

# EMERGENCY RESPONSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK

SOUTH HILLS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY

STATE COLLEGE CAMPUS

2022-2023

Main Campus

480 Waupelani Drive State College, PA 16801

Cato Park Location

3081 Enterprise Drive State College, PA 16801

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## **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this Emergency Response Policies and Procedures Handbook is to inform faculty/staff and administration about the hazards involved in emergencies. Listed are the correct procedures, which must be followed to minimize any danger.

The State College Campus has established a **CODE RED**. When a **CODE RED** emergency is declared, faculty is to lock the door and remain in the classroom until instructed that the situation is safe.

**Emergencies will be communicated using our PA system and E-ZText. To receive text alerts on text the keyword "AL" or "SC" to 1-814-699-8533**

If an evacuation order is given, faculty should escort students to the designated safety area. Once there, faculty should take roll and remain until instructed to do otherwise.

Emergencies should be reported to any Director/Acting Director:

President/Director: Paul Mazza

Director of Education & Regulatory Affairs: Natalie Lombardo-Beaver

Assistant Director of Education: Reana Donaldson

Director of Admissions: Glenn Slater

Director of Student Services: Barb Harer

Director of Outreach: Jeff Stachowski

Director of Financial Aid: Leroy Spicer

CATO- Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program Director: Trish Turner

## **SCOPE:**

These procedures are designed to be flexible in order to accommodate incidents of various types. These procedures apply to all South Hills personnel and all buildings and grounds owned, operated and maintained by South Hills.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

The South Hills Director/Acting Director serves as the overall Emergency Director during any major emergency or disaster. The following definitions are guidelines to assist in determining the appropriate response:

- *Minor Emergency – A minor emergency is any incident or potential incident, which would not seriously affect the school’s ability to conduct “business as usual.”*
- *Major Emergency – A major emergency is any incident or potential incident which affects an entire building or buildings, or which disrupts the school’s ability to do “business as usual.” Outside emergency services will probably be required. Major policy considerations and decisions will usually be required from the Administration during times of crisis.*
- *Disaster – A disaster is any event or occurrence, which seriously impairs the school’s ability to do “business as usual.” The coordinated effort of all school wide resources is required to effectively control the situation. An Emergency Control Center will be activated, and decisions will be made about the appropriate support. Operational plans will be made as soon as possible.*

**ASSUMPTIONS:**

The Emergency Response Policies and Procedures Handbooks is predicated on a realistic approach to the problems likely to be encountered on campus during a major emergency or disaster. The following are general guidelines:

- An emergency or disaster may occur at any time.
- The succession of the events in an emergency are unpredictable. Published support and operational plans will serve only as a guide and checklist, which may require modification in order to meet the specific requirements of the emergency.
- Disasters may occur in the geographical location of the school, City, County and Federal emergency services may be required of the emergency.

**DECLARING A STATE OF EMERGENCY:**

The authority to declare a state of emergency rests with the campus Director or his/her designee.

**PROCEDURES:**

This section outlines the procedures to be followed during specific types of emergencies. The procedures should always be followed in sequence, unless conditions dictate otherwise.

- When reporting emergencies, immediately notify the Director/Acting Director/Office Manager or call 9-1-1.
- While talking on the telephone, stay calm and carefully explain the problem and the location. DO NOT HANG UP UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.

**EVACUATIONS**

**Building Evacuations:**

- All building evacuations will occur upon notification from the Director.

- When the building evacuation is announced, leave by the nearest exit and alert others to do the same.
- ASSIST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN EXITING THE BUILDING.
- Once outside, proceed to the designated area. (This will vary by campus.) Keep street, fire lanes, hydrant areas and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and personnel. Know your assembly points. Familiarize yourself with evacuation plans posted in the building.
- DO NOT return to an evacuated building unless instructed to do so.
- IMPORTANT: After an evacuation, report to your designated assembly point area and remain in the designated area until an accurate headcount is taken.\*

### **Campus Evacuation:**

Evacuation of all or part of the school grounds will be announced by the Director/Acting Director or Office Manager.

- All persons are to immediately vacate the site in question and relocate to the designated area.
- \*Designated Assembly Areas:
  - MAIN- YMCA
  - CATO-Back parking lot by Research Drive

## **LOCKDOWN (CODE RED)**

Types of lockdowns include:

**Shelter-in-Place** – Usually an external health hazard where building evacuations are not recommended.

**Internal Threat** – This threat exists when the danger is inside of the school or campus. The goal of this procedure should be to keep everyone safe until the threat is completely removed.

**External Threat** – This type of threat occurs outside of the school building or campus. The goal of this lockdown is to prevent the threat from entering the school or campus.

**Full Lockdown** – This scenario involves a serious threat that requires immediate action.

### **Campus Lockdown:**

- Lock all doors and windows immediately. If a door cannot be locked, attempt to quickly block the door with heavy items.
- Never open doors or windows unless ordered to do so by a safety or school official. Always ask for documentation from an official to confirm their identity.
- Turn off all lights, and close the blinds or curtains.

- Instruct all students to stay low and away from the windows and doors.
- Keep students inside of the classroom.
- Silence televisions, cell phones and other electronics.
- Clear hallways, bathrooms and any area or room that cannot be thoroughly secured.
- Account for every student in the room.
- Assist those with special needs.
- Remain indoors and under lockdown until you receive an “all clear” from authorized personnel.

## **MEDIA RELATIONS**

The school has three guidelines to observe in a crisis:

- Only a person authorized by the school owners will meet or speak with the media on behalf of the school. Authorization to be granted by the school owners only.
- Only factual information is to be released.
- Administrators will develop an institutional response to be released to the media, including periodic media updates.

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **FIRES:**

A fire is the most likely disaster that may affect the school and is perhaps the most deadly one. The following measures should be reviewed and utilized in the event there is a fire at any location.

There are basically two types of fires: Minor fires, which can be extinguished with a fire extinguisher, and major fires, which require assistance from Fire Department Personnel. Both however, call for calm, immediate action by the person discovering the fire.

#### **If you smell smoke or have any other indication of fire:**

- Immediately contact the Director or Acting Director. Describe what you have observed and give your name and exact location.
- Alert others in the immediate area to prepare for evacuation and assist individuals who may need assistance in exiting the building.
- Wait outside the building for responding emergency personnel and be prepared to provide additional information and your observations.

#### **If flames are observed:**

- Upon discovery of a small fire, activate the nearest fire alarm or make PA Announcement
- Alarm pulls are locations:

- [See attached map- Main](#)
- [See attached map- Cato](#)
- Contact 9-1-1.
- Fire Extinguisher locations:
  - [See attached map-Main](#)
  - [See attached map-Cato](#)

If the fire gets out of control or you judge the fire to be too large to attempt to extinguish single-handedly, call for help immediately and leave the area.

Immediately evacuate the area. Call 9-1-1 and report the fire, giving information as requested by the dispatcher. Do not hang up until instructed to do so.

### **Fire Evacuation Procedures**

If you hear an alarm sound:

- Evacuate the building immediately and assist people with disabilities in exiting the building.
- If smoke is present, keep low to the floor.
- Before opening the door, feel the upper portion of the door. If the upper door or doorknob is hot, DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR.
- If the door or doorknob is not hot, brace yourself against the door and open it slightly.
- If heat or heavy smoke is encountered in the corridor, close the door and stay in the room.
- Keep the door closed, and if your windows are the type that can be raised or lowered, open the top slightly to let out the heat and smoke, open the bottom slightly to let in fresh air.
- Seal the cracks around the door with clothing, tape, or other material, soaking it in water if available.
- Hang an object out the window, such as a shirt, jacket, towel or anything that will attract attention.
- If you can leave the room, close the doors behind you as you move to the nearest exit or stairway. This will retard the spread of smoke and fire and lessen the damage.
- If the nearest exit is blocked, go to an alternate exit. If all exits are blocked, go to a room furthest from the fire, close the door and follow procedures listed above.
- After leaving the building, DO NOT RE-ENTER. Stay clear of responding emergency equipment and personnel.
- DO NOT attempt to return to the structure to retrieve any items until the building is cleared by either school officials or the fire department.



## **Active Shooter (Department of Homeland Security: Run, Hide, Fight)**

Quickly determine the most reasonable way to protect your own life. Remember that customers and clients are likely to follow the lead of employees and managers during an active shooter situation

### **1. Evacuate**

If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises. Be sure to:

- Have an escape route and plan in mind
- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow
- Leave your belongings behind
- Help others escape, if possible
- Prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter may be
- Keep your hands visible
- Follow the instructions of any police officers
- Do not attempt to move wounded people
- Call 911 when you are safe

### **2. Hide out**

- If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find you.
- Your hiding place should:
  - Be out of the active shooter's view
  - Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction (i.e., an office with a closed and locked door)
  - Not trap you or restrict your options for movement
- To prevent an active shooter from entering your hiding place:
  - Lock the door
  - Blockade the door with heavy furniture
- If the active shooter is nearby:
  - Lock the door
  - Silence your cell phone and/or pager
  - Turn off any source of noise (i.e., radios, televisions)
  - Hide behind large items (i.e., cabinets, desks)
  - Remain quiet

*If evacuation and hiding out are not possible:*

- *Remain calm*
- *Dial 911, if possible, to alert police to the active shooter's location*
- *If you cannot speak, leave the line open and allow the dispatcher to listen*

### **3. Take action against the active shooter**

As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter by:

- Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her
- Throwing items and improvising weapons
- Yelling
- Committing to your actions

### **4. When law enforcement arrives**

- Remain calm, and follow officers' instructions
- Put down any items in your hands (i.e., bags, jackets)
- Immediately raise hands and spread fingers
- Keep hands visible at all times
- Avoid making quick movements toward officers such as holding on to them for safety
- Avoid pointing, screaming and/or yelling
- Do not stop to ask officers for help or direction when evacuating, just proceed in the direction from which officers are entering the premises
- Provide information to law enforcement or 911 operator. Give them:
  - Location of the active shooter
  - Number of shooters, if more than one
  - Physical description of shooter/s
  - Number and type of weapons held by the shooter/s
  - Number of potential victims at the location

## **BOMB THREAT**

Bomb threats occur quite often. In rare instances, actual explosives are placed in the structure. Because of the hazards involved in such situations, it is necessary to develop a Bomb Threat Policy.

The purpose of this plan is to:

- Ensure the safety of occupants of the structure;
- Minimize anxiety and panic;
- Minimize disruption of regular activities; and
- Protect the South Hills family and property

**When a bomb threat is received, the individual taking the call should be instructed in advance to:**

- Stay calm.
- Make a note of the date and time.
- Try to keep the caller talking as long as possible. The more they talk, the more you may learn.
- Try to record everything the caller says, if possible.
- The following questions should be asked, as well as other deemed appropriate by the individual receiving the call:
  - When is the bomb going to explode?
  - Where is the bomb located exactly?
  - What does the bomb look like?
  - What kind of bomb is it?
  - What will cause the bomb to explode?
  - Did you place the bomb?
  - Why?
  - What is your address?
  - What is your name
- Listen closely to the voice of the caller and note the following:
  - Sex of the caller;
  - Age of the caller;
  - Race of the caller;
  - Voice description;
  - Speech impediments or peculiar voice characteristics (drunk, lisps, etc.); and
  - Attitude of the caller (calm, excited, anxious, etc.
- Pay particular attention to any strange or peculiar background noises such as street noise, motor noise, music, television or radio programs, dishes rattling, baby crying, or other background noises that might offer a remote clue as to the origin of the call.
- Once the caller hangs up immediately contact the campus Director or designee.

**The Search**

The quickest and most effective search of a structure can be done by the regular occupants of the building. Since bombs come in many forms, it is very difficult for police or anyone not familiar with the building to identify any object as being new or suspicious. Each individual should quickly inspect his/her area. Anything found that arouses suspicion should not be moved or touched. A note should be made as to the description of the object and its exact location. This should be promptly reported to the authorities.

**Evacuation**

The order to evacuate a structure can be given by staff/faculty who locates a suspicious object. The Fire Alarm may be utilized as a means of alerting occupants of an evacuation. Individuals with disabilities should be assisted in exiting the building. DO NOT use elevators in the event of a fire. DO NOT PANIC. Fire escape routes may be utilized in order to evacuate the structure in an orderly manner. If a suspicious

object is found near an escape route, the evacuation should be rerouted as necessary. All doors should be left open when leaving the area. Occupants of the threatened structure should move to the designated evacuation area. No one will be able to re-enter the building until it is deemed safe. Campus directors/designee will be the only persons in authority to issue this order.

## **WEATHER EMERGENCIES**

### **Hurricanes/Flooding**

Officially, hurricane season begins in June and ends in November, but Hurricane Watches and Warnings can be issued at any time during the year for the following reasons:

- A Hurricane Watch is issued whenever a Hurricane becomes a threat. Everyone in the area covered by the watch should listen to weather band radios and local radio stations for further advisories. Everyone should be prepared to act promptly if a Hurricane Warning is issued.
- A Hurricane Warning is issued when hurricane winds of seventy-four (74) miles an hour or higher are expected in a specific coastal area within a twenty-four (24) hour period.

**The following precautionary measures should be taken immediately.**

- Keep a battery-operated radio tuned to a local station, and follow the instructions. Remain calm. If you are told to evacuate, move out of the structure to designated higher ground.
- Turn off all utilities. DO NOT touch any electrical equipment unless it is in a dry area. Avoid the use of telephones.
- Avoid travel in automobiles. Roads may be washed away by floodwaters and rapidly rising water levels could carry the vehicle away.
- If you are trapped in a structure by rapidly rising floodwater, move to the top floor or the roof of the structure. DO NOT attempt to swim to safety. Wait for help.
- Once the hurricane has passed, remain inside until informed by authorities that it is safe to leave. Assist the handicapped in exiting the building.
- Keep you radio tuned to a local station for updates on the situation and vital information.
- Stay out of disaster areas. Sightseeing interferes with essential rescue and recovery work and may be dangerous as well.
- Avoid loose or dangling wires, and report them immediately to the authorities.

### **Tornadoes**

Tornadoes are a major source of injury to thousands of people every year. Tornado season begins in June and ends in November; however, a Tornado Watch or Warning can be issued at any time. A Tornado Watch means that tornadoes and severe thunderstorms are possible. A Tornado Warning means that a tornado has been sighted and you should take appropriate shelter immediately.

**When you receive a warning of a possible tornado, the following safety precautions should be taken:**

- Take shelter immediately. **DO NOT GO OUTDOORS;**
- Close all windows and doors;
- If possible, seek refuge in a basement. This is the safest place to be during a tornado;
- If a basement is not available, seek refuge in a small room with no windows;
- If there are no small rooms available, take cover under heavy furniture in a central room in the structure; and
- If no central rooms are available, take refuge in a hallway, away from any doorways or windows. Sit with your back against the wall, with your knees drawn to your chest.
- All of these precautions should remain in effect until your area has been determined safe by school officials or emergency personnel.

### **Earthquakes**

Earthquakes are frightening and destructive natural disasters. An earthquake is the sudden, rapid shaking of the earth caused by the breaking and shifting of rock deep underground. If an earthquake occurs in a populated area, it has the potential to cause many deaths and injuries along with extensive property damage. Although earthquakes are sometimes believed to be a West Coast phenomenon, there are actually 45 states and territories throughout the United States (including Pennsylvania) that are at moderate to high risk.

Because of the suddenness and unpredictability of earthquakes, it is important to be prepared in advance. In the event of an earthquake, the following precautions should be observed:

- The most important task and perhaps the most difficult one is, **DO NOT PANIC**. The motion of the earth is frightening; but, unless it shakes something down on top of you, it is harmless.
- If the earthquake catches you indoors, stay indoors. Take cover under a desk, table, bench, or in doorways or halls and against inside walls. Stay away from glass.
- **DO NOT** use candles, matches or other open flames during or after the tremors as gas may be in the air due to gas leaks.
- **DO NOT** run through or near buildings. The greatest danger from falling debris is just outside doorways and close to outer walls.

Once the tremors have discontinued, the following steps should be taken:

- Check for injuries. **DO NOT** attempt to move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. If emergency help is necessary, dial 9-1-1.
- Check your utilities; but, do not turn them on. Each movement may have cracked water, gas and electrical conduits.

If the water pipes are damaged, shut off the supply, if possible, and notify the authorities of the situation.

Locations of water shut-off:

[See attached map-Main](#)

[See attached map-Cato](#)

If electrical wiring is shorting out, shut off the current at the fuse box.

Locations of electrical shut-off:

[See attached map –Main](#)

[See attached map-Cato](#)

Location of gas shut-off:

[See attached map-Main](#)

[See attached map-Cato](#)

Evacuate the building immediately. Walk to the nearest marked exit and ask others to do the same. Once outside of the building, move to the designated safe area. Keep streets, fire lanes, hydrants, and sidewalks clear for emergency vehicles and personnel.

Stay out of damaged buildings. Aftershocks can shake them down.

## **OTHER EMERGENCIES**

### **Utility Failure**

In the event of a major utility failure during regular business hours:

- Immediately notify the Director or designee.
- If there is potential danger to building occupants, or if the utility failure occurs after hours or on weekends, or holidays, notify the Director or designee. Walk to the nearest marked exit and ask others to do the same.
- Assist the handicapped in exiting the building.
- Once outside, move to the designated safe area. Keep the walkways, fire lanes and hydrants clear for emergency personnel.
- Do not return to an evacuated building unless told to do so.
- **IMPORTANT:** After an evacuation, report to the designated safe area. Stay there until an accurate headcount is taken.

## Explosions

In the event of an explosion:

- Immediately take cover under tables, desks and other objects, which will give you protection against falling glass or debris.
- As soon as conditions permit, notify Emergency Personnel. Give your name and describe the location and nature of the emergency.
- If necessary or when directed to do so, activate the Fire Alarm and evacuate the building.
- Once outside the building, move to the designated safe area. Keep streets and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and personnel.
- DO NOT return to an evacuated building unless told to do so.
- **IMPORTANT:** After an evacuation, report to the designated safe area. Stay there until an accurate headcount is taken.

## Hazardous Material Spill

In the case of a Hazardous Material Situation:

- Immediately report any spillage of hazardous materials to the Director or designee or call 9-1-1.
- When reporting, be specific about the nature of the material involved and the exact location. The Director or designee will contact the necessary specialized authorities and medical personnel.
- The affected area should be evacuated. The area should be sealed off to prevent further contamination of other areas until the arrival of emergency personnel.
- Anyone who is contaminated by the spill is to avoid contact with others as much as possible, remain in the vicinity and identify themselves to Emergency Personnel. The required first aid and clean up by specialized authorities should be started at once.
- If an emergency exists, activate the fire alarm. When the fire alarm is activated, walk quickly to the nearest exit and alert others to do the same.
- Assist the handicapped in exiting the building. Once outside move to the designated safe area. Keep streets, fire lanes, hydrants and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and personnel.
- **DO NOT** return to an evacuated building until instructed to do so.
- **IMPORTANT:** After an evacuation, report to the designated safe area. Stay there until an accurate headcount is taken.

## **Violent/Criminal Behavior**

Everyone is asked to assist in making the school a safe place by being alert to suspicious situations and promptly reporting them to the Director/Acting Director.

- The reported incident should include the following:
  - Nature of the incident;
  - Location of the incident;
  - Description of person(s) involved; and
  - Description of property involved
- If you observe a criminal act or a suspicious person on the school grounds, immediately notify the Director/designee.
- Assist Emergency Personnel when they arrive by supplying them with all necessary additional information and ask others to cooperate.
- Should gunfire or discharged explosives occur on campus, you should take cover immediately, using all available concealment to protect yourself.

## **If You Are Taken Hostage**

- Be patient. Time is on your side. Avoid drastic actions.
- The initial forty-five (45) minutes are the most dangerous. Follow instruction; be alert and stay alive. The captor(s) is emotionally imbalanced. Don't make mistakes, which could jeopardize your well-being.
- Don't speak unless spoken to and only when necessary. Do not talk condescendingly to the captor(s) who may be in an agitated state. Avoid appearing hostile. Maintain eye contact with captor(s) at all times if possible, but do not stare. Treat the captor(s) like royalty.
- Try to rest. Avoid speculating. Comply with instructions as best you can. Avoid arguments. Expect the unexpected.
- Be observant. You may be released or escape. The personal safety of others may depend on your memory.
- Be prepared to answer the police on the phone. Be patient; wait. Attempt to establish rapport with the captor(s). If medications, first aid or restroom privileges are needed by anyone, say so. The captor(s), in all probability, do not want to harm persons held by them. Such direct action further implicates the captor(s) in additional offenses.

## **Civil Disturbance or Demonstration**

Most demonstrations, such as marches, meetings, picketing and rallies, will be peaceful and non-obstructive. However, if any of the following conditions exist, the Director or designee should be notified immediately:

- INTERFERENCE with the normal operations of the school.
- PREVENTION of access to offices, buildings and/or other facilities.
- THREAT of physical harm to persons or damage to facilities.



## **Psychological Crisis**

A psychological crisis exists when an individual is threatening harm to himself/herself or to others, or is out of touch with reality due to severe drug reactions or a psychotic break. A psychotic break may be manifested by hallucinations and/or uncontrollable behavior.

If a psychological crisis occurs:

- Never try to manage a dangerous situation by yourself.
- Notify the Director or designee of the situation. Clearly state your need for immediate assistance; give your name, your location and the area involved.
- In extreme emergencies, dial 9-1-1, then call the Director or designee to notify of the situation.

## **Medical and First Aid**

If a serious injury or illness occurs in the school, immediately dial 9-1-1 and the Director or designee; give your name and describe the nature and the severity of the medical problem and the location of the victim.

In case of minor injury or illness, trained personnel should provide First Aid care. Only trained personnel should provide First Aid treatment. Use only sterile First Aid materials.

AED Locations – First floor lobbies of both buildings

### **First Aid Kits locations:**

- **Main Campus- Faculty Room, Cafeteria, Reception**
- **Cato – Student Break Area**

*In case of serious injury or illness, quickly follow these steps:*

- Keep the victim still and comfortable. DO NOT move the victim.
- Ask the victim, “Are you okay?” and “What is wrong?”
- Check breathing and give artificial respiration if necessary.
- Control serious bleeding by direct pressure to the wound.
- Continue to assist the victim until help arrives.
- Look for Emergency Medical ID. Question any witness(s) and give all information to paramedics.

## **Deaths**

If death occurs (natural or unnatural) on school grounds, immediately notify the Director/Designee.

## Provisions for the Evacuation and Protection of Students with Disabilities

### Evacuation Policy for People Unable to Evacuate

In all emergencies, after an evacuation has been ordered:

- Evacuation of people with disabilities will be given the highest priority in all emergencies and will be evacuated if possible. Evacuating a disabled or injured person by only one person with no assistance is a last resort.
- Always **ask** someone with a disability how you can help **before** giving assistance. Ask how he/she can best be assisted or moved, and whether there are any special considerations or items that need to come with the person.
- Notify police or fire personnel immediately about any people remaining in the building and their locations.
- If people are in immediate danger and cannot be moved to a safer area to wait for assistance, it may be necessary, only if you have had rescue training, to evacuate them using an evacuation chair or a carry technique. Carrying options include using a two-person lock-arm position, or having the person sit in a sturdy chair - preferably with arms. Before taking action, always ask the person their preferred method of assistance.

### Emergency Responses by Disability

#### Blindness or Visual Impairment

- Most visually impaired persons will be familiar with the immediate area they are in and may have learned locations of exits and fire alarms in advance.
- Tell the person the nature of the emergency and offer to guide him/her by offering your left/right elbow (this is the preferred method when acting as a "Sighted Guide"). **Do not** grasp a visually impaired person's arm.
- Give verbal instructions to advise about the safest route or direction using compass directions, estimated distances, and directional terms or information (i.e., elevators cannot be used or if there is debris or a crowd).
- As you walk, tell the person where you are and advise of any obstacles (e.g. stairs, overhanging objects, uneven pavement, curbs, or narrow passageways).
- When you have reached the designated Emergency Assembly Point, orient the person to where he/she is and ask if any further assistance is needed.
- Some individuals may have dog guides that may be disoriented during the emergency, and may require additional assistance.

- White canes and other mobility aids should **not** be left behind.

### **Deafness or Hearing Loss**

- Most structures are not equipped with visual (flashing light) evacuation alarms and persons with impaired hearing may not perceive an emergency exists. An alternative warning technique is required. Two methods of warning are:
  - Write a note stating what the emergency is and what the evacuation route is (i.e. "Fire - go out the rear door to parking lot").
- Turn the room lights on and off to gain attention, then indicate through hand gestures or writing (i.e. on a blackboard) what is happening and where to go. Offer visual instructions to advise the safest route, or directions by pointing toward exits or evacuation map.
- People who cannot speak loudly or have voice/speech impairments may be carrying a whistle or have other means of attracting the attention of others.

### **Mobility Impairments**

- Mobility-impaired persons should **not** be evacuated by untrained personnel unless the situation is life-threatening. It may be necessary to help clear the exit route of debris (if possible) so that the person with a disability can move outside or to a safer area.
- If people with mobility impairments cannot exit, they should move to a safer area (i.e. most enclosed stairwells or an office with the door shut which is a safe distance from the hazard and away from falling debris in the case of earthquakes.)

### **People Using Crutches, Canes or Walkers**

- The same procedure outlined for the Mobility Impaired should be used. Crutches, canes and walkers should **not** be left behind.

### **Non-Ambulatory (Not able to walk)**

- Most non-ambulatory people will be able to exit safely without assistance out of single story buildings.
- All two story buildings and higher will require persons to be carried out. If evacuation assistance is required, always ask the person what method of assistance they prefer. Some people have minimal ability to move and lifting them may be dangerous to their well-being. If the person prefers to be moved in their wheelchair and stairs are involved, the wheelchair user will be carried facing away from the stairs.

- Some people have no upper trunk or neck strength to assist in being carried out. If a seatbelt is available, secure the person if use of a chair is the method employed to carry the person to safety.
- If moving a person more than three (3) flights, a "relay team" arrangement is needed. If a wheelchair is left behind, do **not** leave it in an exit path or doorway to become an obstacle.
- Wheelchairs have many movable weak parts which were not constructed to withstand the stress of lifting (i.e., the seat bar, footplates, wheels, or movable armrests).
- Frequently, non-ambulatory persons have respiratory complications or rely on electric artificial respirators. They should be given priority assistance if there is smoke or fumes, as their ability to breathe may be seriously in danger.
- Power wheelchairs may have heavy batteries, which are difficult to remove. In this situation, the best response may be to ask the person to transfer to an evacuation chair, if one is available, so that they can be moved immediately. If it is not possible for the person to be removed from the chair (i.e., if the person uses respiratory equipment that is attached to the chair), wait for assistance. If attempting to move a power wheelchair, remove the batteries. Make sure the footrests are locked, the motor is off, and it is in neutral gear. Some power wheelchairs and scooters may not have heavy battery packs, and may be moved with little difficulty.
- If the person prefers to be removed from their wheelchair, their needs and preferences will vary. Always consult the person as to his/her preference with regard to:
  - Ways of being removed from a wheelchair
  - The number of people needed for assistance
  - Whether to extend or move extremities when lifting because of pain, catheter leg bags, spasticity, braces, etc.
  - If a seat cushion or pad should be brought along with him/her if he/she is removed from the wheelchair
  - Being carried forward or backward on a flight of stairs
- After-care. If a person is removed from the wheelchair (i.e. a stretcher, chair with cushion pad, or car seat) perhaps paramedic assistance might be needed. The person will want their wheelchair retrieved as soon as possible. The wheelchair is essential to the person's mobility and should be given a high priority to be retrieved as soon as possible. Inform the police or firemen of the location of the wheelchairs to be retrieved.

**RECEIPT & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SOUTH HILLS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY  
EMERGENCY RESPONSE HANDBOOK**

Please read the following statement and sign below to indicate your receipt and acknowledgement of The South Hills School of Business & Technology employee handbook.

I have received and read a copy of The South Hills School of Business and Technology emergency response handbook. I understand that this handbook replaces all other previous manuals for The South Hills School of Business & Technology as of March 1, 2020.

I understand that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand the handbook and have received a copy.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_