

Accident/Emergency Procedures for Polling Places, Early Voting Satellites, and County Election Offices

The highest priority during any emergency should be the safety of those present in the building.

1) Who is in charge?

At the polls - the Officer of Elections

At a satellite location - the Deputy assigned to this position

At County Election Office - Administrator of Elections

2) What if the person in charge cannot handle an emergency situation?

Not everyone is able or willing to act in an emergency. Hopefully someone will step up and take charge if the assigned person is not willing to do so. The least anyone can do is call "911".

3) What about the election?

Safety first, election second. No election is worth injury or loss of life! If you have been forced to evacuate the polling place, contact the election commission office and they will confer with the election commission and the coordinator of elections about what to do.

4) What should be done if an accident or medical emergency occurs?

- **CHECK** Check the person to assess what the injury or illness is.
- **CALL** If you think that professional medical help is needed or, even if you are not sure, call "911" immediately. Better safe than sorry! Let the professional medical personnel make the decisions.
- **CARE** Provide first aid care only if you are trained or instructed to do so by the 911 operator. Comfort the victim if possible until professional help arrives.
- If you have need for emergency assistance such as an Ambulance, the Police or Fire Department, contact those agencies directly by dialing **"911"**.

- Immediately after taking care of the accident or emergency, contact the election commission office at _____ and report the accident or emergency.
- A written report of the accident or emergency should be completed, signed by the person in charge, and filed with the election commission that day.

5) What if there is a physical threat or disturbance?

- If anyone is unruly, abusive, or in any way threatens the safety of the election officials, voters, or the orderly conduct of the election, call “911” and then report the matter immediately to the election commission office at _____.

6) What if a tornado or severe storm occurs during the election?

- The safety of the poll officials and voters comes **first**.
- If you are informed that a tornado or severe storm is imminent, **take cover immediately!**

The Officer of Elections should check with **someone** in charge of the polling place prior to election day to see where the regular occupants of the facility have been instructed to take cover in case of a tornado or severe storm. Follow their lead. Make sure to know how many individuals you are accounting for.

- If time permits and you are able to remove any supplies when leaving the voting area, **without jeopardizing your safety**, take the signature list and applications for ballot.
- Should a tornado or severe storm damage a polling place--
 - Using any phone available, call “911” if anyone is injured and emergency assistance is needed.
 - Stay in a safe secure area to prevent possible injury until emergency assistance arrives.
 - Call election commission office to report on situation. If at all possible, give an accounting of all poll workers and voters present so that the office personnel can respond to calls from family, the press and the public.
- If there is sufficient damage at a precinct to prevent the holding of an election on election day or during early voting at an early voting site, the administrator of elections will confer with the election

commission and the coordinator of elections to make a decision on what action should be taken.

Note: Every effort should be made to notify the voters if a change is made in a polling place or early voting site. Newspaper and radio notice should be given if an early voting site is involved and there is still time left to vote early. Signs at old locations help eliminate confusion.

7) What if a bomb threat is reported or a fire occurs at the polling location or satellite?

- Leave the building.
- Call "911" to report bomb threat or fire.
- If time permits and you are able to remove any supplies when leaving the voting area, **without jeopardizing your safety**, take the signature list and applications for ballot.

Note: Should voters show up to vote while you are outside of the polling place, tell them about the situation and take their names, addresses and phone numbers where they can be reached during the day, so the office can contact them about voting.

- Contact the election commission office as soon as possible. The administrator of elections will confer with the election commission and the coordinator of elections to make a decision whether or not to move the polling place.

Note: Every effort should be made to notify voters of any change in polling places. (Signs, radio, etc.)

8) What if the polling location or satellite should begin to flood?

- If flooding is caused by a rapidly rising river, creek, etc., or a broken water main, leave the building immediately and go to higher ground.
 - If time permits and you are able to remove any supplies when leaving the voting area, **without jeopardizing your safety**, take the signature list and applications for ballot.
 - Call the election commission office to report the situation. The administrator in conference with the election commission and the coordinator of elections will make a decision about what action should be taken.
- When notified that flooding is a good possibility and that your polling place may be in danger:
 - The Officer should assess the situation and notify the election commission office.
 - The election commission, in conjunction with the local emergency management agency and the coordinator of elections, shall make a decision concerning the polling place.
 - Should the poll workers or voters feel threatened at any time, they should immediately leave the building.
 - All voting supplies and equipment should be removed from the building as quickly as possible if a decision has been made to move the polling place. Any assistance necessary will be provided to the poll workers by the election commission and its staff.

BEST PRACTICE:

Take 5 minutes on the morning of the election to discuss these procedures, especially identifying emergency exits and designated meeting locations.

EMERGENCY PLAN FOR EVACUATION

In the event of an emergency (fire, bomb threat, flood, tornado, etc.) you must follow these instructions. This plan will work only if followed completely.

Always: *Locate Emergency Exits and make sure to keep these Exits Clear!
Make sure that there is access to Building for Emergency Vehicles!*

1. Officer of Election use phone to call 911. After notifying 911, Officer to call County Election Office.
2. Secure machines and bring keys.
3. Post Emergency Sign on outside door.
4. Registration table officials gather signature lists, applications for ballot, and personal belongings and exit to parking lot to previously designated meeting place.
5. All other precinct officials gather necessary belongings and exit to parking lot to designated meeting place.
6. After meeting at designated meeting place in parking lot, personnel will wait until the Officer of Election releases them to go home, to the designated Emergency Location, or back to work.
7. Designated Person will call County Election Office for instructions.
8. Travel as a group (in as few cars as possible) to designated Emergency Location. **The Officer of Election and 2 workers must travel in the same car with the important election documents.**
9. Officials will call County Election Office to confirm arrival at Emergency Voting Location. County Election Office will notify Emergency Voting Location if appropriate.
10. At Emergency Location, County Election Office will meet precinct officials with all necessary materials to continue voting.