

# EVACUATION TOPICS

## PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

### INTRODUCTION

This sheet provides a general guideline of evacuation procedures for people who may have difficulty exiting during building evacuations. Faculty, staff, students and visitors with disabilities are expected to consider these options in advance to determine their best response to a building emergency. Assistance is available through EH&S and the University's Disability Services Office.

### PLANNING

People with mobility disabilities are encouraged to:

- Consider evacuation options for each building you occupy.
- Identify a volunteer who will be responsible to communicate with emergency services on your behalf during a building emergency.
- Document your evacuation plans on the Evacuation Plan for Persons with Disabilities form and provide it to the building evacuation director who will inform evacuation wardens and retain it for reference.

### EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

When the building alarm system is activated or other emergency requiring evacuation occurs, you should evacuate if able. If you are unable to exit, locate an area of refuge or designated evacuation waiting area if available, or stay in place. Call 911 to inform emergency services of your location.

Volunteers may help you reach an area of refuge but should evacuate to the evacuation assembly point and report your location and status to emergency services.

### EVACUATION OPTIONS

You have five evacuation options with preferred options listed first:

- **General Evacuation:** Use accessible routes to exit the building if the route appears safe. Note that the accessible route may not always be the nearest exit.
- **Horizontal Evacuation:** In large buildings and multi-wing complexes such as the Health Sciences Center, evacuate horizontally to an unaffected wing or area where the alarm is not sounding.
- **Area of Refuge:** Move to an area of refuge. A building stairwell with a large landing serves as an area of refuge. Wait near the exit stairwell until everyone has evacuated the floor and traffic has cleared, then enter. Some buildings have designated areas equipped with two-way communications with the UW Police Department. Enclosed elevator lobbies and fire-rated exit corridors can also serve as an area of refuge, especially when close to an exit.
- **Stay in Place:** If evacuating or moving to an area of refuge is not possible, staying in place may be appropriate. An enclosed room with an exterior window, a telephone, and a solid or fire-resistant door may be a good choice. With this option, you may keep in contact with emergency services by dialing 911 and reporting your location directly. Emergency services will relay this location to on-site emergency personnel who will determine the necessity for evacuation.
- **Assisted Evacuation Device:** In the event of a major earthquake or other campus-wide event that would prevent first responders from responding quickly, an assisted evacuation device, such as a specially designed chair, can be used by **trained personnel** to evacuate people with mobility disabilities.

Elevators can be unsafe to use in an emergency; in most buildings they are automatically recalled to the ground floor. Emergency personnel have special keys to override the elevator functions and can use them to assist with evacuation.