



La Plata County
Colorado

EMERGENCY & SAFETY PROCEDURES

▶ **Emergency Dispatch: 911**

▶ **Non-emergency Dispatch: 385-2900**

▶ **Courthouse Security: 382-6396**

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FACILITY SAFETY BEGINS WITH YOU

Every facility has three critical areas that need to be protected: People, Property, and Information. To protect yourself and the public, there are three basic daily procedures that everyone needs to follow:

1. When you arrive at work, be observant of any unusual activity in parking areas or outside of the building.
2. When you get to your desk make sure that there is nothing out of place and that there are no unknown individuals in restricted areas.
3. Know exactly what your responsibilities are in the event that you observe unusual or suspicious activity.

Common sense should dictate reactions to facility safety and emergency situations. All situations will not fit into categories for which hard and fast guidelines can be drawn. Some degree of individual judgment will need to be exercised in any emergency situation.

**Information in this guide is used with permission from the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts*

FACILITY SAFETY BEGINS WITH YOU

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POWER OUTAGE

Note: Prior to a power outage, determine if your building has a back-up power source.

If a power outage occurs:

1. Provide assistance to visitors and staff in your immediate area.
2. If you are in an unlighted area, proceed cautiously to an area that has emergency lights.
3. If you are in an elevator, stay calm. Pick up the emergency phone handset or press the emergency button to be connected to the proper agency.

BUILDING FIRE

Note: Prior to a fire, know the location of the fire alarm and the nearest fire extinguisher.

If you observe a fire or the fire alarm sounds:

1. Only try to put the fire out if it is small and you have the training to use a fire extinguisher.
2. If the alarm sounds, assist the public and your co-workers and evacuate the building. Move to the designated assembly area.
3. Take your coat and employee ID with you and make sure all doors are closed, but not locked.

POWER OUTAGE OR FIRE

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THREAT TO PERSONAL SAFETY

In the event of a threat or a disturbance, good judgment and sound action can reduce the potential for violence.

1. Take immediate action to protect yourself in the event of a violent confrontation.
2. If there is an immediate threat to your safety and well-being call 911. Employees in the Courthouse or Old Main Post Office can call Courthouse Security at 382-6396. If the situation is not an emergency, please contact Dispatch at 385-2900.
3. If you are dealing with a difficult person, use the buddy system for protection. Ask one of your co-workers to assist you so that you have additional help.
4. If you believe that you are in a situation which is potentially threatening, conclude your business quickly. Avoid escalating the situation. Retreat from the area as soon as possible.
5. If a threatening individual or group is at large in the building, lock doors and draw blinds and curtains. Stay where you are and wait for instructions from your supervisor.

THREAT TO PERSONAL SAFETY

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FLOODING AND WATER DAMAGE

Serious water damage can occur from many sources: burst pipes, clogged drains, broken skylights or windows, or construction oversights.

If a water leak occurs:

1. Notify the on-call Facilities & Grounds staff member at 769-2342. They will assist you in handling the emergency. Explain the exact location and severity of the leak.
2. Notify Facilities & Grounds Team Leader Barry Perkins at 759-5078.
3. If the event is an emergency and you cannot speak directly to the Facilities & Grounds staff, please call Emergency Dispatch at 911.
4. Notify your supervisor of the location and extent of the leak, if possible.
5. If there are electrical appliances or electrical outlets near the leak, use extreme caution. If there is any possible danger, evacuate the area.
6. If you know the source of the water leak and are confident in your ability to safely stop it (unclog the drain, turn off the water, etc.), do so cautiously.
7. Take only those steps needed to avoid or reduce immediate water damage. If possible, carefully move small or light objects out of the affected area.

FLOODING AND WATER DAMAGE

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DIFFICULT CUSTOMERS

If you encounter a difficult individual/customer, use the following guidelines to help mitigate the situation. If you can't control the situation, or it escalates beyond your control, ask your co-workers for help and take measures to protect yourself and your co-workers.

Guidance to working with difficult individuals:

1. When you encounter a difficult individual, continue to treat him/her with respect and make every effort to resolve his/her issue.
2. Don't hesitate to ask a co-worker and/or supervisor to provide assistance. Two staff members working on the problem-solving process may help address the individual's concerns. Do not engage in argumentative behavior with the person.
3. If you notice a situation where a co-worker is attempting to resolve an issue with an aggressive customer, step forward and provide backup. If you can, attempt to diffuse the situation and provide the individual with alternatives to solve the issue.
4. Should the individual become rude or abusive, ask him/her to leave your office and the building. If he/she refuses to leave, activate the alarm button or call 911. Contact your supervisor and consult with law enforcement.
5. If the individual becomes physically combative, take steps to protect your safety and that of your co-workers. Evacuate your office and contact Courthouse Security or call 911.
6. If the individual is not combative, but continues to hang around your office, contact Courthouse Security for their assistance and advice. The presence of law enforcement may resolve the situation.
7. On issues where you and your staff have ongoing contact with the individual, make sure your supervisor and/or county management is aware of this person. If they are difficult in your office, chances are they are causing similar problems in other offices.

DIFFICULT CUSTOMERS

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BOMB THREAT

Persons likely to receive bomb threats should keep the [Threat Checklist](#) form in an accessible location. Obtaining accurate information is vital to deciding upon an appropriate response. The most frequent type of bomb threat is via telephone.

Persons likely to receive such calls should be briefed and trained in the following procedures:

1. Note the caller ID or if it is a blocked number.
2. Try to keep the caller on the line long enough to have the call traced and obtain further information.
3. Write down the exact words the caller used.
4. Ask for the exact location of the improvised explosive device (IED), the device type, what it looks like, and time of detonation.
5. Attempt to determine the sex, age and mental state of the caller.
6. Note any accent or unique speech pattern that may help identify the caller, as well as any background noise that may provide a clue to the caller's identity and location.
7. Ask them why they placed the IED.
8. If there is an immediate threat to your safety and well-being, call 911. The employees in the Courthouse or Old Main Post Office can call Courthouse Security at 382-6396. If the situation is not an emergency, please contact Dispatch at 385-2900.

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PHONE THREAT, MAIL THREAT, AND SUSPICIOUS OBJECT

Employees must report any threat or inappropriate communication that they receive.

If you receive a telephone threat:

1. Listen carefully. Be polite and show interest. Try to keep the caller talking, so that you can gather more information.
2. Write down as many details as you can remember. Police interviewers will need this information.
3. If there is an immediate threat to your safety and well-being, call 911. The employees in the Courthouse or Old Main Post Office can call Courthouse Security at 382-6396. If the situation is not an emergency, please contact Dispatch at 385-2900.
4. Security personnel will determine if there is a need to evacuate the building.
5. If an evacuation is ordered, follow [Employee Evacuation Procedures](#).
6. Report the incident using the [Threat Checklist](#) reporting form (last page in this manual) as soon as possible.

If you receive a written threat or suspicious parcel, or if you find a suspicious object anywhere on the premises:

1. Keep anyone from handling it or going near it. The object may be potentially dangerous. Additionally, its preservation is important as evidence for law enforcement.
2. If there is an immediate threat to your safety and well-being, call 911. The employees in the Courthouse or Old Main Post Office can call Courthouse Security at 382-6396. If the situation is not an emergency, please contact Dispatch at 385-2900.
3. Promptly write down everything you can remember about receiving the letter or parcel, or finding the object. This information will be needed by police interviewers.
4. If a package or envelope contains powder or an airborne substance, remain in your office, close your door, turn off all fans and call your supervisor, security and facilities maintenance using the phone. Wait for security to respond to your location.
5. Security personnel will determine if there is a need to evacuate the building.
6. If an evacuation is ordered, follow [Employee Evacuation Procedures](#).
7. Report the incident to your supervisor using the [Threat Checklist](#) reporting form (last page in this manual) as soon as possible.

PHONE THREAT, MAIL THREAT, AND SUSPICIOUS OBJECT

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EMPLOYEE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

In advance, all employees should:

1. Understand the evacuation plan and their role, if any, in evacuating others;
2. Recognize the sound of the evacuation signal;
3. Know at least two ways out of the building from their work station;
4. Know where to assemble after evacuation.

When you hear the evacuation alarm or are told to evacuate the building, follow these procedures and proceed to the designated meeting place:

1. Immediately shut down all hazardous operations.
2. Leave quickly. It is mandatory that you waste no time and leave immediately. Use the buddy system - help someone and have them help you.
3. The highest ranking person who is physically present in each department is responsible for ensuring that all members of his/her department evacuate the area.
4. As you exit, quickly check nearby restrooms, copier rooms, closets, etc. Accompany and help disabled personnel, visitors and any co-workers who appear to need calm direction or assistance. If possible, lead them to the assembly area so that they may be accounted.
5. Proceed as quickly as possible, but in an orderly manner. Do not push or shove. Hold handrails when walking on stairs.
6. Take your car keys, purse, briefcase, etc. with you, but do not attempt to save possessions at the risk of personal injury.
7. Do not use elevators. Elevators can become inoperative during a fire. Additionally, smoke and fire travel up elevator shafts.
8. Touch doors prior to opening them. A hot door indicates fire on the opposite side and the door should not be opened.
9. Close all doors behind you as you go. Closed doors can slow the spread of fire, smoke and water.
10. If smoke is encountered, occupants should breathe through a handkerchief or piece of clothing to reduce smoke inhalation. If caught in heavy smoke, drop to your hands and knees and crawl. Hold your breath as much as possible.
11. Facilities & Grounds staff or security personnel will inform you when it is safe to return.
12. 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.
13. Take your employee ID with you for the purpose of re-entry after the event.

EMPLOYEE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

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THREAT CHECKLIST

If you are completing this form electronically, please be sure to print it as you may not be able to save a copy if it was opened using Adobe Reader.

Exact time of call: _____ Date: _____

Exact words of caller: _____

QUESTIONS TO ASK IF CALLER ALLEGES A BOMB:

1. When is the bomb going to explode? _____
2. Where is the bomb? _____
3. What does it look like? _____
4. What kind of bomb is it? _____
5. What will cause it to explode? _____
6. Did you place the bomb? _____
7. Why? _____
8. Where are you calling from? _____
9. What is your address? _____
10. What is your name? _____

CALLER'S VOICE (circle)

Calm	Disguised	Nasal	Angry	Broken	Stutter	Slow
Sincere	Lisp	Rapid	Giggling	Deep	Crying	Squeaky
Excited	Stressed	Accent	Loud	Slurred	Normal	

If voice is familiar, whom did it sound like? _____

Were there any background noises? _____

Remarks: _____

Person receiving call or package: _____

Telephone number/office number call/package received at: _____

**Report the call immediately to 911 and your supervisor.
Proceed to the Information Desk to meet law enforcement and emergency personnel.**

THREAT CHECKLIST

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THREAT CODES

THREAT CODES

In the event of a dangerous situation, you may be alerted to the situation by an intercom message from your speaker phone, a pop-up message on your computer, or the use of the fire alarm in the building. The threat may be described as a color code. If you are advised of a “CODE COLOR” threat, please follow the instructions listed below to comply with the requested action.

BUILDING EVACUATION (Code Green)

A Building Evacuation is called when there is a need to move employees and members of the public from the facility they are in to a safe location. Follow your department’s evacuation plan, meet at the designated area, report to your supervisor and wait for direction from County Management.

SHELTER IN PLACE (Code Yellow)

A Shelter in Place is called when travel from one facility to another is potentially dangerous because of environmental conditions. An example of Shelter in Place would be an extreme weather situation such as a tornado warning.

LOCKOUT (Code Blue)

A Lockout is called when there is a hazard or threat outside the building. A Lockout uses the building for security and protection. The Lockout procedure could be used when there is criminal activity, violence or a dangerous animal in the neighborhood.

LOCKDOWN (Code Red)

A Lockdown is called when there is a threat in the building and it is unsafe for employees or members of the public to leave the office they are in. When a lockdown is called, employees should lock all doors and turn off the lights. Everyone should maintain silence and wait for law enforcement to enter the room.

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