

EMERGENCY RESPONSE HANDBOOK

FOR THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



Division of Safety & Security

Health & Emergency Management Safety | Police Department | Advocacy & Support

safety.gwu.edu

THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC



To ensure a safe campus, the GW community must work together by understanding our responsibilities if an emergency should occur. We have developed this handbook to help with emergency preparedness efforts. The following sections address how to prepare and respond in emergency situations that may arise. Help make GW a safe university by becoming familiar with this guide and placing it somewhere visible and easily accessible. For additional information, contact the Division of Safety and Security (safety.gwu.edu).

Sincerely,

Division of Safety & Security

The George Washington University Division of Safety and Security—comprised of Health & Emergency Management Safety and the GW Police Department—is tasked with promoting a safe campus and protecting our community. This cannot be accomplished alone and requires involvement from all corners of the university, including students, faculty, and staff.

The mission of Health & Emergency Management Safety is to ensure that the George Washington University works together to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from all hazards; and complies with occupational and environmental health, biological and chemical safety, and fire safety regulations.

- Emergency Communications (Campus Advisories and GW Alert)
- READY GW Preparedness Program
- Planning Guidance
- Training and Exercises
- Community Partnerships
- General Safety
- Fire Safety
- Safety Inspections
- Environmental Health

The George Washington University Police Department (GWPD) is committed to working with the GW community to help ensure a safe and secure environment. Police patrol the campus 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Additional resources include:

- Emergency Medical Response Group (EMeRG)
- Threat Assessment Team
- Blue Light Phones
- Lost and Found
- Self-Defense Programs
- Operation Identification and Bike Registration
- Violence Prevention Program

For more information on these and other programs, visit safety.gwu.edu.



FIRE

- Pull the fire alarm
- Leave the building immediately using the closest emergency exit
- Close doors behind you
- Call GWPD (202-994-6111) or 911 when safe to do so
- Move away from the front of the building
- Re-enter the building only when instructed by officials



- Do not assume an alarm is false
- Use stairs, do not use elevators
- If unable to exit the building, go to the nearest exit stairwell or safe area of refuge and call GWPD (202-994-6111) or 911 to report your location
- If trained, use a fire extinguisher if the fire is small and contained, and room is not filled with smoke



SEVERE WEATHER

Thunderstorms are the most common type of severe weather in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. However, winter storms, extreme hot/cold temperatures, flooding, tornadoes, and hurricanes can occur. Check CampusAdvisories.gwu.edu for up-to-date weather advisories and information.

Shelter-in-place for severe thunderstorms and tornadoes:

- Seek shelter indoors in a low part of the building
- Move to a windowless interior room away from hazardous materials
- Take cover under a sturdy object or against an interior wall
- Monitor Campus Advisories and local media
- Wait for the *all clear* before leaving your safe space



EARTHQUAKE

- Drop to the ground, take cover under a sturdy object, and hold on until shaking stops
- If a sturdy object is not available, move to an inside corner of the room, crouch down, and cover face and head with arms
- Stay away from glass, outside walls, or anything that could fall
- Stay inside and wait for the *all clear* before leaving your safe space
- Do not use elevators
- Monitor Campus Advisories and local media



WEATHER TERMS:

WATCH: Conditions are favorable or expected

WARNING: Conditions are occurring or imminent



ASSISTING PEOPLE WITH ACCESS AND FUNCTIONAL NEEDS



Blind or Visually Impaired:

- Clearly announce the emergency
- Offer your arm for guidance
- Lead the person and alert them of obstacles



Deaf or Hard of Hearing:

- Turn lights on and off to gain the person's attention
- Indicate directions with gestures or a written note



Mobility-Impaired:

- Guide the person to the nearest exit stairwell or safe area of refuge
- Do not use elevators
- Call GWPD (202-994-6111) or 911 to report your location
- Stay with the person if it can be done without unreasonable personal risk
- If in imminent danger and the person requests assistance before emergency personnel can arrive, find volunteers to evacuate the person per his/her instructions



MEDICAL EMERGENCY

- Call GWPD (202-994-6111) or 911 immediately
- Provide the location, nature of injury or illness, current condition of the victim, and other requested information
- Remain on the phone until directed to hang up
- Stay with the victim
- Do not move the victim unless he/she is in immediate danger



UTILITY FAILURE

Utility failures include power outages, gas leaks/unusual odors, flooding/plumbing problems, broken or malfunctioning life-safety equipment, or elevator entrapment.

- Move to a safe area
- Call Emergency Maintenance (202-994-6706) or GWPD (202-994-6111) to report issues
- Be prepared to provide failure type and location
- Building may be evacuated due to utility failures



BIOLOGICAL RELEASE/ CHEMICAL SPILL

- Secure area and do not attempt to clean unless properly trained in managing biological releases or chemical spills
- Move to a safe area
- Call Health and Safety (202-994-4347) or GWPD (202-994-6111) and provide information on location and type of release or spill
- If the release or spill has the potential to impact a larger area, notify GWPD of that potential and follow their directions



SUSPICIOUS/UNUSUAL PACKAGE OR MAIL

- Do not open the item(s)
- Leave the area and close doors behind you
- Call GWPD (202-994-6111) or 911 and provide a detailed description of the item(s), why it is suspicious, and its location



SUSPICIOUS PERSON

- Call GWPD (202-994-6111)
- Do not confront the person or let the suspicious person into a locked building or office
- Do not block the person's access to an exit
- If safe to do so, take a picture/photo of person



BOMB THREAT

Obtain as much information as possible from the caller and report the threat immediately to GWPD (202-994-6111).

Be sure to note:

- Precise time of the call
- Caller's exact words
- Noticeable characteristics of the caller (gender, age, calm/angry, excited/slow, accent, stutter, lisp, high/low pitched, etc.)
- Information regarding the device and possible location
- Background sounds (machine, voices, street noises, music, etc.)
- Threat language (well-spoken, taped, irrational, foul, incoherent, etc.)

Ask the person questions, such as:

- Where is the bomb located?
- When will the bomb explode?
- What does the bomb look like?
- What kind of bomb is it?
- What will cause it to explode?
- Did you place the bomb?
 - If so, why?
 - If not, who did?
- What is your name?
- What is your address?



VIOLENCE/ACTIVE SHOOTER

If an **active shooter** is in your vicinity:

- Call GWPD (202-994-6111) or 911 when it is safe to do so** and provide information, including the location and number of shooters, description of the shooter(s), weapons used, and number of potential victims

Get Out

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

- Have an escape route and plan in mind
- Evacuate regardless if others agree to follow
- Leave your belongings behind
- Help others escape if possible
- Prevent others 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

Hide Out

If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find you:

- Hide in an area out of the shooter's view
- Find protection if shots are fired in your direction
- Lock the doors
- Block entry to your hiding place with heavy objects or furniture pieces
- Silence your cell phone and stay quiet
- Spread out: Do not huddle together
- Wait for law enforcement

Take Out

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

- Devising a plan; committing to your actions
- Throwing items and improvising weapons
- Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her
- Yelling

*Adapted from DHS Active Shooter Guidelines, DHS.gov



CRIME

Criminal acts towards persons or property can occur on or off campus.

Be sure to:

- Remain in or move to a safe area
- Report criminal or suspicious activity to GWPD (202-994-6111) or 911



ACTION TERMS:

SHELTER-IN-PLACE: Take immediate shelter indoors and isolate yourself away from the threat

EVACUATE: Leave an area or building that is or is about to be affected and move to a safe area

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

	EMERGENCY	NON-EMERGENCY
Foggy Bottom (GWPD)	202-994-6111	202-994-6110
Mount Vernon (GWPD).....	202-242-6111	202-242-6110
VSTC (Loudoun County).....	911	
Other Locations	911	
GW Information Line		202-994-5050
VSTC Information Line		571-553-8333

Colonial Health Center	202-994-5300
Emergency Maintenance.....	202-994-6706
Emergency Management.....	202-994-4936
Enrollment and the Student Experience	202-994-6710
GW Hospital.....	202-715-4000
GW Housing	202-994-2552

Health and Safety	202-994-4347
Information Technology	202-994-4948
Student Support and Family Engagement	202-994-2305
Sexual Assault Response	
Consultation Team (SARC).....	202-994-7222
University Operator	202-994-1000

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS:

READY GW

MAKE A PLAN

Get Away/Evacuate:

- Know alternate exit routes
- Identify assembly areas (near & far)

Shelter-In-Place:

- Identify a safe location to shelter
- Know how to protect and isolate yourself from the threat

Communication:

- Consider a variety of ways to keep in contact with family, friends, roommates, and co-workers

People with Access and Functional Needs:

- Include family, friends, roommates, and co-workers in your plan by helping them understand your needs during an emergency

BUILD A KIT

Have at least three days of supplies to sustain yourself. Recommended items*:

- Water (one gallon per person per day)
- Non-perishable food
- Flashlight & extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Radio & extra batteries
- Medications & items for unique needs
- Cash & some change
- Clothes & comfortable shoes
- Important documents
- Filter mask or cotton t-shirt
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags & plastic ties
- Plastic sheeting & duct tape
- Whistle
- Mobile device charger

* Adapted from Ready.gov

STAY INFORMED

CampusAdvisories.gwu.edu is the university's primary website used for communicating emergency preparedness and incident-related information to the GW community.

GW Alert is a notification system that sends emergency alerts to email addresses, mobile devices (text messages), GW IP desk phones and residence hall phones, social media, and university webpages. Students, faculty, and staff are requested to maintain current contact by logging onto alert.gwu.edu using their GW NetID and password.

AlertDC is the official District of Columbia communication system that sends emergency alerts, notifications, and updates to your device. To sign up, go to hsema.dc.gov.

Local media, such as 103.5FM or WTOP.com, delivers additional community awareness.

TIPS:

- Always carry your GWorld ID card
- Keep GW Alert contact information up-to-date
- Know your location and exits, and the placement of first aid kits, AEDs, and fire extinguishers
- Program GWPD and personal I.C.E. (in case of emergency) numbers into your mobile device
- Report unusual/suspicious activities or items