



Supreme Court of Arkansas
Administrative Office of the Courts

Emergency Response Plan

Name of Building/ Facility: _____

Building/ Facility Address: _____

County: _____

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I. **Purpose:**

Every person who attends or is present in a circuit or district court proceeding is entitled to a safe and secure environment. An **Emergency Response Plan** establishes policies and procedures to be followed by city, county, and court personnel in order to report and respond to critical incidents (fire, severe weather, major medical emergencies, etc.).

II. **Authority:**

Act 576 of 2007 provides that city and county governments adopt and implement security and emergency preparedness plans for their circuit and district courts. (Act 576, section 1 and Ark. Code Ann. section 16-10-1003)

III. **Definitions:** (To include any terms not commonly used)

- A. Court Facility Administrators: Those court personnel within each court facility designated by the Local Court Security and Emergency Preparedness Committees and listed in that facility's contact list.
- B. First Responders: State and local law enforcement personnel, fire department personnel, and emergency medical personnel who will be deployed to bioterrorism attacks, terrorist attacks, catastrophic or natural disasters, and emergencies.
- C. Phone Tree: A prearranged system for activating a group of people by telephone. Using the phone tree system can spread a brief message quickly and efficiently to a large number of people.
- D. All Clear: A spoken or otherwise conveyed message from a First Responder or Court Facility Administrator that the facility is safe to reenter.
- E. Contact List: A current list of contact information for those court personnel defined as Court Facility Administration. The list should be in "chain of command" order.

Appropriate and deliberate action must be taken when an emergency occurs. The following are instructions for reporting and responding to specific incidents.

A. **Reporting an Emergency**

Step 1. **Call 911.** In most cases, such as fire or medical emergency, the appropriate number to call is 911.

Step 2. Notify Court Facility Administration [Insert contact list]

Step 3. Notify other staff [Insert Phone Tree here]

B. **Facility Evacuation Procedures**

Evacuation is required any time a condition exists which would require it, when the fire alarm sounds, when an evacuation announcement is made, or when ordered by a Court Facility Administrator.

The designated evacuation point is: [Describe location]
[Post signage at proper locations]

The **Evacuation Coordinators** are: [Identify persons and numbers here]

Responsibilities of the **Evacuation Coordinator** are:

- **Call 911** from a safe location to verify the fire alarm/evacuation signal has been received.
- Ensure people have evacuated the facility, to the extent it is safe to do so.
- Maintain a roster of court staff as an appendix to this plan and bring the roster to the evacuation point.
- Account for staff at the evacuation point.
- Be the contact person for reporting unsafe situations in the building or missing persons and report these to the First Responders.
- Maintain a list of court staff home phone numbers, cell phones, and/or pagers for contacting employees during and after emergencies.

C. **Fire Alarm Procedures**

Or, when an evacuation is ordered.

Step 1. Remain Calm.

Step 2. Exit the room and:

- Take jackets or clothing necessary for protection from the weather.
- Close windows and doors, but do not lock doors as you leave.
- Leave office lights on.
- If you are away from office or courtroom when the alarm sounds you should exit the facility and proceed to designated location.

Step 3. Notify others in the area of the alarm if they did not hear it.

Step 4. Supervisors must ensure that all staff evacuate.

Step 5. Exit the facility via the nearest safe exit route. Walk, do not run. Never open doors that feel hot to the touch or attempt to travel through smoke-filled or hazardous areas. Do not use elevators.

Step 6. Report to the designated evacuation point.

Step 7. Wait at evacuation point for instructions.

Step 8. Do not re-enter the facility until the “all clear” signal has been given by First Responders or Court Facility Administration.

Step 9. If you become trapped due to smoke, heat, flames, or some other hazard:

- Leave the office/courtroom door closed.
- **Call 911** and let them know your location. Hang an article of clothing, large enough for First Responders to see, in or out the window if possible.
- If smoke enters the room and there is a window that opens, open the window to let it out. Close the window if outside smoke enters. Stay close to the floor.

D. **Medical Emergency Procedures**

Step 1. **Call 911** or have someone call for you.

Step 2. If it is possible and safe to do so:

- Protect victim from further injury by removing any persistent threat to the victim. Do not move the victim unnecessarily. Do not delay in obtaining trained medical assistance.
- Provide first aid until help arrives if you have appropriate training and equipment.
- Send someone outside to escort the First Responders to the location.

Step 3. Location of first aid kits: **[List specific locations here]**

E. **Bomb Threat Procedures**

If you receive a telephoned bomb threat:

Step 1. Remain calm, listen carefully. Be polite and show interest.

Step 2. Using the attached Bomb Threat Checklist, obtain as much information as possible.

After the call:

Step 1. **Call 911.**

Step 2. Notify Court Facility Administration.

Step 3. If the facility must be evacuated, follow Facility Evacuation Procedures.

Bomb Threat Checklist

(Copy and place near all phones)

- Exact time of call: _____
- Phone number of caller (if available): _____
- Exact words of caller: _____

Questions to ask:

- When is the bomb going to explode? _____
- Where is the bomb? _____
- What does it look like? _____
- What kind of bomb is it? _____
- What will cause it to explode? _____
- Did you place the bomb? _____
- Why? _____
- Where are you calling from? _____
- What is your address? _____
- What is your name? _____

Characteristics:

- Caller's Gender: _____ Caller's Age: _____ Caller's Accent: _____
(Circle) Calm Disguised Nasal Angry Broken
 Stutter Slow Sincere Lisp Rapid
 Giggly Deep Crying Squeaky Excited
 Stressed Accent Loud Slurred Normal
- Were there any background noises? _____

- Notes: _____

F. **Active Shooter Procedures**

If you are involved in a situation where someone has entered the area and started shooting, the following instructions should be followed:

- Step 1. If possible, exit the facility immediately.
- Step 2. Notify anyone you may encounter to exit the facility immediately.
- Step 3. **Call 911**; provide the following information to the operator:
 - a. Your name
 - b. Location of incident and your exact location
 - c. Number of shooters (if known)
 - d. Identification of shooters (if known)
 - e. Number of persons involved and/or injuries

If you are directly involved and exiting the building is not possible, the following **Lockdown** instructions should be followed:

G. **Emergency Lockdown Procedures**

- Step 1. Go to nearest room or office.
- Step 2. Close and lock the doors.
- Step 3. Cover the door windows.
- Step 4. Stay calm and quiet and act as if no one is in the room.
- Step 5. Do not answer the door.
- Step 6. **Call 911**; provide the following information to the operator:
 - a. Your name
 - b. Location of incident and your exact location
 - c. Number of shooters
 - d. Physical description/Identification of shooters
 - e. Number of persons involved and/or injuries
- Step 7. Wait for First Responders to assist you out of the facility.

H. Hostage Situation Procedures

If you hear or see a hostage situation:

- Step 1. Immediately remove yourself from any danger.
- Step 2. **Call 911**; provide the following information to the operator.
 - a. Your name
 - b. Location of incident and your exact location
 - c. Number of hostage takers
 - d. Physical description/identification of hostage takers
 - e. Any weapons the hostage takers may have

If you are taken hostage:

- Remain calm, be polite and cooperate with your captors.
- Do not attempt escape unless there is an extremely good chance of survival.
- It is safer to be submissive and obey your captors.
- Do not complain, avoid being belligerent, and comply with all orders and instructions.
- Do not draw attention to yourself with sudden body movements, statements, comments, or hostile looks.
- Observe the captors and try to memorize their physical traits, voice patterns, clothing, and other details that can help provide a description later.

In a rescue situation:

- Do not run. Drop to the floor and remain still. If that is not possible, cross your arms, bow your head, and stand still. Make no sudden moves that a tense rescuer may interpret as hostile or threatening.
- Wait for instructions and obey all instructions you are given.
- Do not be upset, resist, or argue if a rescuer isn't sure whether you are a terrorist or a hostage.
- Even if you are handcuffed and searched, do not resist. Just wait for the confusion to clear.

I. **Suspicious Mail/Packages Procedures**

Common Features of suspicious mail/packages:

- There may be liquid leaking from package.
- They tend to have hand-applied postage.
- They have excessive postage.
- They are addressed to a position, not a person.
- There may be no return address.
- They are often hand written or have a poorly typed address.
- They tend not to be in business format envelopes.
- There may be misspellings of common words.
- They may have restrictive markings such as “confidential”, “personal”, etc.
- They may have excessive weight and /or feel of a powdery or foreign substance.
- There may be foreign post marks and/or writing.

If you believe you have received suspicious mail/package:

- Step 1. Do not open it.
- Step 2. **Call 911**, or have someone call for you.
- Step 3. Remain at the location until First Responders arrive.

If you do open suspicious mail/package:

- Step 1. Immediately set the item down at the location where it was opened.
- Step 2. **Call 911**, or have someone call for you.
- Step 3. Do not leave the area and do not allow others into the area.
- Step 4. Wait for instructions from First Responders.

You should **not** do the following:

- Pass the mail/package to others to look at.
- Disturb any contents inside by handling the suspicious mail/package.
- Ignore the threat; it must be treated as real until determined otherwise.
- Leave the area until instructed to do so.

Concerns for explosive devices:

Common features of suspicious mail/package containing explosive devices:

- They may have bumps, wires, or pieces of metal exposed.
- They may be heavier than normal.
- They may have an excessive amount of securing material, such as tape, string, etc.

If you suspect that suspicious mail/package contains an explosive device:

- Step 1. Do not move or open the mail/package.
- Step 2. Do not let other people inspect or handle the mail/package.
- Step 3. Immediately evacuate the area.
- Step 4. **Call 911.**

J. **Isolated or Contained Fire Procedures**

- Step 1. Alert people in the immediate area of the fire and evacuate the area.
- Step 2. If you have been trained and it is safe to do so, you may attempt to extinguish the fire with a portable fire extinguisher. If you have not been trained you must evacuate the area.
- Step 3. Confine the fire by closing doors as you leave the area.
- Step 4. If the automatic fire alarm has not been activated, activate the facility fire alarm system by pulling the handle on a manual pull station.
- Step 5. If the facility must be evacuated, follow Facility Evacuation Procedures.

K. **Severe Weather Procedures**

IF YOU HEAR THE SEVERE WEATHER WARNING SIREN

Or, are otherwise notified by Court Facility Administration:

- Step 1. Alert all facility occupants of the impending weather.
- Step 2. Move quickly to a safe area indoors. This should be interior hallways, a basement, or interior bathrooms (interior spaces without windows).
- Step 3. Close all doors as you leave the area, especially ones leading to exterior rooms or offices.
- Step 4. Stay away from windows, doors and exterior walls.
- Step 5. When moving to lower levels, remember to use stairwells, as the elevators are not for use during emergency situations.
- Step 6. Do not go outside or attempt to outrun the storm.
- Step 7. Monitor local radio stations or weather band radio for updates.
- Step 8. **Call 911** in the event someone is injured.
- Step 9. Notify Court Facility Administration of injuries and/or property damage. (Reference contact list)

L. **Utility Interruption Procedures**

NOTE: ENSURE YOUR FACILITY HAS A BACK-UP POWER SOURCE

- Step 1. Remain calm.
- Step 2. Notify Court Facility Administration. (Reference contact list)
- Step 3. If you are in an unlighted area, proceed cautiously to an area that has emergency lighting.
- Step 4. Provide assistance to others in moving to a safe area.
- Step 5. If you are in an elevator, press alarm button and stay calm.
- Step 6. Areas not served by emergency lighting should maintain flashlights in accessible locations.
- Step 7. If the facility must be evacuated, follow Facility Evacuation Procedures.

M. **Flooding and Water Damage Procedures**

- Step 1. Notify Court Facility Administration. (Reference contact list)
- Step 2. Explain the exact location and severity of the leak.
- Step 3. If there are electrical appliances or electrical outlets near the leak, use extreme caution. If there is any possible danger, leave the area.
- Step 4. If you know the source of the water and are confident in your ability to stop it, do so cautiously.
- Step 5. Take only steps needed to avoid or reduce immediate water damage.
- Step 6. If the facility must be evacuated, follow Facility Evacuation Procedures.

N. **Earthquake Procedures**

WHEN SHAKING OCCURS

- Step 1. If indoors, drop, cover, and hold. Protect yourself from falling objects such as light fixtures, books, and shelves.
- Step 2. Stay away from windows. Do not stand in doorway.
- Step 3. If possible, get under a desk or table.
- Step 4. During the shaking do not run for exits or attempt to leave the facility. Do not use elevators.
- Step 5. If outside, move away from structures, power lines, or other hazards.

WHEN SHAKING STOPS

- Step 1. Check for injuries to people in your area. Do not attempt to move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger.
- Step 2. Check the area for safety hazards such as facility damage, fire, or gas leak.
- Step 3. Evacuate the facility following the Facility Evacuation Procedures.
- Step 4. **Call 911** to report serious injuries or other immediate emergencies.
- Step 5. Once you have exited the facility, do not reenter until the “all clear” has been given by First Responders.

O. **Terrorists Events**

It is difficult to know with certainty in what form a terrorist event will take place. It could be an obvious event involving an explosion and release of hazardous materials, or it could involve a covert method, such as mailing letters or packages containing hazardous material.

The following are guidelines for generic suspicious activities that should be reported:

- Anonymous tips, phone calls, or notes indicating threatening events.
- People watching officials or offices.
- Unidentified or unattended packages.
- Requests for plans, blueprints, or specifications for facilities by people who have no reason for this information.
- People in places where they do not belong.
- Packages or heavy mail which has a peculiar odor or appearance.
- Confrontations with angry, aggressively belligerent or threatening persons.
- Extremely threatening or violent behavior by co-workers who indicate they may resort to revenge or more violence.

P. **Hazardous Material/Chemical Spill Procedures**

- Step 1. Remain calm and alert others. If hazardous materials or toxic chemicals come in contact with your skin, immediately flush the affected area with clean water.
- Step 2. **Call 911**, or have someone call for you. Do not call the Haz-Mat unit directly; the First Responder will make that determination.
- Step 3. If you are contaminated, do not leave the area or let others in. If possible, do what you can to contain the spill without endangering yourself.
- Step 4. Wait for instructions from First Responders.

Q. **After Hours Emergency Procedures**

There is significant chance an emergency may occur outside normal business hours. While the structure of this plan remains precisely the same, its implementation may vary depending upon available resources and manpower until proper officials can be notified.

Step 1. An updated phone contact list of Court Facility Administrators should be provided to the alarm company (if applicable), local police, sheriff's, and fire departments.

Step 2. Court Facility Administrators should respond to the facility as soon as possible to assess the situation and determine course of action.