



## **BOSTON COLLEGE**

# **SPECIAL EVENTS EMERGENCY PLANNING GUIDE**

### **Introduction**

Planning for a special event can be difficult. Planning for the potential risks and hazards associated with a special event is even more difficult but essential to the event's success. A special event is an activity within a community that brings together a large number of people (usually 500 or more). Emphasis is not placed on the total number of people attending but rather the impact on the community's ability to respond to a large-scale emergency or disaster or the exceptional demands that the activity places on various support services.

This document highlights emergency issues that you should address in the very early stages of planning or even when you are discussing promoting or sponsoring such an event. You should consider the scope of the event, the risks to spectators and participants, community impact, and the support required (personnel and logistics).

### **Some Emergency Planning Considerations**

Consider items below and use the attached Special Event Emergency Planning Checklist to assist you.

**Evacuation and Shelter Locations** – Be sure to identify how to evacuate attendees and where to direct them to for shelter if needed. Make sure staff are aware of these procedures and locations.

**Event Staff/Credentials** – Staff working the event need to be in a uniform or otherwise quickly identifiable to attendees during an emergency. Credentials identify specific individuals who require access to a venue to perform an operational role or function.

**Event Cancellation or Postponement** - An event may need to be canceled, postponed, or interrupted. If a crowd has already gathered, these actions have the potential to create dangerous crowd reactions. Have plans in place to manage an angry crowd appropriately and to address the possible readmission of patrons to the venue. Decide with the planning team ahead of time who has the authority to cancel or postpone an event and under what conditions.

**Medical Personnel/First Aid** – Have you considered having on site medical/first aid personnel including ambulances for the event? (this may not be needed if under 500 people are expected) Be sure to notify local ambulance providers and hospitals of the event, spectator profile and potential medical problems (ie: heat, alcohol, drugs, etc).

**Maintain Access** – Have you ensured the event has proper access for people to enter and exit the venue site including maintaining aisle-ways and keeping areas in front of the event and emergency exits clear?

**Event Maps** - A universal map for the entire event footprint should be developed in advance for all attendees and event staff (including public safety personnel) to allow for the rapid identification of event-specific facilities and other locations in an emergency.

**Emergency Notification of Crowd** – Do you have a way to quickly communicate with the attendees to the event in case of an emergency, disruption or other problem? Examples include access to a public address system, portable bullhorn or other capabilities.

**Emergency Plan** – All key staff should have a basic emergency plan which contains key items such as how to report an emergency, what kind of emergencies could happen at the event and actions that should be taken, evacuation instructions and shelter locations. Ideally this document should also contain key contact information for various individuals and departments, a timeline for the event and specific event maps. This plan should be distributed to and reviewed with key staff before the event (See sample plan attached).

**Monitoring Weather Impacts** – Will you monitor for weather events that could impact your event, such as severe weather, flooding, snow and heat or cold? Be sure plans take into account weather impacts.

**Pre-Event Briefing** – Conduct a briefing just prior to the event of all involved staff and volunteers to be sure everyone is aware of plans, policies, last minute updates and especially what to do in case of emergency.

#### **Others Who Might be Able to Assist**

There are numerous departments on campus who might be able to assist you further with specific issues:

- **BC Police** – Threat Assessment, Security, Crowd Control, EMS, Escorts/VIPs
- **Emergency Management** – Emergency Planning, Weather, Evacuation
- **Environmental Health and Safety** – Fire/Venue Safety, Evacuation, Permits, Chemicals, Flammables, Pyrotechnics
- **Facilities** – Space/Site Considerations, Utilities, Sanitation/Cleaning/Trash Removal, etc
- **Event Management** – Food, Tents, Chairs, Staging, Tables
- **Parking and Transportation** – Parking, Transportation/Shuttles, Traffic/Road Impacts
- **Media Technology Services** – Audio Visuals & Lighting
- **University Communications** – Press Releases & Media Coordination
- **Government & Community Affairs** – Neighborhood and Government Coordination

**If you have specific questions about Special Events Emergency Planning, please contact the Boston College Office of Emergency Management at 617-552-4316.**

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## SPECIAL-EVENT EMERGENCY PLANNING CHECKLIST

**Name of Event & Date:**

**Type of Event** (Sporting, Festival, Live Performance/Music/Concert, Political Rally, Speaker, Other):

**Expected Attendance:**

**Emergency Plan/Incident Action Plan** (Attach ICS Forms 201, 202, 203 and 205 if developed).

- Objectives
- Schedule of Events/Detailed Timeline
- Assignments and Contact Lists
- Emergency Communications
- Policy and Emergency Procedures (based upon risks below)
- Maps

### **Risk/Hazard Analysis**

- Criminal response
- Fire response
- Hazardous materials
- Medical emergencies
  - o Food-related illnesses
  - o First aid
  - o Heat/cold exposures
  - o Trauma
  - o Overdoses
  - o Mass Casualty
- Crowd rush
- Lost or missing persons/children
- Unattended packages
- Crowd dispersal
- Public notification process
- Access control
- Evacuation routes
- Shelter Locations

### **Demobilization Plan**

- Traffic or pedestrian egress from site
- Venue Cleanup/Sanitation removal
- Contractual evaluation
- Organizer commitments
- Other public or private contracts

**Debriefing Meeting** (held immediately at the end of the event to discuss quick items)

**After Action Meeting and Report** (held a couple of days to a week after the event to discuss in depth issues and assess the event and improvements and is documented in a report)

**\*\*\*SAMPLE\*\*\***

**BOSTON COLLEGE SPECIAL EVENT 202X**  
**EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

**All personnel should stay attentive to hazards, guests who may need assistance and unsafe actions. Report anything unusual or suspicious to proper personnel.**

**BE SURE TO NOTIFY OTHERS IF YOU ARE ALERTED TO AN EMERGENCY!**

**In Case of an Emergency, contact Boston College Police at 617-552-4444**

**General Emergencies which could happen during Parents Weekend:**

- **Medical Emergency** – notify BC Police and your supervisor
- **Missing Person** – notify BC Police – follow instructions of Police
- **Fire Alarm** – know exit locations ahead of time - notify BC Police, Evacuate building/area - direct visitors to exits - do not use elevators - alert officials to people who may need assistance
- **Suspicious Package** – Do not touch - call BC Police and notify your supervisor – DO NOT USE WORDS WHICH CAUSE PANIC (IE: BOMB) – follow instructions of Police
- **Suspicious Person/Violent Act** - Do not physically confront the person and do not block person's access to an exit – Call BC Police and provide as much information as possible – Alert others to the danger - Follow instructions of Police - If told to seek safe shelter, get inside immediately and lock doors (shelters listed below)
- **Severe Weather** – pay attention to weather conditions - if instructed, direct visitors to indoor shelter locations (see below) - stay away from windows and doors – report any injuries or damage
- **Emergency Evacuation** – know exit locations ahead of time - direct and assist visitors to exit in a calm and orderly fashion – visitors should use nearest exit – alert official to people who may need assistance
- **If Told to Shelter in Place** - Get indoors immediately (shelter locations listed below) - Shut and lock all doors and windows and stay away from windows and doors - Stay inside until informed it is safe to go outside - Follow instructions of emergency personnel.

## **Reporting Emergencies During Parents Weekend**

If you Need Assistance (Police/Fire/Ambulance) or need to report one of the previously listed emergencies, contact:

### **BC Police at 617-552-4444 or use the Blue Light Call Boxes on Campus**

- When calling, stay calm and carefully explain the problem and location to the Dispatcher.
- DO NOT hang up until told to do so.
- Keep calm. Keep others calm until help arrives.

## **COMMUNICATION DURING AN EMERGENCY**

Effective communication during an emergency is vital to success and safety. Anyone with a radio must refrain from any unnecessary transmissions and must listen carefully for instructions. Tips for communicating during an emergency are:

1. Stay calm. Speak slowly and clearly over the radio. Do not shout.
2. All communication must be brief and to the point.
3. Do not use words over the radio that would incite panic. Refer to the emergency as "a situation" not a bomb, fire, etc.
4. Report all emergencies on your assigned radio channel or to BC Police at 617-552-4444.
5. Depending on the emergency, not all normal modes of communication will function. Be prepared to use landline phones and cell phones.

## **Boston College Emergency Evacuation & Shelters**

In the event that the Boston College Special Events are affected due to severe inclement weather (heavy rain, lightning, wind, hail, tornadoes) or other circumstances, **the following facilities on or near the event have been pre-identified as emergency shelters** if needed.

- **Alumni Stadium** (concourses/under stands only)
- **Conte Forum**
- **Fish Field House**
- **Beacon Street Garage**
- **Connell Recreation Center**
- **Commonwealth Avenue Garage**
- **Corcoran Commons/Robsham Theater**
- **Bapst/Burns Library**
- **O'Neill Library**
- **Gasson Hall**
- **McElroy Commons**
- **Stokes Hall**
- **Devlin Hall**
- **Higgins Hall**
- **McGuinn Hall**
- **Merkert Chemistry Center**
- **Lyons Hall**
- **Fulton Hall**
- **Saint Ignatius Church**