

# General Building Emergency Plan

The American University  
4400 Massachusetts Ave., NW  
Washington, DC





## I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the General Building Emergency Plan is to promote safety for the occupants of buildings at The American University. The plan also delivers critical building information to emergency responders and university staff to improve the response, mitigation, and recovery in the event of an emergency.

In any emergency that requires evacuation, remain calm and exit the building in an orderly manner.

The fire alarm and emergency notification system are used to signal the need for an evacuation from a building for events including: fire, hazardous material release, or structural failure.

All evacuees must follow direction from DC Fire and EMS Department Officials, AUPD or MPD Police Officers, and university personnel for the duration of the incident. All occupants and guests are required to evacuate by the nearest safe stairwell as soon as an alarm is sounded. Those persons refusing to evacuate are violating District of Columbia regulations as well as university policies, and may be subject to disciplinary action.

All American University occupants and visitors must understand that time is critical when an alarm is sounded. Refusal or delay in evacuation puts you and rescue personnel in danger.

This Building Emergency Plan is maintained by the Office of Risk Management and is reviewed whenever there are changes to a building that might impact this plan. Some buildings have more specific plans. Requests for clarification, comments, or questions should be directed to Risk Management at (202) 885-2504.

## II. EMERGENCY PLAN

### **Reporting an Emergency:**

In the event of an emergency necessitating an evacuation, building occupants should activate the closest manual fire alarm pull station and evacuate the building. Automatic alarm (smoke, heat, duct detectors) or manual fire alarm pull station activation will sound the alarm system for the affected building.

Notify AUPD at (202) 885-3636, and if unable to contact AUPD, dial 911. Supply all relevant information: name, location, type of emergency. DC Fire and EMS Department is responsible for all rescues of occupants within a building.

### **Occupant Emergency Instructions:**

Upon discovery of smoke or flames:

- Remove or notify people in danger.
- Activate the fire alarm.
- To contact AUPD, call (202) 885-3636, and provide them with the following information:
  - Your name.
  - Exact location of the fire or emergency (i.e., Federal Hall, Room 101).
  - Size and type of fire (i.e., small, large, garbage can, chemical, etc.).
- If unable to contact AUPD, dial 911.



- If you have been trained and feel capable of doing so, with another person's assistance, use a fire extinguisher to extinguish the fire.
- Evacuate the building using the nearest safe exit or stairwell.

Upon activation of the alarm, you are expected to:

- Secure or take personal belongings (including your wallet, cell phone, and AUID).
- Close all internal doors. **DO NOT LOCK DOORS.**
- Proceed in a calm, orderly manner to the nearest stairwell exit.
- Enter the stairwell, move to the right on the stairs, proceed up or down the stairs, and exit the building at the **GROUND LEVEL.**
- Congregate outside in the designated Evacuation Meeting Point or other Evacuation Meeting Point as directed by AUPD. You may be asked to relocate to a location remote from campus.
- Keep streets, fire lanes, and walkways clear for emergency responders.
- Return to the building when permitted to do so or comply with other instructions given by AUPD.

### **Building Evacuation Meeting Points:**

Occupants should exit the building and congregate at one of the outdoor or indoor Evacuation Meeting Points at the direction of AUPD. Refer to **Appendix A** for evacuation areas.

### **Procedures for Individuals with Special Needs:**

Individuals with special needs should move out of imminent danger areas and to the nearest safe Area of Rescue Assistance or safe area where they can shelter in place. Shelter in Place for a fire emergency in a room with an exterior window with an operable door. Close all doors and windows and report your location to AUPD at (202) 885-3636 or by activating the RAVE Guardian app. AUPD will notify DC Fire of any persons that are sheltered in place. DC Fire will provide assistance or rescue.

### **Shelter-In-Place:**

Upon Direction to Shelter-In-Place:

- **IF YOU ARE INSIDE, STAY WHERE YOU ARE.** If outside, go to the nearest campus building. Collect any shelter-in-place supplies (including a telephone) to be used in case of emergency.
- Evacuate only if your building is damaged or you are directed to do so by emergency personnel.
- Shelter-in-Place in an **INTERIOR ROOM, ABOVE GROUND LEVEL, and with the FEWEST WINDOWS.** Shut and lock all windows (locking will form a tighter seal) and close exterior doors.
- Make a list of all the people with you and your location. Retain until asked for report by AUPD.
- Check AU ALERTS if available on AU's [home page](#), [Facebook](#), or [Twitter](#), or call the General Information line: (202) 885-1000. Turn on a radio or television and listen for further instructions.
- Make yourself comfortable.

**Lockdown:**

## Upon Notification of a Campus Lockdown

- Follow the instructions from “[RUN, HIDE, FIGHT](#)” training.
- IF YOU ARE INSIDE AND ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, EXIT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. All campus buildings will be locked and only accessible to emergency personnel.
- IF YOU ARE INSIDE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER AND ARE UNABLE TO EXIT, **HIDE**. Remain quiet and calm, and monitor AU Alert for additional instructions. Turn off cell phone ringers.
- AS A LAST RESORT, IF YOU ARE IN IMMEDIATE DANGER: **FIGHT!**
- IF YOU ARE INSIDE AND ARE NOT IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, STAY WHERE YOU ARE. Remain quiet and calm, and monitor AU Alert for additional instructions. Turn off cell phone ringers.
- IF YOU ARE OUTSIDE, LEAVE CAMPUS. Leave campus as quickly as possible by foot, public transportation, or driving. Monitor AU Alert for additional instructions.
- Evacuate your building only if you are directed to do so by emergency personnel.
- Shelter-in-Place in an INTERIOR ROOM, without WINDOWS. Shut and lock all doors.
- If in a classroom, secure the classroom door and block any windows to the hallway.
- Make a list of all the people with you and your location. Retain until asked for report by AUPD.
- Make yourself comfortable.

## FACILITY CONTACT INFORMATION

## AU Facilities

- 202 885 2349 (2-FIX)
- [2FIX@american.edu](mailto:2FIX@american.edu)



### **Emergency Procedure Situations**

The following information is more specific to certain types of events. This information is consistent with AU Police training criteria provided to community members.

#### **Calling AUPD:**

- Dial x3636 or use a Blue Emergency Phone when:
  - An immediate response is needed
  - The incident is occurring or has just occurred
  - When in doubt, **CALL 3636**
- Dial 202-885-2527 (non-emergency) when:
  - The incident occurred in the past
  - Officer needed for consultation
- When calling the Police:
  - Provide a call-back number
  - Give an accurate description of the parties involved
  - Be willing to meet with the police officer upon arrival
- Anonymous Tips Can Be Submitted at [www.american.edu/publicsafety](http://www.american.edu/publicsafety)

#### **Medical Emergencies**

If there is an accident or illness on campus, call AUPD at **(202) 885-3636** (x3636 from a campus phone) or any emergency blue light phone and tell the dispatcher:

- You need an ambulance
- Your location, including building name, floor, and room number (if applicable)
- Specifics about your location
- Important details about the accident or illness (e.g. extent of injury)

#### **After calling the dispatcher:**

- Do not move the injured or ill person unless they are under life-threatening circumstances (e.g., a fire).
- If possible, have a third party meet the AUPD officer at a designated location.
- If the person is unconscious, retrieve the building Automated External Defibrillator (“AED”) (if equipped). Activate the AED and follow the voice prompts.



### **Hazardous Materials Incident**

A chemical spill emergency is defined as a release of hazardous chemicals that could threaten human health or the environment.

#### **If you discover a chemical spill:**

- Do not attempt to clean up a spill yourself
- Alert others and evacuate the room or area, if appropriate
- Close and secure the room if possible
- Report the spill to AUPD at **(202) 885-3636** (**x3636** from a campus phone) and provide the dispatcher with the following information:
  - Building name and location
  - Floor and room number
  - Details regarding the type of spill
  - Any injuries
- Do not return to the evacuated building unless you have been told to do so by AUPD.

### **Fire Safety**

#### **Upon discovery of smoke or flames:**

- Remain calm
- Secure or take personal belongings (including wallet, phone, and ID).
- Close all internal doors. Do not lock doors.
- Evacuate the building using the nearest safe exit or stairwell. Do not use the elevators.
- Activate the fire alarm.
- Contact AUPD **(202) 885-3636** (**x3636** from a campus phone) and provide them with your name, location of fire/emergency and size and type of fire.
- In unable to self-evacuate, Shelter-In-Place as if for a fire emergency in a room with an exterior window, operable door and telephone. Close all doors and windows and report your location to AUPD by calling **(202) 885-3636** (**x3636** from a campus phone) or by activating the Rave Guardian app.
- Notify AUPD when you exit the building if someone needs assistance. Be sure to identify the person's location.
- Never try to walk through smoke-filled or other imminently hazardous areas. If you see or smell smoke in the stairwells, close the door and use a different exit.
- Keep streets, fire lanes, hydrants, and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and crews.
- Return to the building when permitted to do so or comply with other instructions given by AUPD.





### **Security Threat: Campus Lockdown**

When notified of an immediate danger, AUPD will lockdown all exterior doors to on-campus buildings and will issue an AU Alert stating: “Security Threat: Campus Lockdown.” Exterior doors will secure and will only be able to be opened by emergency personnel. However, doors will always allow you to exit a building from the inside.

**RUN!** If you are inside and are not in imminent danger, stay where you are. Remain quiet and calm, and monitor social media and e-mail, but do not post anything to social media.

- If you are outside, leave campus. Leave campus as quickly as possible by foot, public transportation, or driving.
- Evacuate your building only if you are directed to do so by emergency personnel.

**HIDE!** Shelter in an interior room, without windows. Shut and lock all doors.

- If in a classroom, secure the classroom door and block any windows to the hallway..
- Stay quiet, silence phone ringers, and stay out of sight.

**FIGHT!** As a last resort, if you are in immediate danger:

- Create chaos
- Swarm the attacker

Move the weapon away from potential victim

### **Disruptive Visitors**

If you witness violent, disturbing, or suspicious behavior, you should call AUPD at **(202) 885-3636 (x3636** from a campus phone) once you reach a safe location. When calling, tell the dispatcher:

- Your name and affiliation
- Location of the incident or observation
- Description of the observation or behavior
- Why you think the behavior is disturbing or suspicious

### **TIPS**

- Internal code word or phrase
- Be mindful of body language
- Put a barrier between you and the individual
- Stay centered and do not react to outbursts
- Listen and collect information
- Set limits if necessary
- Retreat to a safe room if necessary



### **Noticing Suspicious Behavior on Campus/Property**

If you witness violent, disturbing, or suspicious behavior, you should call AUPD at **(202) 885-3636 (x3636** from a campus phone) once you reach a safe location. When calling, tell the dispatcher:

- Your name and affiliation
- Location of the incident or observation
- Description of the observation or behavior
- Why you think the behavior is disturbing or suspicious

### **Examples:**

- Strangers loitering
- Unattended packages
- Someone peering into windows/vehicles
- Strange odors
- People asking about access procedures
- Discussion of possession of weapons

### **Suspicious Packages or Bomb Threats**

#### **Suspicious Package**

If you receive a suspicious package:

- Do not open or unnecessarily handle the package.
- Call AUPD immediately at **(202) 885-3636 (x3636** from a campus phone)

AUPD will immediately respond and evaluate the threat.

#### **Bomb Threat**

Attempt to keep the caller on the telephone for as long as possible. Questions to ask:

- When will the bomb go off?
- Where is it located?
- What type of bomb is it?
- What type of explosive is it?
- Why are you doing this?
- Who are you?





## Weather Related Emergencies

During weather-related emergencies like tornadoes, hurricanes, and severe thunderstorms, the greatest danger is from falling debris, trees, and broken glass from the high winds associated with the storm.

### **Upon direction to Shelter-In-Place**

- If you are inside, stay where you are. If outside, go to the nearest campus building. Collect any supplies (including a cell phone) to be used in case of emergency.
- Evacuate only if your building is damaged or you are directed to do so by emergency personnel.
- Shelter-In-Place in an interior room, above ground level, and with the fewest windows. Shut and lock all windows (locking will form a tighter seal) and close exterior doors.
- Make a list of all the people with you and your location. Retain until asked for report by AUPD.
- Monitor social media, e-mail, AU's main page, or your phone for an AU Alert.
- Make yourself comfortable.

For information on weather-related school closings: go to [www.american.edu](http://www.american.edu) or call (202) 885-1100

## Earthquakes

Earthquakes are sudden, rapid shaking of the earth, caused by the breaking and shifting of underground rock. Earthquakes can cause buildings to collapse and cause heavy items to fall, resulting in injuries and property damage.

### **Preparation**

Knowing the safest places in your office, work area, or living unit. These areas should be away from heavy furniture, appliances, fireplaces, and large panes of glass (windows, mirrors, etc.) and should be in an inside corner of a room.

### **During an Earthquake**

- If you are indoors, **drop** to the floor. Take **cover** under a sturdy desk, table, or other furniture. **Hold on** to it and be prepared to move with it.
- If you are in a wheelchair, lock your wheels and remain seated until the shaking stops.
- If you are blind or have low vision, keep in mind that earthquakes cause items to fall and furniture to shift. Regular sound clues may not be available. Move with caution.
- Always protect your head and neck with your arms, a pillow, or whatever is available.
- If you are outside, get into the open, away from trees, buildings, and power lines. Be watchful for falling glass and building debris. If you are already outdoors, stay out there.
- Do not get in a doorway. You are safer under a table.

### **After an Earthquake**

- Expect aftershocks. Most of these are smaller than the main earthquake, but some may be large enough to do additional damage to weakened structures
- Check yourself for injury and provide aid others if you have training



- Do not enter damaged buildings. If in a damaged building, go outside and quickly move away from the building
- If you are trapped, cover your mouth. Send a text, bang on a pipe or wall, or use a whistle instead of shouting SOS that rescuers can locate
- Monitor social media, e-mail, AU's main page, or your phone for an AU Alert.



## Appendix A

## Evacuation Sites

Revised (4/8/22)

The default evacuation sites for campus-wide evacuations are:

- Metropolitan Memorial Methodist Church at Nebraska
- New Mexico Avenue, National Presbyterian Church at 4101 Nebraska Avenue,
- St. Anne Church at 4001 Yuma Street

**Special rules apply to residence halls (see notes below)**

<b>AU Building</b>	<b>Outdoor Evacuation Site</b>	<b>Indoor Evacuation Site</b>
3201 New Mexico Ave.	Rear Parking Deck	Bender Library
4200 Wisconsin Ave.	Vacant Lot across Van Ness	WCL Warren Building
4401 Connecticut Ave	On Veasey St. (dead end)	
Anderson Hall *	Main Quad	Mary Graydon Center
Asbury	Main Quad	Mary Graydon Center
Battelle-Tompkins	Main Quad	Mary Graydon Center
Beeghly	Main Quad	Mary Graydon Center
Bender Library	Main Quad	Mary Graydon Center
Butler Pavilion	Main Quad	Mary Graydon Center
Cassell*	Amphitheater	Mary Graydon Center
Centennial Hall *	Main Quad	Mary Graydon Center
Child Development Center	L/A Quad	
Clark Hall	Main Quad	
East Campus Duber*** (formerly Congressional)	East Campus Parking lot	Mary Graydon Center
East Campus Constitution ***	East Campus Parking Lot	Mary Graydon Center
East Campus Federal ***	East Campus Parking Lot	Mary Graydon Center
East Campus – Meyers Building	East Campus Parking Lot	Mary Graydon Center
Financial Aid	McKinley Grassy Area	Bender Library
East Quadrangle Building	Main Quad	Mary Graydon Center
Gray	Main Quad	Bender Library
Hall of Science	Main Quad	Bender Library
Hamilton	L/A Quad	Bender Library
Hughes Hall *	Amphitheater	Mary Graydon Center
Hurst	Main Quad	Mary Graydon Center
Katzen	Grass near Nebraska Hall	Kerwin Hall Building
Kay Spiritual Life Center	Main Quad	Mary Graydon Center
Kirwin Hall	Main Quad	Mary Graydon Center
Kogod	Main Quad	Mary Graydon Center
Kreger	Hamilton Parking Lot	
Leonard Hall *	Amphitheater	Mary Graydon Center



Letts Hall *	Main Quad	Mary Graydon Center
Mary Graydon Center	Main Quad	Sports Center
McCabe	Grassy Area next to old Rockwood	Mary Graydon Center
McDowell Hall *	Amphitheater	Mary Graydon Center
McKinley	Main Quad	Mary Graydon Center
Media Production Center	McKinley Green	Mary Graydon Center
Nebraska Hall **	Grass near Katzen	Katzen Art Center
Osborn	Reeves Field?	Mary Graydon Center
President's Office Building	Kogod Grassy Area (North Side)	Mary Graydon Center
Rockwood	Gray Hall Grassy Area	Mary Graydon Center
Roper*	Gray Hall Grassy Area	Bender Library
School of International Service	Main Quad	Mary Graydon Center
Sports Center	Amphitheater or Reeves Field	Mary Graydon Center
Sports Center Annex	Reeves Field	Mary Graydon Center
Spring Valley Building	Mass Ave South of 48th Street, Rear parking deck	Mary Graydon Center
Tenley Campus – Dunblaine	Grass near Warren	WCL – Warren Building
Watkins	Hamilton Parking Lot	Mary Graydon Center
WCL – Capital Hall	Ellipse	Spring Valley Building
WCL – Warren Building	Grass near Dunblaine	Spring Valley Building
WCL - Yuma Building	Surface Parking Lot	Spring Valley Building

**Special Rule for Residence Hall Residents:**

**Anytime during inclement weather OR from 11:00 pm to 7 am in any weather conditions, residents of residence halls will be redirected from the primary assembly areas as follows:**

- \* If an alarm activates in a main campus residence hall the students will be redirected to Bender Arena from 11:00 pm to 7:00 am. During inclement weather conditions, from 7:00 am to 11:00 pm, students in residence halls will be directed to MGC or the Library.
- \*\* If an alarm activates in Nebraska Hall, the students will be directed to Katzen (access will be made via the Welcome Center side door). During inclement weather conditions, from 7:00 am to 11:00 pm, students in residence halls will be directed to MGC or the Library.
- \*\*\* If an alarm activates in East Campus, their evacuation location will be the East Campus Commons event/meeting space facility. During inclement weather conditions, from 7:00 am to 11:00 pm, students in residence halls will be directed to MGC or the Library.