Emergency Buddy Program

Emergency Management

https://www.ucalgary.ca/risk/emergency-management

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Introduction

The Emergency Buddy Program can greatly reduce the risk associated with the evacuation of persons with a disability. All persons with a disability that are in your area of responsibility should be made aware of and participate in the Emergency Buddy Program; however, individuals are ultimately in charge of their own personal safety.

The Emergency Buddy Program is the best way to ensure that Campus Security (CS) and the Calgary Fire Department (CFD) are made aware of the location of a person with a disability. The Emergency Buddy assists a person with a disability in egress to the nearest Emergency Exit or fire rated stairwell landing and waits until CS or the CFD can evacuate the person with an impairment. The person's name, location, and any special evacuation requirements can be passed on to CS or the CFD directly by the Buddy or another evacuating occupant, or through use of UCalgary *Alertus* Emergency App.

Who may need an Emergency Buddy?

Any persons with temporary or permanent disability, including:

- Mobility
- Visual
- Hearing

Also consider the following:

- Someone with asthma may need help walking long distances or with stairs, especially if there is smoke, dust, fumes or chemicals in the air.
- An employee may have a condition such as arthritis, weak knees/hips, or a temporary disability (e.g., a broken leg) that may make it difficult to move quickly down stairs.
- An employee with an impairment that limits manual dexterity may not be able to pull a fire alarm.
- A person with a speech impairment may need an alternate mode of communication in an emergency.
- A person with a mental health condition may experience anxiety, panic or stress in an emergency.

Who would be a suitable Emergency Buddy?

The following general criteria will be useful in the selection of an Emergency Buddy and a Backup Emergency Buddy. These criteria, along with other factors, suggest that a high level of trust be established in this relationship. Therefore, the person with a disability should take great care in choosing an appropriate Emergency Buddy.

- The person with a disability and the Emergency Buddy should be located on the same floor of the building and know each other's specific work locations.

- The person with a disability should feel comfortable enough to inform the Emergency Buddy of any schedules such as regular work hours, holidays, class schedules, study locations, etc.

- The Emergency Buddy should be physically able to assist the person with a disability in egress to an Emergency Exit and stairwell landing.

The Evacuation Plan during an Alarm

All University of Calgary building fire alarms are monitored by CS and the CFD. When any building on university campus goes into alarm, a notification is instantly sent to both. The fire alarm system may be used for evacuations other than fire and all evacuation alarms should be treated as "real" with proper evacuation procedures conducted.

CS and the CFD will respond to the alarm by physically attending the building. All occupants of a building in alarm should immediately evacuate the building through the **nearest** and **safest** Emergency Exit and proceed to their designated Assembly Point.

Occupants should exit to the exterior of the building and avoid use of building connectors/tunnels, to get to the Assembly Point.

Persons with a Disability: Roles and Responsibilities

BEFORE an Alarm

1. Choose an appropriate Emergency Buddy and a Backup Emergency Buddy.

2. Provide your Emergency Buddy with the following information:

   - Your name, building, room number, telephone number, type of disability and any special evacuation requirements.

   - Your Backup Emergency Buddy's name, building, room number and telephone number.

3. Update your Emergency Buddy of any change to the above information.
4. Obtain information from the [Emergency Management Website](#) regarding both primary and secondary emergency egress routes for all frequently used areas.

DURING an Alarm

1. Evacuate along the primary emergency egress route:

   o Along designated hallway and out nearest and safest Emergency Exit for occupants on ground level floors

   o Along designated hallway and into nearest and safest Emergency Exit stairwell landing for occupants on upper floors.

2. If there is an emergency situation along the primary emergency egress route or if you are located on an upper floor and there is smoke in the stairwell, evacuate along the secondary emergency egress route.

3. If your primary Emergency Buddy is not present, your secondary or tertiary Emergency Buddy is expected to take action.

4. Use [UCalgary *Alertus* Emergency App](#) or any telephone to contact CS at 220-5333 and inform them of your name, location, and any special evacuation requirements.

5. If you have evacuated into a stairwell, wait there until CS or the CFD can assist in your evacuation or it is confirmed that the building is safe to re-enter.

6. Confirmation that the building is safe to re-enter may come from a member of CS or the CFD, or by an announcement over the Public Address System.

Emergency Buddy Roles and Responsibilities:

DURING an alarm

1. If applicable, knock on the door of the person with the disability's room and raise a voice alarm.

2. Assist the person with a disability in evacuating along the primary emergency egress route along designated hallways and out the nearest and safest Emergency Exit for occupants on ground-level floors, or along designated hallways and into Emergency Exit stairwell landings for occupants on upper floors.

3. If there is an emergency situation along the primary emergency egress route, evacuate along the secondary emergency egress route.

4. Contact a member of CS or the CFD to pass on the name, location and any special evacuation requirements of the person with a disability by using any of the following methods:

   - Use any telephone to contact CS at 403.220.5333.

   - Use the UCalgary *Alertus* Emergency App to notify CS. See below for more information.

   - Inform another evacuating occupant of the situation. Ask this evacuee to pass on the above information to a member of CS or CFD.

   If the above actions fail, you should evacuate the building yourself and find a member of CS or the CFD to inform them of the name, location and any special evacuation needs of the person with a disability.

5. If you have evacuated into a stairwell, wait with the person with a disability until CS or the CFD arrive, or you receive confirmation that the building is safe to re-enter. Confirmation will be given to you by a member of CS or the CFD, or by an announcement over the public address system.

6. If you are unable to locate your Buddy when a fire alarm sounds, please evacuate immediately and inform a member of CS or the CFD of the person's name, room number, usual emergency egress route (primary and secondary), telephone number and any special evacuation requirements. Information regarding the routine of the person with a disability is also beneficial for CS and the CFD in this situation.

DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CARRY ANYONE.

Emergency Buddies should report the location and name of all persons with a disability in stairwells to CS or the CFD via the UCalgary *Alertus* Emergency App or by phone at 403.220.5333 or directly to the CS or CFD.

UCalgary *Alertus* Emergency App

In the event of an emergency on campus, it is crucial to receive information quickly. The UCalgary *Alertus* Emergency App delivers alerts and updates that can save lives and prevent injury. The app is one part of the University's Emergency Communication System and a critical resource in creating a safe and healthy living and learning environment for everyone on campus.

Download the UCalgary *Alertus* Emergency App onto your mobile device using instructions here.

Once downloaded from your app store, simply login using your University of Calgary IT account credentials. Be sure to enable push notifications as you login to allow the university to send you emergency alerts. The old UC Emergency app is no longer supported and should be deleted.

Appendix A: Definitions

Assembly Point: designated area where evacuated building occupants can gather and learn more information about their emergency, including the "all clear" message indicating it is safe to re enter the building.

Emergency Buddy System: having someone assist or stay with a person with a disability during a fire alarm or other emergency situation.

Emergency Exit: door that leads outside of the building or to another building.

Fire-rated stairwell: enclosed stairwells usually constructed of cement, cinderblocks or other non-flammable materials leading to an exterior exit.