



UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES GUIDE

2026



Emergency Management

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This Emergency Procedures Guide is intended for use by faculty, staff, students, and guests of the university. In the event of an emergency, it will serve as a quick reference for effective and timely action. Please become familiar with its contents and keep it in an easily accessible location. During an emergency, monitor UWF emergency notifications and official University communication channels for protective-action instructions and updates.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Police / Fire / Medical Emergency: 911

Call 911 for any immediate threat to life or safety or when emergency police, fire, or medical assistance is needed.

When calling 911 from a UWF location:

- Tell the 911 dispatcher that you are at the University of West Florida.
- Provide your building number or name, room number, or specific location.
- Clearly describe the nature of the emergency.
- Provide a callback number if requested.
- Remain on the line and follow the dispatcher's instructions.

Do not delay calling 911 during a life-threatening emergency in order to contact University Police first.

UWF Police Department (UWFPD): 850-474-2415

Contact UWFPD for non-emergency police assistance and other campus police matters.

For additional emergency preparedness and procedures information, contact your Building Emergency Coordinator (BEC) or UWF Emergency Management.

FIRE

If You Discover Fire or Smoke

- **Activate the nearest fire alarm pull station and call 911.**
- Give the dispatcher the UWF building name or number, location of the fire or smoke, and any known hazards or persons needing assistance.
- Warn others as you evacuate, if safe to do so.
- Use the nearest safe exit or stairwell. **Do not use elevators.**

When a fire alarm sounds, evacuation is mandatory.

- Leave belongings behind and evacuate promptly.
- Shut down hazardous operations only if this can be done quickly and safely.
- Close doors behind you, but do not lock them.
- Check closed doors for heat before opening. If smoke is present, stay low and use the nearest safe exit.
- Go to the designated evacuation assembly area and keep emergency access routes clear.
- Report anyone who may remain inside or need assistance to emergency personnel.
- **Do not re-enter until authorized by emergency personnel.**

If You Cannot Evacuate

- Move to a location that provides protection from fire and smoke and close doors between you and the fire.
- If smoke is entering, seal gaps around the door when possible.
- **Call 911 and give your exact location.**
- Signal from a window if available and safe to do so.
- Remain in place until rescued or directed otherwise.

Individuals Requiring Evacuation Assistance

- Ask the individual what assistance they need.
- Assist toward a safe exit when this can be done without placing yourself or the individual in danger.
- Do not carry or move someone down stairs unless trained and necessary because of an immediate life-threatening condition.
- If stairs cannot be used safely, follow the building evacuation plan and move to an identified protected location, if available.
- Tell emergency personnel the individual's **exact location and assistance needed.**

Never assume someone else has reported the fire or called 911.

ACTIVE ASSAILANT/SHOOTER

If you become aware of an active assailant, gunfire, or another immediate violent threat:

RUN — Evacuate if safe

- Move away from the threat using the safest available route.
- Leave belongings behind and encourage others to evacuate, but do not delay your escape.
- Keep your hands visible and follow law enforcement instructions.

- Once safe, **call 911**.
- Do not return until authorized by law enforcement.

HIDE — If you cannot safely evacuate

- Hide out of the assailant's view.
- Lock and barricade doors when possible.
- Turn off lights, silence electronic devices, remain quiet, and stay away from doors and windows.
- Spread out when circumstances allow.
- **Call 911 when it is safe to do so** and provide your location and information about the threat.
- Remain hidden until law enforcement directs you to leave or you must move for immediate safety.

FIGHT — As a last resort

If confronted and unable to run or hide:

- Act aggressively and commit to your actions.
- Attempt to disrupt or incapacitate the assailant.
- Use available objects to defend yourself and work with others when possible.

When Law Enforcement Arrives

- Follow officers' instructions immediately.
- Keep your hands empty and visible and avoid sudden movements.
- Do not stop officers moving toward the threat.

If safe to do so, provide 911 with the **location and description of the assailant, weapons, direction of travel, and location of injured persons**. Do not endanger yourself to obtain this information.

Report suspicious activity that does not present an immediate threat to UWFPD at 850-474-2415.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

For a serious or potentially life-threatening injury or illness, call 911 immediately. Provide your location and describe the person's condition.

Remain on the line and follow the dispatcher's instructions.

While Waiting for Emergency Responders

- Stay with the person unless remaining would place you in danger.
- Do not move a seriously injured person unless necessary to protect them from an immediate hazard.
- Provide first aid or CPR within the limits of your training and ability.
- If the person is not breathing normally or is experiencing a suspected cardiac arrest, send someone to retrieve the nearest **Automated External Defibrillator (AED)** and use it as directed.
- Control serious bleeding using direct pressure when appropriate.
- Do not give the person food, drink, or medication unless directed by qualified medical personnel.
- If possible, send someone to the building entrance or another appropriate location to meet emergency responders and direct them to the patient.
- Provide responding personnel with any relevant information about the person's condition and the care already provided.

For minor injuries or illnesses, provide appropriate first aid within your level of training and seek medical assistance as needed.

When in doubt about whether a medical condition is an emergency, call 911.

SHELTER-IN-PLACE

Shelter-in-place may be used when conditions outside make evacuation unsafe, including severe weather, a hazardous materials release, or another external threat.

When directed to shelter-in-place:

- Move inside the nearest safe building.
- Follow UWF emergency notifications and instructions from emergency personnel.
- Do not leave to retrieve belongings or vehicles.
- Remain sheltered until an all-clear or other instructions are provided.

Severe Weather / Tornado

- Move to the lowest safe level and an interior room, hallway, or designated shelter area away from windows and exterior walls. Avoid large open areas when a safer location is available and protect your head and neck. **See TORNADO for additional guidance.**

Hazardous Materials Release

- Remain indoors and move away from exterior doors and windows.
- Close doors and windows and move to an interior area.

- Turn off equipment that brings outside air into the room **if directed and safe to do so**.
- Monitor UWF emergency notifications and remain sheltered until instructed otherwise.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Emergency Release or Exposure

Call 911 immediately if a hazardous materials incident:

- Causes or threatens serious injury or illness.
- Involves fire, explosion, significant fumes or vapor, or an uncontrolled release.
- Presents an immediate threat to people or the surrounding area.
- Cannot be safely managed by trained personnel using established procedures.

Tell the dispatcher your **UWF building and specific location**, the material involved if known, and any injuries, exposures, fire, fumes, or other hazards.

If a Release Occurs

- Move away from the affected area and warn others, if safe to do so.
- Avoid breathing fumes or vapors and do not touch or walk through spilled material.
- Close doors behind you when evacuating, if possible.
- Do not enter or re-enter the affected area.
- For an outdoor release, move indoors when directed and follow the **Shelter-in-Place** procedures in this guide.
- If exposed, move away from the source and follow emergency personnel's instructions regarding decontamination or medical evaluation.

Minor Spills

Personnel trained to handle hazardous materials should follow applicable laboratory, departmental, Environmental Health and Safety, and University procedures for spills that can be safely managed within their training and available resources.

Do not attempt to clean up or contain a hazardous materials release unless you are trained, equipped, and authorized to do so.

BOMB THREAT / SUSPICIOUS ITEM

All bomb threats and suspicious items should be taken seriously.

If You Receive a Bomb Threat by Telephone

- Remain calm and keep the caller on the line as long as possible.
- **If another person is present, have that person immediately notify UWFPD at 850-474-2415 without alerting the caller. If you are alone, contact UWFPD immediately after the call ends. Call 911 if the threat indicates an immediate danger or imminent detonation.**
- Listen carefully and write down as much information as you can.
- If available, note the caller's telephone number or other information displayed by the telephone system.

If possible, obtain or note:

- The exact wording of the threat.
- Where the device is reportedly located.
- When the device is expected to detonate.
- What the device looks like.
- What type of device it is.
- Why it was placed.
- The caller's voice, speech characteristics, and demeanor.
- Background sounds or other information that may help identify the caller or location.

Do not delete call information, notes, voicemail, messages, or other potential evidence.

Threats Received by Email, Text, Social Media, or Other Electronic Means

- Do not delete the message.
- Do not reply, forward, or unnecessarily share the message.
- Preserve the message and any available information about the sender.
- Immediately report the threat to UWFPD at **850-474-2415**.
- Call **911** if the message indicates an immediate threat to life or an imminent detonation.

If You Discover a Suspicious Item

If you discover an object or package that you believe may be an explosive device:

- **Do not touch, move, open, or disturb the item.**
- Move away from the immediate area and warn others not to approach.

- **Call 911 from a safe location.**
- Provide the dispatcher with the location and a description of the item.
- Do not return to the area or attempt to investigate the item.
- Follow instructions from law enforcement and emergency personnel.

Evacuation

Do not independently initiate a building evacuation in response to a bomb threat unless there is an immediate life-safety need. Follow instructions from law enforcement, University officials, fire alarms, or University emergency notifications.

If directed to evacuate:

- Use the safest available route and follow instructions from emergency personnel.
- Do not touch or approach suspicious objects while evacuating.
- Assist individuals who need help when it is safe to do so and report the location of anyone unable to evacuate to emergency personnel.
- Proceed where directed and keep emergency access areas clear.
- **Do not re-enter the affected area until authorized by law enforcement or emergency personnel.**

ASSAULT/VIOLENCE

If an Assault or Act of Violence Is Occurring

- Move to a safe location as soon as possible.
- **Call 911** if there is an immediate threat, an assault is in progress, someone is injured, or emergency assistance is needed.
- Provide your location and, if known, information about the individual involved, weapons, and injuries.
- Do not confront, pursue, or attempt to locate an assailant.
- Follow instructions from law enforcement and emergency personnel.

For suspicious activity or a police matter that does not present an immediate threat, contact **UWFPD at 850-474-2415**.

If You Have Experienced a Sexual Assault

- Move to a safe location and seek medical attention as soon as possible.
- **Call 911** if you are in immediate danger, seriously injured, or need emergency assistance.
- If considering reporting the assault or having evidence collected, avoid showering, bathing, changing clothes, washing clothing, or disturbing the location when possible.

- Preserve clothing and relevant messages, photographs, or other potential evidence when possible.
- Contact UWFPD or another appropriate law enforcement agency if you wish to make a police report.
- University support services are available to students and employees.

Assistance

Emergency: 911

UWF Police Department: 850-474-2415

UWF Counseling and Psychological Services: 850-474-2420

HURRICANE/TROPICAL WEATHER

Monitor **UWF emergency notifications and official University communications** when tropical weather threatens. Follow instructions concerning preparedness, class schedules, campus closure, sheltering, evacuation, and re-entry.

Before the Storm

- Faculty and staff should follow departmental hurricane and Continuity of Operations (COOP) procedures.
- Secure equipment, records, and work areas as directed.
- Move sensitive equipment and important materials away from windows and, when possible, above floor level.
- Shut down and unplug non-essential electronic equipment when appropriate. **Do not cover operating equipment with plastic or other materials.**
- Close and secure windows and doors and secure or report outdoor objects that could become windborne hazards.
- Do not delay personal hurricane preparations while waiting for a campus closure announcement.

Resident Students

Follow Housing & Residence Life instructions concerning preparedness, evacuation, sheltering, accountability, and hurricane refuge operations.

Campus Closure

If a closure is announced:

- Follow the effective time and instructions in the official closure notice.
- Complete only those shutdown or protective actions that can be performed safely.

- Non-essential personnel should leave as directed; essential personnel should follow supervisory and departmental instructions.
- **Do not return until campus re-entry or reopening is authorized.**

During and After the Storm

- Remain indoors in a safe location during dangerous conditions and stay away from windows and exterior doors.
- Continue monitoring UWF emergency notifications and official communications.
- After the storm, avoid damaged buildings, downed power lines, standing water, debris, and other hazards.
- **Call 911 for immediate threats to life or safety.**
- Report non-emergency police matters to **UWFPD at 850-474-2415.**
- Follow University instructions concerning campus access, re-entry, reopening, work status, and classes.

TORNADO

Tornado Watch

Conditions are favorable for tornadoes to develop. Monitor UWF emergency notifications and weather information, identify the nearest safe shelter location, and be prepared to act.

Tornado Warning

A tornado has been detected or indicated. **Take shelter immediately. Do not wait to see or hear the tornado.**

If You Are Indoors

- Move to the **lowest safe level** and an interior room, hallway, or designated severe-weather shelter area.
- Stay away from windows, exterior doors, exterior walls, and large open areas such as auditoriums or gymnasiums.
- Get as low as possible and protect your **head and neck** from flying or falling debris.
- **Do not use elevators.**
- Remain sheltered until conditions are safe or University officials or emergency personnel direct you to relocate or leave.

Modular or Temporary Buildings

When severe weather threatens, follow University instructions to relocate to a more substantial building. **Do not attempt to relocate after dangerous conditions have arrived.**

If You Are Outdoors

- Seek shelter immediately in the nearest substantial building, if it can be reached safely.
- If no substantial shelter is available and a tornado is imminent, move to the lowest available location and protect your head and neck.
- Stay away from trees, power lines, vehicles, and other potential hazards. **Do not shelter beneath bridges or overpasses.**

After the Tornado

- Remain alert for additional severe weather and avoid damaged buildings, downed power lines, gas leaks, debris, and other hazards.
- **Call 911 for injuries or other immediate threats to life or safety.**
- Report non-emergency police matters to **UWFPD at 850-474-2415** and facility damage through the University's established reporting process.
- Do not enter damaged or restricted areas until authorized.