

Emergency Preparedness Manual



George R. Brown Convention Center
Houston, Texas

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Introduction

The Emergency Preparedness Manual has been designed to assist guests of the George R. Brown Convention Center (GRB). Procedures as outlined here are not intended to be all-inclusive and individuals should use their best judgment for existing circumstances. Emergencies can happen without warning, at any time, or any place. It is because of this reason that guests must familiarize themselves with the following procedures contained within this manual. By becoming familiar with these procedures, one can help to minimize the dangers associated with an emergency situation.

Please contact the Convention Services Team at 713-853-8716 with any questions.

The Emergency Response Team

The General Manager will manage the Emergency Response Team and he/she is responsible for carrying out the plans set forth by the Emergency Preparedness Manual. The Response Team is comprised of all Convention Services Managers, Senior Manager of Guest Services and Operations personnel, in-house contractors and the Fire Marshal. In the absence of the General Manager, the Assistant General Manager will serve in this capacity.

During an emergency, all staff members are responsible for assisting in minimizing the impact of the emergency. It is critical to remember that the first goal of the facility is to provide for the safety and wellbeing of all guests and employees.

Emergency Operations Center

In the event of an emergency, an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will be set up inside of the George R. Brown Convention Center. The EOC will act as the main gathering point for the Emergency Response Team and emergency personnel. From the EOC, the Emergency Response Team will disseminate information to lessees as it becomes available.

Emergency Notifications

Emergency notifications will be deployed to all of the 22 screens inside of the GRB. Screens will display important updates, directional guidance, and evacuation information as it applies to the situation.

The Senior Manager of Guest Services will be responsible for deploying emergency notifications.

Active Shooter

An active shooter is defined by the United States Department of Homeland Security as an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined space or other populated area. In most cases, active shooters use firearms and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.

Since active shooter situations develop so quickly and provide little or no warning, it is difficult to prepare for them, but reviewing this manual can make a difference in saving lives until law enforcement arrives.

The Best Option – Evacuate

The best option in an active shooter scenario is to flee the premises and remove yourself from the shooter's path. Unfortunately, this is not always a viable option as escaping could put you in greater danger if it brings you closer to the shooter. There are a few precautions you should take if, after assessing the situation, you determine you can safely evacuate. You should:

- Call GRB Security at (713) 853-8087, if you can do so safely.
- Warn any individuals you encounter to not enter the area.
- Leave your personal belongings behind.
- Have your escape route planned in your mind.
- If possible, assist other able-bodied people in fleeing.
- Comply with all law enforcement requests.
- Keep your hand visible and your fingers spread.

Next Best Option – Hide

If you are unable to safely evacuate the path of an active shooter your next best option is to hide, avoid detection, and wait for law enforcement to arrive. While hiding is not as effective as evacuation, it can usually keep you safe long enough for law enforcement to arrive. To ensure your hiding spot is as safe as possible please consider the following recommendations:

- Remain silent and still.
- Silence your cell phone and other electronic devices.
- If possible, lock the door to whatever room or closet you are hiding in. Do not unlock the door for anyone at any time.
- Blockade the door with heavy furniture.
- Make sure you remain out of the shooter's view.
- Stay away from any windows.

- If the windows are equipped with curtains, close them.
- Remain low and attempt to find cover under furniture or other objects.
- Do not leave your hiding place until you are absolutely certain law enforcement has arrived.

Last Resort – Fight Back

Occasionally, in active shooter situations, evacuation and hiding are not available options and you may find yourself face-to-face with the shooter. If you find yourself in this situation, your only remaining option is to take physical action against the shooter in hopes of incapacitating them or disarming them. This should only be considered as an extreme last resort.

AED

An automated external defibrillator (AED) is a lightweight, portable device that delivers an electric shock through the chest to the heart. The shock can stop an irregular heart rhythm and allow a normal rhythm to resume following sudden cardiac arrest. Sudden cardiac arrest is an abrupt loss of heart function. If it's not treated within minutes, it quickly leads to death.

The GRB has 18 AEDs located throughout the building and 1 in the Avenida South Garage. When an AED is used, please call GRB Security at 713-853-8087 immediately. GRB Security will contact 911 for medical transport to the hospital. Please note the location and AED number that is in use to expedite the process.

Please see AED Maps

Alarms

In the event of an alarm, the following announcement will be recited over the public address system:

*“This is building management;
we have an indication of an alarm condition within the building.*

The Fire Department has been notified.

Please prepare to evacuate by going to the nearest exit door.

If there is any evidence of fire, please evacuate to a safe area.”

This message will repeat every three minutes until it is confirmed by your Convention Services Manager that the threat has subsided or evacuation has commenced.

If evacuation appears imminent, the following announcement will be recited over the public address system:

“This is building management; we have an emergency within the building.

The fire department has been notified.

Please evacuate the building to an assembly area using the nearest exit door.”

Bomb Threats

Most bomb threats are received by phone. Bomb threats are serious until proven otherwise. Act quickly, but remain calm and obtain information using the Bomb Threat Checklist.

If a bomb threat is received by phone:

1. Remain calm. Keep the caller on the line for as long as possible. DO NOT HANG UP, even if the caller does.
2. Listen carefully. Be polite and show interest.
3. Try to keep the caller talking to learn more information.
4. If possible, write a note to a colleague to call the authorities or, as soon as the caller hangs up, immediately notify them yourself.
5. If your phone has a display, copy the number and/or letters on the window display.
6. Complete the Bomb Threat Checklist (reverse side) immediately. Write down as much detail as you can remember. Try to get exact words.
7. Immediately upon termination of the call, do not hang up, but from a different phone, contact FPS immediately with information and await instructions.

If a bomb threat is received by handwritten note:

- Call GRB Security at 713-853-8087
- Handle note as minimally as possible

If a bomb threat is received by email:

- Call GRB Security at 713-853-8087
- Don not delete the message

Signs of a suspicious package:

- No return address
- Poorly handwritten
- Excessive postage
- Misspelled words
- Stains
- Incorrect titles
- Strange odor
- Foreign postage
- Strange sounds
- Restrictive notes
- Unexpected delivery

Do NOT:

- Use two-way radios or cellular phone; radio signals have the potential to detonate a bomb
- Evacuate the building until police arrive and evaluate the threat
- Activate the fire alarm
- Touch or move a suspicious package

Please see Bomb Threat Checklist

Disturbances or Confrontations

Disturbances or confrontations may occur when aggression overtakes rational judgment. An aggressive dispute can often be resolved with a few words from a person of authority or using verbal skills to encourage the person to “vent”. Use your best judgment when assessing the situation; determine whether it is something that can be resolved with intervention. NEVER put yourself into a

situation that can become harmful to you. Take implied threats seriously, but attempt to avoid confrontations.

Immediately call GRB Security at 713-853-8087 for disturbances which have escalated to be potentially dangerous to people or property. Inform security of the location and actions of the individual(s) creating the disturbance when:

- A person(s) behavior appears to be drug or alcohol induced
- A person(s) has done or is doing malicious damage to property
- A person(s) is physically assaulting another
- You intervene and they refuse to cooperate

Elevators

Elevator entrapment is a very uncommon occurrence, but due to the fact that it is a mechanical device, failure is possible.

If the following is reported to you, or you are trapped in an elevator:

- Use the emergency elevator phone, alarm button or cellular phone to contact your Convention Services Manager or GRB Security at 713-853-8087
- Do not call 911
- Do not attempt to pry open doors
- Your Convention Service Manager or GRB Security will deploy the Houston Fire Department, if necessary

If on an upper level during an evacuation, never use an elevator. Please proceed to the nearest stairwell. An Emergency Response Team representative will be dispatched to occupied areas of the GRB to assist with the evacuation routes, assembly area locations and the needs of handicapped guests.

Evacuation Routes

Should the need arise to evacuate the facility, use stairwells when on an upper level. Never use an elevator during an evacuation. An Emergency Response Team representative will be dispatched to occupied areas of the GRB to assist with the evacuation routes, assembly area locations and the needs of handicapped guests.

Please see Evacuation Maps

Fire

If the following is reported to you or if you see smoke, flames or smell something burning:

- Notify GRB Security at 713-853-8087
- Provide concise, accurate information about the location and severity of the fire

In instances of minor fires, fire extinguishers are located throughout the GRB.

When operating a fire extinguisher, remember PASS:

Pull the pin

Aim the nozzle or hose at the base of the flame

Squeeze or press the handle

Sweep slowly from side-to-side

If the fire is serious and requires evacuation, listen for instructions from the alarm or your Convention Services Manager. Close all doors behind you, if you can do so safely. Be cautious, courteous and aid other guests so long as it doesn't impede on your own personal safety. Before opening a door, always touch the surface

and feel for heat. Never open a door that is hot to the touch. If evacuation from the upper level becomes necessary, never use an elevator.

Emergency Response Team representatives will be present along the evacuation route and at the assembly areas to assist guests.

Please see Fire Suppression Maps

Hazardous or Infectious Materials

A hazardous material spill is a spill in which there is a significant amount of a hazardous material that has been released or one in which the release of the substance cannot be controlled. Examples of hazardous materials in quantities that would be considered a spill are more than one gallon of bleach or gasoline. Examples of infectious materials include blood and other bodily fluids.

If the following is reported to you or if you see a hazardous or infectious material spill or smell an unfamiliar or peculiar odor:

- Call GRB Security at 713-853-8087 and your Convention Services Manager
- If the hazardous material comes in contact with your skin, immediately flush the affected area with large amounts of water for at least 15 minutes, and then seek medical attention
- Evacuate the immediate area, closing doors behind you
- Unless trained, DO NOT attempt to clean up the spill yourself
- Provide as much of the following information as possible:
 - Where has the hazardous material spill occurred? Specify the floor, room number, and location in room.
 - What material has been spilled?
 - What is the state of the material (i.e., solid, liquid, gas, combination)?

- Is any of the hazardous material escaping from the spill location in the form of chemical vapors/fumes or running or dripping liquid?
- Has there been a fire and/or explosion?
- Has anyone been injured? If so, how many people and what type/s of injuries have occurred

Muster Points

All staff and guests must remain at the assembly area until instructed otherwise by the Emergency Response Team.

Muster Point 1: Avenida North Transit Center

Muster Point 2: McKinney & Avenida de las Americas

Muster Point 3: Lamar & Avenida de las Americas

Muster Point 4: Avenida South Transit Center

Please see Muster Point Map

Power Outages

In the event of a power outage, remain calm and standby for emergency lighting to appear and illuminate all life safety devices throughout the facility. The GRB is equipped with emergency generators that automatically start up in the event of a building power outage.

Weather

Generally, weather-related problems are preceded by a warning thus allowing ample time for protection of equipment and evacuation of guests, if necessary. However, in the event of an unexpected, weather-related emergency, immediately notify GRB Security at 713-853-8087.

Hurricane/Tornado:

- Move to an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor
- Avoid windows and areas with glass
- Do not call 911 for information
- All staff and guests must remain inside the Convention Center until instructed by Emergency Response Team

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