



WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

EVACUATION PROCEDURE

PROCEDURE [S-115](#)

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Please direct any questions or comments about the applicability of this document to Luigi Marcone, WCSU Department of Public Safety

1. PURPOSE

This policy establishes procedures for the emergency evacuation of residence halls, classrooms, assemblies, and otherwise occupied buildings at Western Connecticut State University.

2. SCOPE

This policy outlines the responsibilities and procedures to be followed during an emergency evacuation by instructors, building coordinators, staff, students, visitors, and persons with physical impairments.

3. INTRODUCTION

Appropriate action during an emergency evacuation depends on preparation. It is the responsibility of University employees to be aware of and be familiar with the emergency evacuation procedures. These procedures are intended to minimize injury and/or loss of life and damage to property and ensure an orderly evacuation of buildings. While the procedures are specific for fire emergencies, they are applicable to any evacuation conditions.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

University administrators are responsible for ensuring that all persons, including those with physical impairments, within their area of responsibility: know of, and are instructed to comply with these procedures.

5. GENERAL BUILDING EVACUATION

- a. When a fire alarm sounds, all occupants shall immediately evacuate the building.
- b. Never use elevators during an emergency evacuation.
- c. Be aware of the marked exits from your area and building.
- d. Know the locations of fire alarm pull stations and fire extinguishers.
- e. When the building evacuation alarm is sounded or when you are directed to leave, walk quickly to the nearest marked exit and ask others to do the same.
- f. Once outside, proceed to a clear area at least 50 feet away from the building. Residence Hall students are to report to their emergency assembly areas. Keep walkways clear for emergency vehicles. Public Safety officers and/or Housing representatives will assist with directions.
- g. An Emergency Command Post (ECP) may be established near the emergency site by the Department of Public Safety. Keep clear of the ECP unless you have important information to report.
- h. Do not return to the building until you are told to do so by a representative of the WCSU Police Department or a member of the Danbury Fire Department.

## 6. PROCEDURES

- a. Anyone having evidence of, or seeing an immediate threat to life or a fire, should go to the nearest fire alarm pull station and activate the alarm and/or go to the nearest phone and dial “911”. Do not attempt to put a fire out yourself unless there is a fire extinguisher nearby and the fire is under control.
- b. When evacuation procedures have been initiated, faculty and staff members shall assume responsibility for the evacuation in an orderly manner. If in a classroom, ensure that all students have evacuated and close the door behind you.
- c. Fire hydrants, streets, and driveways must remain accessible to emergency vehicles. Evacuation of buildings should be made through the nearest available exit.
- d. The University Police Department will assist with the evacuation.
- e. In the event that evacuation stimulates media attention, all inquiries will be referred to WCSU Public Relations Office.

## 7. PERSONS WITH PHYSICAL IMPAIRMENTS

WCSU serves a substantial number of students, faculty, staff, and visitors with physical impairments. Generally, faculty will be informed in advance when a student with special needs is enrolled in a class. The instructor must discuss special needs with these students in relation to the specific course, and make plans for emergencies accordingly. A person with a physical impairment should bring to the attention of faculty and staff the extent of the impairment and what special needs he/she may have in the event of an emergency evacuation. Administrators, instructors, and/or supervisors shall ensure that persons with physical impairments are assisted, if necessary, to a safe location in the event of an emergency evacuation. They shall also maintain a system of accountability for those persons with physical impairments that includes the known locations of individuals and their impairments.

### Evacuation of Persons with Physical Impairments

- a. As soon as an alarm sounds, individuals should be assisted from the building as needed.
- b. Sight impaired but mobile persons should wait out the rush of pedestrian traffic until assistance arrives to escort them to the nearest exit.
- c. Hearing impaired but mobile persons may be unaware of the need to evacuate and should be advised that an emergency evacuation is in progress. They should use the nearest exit to leave the building.
- d. Mobility impaired persons should be assisted to the nearest exit or await professional assistance in a designated area.
- e. Physically impaired individuals shall inform administrators, instructors, and/or supervisors of any physical impairments, as well as their assigned work station, classroom, or place of normal occupancy in the building. In the event of an emergency evacuation, persons with physical impairments should dial 911 from any University phone and advise the police dispatcher of their location and the nature of their impairment. The Danbury Fire Department will evacuate if necessary (as long as this assistance does not involve placing anyone in personal danger).

### Reminders to Persons with Physical Impairments

- a. Take control without depending on others to take the first step.
- b. Don't be afraid to let others know when you need assistance.

- c. Don't hesitate to communicate what your special needs are in order to make the evacuation easier and safer for you and your assistant.
- d. Plan ahead. Be prepared. Know what you are going to do before an emergency arises. Make a plan and then test it. Determine what your alternatives are.
- e. When you enter an unfamiliar building, locate the most available telephones, exits and ramps, enclosed stairwells (determine if landings are large enough for wheelchairs), rooms that would make good areas of refuge, fire alarm pull stations, and fire extinguishers.
- f. Never taken an elevator in a building evacuation.

Specific evacuation procedures are posted on the inside of resident doors and assembly areas.