



EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNING FOR EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES	
EFFECTIVE DATE: November 2014	REVIEWED ON: May 2015

Policy Statement:

This policy outlines the responsibility and process of identifying employees who require assistance in the event of an emergency situation and developing a plan to ensure that all employees are able to evacuate a hazardous environment.

It is an expectation that all United's employee involved in assisting employees with disabilities during an emergency response, do so in a safe manner. Employees must also ensure that the environment, equipment, and tools used during the emergency response are safe and in good working condition.

Definitions:

Employee requiring assistance: Employee with a permanent or temporary disability that may affect their ability to evacuate the building safely during an emergency. Examples of conditions that may affect safe evacuations may include, but are not limited to; inability to climb/descend stairs, inability to hear emergency alarms and/or see signs, emergency equipment and evacuation directions.

Buddy: the staff member assigned during the planning stage, who will assist the employee requiring assistance during an evacuation.

Standards and Regulations:

Occupational Health and Safety Act, Industrial Establishments
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

Roles and Responsibilities:

Emergency Procedures Committee

- Ensure that Code policies/procedures incorporate general procedures and considerations for persons that require assistance to evacuate a hazardous environment in accordance with this policy.
- Include this procedure into the review of all general emergency response policies.



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Manager

- Ensure employees are trained and aware of the general emergency response plan for employees requiring assistance.
- Be aware of employees with permanent disabilities and/or those who require temporary assistance to evacuate in the event of an emergency.
- Notify the Joint Health and Safety Committee and the Emergency Evacuation Team in order to develop and communicate individual emergency response plans.
- Discuss with the person that requires assistance to determine the level of assistance required to evacuate the building in the event of an emergency and determine the need to create individualized emergency response plans based on the procedure below to achieve the established emergency procedures for the building.
- Assign a buddy to the employee requiring assistance.
- Review the individualized emergency response plan when an employee moves to a different location within the organization (reference to Appendix A)
- Designate fire wardens and ensure that they are aware of persons that require assistance and what measures are needed for that person to evacuate the building safely in the event of an emergency.

Department Employees

- Participate in training on the general emergency response plan for employees requiring assistance.
- Assist those with special needs.
- Follow procedures as required.
- If assigned to be a buddy, communicate to the staff member that requires assistance if you will be away and unable to provide assistance.

Employee that Require Assistance

- Inform your supervisor/manager or HR if you require assistance in the event of an emergency situation.
- Work with your supervisor or manager to determine an individualized plan that will achieve the results intended by the building's established emergency procedures.
- Inform your supervisor or manager when your condition changes, requiring different, more or less assistance.
- During an emergency that requires an evacuation, communicate to staff members if additional assistance with evacuation is needed.
- Maintain communication with your buddy.



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Joint Health and Safety Committee/Trainer

- During health and safety training for new hires, identify permanent/temporary disabilities that may require special assistance during an evacuation.
- Review, update and communicate the general emergency response plan for employees requiring assistance.
- As part of the return to work planning process, identify the specific functional limitation (i.e. inability to descend stairs) that would warrant an individualized emergency response plan.

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During the return to work/permanent accommodation planning, have the manager identify how the emergency response measures for that individual will be applied within their department. In collaboration with the manager and employee, review any restrictions and how they would impact the employee's ability to evacuate (i.e. inability to descend stairs). Document the employee's individualized emergency response plan in their personnel file. Review and update the individualized emergency response plan when the employee's overall accommodations needs or return to work plans change.

Procedure

- If there is an immediate threat on the floor that requires evacuation, the buddy assigned to the person requiring assistance will assist in the evacuation as planned. In the event that the assigned buddy is not available during the time of the incident, the person requiring assistance will identify themselves to the evacuation team leader/designate or any staff member in the area so a buddy can be assigned and assist the employee.
- Move horizontally on the same floor away from the danger, if possible. If the employees are unable to move horizontally away from the danger, the employee requiring assistance including those in the wheelchairs will be assisted to the closest exit. The buddy will assist the employee towards the building exit.
- The buddy is to stay with the employee requiring assistance until the area has been cleared by the emergency responders in charge of the incident.

Approved by: AODA Committee



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Appendix A
EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNING FOR EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES

Individualized Emergency Response Plan Agreement

Name: _____
Position: _____
Department and Location: _____
Date: _____
Managers Name: _____
Restrictions: _____

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that JHSC and Emergency Evacuation Team is aware of the need for accommodation regarding an individualized emergency response plan. All participants are in agreement that your permanent or temporary health condition can currently be accommodated within your position. Below is your individualized workplace emergency response plan as agreed upon on **(insert date)**.

Please describe the individualized emergency response plan below and include details such as meeting location and name of the buddy if applicable. This individualized emergency response plan must be reviewed when; the employee moves to a different location or starts working on different shift in the organization the employee's overall accommodation needs are changed or JHSC determines that there is a need for review. The employee is to report to HR and JHSC if she /he moves or experiences any changes in his/hers permanent or temporary health condition so that the existing accommodation and the plan could be reassessed and modified as appropriate. The employee consents that this information can be shared with anyone designated to provide assistance in an emergency.



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A copy of this agreement will be provided to all parties.

The signatures below reflect all participants involved in the approval of this accommodation and emergency response plan.

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Manager Signature: _____ Date: _____

Buddy Signature (if applicable): _____ Date: _____

JHSC: _____ Date: _____

Emergency Evacuation Team: _____ Date: _____