



HOUSING AND RESIDENCE LIFE STAFF PREPAREDNESS

Division of Administrative Services

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

540-231-2438 oem@vt.edu www.emergency.vt.edu

Use this guide to help you become better prepared to provide guidance for your residents. If you have any questions about preparedness, contact the Virginia Tech Emergency Management.



WHAT IS THE ROLE OF HOUSING AND RESIDENCE LIFE STAFF DURING AN EMERGENCY?

Students, even in the residential environment, look for the person at the end of the hall for leadership, anticipating that the Housing and Residence Life Staff will know what to do if an emergency occurs.

- » Clearly cover basic emergency preparedness techniques during the first week – 10 minutes of pre-planning can save lives. Visit www.emergency.vt.edu for additional resources.
- » Remind residents to update their emergency contact information on Hokie SPA, to sign-up for VT Alerts, and to download and install VT Desktop Alerts on their personal computers at www.alerts.vt.edu.
- » Know how to report any emergency that occurs in your Residence Hall.
- » Individuals with disabilities – who self-identify – should be able to provide information on special assistance needs if an emergency occurs. They may need help leaving the building during an evacuation.
- » Provide leadership if an emergency occurs; lead by example and follow emergency procedures.



HOW DO I REPORT AN EMERGENCY?

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

- » Tell the dispatcher you are at Virginia Tech and give the exact building and closest room number.
- » Give your full name and the telephone number from which you are calling, in case you are disconnected.
- » Describe 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.



WHAT SHOULD I DO TO PREPARE FOR DUTY SHIFTS AND ROUNDS?

In addition to your Hokie Passport and Residence Hall keys, you should also consider:

- » Keeping a charged cell phone with you at all times.
- » Subscribe to VT Alerts and install VT Desktop Alerts onto your personal computer.
 - ▶ Add your assigned room phone to the list of contact methods.
- » Keeping a list of important telephone numbers (i.e. RLOC and AOC if applicable, etc.).





WHAT IF THERE IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY IN A RESIDENCE HALL?

Please temporarily provide adequate space for the victim and emergency personnel.

- » Unless they are in immediate danger, do not move any victims until emergency personnel arrive.
- » If properly trained, give appropriate first aid until emergency personnel arrive.
- » Try to have someone escort first responders to the scene.



HOW DO I SECURE-IN-PLACE?

When it is necessary to secure-in-place, 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.

WHAT 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. **USE GOOD JUDGMENT.**

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 someone is not lying in wait? 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.

Remember, always use common sense. There are exceptions to all guidance and prescribed directions.



HOW DO I SHELTER-IN-PLACE?

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 sturdy 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 large free standing expanses such as auditoriums and gymnasiums.
- » **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 hand



WEATHER DEFINITIONS

- » **Watch:** Conditions are favorable for the development of severe weather. Closely monitor the situation in case conditions worsen.
- » **Warning:** Severe weather has been observed. Listen closely to instructions provided by weather radios, emergency officials, and other alert mechanisms. Seek shelter immediately.



HOW DO I EVACUATE A RESIDENCE HALL?

Evacuation routes are posted in building hallways, usually near stairwells or exits.

- » Know two evacuation routes for your room. Look for illuminated EXIT signs to determine primary and secondary exits.
- » Remember, all fire alarms are mandatory evacuations. Do not use elevators unless authorized to do so by emergency personnel.
- » As your residence hall is evacuating, encourage all persons to leave the building – do not wait for those who refuse to leave. Inform emergency personnel of the location of those that are still in the building. Move at least 50 feet away from the building to provide easy access for emergency personnel.
- » The Building Emergency Coordinator (BEC) should remain at the door closest to the fire panel to meet with emergency personnel.
 - ▶ Utilize additional Residence Life staff to prevent residents from reentering the building before it is safe to do so.



HOW TO ASSIST AN INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY?

If you have questions about special assistance, contact Services for Students with Disabilities (540-231-0858).

- » Ask students to self-identify in confidence if they will require special assistance during an emergency.
- » Communicate the type of emergency to the individual. Depending on the type of disability:
 1. **Auditory:** communicate with the hearing impaired by writing a note, hand gestures, or by using another method to convey the message.
 2. **Visual:** describe the nature of the situation and offer to act as a “sighted guide” by offering your elbow and escorting him or her to a safe location. Determining a “buddy” before an emergency occurs can be a good start.
 3. **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. The individual with a disability should call 911 to provide his or her location while the buddy notifies onsite emergency personnel of the situation. You should attempt a rescue evacuation of an individual with a disability as a last resort and only if you have had rescue training. If the other evacuation options are not available or are unsafe (and danger is not immediate), the individual with a disability can remain in a room with an exterior window, a telephone/cell phone. Notify 911 and onsite emergency personnel.



STAY INFORMED

Use these outlets to stay up-to-date on what to do before, during, and after an emergency.

- » **Virginia Tech Emergency Management**
 - ▶ www.emergency.vt.edu | @BeHokieReady
- » **Virginia Tech Police Department**
 - ▶ www.police.vt.edu | @VaTechPolice
- » **VT Alerts**
 - ▶ www.alerts.vt.edu | @vtalerts
- » **Virginia Tech News**
 - ▶ www.vtnews.vt.edu | @vtnews
- » **National Weather Service**
 - ▶ www.weather.gov | @NWSBlacksburg