

HEALTHWEST

PROCEDURE

No. 07-015

Prepared by:
Environment of Care Committee

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Approved by:

Subject: Life Safety/Fire and
Emergency Preparedness
Procedures

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I. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for the safe evacuation or shelter-in-place in the event of a drill or actual occurrence of a fire, natural disaster, bomb threat, medical emergency, utility failure, or violent/threatening situation.

II. APPLICATION

All staff, individuals receiving services, and visitors at all HealthWest facilities.

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IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. All Clear:
Notification that an emergency alert or warning has lapsed and occupants may safely re-enter the building.
- B. Bomb Threat:
An actual or threat of a bomb that may affect staff, individuals receiving services, visitors, and/or property at a HealthWest facility.
- C. Building Evacuation Drill Signal:
The sound or flashing light that signals the activation of a fire alarm/smoke detector.

- D. Evacuation:
The exit of all occupants of a building to a safe location outside and away from the building during an emergency drill or event.
- E. Life Safety/Fire:
A fire that may affect staff, individuals receiving services, visitors, and/or property at a HealthWest facility.
- F. Medical Emergency:
An actual or potential medical emergency that may affect staff, individuals receiving services, visitors, and/or property of HealthWest.
- G. Natural Disaster:
An actual or threat of a tornado, flood, or winter storm that may affect staff, individuals receiving services, visitors, and/or property at a HealthWest facility.
- H. Severe Weather Alert:
An alert issued by the National Weather Service and broadcast through the local Emergency Services System in the event of extreme wind, heavy snow, freezing rain or similar condition that may endanger personal safety due to poor visibility, freezing temperatures, or dangerous driving conditions.
- I. Shelter-in-Place:
An area within the building designated as safe shelter where all occupants of a building will go during an emergency drill or event.
- J. Site Safety Officer:
Staff assigned to each HealthWest site who is responsible for coordinating activities associated with the Environment of Care functions in order to provide a safe and supportive environment for those individuals receiving services or providing services at the site.
- K. Safety Coordinator:
Individual who oversees all Site Safety Officers, is the Chairperson of the Environment of Care Committee, and is a member of the Risk Management Committee.
- L. Suspicious Mail:
A letter or package having any of the following characteristics: no return address, restrictive markings, possibly mailed from a foreign country, excessive postage, misspelled words, oily stains, discolorations or crystallization on wrapper, excessive tape or string, rigid or bulky, strange odor, addressed to title only or incorrect title, badly typed or written, lopsided or uneven, etc.
- M. Tone-Activated Weather Radio:
An emergency radio that can be turned on automatically by the Emergency Broadcast System.
- N. Tornado, Flood, or Winter Storm Warning:
Public notification that a tornado, flood, or winter storm has formed and is imminent. All persons should move to a place of safety.

- O. Tornado, Flood, or Winter Storm Watch:
Public notification that conditions indicate a tornado, flood, or winter storm could form in Muskegon County. Preparations should be made for possible shelter-in-place.
- P. Utility Failure:
An electrical/power failure or heating/cooling failure that may affect staff, individuals receiving services, visitors, and/or property at a HealthWest facility.
- Q. Violent/Threatening Situation:
A use or threat of a use of weapons, an explosion, a chemical leak or spill, a gas leak or spill, or a hazardous transport leak or spill that may affect the safety of staff, individuals receiving services, visitors, and/or property at HealthWest facilities.

V. PROCEDURE

A. Site Safety Officers Duties

- 1. Site Safety Officers shall conduct at least one (1) life safety/fire drill per shift per site per quarter, and five (5) emergency preparedness drills per shift per site per fiscal year. Emergency preparedness drills include:
 - a. natural disaster
 - b. utility failure
 - c. bomb threat
 - d. medical emergency
 - e. violent/threatening situation
- 2. Site Safety Officers shall conduct at least one (1) of *each* of the five (5) types of emergency preparedness drills per fiscal year, conducting at least one (1) for each of three (3) quarters, and two (2) during the remaining quarter. Site Safety Officers should rotate the type of natural disaster drill, utility failure drill, and violent/threatening situation drill yearly, until all types of drills have been conducted.
- 3. Actual events that are recorded and submitted may substitute for a required drill.
- 4. All life safety/fire and emergency preparedness drills or actual events must be recorded by the Site Safety Officer and submitted to the HealthWest Safety Coordinator/designee as soon as possible. Drills or actual events are to be recorded on the *Safety Drill/Actual Event Log & Evaluation* form (A068). In addition, the Site Safety Officer or designee shall complete the *Evacuation Drill/Actual Event Safety Checklist* (A168) if the drill or actual event required evacuation; or the *Shelter-in-Place Drill/Actual Event Safety Checklist* (A169) if the drill or actual event required shelter-in-place.
- 5. Site Safety Officers shall also complete the *Quarterly Site Safety Survey Checklist* (CMH Form A069) at least once per quarter per site and submit the form to the HealthWest Safety Coordinator/designee.

6. Staff shall receive initial training in safety procedures at their employee orientation. Emergency drills and actual events, and an annual Health and Safety training will serve to update staff on safety procedures.
7. Site Safety Officers shall provide a site safety orientation for new hires during new hire orientation.
8. Site Safety Officers shall monitor the inspection, testing, and maintenance by a contract agency of all life safety and emergency safety equipment.
9. The Environment of Care (EOC) Committee will review this Procedure at least annually. The Safety Coordinator/designee will monitor and maintain drill records submitted by each site to assure compliance with this Procedure.

B. Evacuation Drills or Actual Events

Life Safety/Fire, Utility Failure, Violent/Threatening Situation, and Bomb Threat

1. Safety drills or actual events may require evacuation for the following:
 - a. Life safety/fire
 - b. Utility failure
 - c. Violent/threatening situation¹
 - d. Bomb threat
2. The Site Safety Officer/designee shall initiate an evacuation procedure by activating the fire alarm or “pull” station, smoke detector, alarm control panel, paging system, or other means of mass notification. In the event of an actual emergency, persons nearest an activation system may sound the alarm.
3. All occupants shall immediately evacuate including visitors and individuals receiving services via the primary building evacuation route as posted on Building Evacuation Route diagrams throughout HealthWest sites. Secondary exits and routes are to be used only when primary exits are obstructed and deemed dangerous.
4. All Building occupants shall evacuate to the designated destination whenever the building evacuation drill signal is sounded or announced. Assistance will be provided to individuals requiring it. Unattended children in either the adult or youth lobbies will be accompanied by a HealthWest staff person throughout the drill until the child is safely reunited with their parent/responsible adult.
5. In the event of an actual emergency, the Site Safety Officer or designee will call 911 from an outside telephone. If a Site Safety Officer is not available, any staff person may call 911. After notifying 911, the Site Safety Officer/designee shall notify the Safety Coordinator, a supervisor, and the agency Executive Director or designee of the event.

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A Violent/Threatening Situation may require EITHER an evacuation procedure OR a shelter-in-place procedure, depending on the type of emergency.

6. Should the emergency require an extended evacuation, staff shall follow the procedures identified in the *County of Muskegon Emergency Building Closures Procedure* and the *HealthWest Procedure 07-007, Emergency Relocation of Services Procedure*.
7. The Site Safety Officer/designee shall ensure that all persons are evacuated from the building, and will close doors and windows as they leave, if possible. Fire extinguishers are to be used by staff only when necessary to clear walkways and exits for a safe evacuation.
8. Persons may return to an evacuated building only after the “all-clear” signal is given by the Site Safety Officer/designee, or by Public Safety personnel (e.g., Fire or Police Department).
9. In the event of a **Bomb Threat** drill or actual event, staff shall remain as calm as possible, and follow the instructions below and recommendations of public safety personnel.
 - a. Staff who receive a bomb threat via a telephone call shall:
 - i. Keep the caller on the telephone or leave the telephone line open so the call can be traced.
 - ii. Try to obtain as much information from the caller as possible, e.g., location of the bomb, type of device, when it is set to go off, etc.
 - iii. Question the caller on the location of the bomb since it may be possible to ascertain if it is an employee, or someone familiar with County procedure.
 - iv. Inform the caller that there may be handicapped persons in the building that may not be able to be evacuated in the warning time provided.
 - v. Pay particular attention to peculiar or otherwise identifiable background sounds that may be a clue to the location of the caller.
 - vi. Attempt to identify voice characteristics, i.e., quality (calm, excited), accents or speech impediments.
 - vii. Try to determine if the caller is male or female, and his/her ethnicity, if possible. Try to recall their exact words.
 - viii. Complete the *Bomb Threat Checklist (A005)* during the call or as soon after as possible.
 - b. Individuals who receive a bomb threat by mail shall avoid unnecessary handling of the piece of mail and do not move or squeeze the object so fingerprints remain intact.

- c. All threats shall be immediately communicated to the staff member's immediate supervisor/designee who shall:
 - i. Alert the proper authorities through Muskegon Central Dispatch by dialing 911.
 - ii. If directed, notify staff, individuals receiving services and visitors by overhead paging or other mass notification system, and implement Life Safety Procedures to evacuate the building.
 - d. Alert the agency Executive Director/designee of the situation as soon as possible. Upon arrival, the proper authorities shall take charge of the situation. If evacuation has been ordered, persons shall re-enter the building only after authorities have determined the building is safe.
 - e. The Site Safety Officer will forward the completed *Bomb Threat Checklist*, the *Safety Drill/Actual Event Log & Evaluation* form, and the *Evacuation Drill/Actual Event Safety Checklist* to the HealthWest Safety Coordinator as soon as is possible.
 - f. The HealthWest Safety Coordinator will present the staff response to the incident for review at the next scheduled meeting of the Environment of Care Committee.
10. In the event of a **Use of Weapons** drill or actual event, staff will follow HealthWest Procedure [07-019](#) Violence in the Workplace, Section IV., I.-K.

C. Shelter-in-Place Drills or Actual Events

Natural Disaster or Violent/Threatening Situation

1. Safety drills or actual events may require shelter-in-place for the following:
 - a. Natural disaster
 - b. Violent/threatening situation²
2. The Site Safety Officer or designee shall initiate a shelter-in-place procedure when conducting a drill or when actual conditions exist where evacuation would subject individuals to a greater risk.
3. A shelter-in-place is prompted by an alert sounded by the Site Safety Officer/designee to conduct a drill, or by alerts provided via a weather radio or local radio station. In the event of an actual emergency, the National Weather Service will broadcast weather alerts, watches, and warnings over the Emergency Services System whenever severe weather occurs. Local

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A Violent/Threatening Situation may require EITHER a shelter-in-place procedure OR an evacuation procedure, depending on the type of emergency.

emergency personnel will broadcast violent/threatening situation emergencies on local radio stations and/or via direct notification to County facilities management personnel.

4. An Emergency Tone-Activated Radio, or a local radio station, shall be monitored by the Site Safety Officer/designee during all threatening natural disaster or violent/threatening situations.
5. The Site Safety Officer/designee will notify the Safety Coordinator, a supervisor, and the agency Executive Director/designee when there is a severe weather advisory or other threatening situation with recommendations by the National Weather Service or emergency personnel to seek shelter and/or stay off the roads.
6. The agency Executive Director/designee will assess the situation and confer with the County Administrator to determine whether or not to relocate staff and/or services or to close agency buildings, following the *County of Muskegon Emergency Building Closures Procedure* effective September 22, 2006 and revised February 1, 2007, and HealthWest Procedure [07-007 Emergency Relocation of Services](#).
7. When a **Watch** is announced for a natural disaster or other potentially threatening situation, the Site Safety Officer or designee shall:
 - a. Notify all staff and remind them of the designated shelter area. This may be done via a public address or paging system, or by word of mouth.
 - b. Limit activity to inside the facility.
 - c. Assign someone to monitor the weather radio and/or local radio station.
 - d. Assure that evaluation routes to the shelter-in-place area are clear of obstructions.
 - e. Account for all staff, individuals receiving services, and visitors.
 - f. Prepare to implement shelter-in-place if a **Warning** is announced for a natural disaster or other threatening situation.
8. When a **Warning** is announced for a natural disaster or other threatening situation, the order shall be given by the Site Safety Officer or designee to take shelter. This announcement shall be delivered via a public address or paging system, by activating the building alarm control panel, or by word of mouth until everyone in the building is notified. If notification occurs by activating the building alarm control panel, the control panel must be set to a tone different than the tone used for evacuation and staff must be trained to clearly recognize the shelter-in-place notification.
9. Upon receiving a **Warning** notice of severe weather or other threatening situation, all building occupants shall move to the designated shelter area of the

facility. Assistance will be provided to persons requiring it. Unattended children in either the adult or youth lobbies will be accompanied by a HealthWest staff person throughout the drill until the child is safely reunited with their parent/responsible adult.

10. Individuals unable to reach the designated shelter area shall take cover under desks, tables, doorways or other areas which would protect them from flying glass or falling debris.
11. If safely possible, designated staff will close internal doors between sheltered areas and windows.

If the event is a chemical spill or other similar threatening situation:

- a. Close all outside air vents.
 - b. Turn off heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems.
 - c. Place plastic sheeting over only operative windows/doors and tape it in place.
 - d. Cover cracks under doors with damp towels and tape cracks or other openings as appropriate.
12. When the "All Clear" is announced, all individuals shall be accounted for, per building procedures, and designated staff will proceed to do the following:
 - a. All staff trained in First Aid/CPR will check for injuries and implement care if needed.
 - b. The Site Safety Officer and Property Specialist, in cooperation with other qualified internal and/or external personnel, will assess building damage and individual injuries and implement emergency relocation plans for the site as necessary.
 - c. The Site Safety Officer or designee will notify the agency Executive Director or designee as soon as feasible of any damage or injury.
 - d. If emergency assistance is needed, contact one or both:
 - i. Central Dispatch: 911
 - ii. Muskegon County Emergency Services: 231-724-6341
 13. If the facility is not affected by an actual event, individuals shall return to normal activities upon hearing the All Clear Signal.
 14. If the directive is given to relocate, each agency building shall follow its written plan of action for safely relocating staff, visitors, and individuals receiving services. Affected Site Safety Officers will be responsible for notifying the public and staff of the site closure.

15. Appropriate staff, as designated by the agency Executive Director or designee, shall be responsible for assuring that individuals receiving services have adequate transportation home and care providers are at home for those individuals residing in Adult Foster Care Homes.
16. The agency will maintain an adequate number of portable generators for emergency use at the Adult Foster Care Homes that are equipped with generator transfer switch hook-ups.
17. If an actual event or threat of severe weather or other violent/threatening situation occurs prior to the start of the workday, staff are to follow the *County of Muskegon Emergency Building Closures Procedure* effective September 22, 2006 and revised February 1, 2007.
18. Persons may return to their work area only after the "All-Clear" signal is given by the Site Safety Officer or designee, or by emergency services personnel.

D. Medical Emergency

1. Medical emergencies occur when an occupant at a HealthWest site unexpectedly becomes ill or is injured, requiring immediate health care attention.
2. For medical emergencies, follow HealthWest *Procedure 06-018, Responding to Medical Emergencies/Unusual Events*.

VI. ATTACHMENTS

- A. [A068](#), Safety Drill/Actual Event Log & Evaluation
- B. [A168](#), Evacuation Drill/Actual Event Safety Checklist
- C. [A169](#), Shelter-in-Place Drill/Actual Event Safety Checklist
- D. [A069](#), Quarterly Site Safety Survey Checklist
- E. [A005](#), Bomb Threat Checklist

VII. REFERENCES

- A. County of Muskegon Emergency Building Closures Procedure, *effective September 22, 2006, revised February 1, 2007*
- B. CMH Procedure [07-007](#): Emergency Relocation of Services
- C. CMH Procedure [07-019](#): Violence in the Workplace, Section IV. I.-K.
- D. CMH Procedure [06-018](#): Responding to Medical Emergencies/Unusual Events
- E. FBI Advisory, General Information Bulletin 2000-3, Produced by the Bomb Data Center, Weapons of Mass Destruction Operations Unit