



LA PLATA COUNTY EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN FOR COUNTY OFFICES

This plan has been established to provide general guidelines to staff for appropriate actions to be taken in the event of a fire, bomb threat or other emergency in the La Plata County Courthouse, other county offices, and/or leased premises. The plan also establishes the protocol for notification of employees and the public during non-emergency County office closures.

I. Types of Emergency Situations

Emergency situations are classified as those sudden and unexpected situations, which pose or may pose an immediate, serious threat to public property and the life, health and safety of people. In the event of an emergency situation, employees will be directed to take action to protect themselves and members of the public. One or more of the following responses may be required.

A. Building Evacuation

A **building evacuation** will be ordered when an immediate threat to the health, safety and welfare of people in the building has been determined. Under a building evacuation, all employees and members of the public will be required to exit the building. Circumstances under which a building evacuation would be imposed include a fire, a sudden structural or mechanical failure, or some other type of incident that places everyone in the building at immediate risk.

B. Secured Office

A **secured office** order will be issued in the event that a threat has been identified, but law enforcement officials determine that it is not be safe for employees to leave the building. In that case, employees will be asked to stay in their offices, lock all access doors, and move away from doors and windows. A secured office order might be enacted if there is an armed and dangerous individual in the building.

C. Building Alert

A **building alert** may be issued when law enforcement or other authorities become aware of a possible, but unsubstantiated, threat. In this case, employees will be informed of the potential threat and asked to remain alert to any unusual

activity or objects. A building alert may be imposed in the event of a bomb threat that is under investigation.

II. Responses to Fire and Bomb Threat Situations

A. Discovering a Fire.

Fire detection devices (smoke alarms) are situated in strategic locations throughout the courthouse. In the event of a fire, the closest detection device will trigger a fire alarm throughout the building. Fire exits are identified on color-coded building maps, which are located on the north and south ends of all three levels and at the midpoint of the lower and main levels of the courthouse. Other county buildings and leased space have fire alarms as well. Employees in locations other than the courthouse should familiarize themselves with the location of alarms and fire exits in those buildings.

Any employee discovering a fire should take the following actions:

1. Activate (pull) the nearest building fire alarm. (To be well prepared, please familiarize yourself with the location of the nearest fire alarm to your department or office.)
2. If the fire is small, and you have been properly trained in the use of a fire extinguisher, you may take cautious steps to control it with a fire extinguisher. (To be well prepared, please familiarize yourself with the location any fire extinguishers in your department or office.)

B. Receiving a Bomb Threat.

Threatening phone calls should be taken seriously. Do not dismiss the caller, as the safety and well being of your fellow employees may be at risk. The following steps should be taken in the event that a bomb threat is communicated to any County employee at any County facility:

1. Immediately report the call to law enforcement authorities by dialing 911. Care should be taken to record and provide law enforcement officials with exactly what the caller said and any other information that may be helpful (such as tone of voice and demeanor of the caller). Use the following checklist as a guide:
 - Record the caller's phone number, if displayed on your phone.
 - Record the time of the call.
 - Try to engage the caller to get possible clues about the bomb's location and type and note any remarks the caller makes.
 - Note any discernable background noise or characteristics of

the caller (male or female, mental state, etc.).

- Note any information the caller provides about a particular department or office.
- Tell the caller to contact 911 to report the bomb. This will allow for a trace of the call.

For the convenience of employees, a more detailed checklist can be found in the La Plata County Employee Telephone Directory so that it is readily available in all offices at all times.

2. After the threat has been reported to 911, immediately inform the supervisor, County Manager (ext. 6220) or Assistant County Manager (ext. 6211), courthouse deputy (ext. 6396) and building maintenance staff (ext. 6327).
3. **The person receiving the call must report directly to whatever location is established by law enforcement to provide information to peace officers and emergency personnel. The person receiving the call should not leave that location until he or she has been released by the peace officer in charge.**

Appropriate law enforcement will make the decision, in consultation with the County Manager, concerning evacuation of the building. Any such evacuation instructions from law enforcement, fire personnel, or County employee authorized by law enforcement or fire personnel to give such evacuation instructions, should be strictly observed by all staff.

Prior to leaving their offices, supervisors and employees should search their work areas for any packages or articles that appear to be suspicious. If something suspicious is found, **EMPLOYEES SHOULD NOT TOUCH OR DISTURB THE ITEM.** Law enforcement should be notified immediately and the area should be locked or otherwise secured to ensure that no unauthorized person has access to the suspicious item.

III. Evacuation Procedures

A. Offices

At the sound of a fire alarm, or at the direction of fire or law enforcement personnel to evacuate the building, or at the direction of a County employee authorized by law enforcement or fire personnel to give evacuation instructions, all staff should immediately close (but not lock) all doors and windows in the work area, secure public records (in accordance with your department's or elected official's policy), survey the area for other people (to make sure that everyone is alert to the alarm), and evacuate the building as quickly as possible in a calm and orderly fashion using designated fire exits. Staff should also take care to ensure that all customers in their work area are safely escorted out of the building

through a designated fire exit.

B. Elevators

A fire in the building can cause an interruption of the electrical current, which can result in an elevator stopping in between floors. Therefore, ***elevators should not be used during an emergency - only stairs should be used.*** The courthouse elevator has an alarm button, which should be pressed if someone becomes stranded in an elevator during a fire. In the event of a fire alarm evacuation, the Building and Grounds staff are responsible to check the elevator to ensure that no one is stranded in the car.

C. Restrooms

Departments are encouraged to have one person check restrooms adjacent to their offices to alert individuals in the restroom of the need for evacuation.

D. Evacuating Disabled Persons

In the event of an emergency evacuation, employees shall make every effort to assist disabled persons to evacuate the building and shall enlist the assistance of other employees, fire personnel and/or law enforcement personnel if necessary to do so.

E. Designated Meeting Area for Employees during Emergency Evacuation

In the event of an emergency evacuation, all affected staff shall report to the locations noted below:

Employees in this Facility:

Should report to:

County Courthouse

Durango School District 9R
Administration Bldg.. 12th and E.
2nd Ave.

Old Main Post Office

Durango School District 9R
Administration Bldg., 12th and E.
2nd Ave.

Crossroads Building

County Courthouse

Senior Center and Riverbend

Fairgrounds Exhibit Hall

Fairgrounds/Extension Office

Senior Center

Procurement Warehouse	Clerk's Office
Clerk's Office	Procurement Warehouse
Sheriff's Day Reporting	Sheriff's Administrative Office or Emergency Communications Center, 221 Turner Drive
Sheriff's Administrative Office	Sheriff's Day Reporting or Emergency Communications Center, 221 Turner Drive
Road and Bridge Main Shop	Colorado Dept. of Transportation Shop, 20581 Highway 160
Marvel Road and Bridge Shop	U.S. Post Office, 10383 C.R. 100, Marvel
Ignacio Road and Bridge Shop	U.S. Post Office, 1001 Williams Street, Ignacio
Bayfield Road and Bridge Shop	Bayfield Post Office, 145 West Park, Bayfield

Department members should attempt to stay grouped together and the Department Head, Elected Official or a department designee shall take attendance to ensure that all employees from that department have been safely evacuated. An attendance sheet should be compiled, and if requested, the attendance sheet shall be turned in to the La Plata County Risk Manager, or a representative from the Human Resources Department.

IV. Security Issues

Each department and/or office shall designate a person or persons to be responsible to secure (lock) any vault within the jurisdiction of that department or office. The department designee will also be responsible to check that all doors and windows are closed **but not locked**. All staff are encouraged to take essential personal items (such as purses, keys and wallets) with them when evacuating the building for any reason. Co-workers are encouraged to remind one another of these security measures in the event of an emergency.

In general, employees are also encouraged to report to law enforcement authorities any unusual behavior or out-of-place items that may be noted in any County buildings at any time such as unattended day packs, briefcases or packages. Mailed or delivered packages addressed to County staff without return addresses should also be carefully handled and, if they appear to be suspicious, law enforcement authorities should be consulted before opening.

V. Emergency Closure of County Offices

A. Emergency Closure Decision.

After an emergency **evacuation** (i.e., mandatory departure of people from the building) has taken place as a result of a fire, bomb threat or other life-threatening situation which would make it unsafe for employees and the public to be building, an emergency **closure** (i.e., temporary closing of an office for business) may be ordered by the County Manager, or his designee, in consultation with appropriate fire personnel and/or law enforcement officials.

Signs announcing the temporary closure will be posted on all outside doors

B. Notification of employees and the public during business hours of emergency closures.

If an emergency closure occurs within normal business hours, departments and offices will be notified individually by the County Manager's office or Building Maintenance office or, if evacuation of the building has occurred, employees will be notified at the designated meeting area.

C. Notification of employees and the public during non-business hours of emergency closures.

If the emergency closure occurs during non-business hours, the County shall notify employees utilizing its automated telephone notification system. La Plata County has established this system to alert employees of emergency and non-emergency building and office closures. In order for the system to be effective, each employee must provide the preferred telephone numbers at which to be contacted. Employees are responsible to update their contact telephone numbers through the County's staff website whenever these numbers change. The employee hotline (970-382-6401) will also be updated with current information.

VI. Non-Emergency Building and Office Closures

From time to time, County buildings and offices may be closed for non-emergency reasons such as weather (e.g., severe snows) or building system failures (e.g., electrical system failure). Depending on the circumstances, such a closure may apply to all County buildings and offices.

A. Non-emergency Closure Decision.

Determination to close County offices for non-emergency reasons shall be made by the County Manager in consultation with the Board of County Commissioners and appropriate Department Heads and/or Elected Officials.

B. Protocol for notification to employees and the public during business hours of non-emergency building and office closures.

When non-emergency closures occur during normal business hours, departments and offices shall be notified individually by personal contact from the County Manager's or Building Maintenance office. County email and/or network alerts will also be used to communicate information to employees during business hours.

Local media will also be notified to inform the public of the closure, what offices are impacted and the expected duration of the closure, if known. The La Plata County website (<http://co.laplata.co.us>) and main County telephone number (970-382-6200) will also be updated with closure information.

C. Protocol for notification to employees and the public after business hours of non-emergency building and office closures.

If the non-emergency closure occurs during non-business hours, the County shall notify employees utilizing its automated telephone notification system. La Plata County has established this system to alert employees of emergency and non-emergency building and office closures. In order for the system to be effective, each employee must provide the preferred telephone numbers at which to be contacted. Employees are responsible to update their contact telephone numbers through the County's staff website whenever these numbers change. The employee hotline (970-382-6401) will also be updated with current information.

Local media will also be notified to inform the public of the closure, what offices are impacted and the expected duration of the closure, if known. The La Plata County website (<http://co.laplata.co.us>) and main County telephone number (970-382-6200) will also be updated with closure information.

VII. Media Communication

In the event of an emergency situation, the County Commissioners, County Manager, Assistant County Manager, Sheriff (or his designated representative) and Director of Emergency Preparedness are authorized to make statements to the media. All other employees should avoid making any statements to media representatives with regard to any emergency situation.

VIII. Other County Facilities

The general provisions of this plan apply to all County buildings and facilities and leased premises; however, this plan **does not** supersede any specific emergency plans in place for the La Plata County Detention Facility, Durango/La Plata County Airport, Durango/La Plata County Senior Center or other County facility.