restrictive marking such as “Confidential” or “Personal”.
2. Excessive postage.
3. Handwritten or poorly typed address.
4. Incorrect titles.
5. Misspelling of common words.
6. Oily stains or discoloration on package.
7. Excessive weight.
8. Rigid, lopsided or uneven envelope.
9. Protruding wires or tinfoil.
11. No return address.
Terrorism

If a bomb threat is received in your area, via telephone, DO NOT hang up.

1. Remain calm, be courteous, listen and do not interrupt the caller.
2. If a phone number can be seen on the phone screen, then make sure to write it down.
3. Have a co-worker call the University Police immediately.

Bomb Threat Check List (what to ask caller):

1. Where is the bomb?
2. When is it going to explode?
3. What will cause it to explode?
4. What does it look like?
5. What kind of bomb is it?
6. Did you place the bomb?

Keep note of background noises, if caller is a male or female, and the date and time of the call.
Write down the exact wording of threat:

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Weather Emergencies

Precautions

Severe weather is very dynamic and can either form quickly from an unstable atmosphere or several days beforehand in the case of a tropical event. It is imperative that you keep abreast of the weather on a day to day basis so that you can be prepared.

⚠️ Golf carts, trees, tents, and tall objects are unsafe places to be at during weather emergencies.

Lightning

Lightning is the most dangerous aspect of a thunderstorm.

1. Seek shelter within a building.
2. Avoid water, metal objects and open spaces.
3. Stay off land based telephones unless it is an emergency.
**High Winds / Tornado**

All buildings have at least one undesirable structural feature relating to the effects of high winds. Examples include large areas of glass, long roof/ceiling spans, and exterior hallways.

**General Precautions**

1. Avoid windows and glass items.
2. Avoid interior and exterior doors.
3. Keep occupants as far away as possible from entrances.
4. Avoid areas where chemicals are stored.
5. Put as many walls as possible between you and the exterior walls of the building.
6. If a tornado threatens, you should leave automobiles and portable structures for a more substantial shelter.

**Tornado Watch**

Review your severe weather action plan. Usual activities can continue, but be prepared.

**Tornado Warning**

A tornado is imminent! General precautions and sheltering in place are advised. If you have a weather radio, it should be taken with you to a safe area in the building.

**Hail**

Seek shelter immediately in a building, and stay away from windows. Do not leave building until the storm has passed and it is safe.

If in an automobile and it is not safe to move to a building, look for a safe place to park, stay in vehicle and cover face. Do not attempt to make a run for a building.
Weather Emergencies

Severe Thunderstorm

Watch
Be aware that conditions may be ripe for the development of high winds, large hail, and possibly an isolated tornado.

Warning
Review your severe weather action plan. Usual activities can continue safely indoors, but be prepared to seek shelter.

1. Avoid going outside, if possible.
2. Stay away from windows.
3. Report any injuries and damage to University Police. Be prepared to give the following information:
   - Your name.
   - Building name.
   - Type of injury or damage.
   - The location of any injured person(s) or building damage.
   - Room number you are calling from.
   - Possible medical conditions of individuals.
Shelter in Place

This is the act of seeking refuge in an area inside a building that offers occupants an elevated level of protection during a tornado or other severe weather emergency. This is usually the inner most (core) area of the building free of windows and exterior doors.

Tornado

If inside building:

- Go to the lowest level of building.
- Stay away from windows.
- Go to interior hallway.
- Use arms to protect head and neck in a crouched position.
In the event of a medical emergency act immediately, keep calm, and reassure the victim.

Summon medical help as soon as possible by University Police. Be prepared to give the following information:

- What happened.
- Number of victims.
- Kind of injury.
- Exact location of the emergency.
- What help is being given.
- Your name and phone number.

Assist injured person(s) and remove them from the hazard if injuries are minor. Do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in danger of further injury.

Do not transport seriously injured persons to the hospital and do not hang up until the dispatcher hangs up.

If you are trained to provide medical care, do so only to the level that your training allows.
Life-Threatening Conditions

1. Check the scene for safety.
2. Check the injured for consciousness, breathing, pulse, and severe bleeding. Immediately call 911 then the University Police (when time allows) if the injured person:
   - Is unconscious.
   - Has trouble breathing or is breathing in a strange way.
   - Has chest pain or pressure.
   - Is bleeding severely.
   - Has pressure or pain in the abdomen that does not go away.
   - Is vomiting or passing blood.
   - Has repeated seizures or a seizure that lasts for more than a few minutes.
   - Has a severe headache or slurred speech.
   - Has injuries to the head, neck, or back.
   - Has possible broken bones.
3. Do not move the victim unless absolutely necessary.

Non Life-Threatening Conditions

1. If there are no life-threatening conditions:
   - Watch for changes in breathing and consciousness.
   - Help the injured rest comfortably.
   - Keep the injured from getting chilled or overheated.
   - Reassure the injured.
2. Call University Police for serious injuries that are not life-threatening. University Police will assess the situation, and call EMS if necessary or if requested by the injured person. University Police will not transport the victim to the hospital.
Fire Emergencies

Reporting a Fire

1. Manually activate the fire alarm system (pull station).
2. Evacuate the building as soon as possible. Close doors behind you. Do not use elevators.
3. Notify University Police. Be prepared to provide the following information:
   - Your Name.
   - Location of fire.
   - What is on fire.
   - If the building has been evacuated.
   - If there are any injuries.

All Fire incidents need to be reported to the University Police and DEHS&RM no matter the size or significance.

Evacuating the Building

1. Check door for heat to ensure safe passage.
2. Close door behind you.
3. Proceed to nearest exit.
4. Use stairwells to exit upper floors.
5. If you encounter a person with a disability (PWD), assist to stairway if safe to do so.
6. Notify First Responders if people are still inside and/or any PWD.
7. Gather at least 150 ft. away from building.
8. Do not re-enter unless authorized by University Emergency Personnel or Fire Department Personnel.
Trapped in Building

1. Place wet cloth material around or under door to prevent smoke from entering room.
2. Close doors between you and the fire.
3. Call **911** and advise of your location and present situation.
4. Be prepared to signal someone outside. **DO NOT BREAK GLASS** unless absolutely necessary.

Using a Fire Extinguisher

When safe to do so and properly trained, use a fire extinguisher to fight small fires.

Remember to keep yourself between the fire and exit.

Fire Extinguisher Instructions

- **P**ull Safety Pin.
- **A**im at base of fire.
- **S**queeze the handle.
- **S**weep side to side.
Hazardous Materials

**Major Chemical Spill or Release**

ONLY trained individuals are to be involved in Hazardous Materials Response.

1. Remain calm and evacuate persons in the vicinity of the incident. If widespread, manually active fire alarm system.
2. Remove injured personnel to fresh air if possible and safe.
3. Move upwind and uphill from any incident.
4. Call the University Police Department and the Department of Environmental Health, Safety & Risk management
   Provide following information:
   - Name/ telephone number.
   - Location of incident.
   - Name and quantity of materials involved.
   - Injuries and environmental concerns.

**Minor Chemical Spill or Release**

1. Follow departmental protocols.
2. Contact the Department of Environmental Health, Safety & Risk management and/or the University Police.
Building / Utility Disruptions

Power Outages

1. Stay calm.
3. DO NOT CALL University Police unless life threatening.
4. Follow directions from University Emergency Personnel and/or Facilities Operations Workers.
5. Do not light candles.
6. If evacuation of a building is necessary, see “Evacuation” section of this guide.
7. Keeping a flashlight on hand will assist in power outages.

If people are trapped in elevator

Victim

1. Do not panic.
2. Remain calm and use in-car emergency phone for help.
3. Never attempt to exit elevator if not functioning properly.
   You can be seriously injured.
4. Facilities Operations and University Police will be dispatched to assist.

Witness

1. Do not attempt to remove people from elevator.
2. Call University Police, provide location of incident.
3. Report possible medical conditions of individuals trapped.
4. Stay with passengers until University Police arrives, provided it is safe.