



BUILDING EMERGENCY COORDINATOR OPERATIONS GUIDE



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
VIRGINIA TECH™

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Be Hokie Ready

Be Hokie Ready is a program designed to encourage all Hokies to actively engage in basic emergency preparedness, response, and recovery efforts as an extension of the university motto *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve). Use this guide and download the Hokie Ready app to help you become better prepared for emergencies, on- and off-campus. If you have any questions about personal preparedness, please contact Virginia Tech Emergency Management.



540-231-4873



oem@vt.edu



emergency.vt.edu

Building Emergency Coordinator (BEC) Overview

The Building Emergency Coordinator (BEC) program was established to coordinate the emergency preparedness and planning efforts among all Virginia Tech buildings.

Typically, a campus building is occupied by multiple departments, making building-wide communications difficult during normal operations, let alone during an emergency. The BEC program serves to assist first responders and Virginia Tech Emergency Management (VTEM) by developing a common, building-wide plan of action for emergencies that threaten life safety.

Building Emergency Coordinators serve as an extension of Emergency Management in the preparedness, response, and recovery phases of an emergency. They not only add value to the building community by serving in this position, but also to the overall university.

BECs work with Emergency Management to disseminate pertinent emergency preparedness information and plans throughout their building. In addition, they provide emergency responders with a single, knowledgeable point of contact who can assist in contacting appropriate departmental personnel and officials in case of an emergency.

Ideally a building emergency coordinator should plan on serving a term of no less than a year with no limit to the number of consecutive terms. BECs are expected to provide multiple forms of contact, including methods reachable outside of normal business hours. The Alternate Building Emergency Coordinator (ABEC) should fulfill a similar role.

Building Emergency Coordinators also facilitate emergency preparedness in their building by coordinating the Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC).

Duties of the Building Emergency Coordinator (BEC)

The Building Emergency Coordinator serves his or her building by:

- Serving as the chair the Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC).
- Serving as the point of contact for safety and emergency preparedness information; receiving and monitoring emergency communications as provided; and distributing relevant information throughout the building.
- Conducting roll call at the assembly area to account for those who have evacuated the building.
- Coordinating the development of, and maintaining the Emergency Action Plan (EAP) building annex in conjunction with the EPC.
- Serving as the primary contact between emergency responders and building occupants in event of an emergency.
- Coordinating with Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) on annual fire drills for the building.
- Coordinating with Virginia Tech Emergency Management (VTEM) on emergency exercises or drills as necessary.
- Work alongside the Alternate Building Emergency Coordinator (ABEC) to assume the duties in case of absence.
- Coordinate building-specific emergency notification procedures, for example if the building does not have a centralized fire alarm system.

The EPC may also assign an Alternate Building Emergency Coordinator (ABEC). The ABEC is responsible for assuming the duties of the BEC in their absence.

Floor Warden Responsibilities (BEC)

The Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC) should determine if Floor Wardens are advantageous for the building. Floor Wardens are volunteers within the building that provide leadership to personnel on their floor for evacuation of the building in the case of a fire or fire alarm. The Floor Warden is expected to guide occupants out of the building, perform a visual sweep of the area as they evacuate, and report the status of the evacuation to their Building Emergency Coordinator (i.e. were there any person(s) with disabilities or injuries and where they were located).

Please remember that personal safety is of the upmost importance. Floor wardens should not place themselves at risk. Rather, they should note any issues during evacuation to report to the BEC or emergency response personnel after they have safely evacuated the building.

Floor Wardens may be asked to perform the following tasks:

- Take note of unusual occurrences or non-compliance of personnel with a mandatory evacuation between their location and the nearest exit point.
- Knock loudly on doors, informing occupants to evacuate.
- Close open doors on the way out of the building.
- Instruct any lingering occupants to evacuate the building. If persons refuse to exit, the BEC should be notified once outside the building.
- Instruct occupants to use the exit stairwells, not the elevators, to evacuate the building.
- Report pertinent emergency information to the BEC at the assembly area.

Preparing to Serve as the BEC/ABEC

Consider keeping the following items with you or readily available in case of an emergency:

- A charged mobile phone
- A list of important telephone numbers (e.g. EPC members)
- BEC Emergency Backpack
 - Red BEC vest
 - Clipboard and paper
 - Flashlight (working batteries)
 - Roll of Caution Tape
 - Roll of Duct Tape
 - First Aid Kit
 - 3 Yellow Glow Sticks
 - Megaphone (As needed)

These supplies are examples of what is originally provided with the backpack. BECs should periodically check the bag contents, and may add additional supplies as necessary for their building.

Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC)

The Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC) is composed of one representative from every department that occupies a specific building on campus. Each of the departmental representatives shall act as a liaison between their department and the EPC. If a department occupies space in more than one campus building, the department will then have multiple EPC representatives serving on their respective buildings' EPC.

The Emergency Preparedness Committee serves their building by:

- Convening at minimum, once annually. More frequent meetings are recommended. Inviting a representative from VTEM is encouraged.
- Appoint a Building Emergency Coordinator (BEC) with an assigned term as designated by the committee.
- Appoint an Alternate Building Emergency Coordinator (ABEC) with an assigned term as designated by the committee.
- Develop and maintain the EAP building annex within prescribed guidelines in conjunction with the BEC.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP) Overview

The Emergency Action Plan (EAP) addresses natural and man-made emergencies, which may threaten life safety and which may occur in your building.

As a BEC or ABEC, you should be familiar with the Emergency Action Plan (EAP). The EAP can be broken down into two main components, Department Information and the Building Annexes. Every building on campus has a unique Building Annex that addresses its specific layout and hazards. Each department that occupies a building will have the same Building Annex as a part of their departmental EAP. However, the BEC's primary concern is the Building Annex where they are located.

The following are key aspects of the EAP Building Annex Plan:

- Evacuation routes, exit points, and pre-designated emergency assembly areas outside the building in case of an emergency;
- When and how to evacuate the building;
- Procedures for notifying emergency responders of an emergency;
- Procedures for Shelter-In-Place and Secure-In-Place
- Locations of fire extinguishers, first aid kits, and AEDs; and,
- Any unique hazards located in the building where you work.

Reporting an Emergency

Dial 911 from a mobile or building phone when you need Police, Fire, or Emergency Medical Services. Remain calm – your actions influence others.

- Give the dispatcher your exact address and building name. Tell the dispatcher if you are calling from the Virginia Tech campus.
- Your full name and the telephone number from which you are calling, in case you are disconnected.
- The nature of the emergency (describe clearly and accurately).
- Remain calm and do not hang up as additional information may be needed. If possible, have someone else meet emergency personnel outside of the building.

Secure-in-Place Procedures

You should secure-in-place during violence, threat of violence, when an active assailant has been reported or is nearby, or otherwise when instructed to do so by a VT Alert. You will be the safest by placing a locked door or other barricade between you and the associated violence or danger.

- Remain calm.
- If you are outside during a secure-in-place emergency you should seek cover in the nearest unlocked building.
- If the buildings in the immediate area have exterior doors that have been locked, continue to move away from the danger, seek cover, move to another building, or leave campus if it is safe to do so.
- Once inside, find an interior room and lock or barricade the doors.
- To minimize vulnerability, turn off lights, silence phones, draw blinds, and move away from windows.
- Await further instruction from VT Alerts and emergency personnel.
- Do not leave until an “All Clear” is received.

Remember, if you are witness to violent acts or behavior, immediately move away from the incident, and then dial 911 to summon the Virginia Tech Police Department. If you hear about an incident on campus, please stay away from that area.

If Someone Wants to Enter a Secure Area

If there is any doubt about the safety of the individuals inside the room or building, the area needs to remain secure. Allowing someone to enter a secure location may endanger you and others. Always use good judgement. There are exceptions to all guidance and prescribed directions.



If there are individuals outside the secured door who wish to get in, several factors should be considered to determine if it is safe:

- Can you see the area outside the door to determine that the individual is not under duress? Is it a trap?
- If a physical description of the subject was given in the secure-in-place alert, consider similarities such as age, race, clothing description, height, weight, sex, and hair and eye color.

If the decision is made to let a person in, consider the following:

- Have the person leave anything he or she is carrying (a backpack, laptop case, package, etc.) on the ground, outside of the secure area.
- Have the subject lift up his or her shirt, coat, and/or jacket until the waistline is visible and rotate 360 degrees to see if he or she is concealing a weapon.

Shelter-in-Place Procedures

Shelter-in-place events are usually weather-related emergencies. When it is necessary to shelter-in-place, you will be safest by moving inside to a building space that protects you from the danger. Do not lock doors behind you as others may also need to shelter-in-place.

- Remain calm.
- Immediately seek shelter inside the closest building. Do not wait until you physically see a tornado or severe weather event to react.
- Resist the temptation to go outside and check the weather conditions yourself.
- Once inside, stay away from windows, glass, and unsecured objects that may fall.
- Seek shelter in interior rooms and corridors.
- Avoid, if possible, large free-standing expanses such as auditoriums and arenas.
- Do not use elevators.
- Await further instruction from VT Alerts and emergency personnel.
- Do not leave until an "All Clear" is received.

During a tornado, seek shelter on the lowest level possible. If warranted, consider crouching near the floor and seeking additional shelter under a sturdy desk or table, or cover your head with your hands.



Weather Definitions

Watch: Conditions are favorable for the development of severe weather. Closely monitor the situation in case it gets worse.

Warning: Severe weather has actually been observed. Listen closely to instructions provided by weather radios/emergency officials.



Building Evacuation

If time and conditions permit, secure your workplace and only take important personal items that are easily accessible — such as car keys, purse, medication, and glasses.

Read and understand the following steps:

- Remember, all fire alarms are mandatory evacuations. Do not use elevators unless authorized to do so by emergency personnel.
- Check doors for heat before opening and if the door is hot, do not open it.
- Walk, do not run, push, or crowd. Use handrails in stairwells and stay to the right.
- Keep noise to a minimum so you can hear emergency instructions.
- Assist people with disabilities.
- Inform emergency personnel of the location of those that are still in the building.
- Unless otherwise instructed, move quickly away from the building towards an assembly point.
- Remain at least 50 feet away from the building to provide easy access for emergency personnel
- If you have relocated away from the building, do not return until notified that it is safe.



Fire Safety

If there is a fire on your floor, follow these recommendations:

- If your building has a fire alarm system, activate it as you exit.
- Follow the procedures outlined in your department's Emergency Action Plan (EAP).
- Move quickly to an open area that is away from buildings, trees, power lines, and roadways. If your department has a designated assembly area, move to that location if it is safe to do so.
- Call 911 and report the location of the fire. Follow directions of emergency personnel.
- Use a fire extinguisher on small (wastebasket-size) fires; but ONLY if it is safe to do so.
- For larger fires, GET OUT; close doors as you leave to confine the fire as much as possible.
- If clothing catches fire, STOP...DROP...ROLL.



Fire Alarm is Activated

If you hear a fire alarm in your building, you should exit the building immediately.

- Proceed to the nearest exit.
- Using the back of your hand, feel the top and bottom of the door for heat. Do not open the door if it is hot. Otherwise, open slowly. Stand behind the door and to one side; be prepared to close it quickly if fire is present. If you feel heat, proceed to an alternate exit.
- Exit the building in a calm manner using the stairs — never use elevators. Remember to close the stairwell door behind you.
- Stay low when moving through smoke; walk down to the ground floor and exit.
- After you exit the building, go to your department's designated assembly point and remain there.
- Do not return to the area until instructed to do so by emergency personnel.

How to Assist Individuals with Disabilities

If you have questions about special assistance, contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), for students, (540-231-3788, ssd@vt.edu) or the Office of Equity and Accessibility, ADA & Accessibility Services, for faculty and Staff, (540-231-2010, adaaccess@vt.edu).

Building occupants may self-identify, in confidence, if they will require special assistance during an emergency. If necessary, communicate the type of emergency to the individual along these accessibility guidelines:

- **Auditory:** communicate with the hearing impaired by writing a note, hand gestures, or by using another method to convey the message.
- **Visual:** describe the nature of the situation and offer to act as a “sighted guide” by offering your elbow and escorting the individual to a safe location. Determining a “buddy” before an emergency occurs can be a good start.
- **Mobility:** if a person cannot safely leave the building, a “buddy” can accompany the individual to an area of refuge without blocking the evacuation path. Some campus buildings have identified areas of refuge near or inside a main stairwell or adjacent to the elevators. Be aware of any any designated areas of refuge within your building in the event of an emergency. The individual with a disability should call 911 to provide his or her location while the buddy notifies on site emergency personnel of the situation. Note: You should not attempt a rescue evacuation of an individual with a disability unless you have their permission, and only if you have had rescue training.

Additional Resources

For more information and to stay up-to-date on what to do before, during, and after an emergency, check out the following resource websites and follow on social media.




Virginia Tech Emergency Management

-  emergency.vt.edu
-  [@BeHokieReady](https://www.facebook.com/BeHokieReady)
-  [@BeHokieReady](https://twitter.com/BeHokieReady)
-  [@BeHokieReady](https://www.instagram.com/BeHokieReady)

Virginia Tech Police Department

-  police.vt.edu
-  [@VaTechPolice](https://www.facebook.com/VaTechPolice)
-  [@VaTechPolice](https://twitter.com/VaTechPolice)

Virginia Tech WeatherSTEM

-  montgomery.weatherstem.com/vt
-  [Virginia Tech WeatherSTEM](https://www.facebook.com/VirginiaTechWeatherSTEM)
-  [@VTWxSTEM](https://twitter.com/VTWxSTEM)

VT Alerts

-  alerts.vt.edu
-  [@BeHokieReady](https://twitter.com/BeHokieReady)

Virginia Tech Rescue Squad

-  rescue.vt.edu
-  [@VTrescue](https://www.facebook.com/VTrescue)
-  [@VT_Rescue](https://twitter.com/VT_Rescue)
-  [@VT_Rescue](https://www.instagram.com/VT_Rescue)

National Weather Service

-  weather.gov
-  [@NWSBlacksburg](https://www.facebook.com/NWSBlacksburg)
-  [@NWSBlacksburg](https://twitter.com/NWSBlacksburg)

Ready.gov

-  ready.gov
-  [@Readydotgov](https://www.facebook.com/Readydotgov)
-  [@readygov](https://twitter.com/readygov)

Environmental Health and Safety

-  ehs.vt.edu



Download the Hokie Ready app, Virginia Tech's public safety and preparedness app, for mobile access to campus preparedness resources and emergency response guides and information.



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