

## EMERGENCY SAFETY PLAN - BEST PRACTICES GUIDE

The following information is to assist landlords, property managers, resident agents, or other individuals in creating emergency safety plans. When filling in the template, you should consider many kinds of emergencies such as fire, explosion, prolonged power outages, and severe weather (wind damage or flooding). The emergency safety plan is intended to be used by residents, landlords and property managers, and county agencies as a guide covering what actions to take and who to contact.

**A. Building Information**

Provide the building address to which the ESP applies. An ESP is required for every multi-family dwelling building. Multi-family means any building with three or more dwelling units. The ESP may apply to multiple buildings provided they have similar attributes such as the same number of floors, units, fire protection systems, contacts, and relocation plan. If the plan is used for multiple buildings, it still must be submitted for each FCC permit in ePlans for review.

**B. Landlord Contact Information**

Provide landlord contact information. Landlords or their designee(s) should have a current roster of tenants readily available (consider power outages) and list of tenants that have requested assistance evacuating because of mobility issues or hearing or vision impairments.

**C. Emergency Contact Information**

Provide a 24-hour contact available to county authorities and residents. This could be the landlord or their designee(s), such as the property manager or resident agent, and have the authority to implement impairment and relocation plans. This may be one or two people and it is required to be updated if names change. A review fee will not be charged for changing contact names.

**D. Fire Protection Systems**

Indicate whether a fire alarm system and/or sprinkler system is present. For fire alarm systems, indicate whether it is a 120V system, with or without dialer (emergency forces notification), a programmed panel, with or without voice evacuation. For assistance determining what type of system is present, contact your fire alarm contractor or your assigned fire inspector from DPS. For sprinkler systems, indicate 13 or 13R, any dry systems that may cover outside areas and garages, a local system that might cover basement storage rooms, partial systems covering certain floors, or fully sprinkled. For assistance determining sprinkler coverage, contact your sprinkler contractor or your assigned fire inspector from DPS.

A system "impairment" is when the fire alarm or sprinkler system will not function as intended. Examples include, but are not limited to, closed sprinkler valves, the water supply becomes unavailable, the fire alarm will not dial out to contact emergency services, or the fire alarm will not activate horns and strobes. Impairment plans are procedures that building management will take to reduce the risk of fire, alert building occupants in the event of an emergency, and call for emergency services when a system is out of service (impaired). To report a fire protection system out of service, call **240-773-8903** and leave a message for the on-duty fire inspector. Fire alarm or sprinkler systems taken out of service temporarily (less than 10 hours in a single day)

for maintenance, service, or testing, do not need to be reported. For multi-family apartment buildings, we require the minimum following actions:

### **Sprinkler System Impairment**

Call the impairment line to report the system out of service at 240-773-8903. Post signs at pull stations, entrances and exits that state: *SPRINKLER SYSTEM OUT OF SERVICE. IN CASE OF FIRE, PULL FIRE ALARM, EVACUATE AND CALL 9-1-1. USE CAUTION WHILE COOKING. NEVER LEAVE CANDLES UNATTENDED. KEEP SPACE HEATERS AWAY FROM COMBUSTIBLES.*

### **Fire Alarm Impairment**

For garden-style apartments or similar buildings up to four floors, with or without sprinklers, and for larger buildings of five stories or more with working, full coverage sprinkler systems: Call the impairment line to report the system out of service at 240-773-8903. Post signs at pull stations, entrances and exits that state: *FIRE ALARM OUT OF SERVICE. IN CASE OF FIRE, EVACUATE AND CALL 9-1-1. USE CAUTION WHILE COOKING. NEVER LEAVE CANDLES UNATTENDED. KEEP SPACE HEATERS AWAY FROM COMBUSTIBLES.*

For larger buildings with five or more floors, without sprinklers: Call the impairment line to report the system out of service at 240-773-8903. Post signs at pull stations, entrances and exits that state: *FIRE ALARM OUT OF SERVICE. IN CASE OF FIRE, EVACUATE AND CALL 9-1-1. USE CAUTION WHILE COOKING. NEVER LEAVE CANDLES UNATTENDED. KEEP SPACE HEATERS AWAY FROM COMBUSTIBLES.* Fire watch: A dedicated person must walk the building at least every four hours and keep a log of their work. They are responsible for ensuring all exits and paths to exits are clear and unobstructed, no storage is present in or under the stairs, exit signs and emergency lighting are in working order, and there is no trash accumulation in or around the building. The fire watch person must have a means to call 9-1-1. They should check that emergency evacuation plans are posted at stair doors and elevator lobbies.

The fire watch person must be dedicated to performing the fire watch duties and cannot be assigned to any other duties. It is highly recommended the fire watch person complete crowd manager training available online at [crowdmanagers.com](https://crowdmanagers.com). The impairment plans described above cannot be ended until a DPS fire inspector determines it is no longer needed. You may copy and paste the above applicable sections into the ESP template.

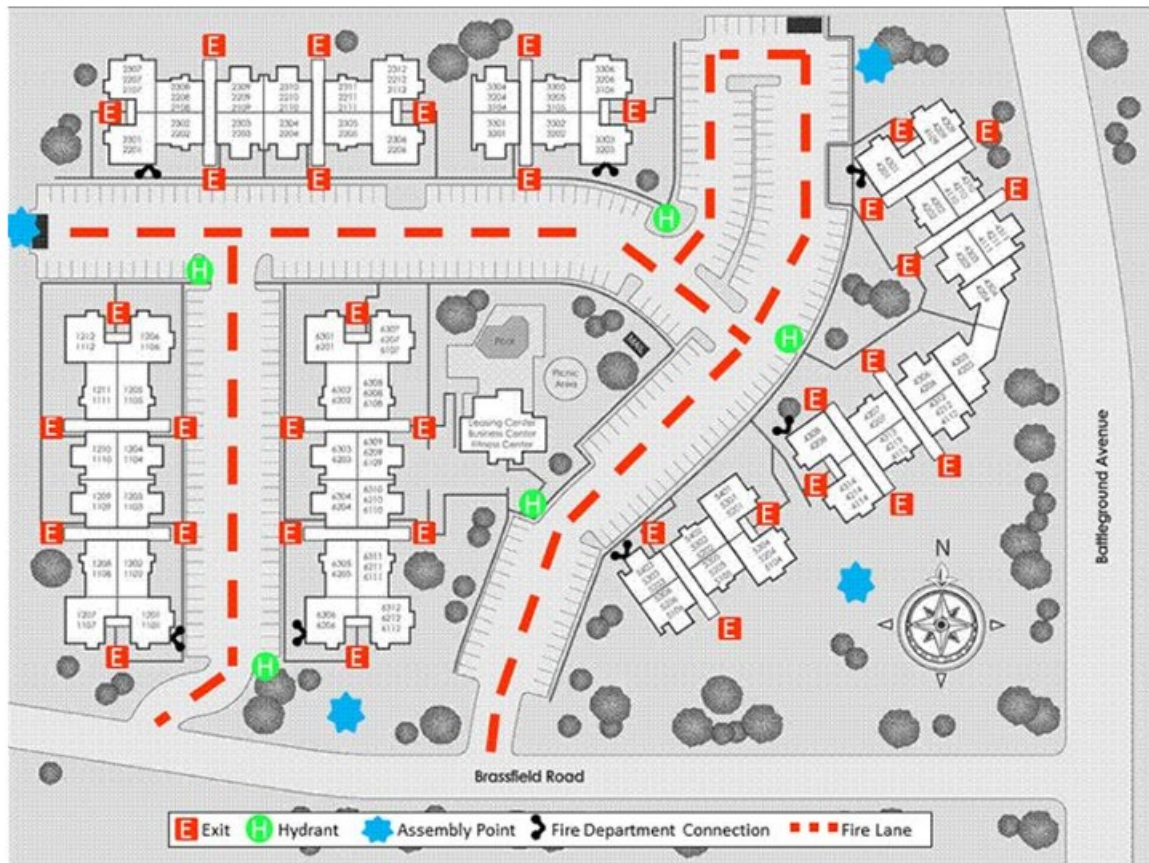
#### **E. Life Safety Information**

Some modern fire alarm systems have “phased evacuation” capabilities that typically alert only the floor of the incident and one floor above and below to prevent the entire building from evacuating at once. Indicate whether your fire alarm system has special evacuation procedures. Buildings that have memory care units may have areas to relocate residents safely inside the building during an emergency. Indicate whether the building has approved defend-in-place capabilities and procedures.

Identify the titles and responsibilities of any building personnel that are required to respond in the event of an emergency.

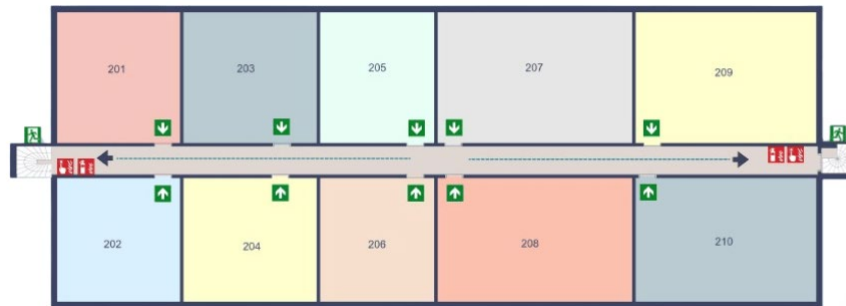
Lastly, indicate whether there are enhanced notification systems or other provisions available in the building for disabled individuals.

Provide a map of the building footprint that includes the outline of the building, streets or parking lots around the building, the tenant meeting point following evacuation, and the location of the fire alarm panel, sprinkler room or valves, and fire department connection, where applicable. The map may include any buildings using the same emergency safety plan. For buildings with their own emergency safety plan, submit a site plan for each specific building. This can be an internet map of the building that has been edited to show the relevant information on the site.



In addition to this site plan, provide a floor plan(s) for the building and add arrows showing the path from the farthest unit(s) to the nearest exits, the location of fire alarm pull boxes, the location of any fire extinguishers, and any approved areas of refuge. This floor plan should contain an outline of the units, stairs, lobbies, and door locations.

Example:



G. Procedures for Reporting Emergencies

The following is the recommended procedure for reporting emergencies: If you see evidence of a fire, such as flames or smoke, evacuate the building as soon as possible. If you are able to pull a fire alarm box on the way out, do so. In any case, once you have reached a safe area, call 9-1-1 to give the fire department information about the incident. Do not return to the building until it has been declared safe by the fire department. Information about when residents can return to the building may be relayed to residents by the emergency contact person listed in Section C.

H. Actions to be taken in an emergency:

Describe the location of the meeting place for residents if they need to evacuate the building during an emergency. This location should be at least 50 feet away from the building and identifiable by street names, a landmark, or other physical attributes. Examples include, a park entrance, a flagpole, leasing offices, mailboxes, a garden, etc. Have an alternative meeting place if the first location is not available due to weather, construction, or emergency vehicles. Indicate how the landlord or property manager will contact residents in the event of an emergency with event updates, relocation information, or alternative housing information. Examples of contact methods include, but are not limited to, verbal face-to-face communication at the meeting point, text messages, phone calls, and emails.

I. Relocation Plan

Provide information for tenants on whom they should contact with questions or to find information about re-occupying their unit, retrieving personal items, condemnation status, information they will need for admittance to a shelter, etc.

J. Alternate Housing Information

Provide any information on alternative housing plans that the landlord or management company has identified in advance. Have this information available for displaced residents.

## Final Instructions

Save the template (pdf) with the FCC permit number and current year to upload into ePlans. For example: "ESP\_123456\_2025"

Contact Fire Code Compliance using the directory on the DPS website or call 3-1-1 for assistance. Once the ESP is approved, download it and provide it to residents.

## EMERGENCY SAFETY PLAN - PLAN ADDENDUM

If the fire department receives ten (10) or more fire-related calls for emergency services for your building, you will be notified that a safety plan addendum is required. In the addendum, provide the following information:

1. Efforts to hire security guards or additional building personnel. The additional building security may be needed to help deter individuals from purposefully and maliciously pulling the fire alarm. Repeated fire alarm activations can create complacency, causing residents to remain in the building because they believe it is not truly an emergency. Efforts must be made to reduce malicious alarms.
2. Repair or replace fire alarm. If the fire alarm is malfunctioning and causing alarms that are not associated with an emergency, the alarm must be repaired. If the alarm cannot be repaired to stop the false alarms, the alarm must be replaced. While the alarm is out of service, the impairment plan outlined in the building's original emergency safety plan must be implemented.
3. Facilitate opportunities for the County to provide outreach and educational resources to residents regarding fire safety and prevention. Options for this section include contacting the MCFRS Community Risk Reduction office to schedule talks with residents and any resources or media that can be provided to help educate residents.
4. Contact with a vendor to provide outreach and education resources to residents regarding fire safety and prevention of false alarms. Describe any efforts to work with a private vendor or contractor to help mitigate frequent alarms.
5. Other. Describe any other efforts taken by building management to decrease the number of alarms at this address.