

What To Do in an Emergency Quick Guide Booklet

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Active Threat

Active threat situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Because they are often over within minutes, and sometimes before law enforcement arrives on the scene, individuals must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with an active threat situation. The following steps are adapted from the Department of Homeland Security's [Active Shooter: Preparedness Resources](#).

Evacuate (Run)

If there is a safe and accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises.

- Have an escape route and plan in mind.
- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow.
- Do not risk your life to go back for personal belongings.
- If it is safe to do so, help others escape.
- If possible, prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter might be.
- Keep your hands visible as you evacuate.
- Follow the instructions of any police officers on scene.
- Do not attempt to move wounded people.
- Call 911 when you are safe.
- Text friends and co-workers/supervisors to let them know you are safe.

Take Cover (Hide)

If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the Active Threat is least likely to find you. Your hiding place should be out of view and provide protection if shots are fired in your direction.

- Lock the door.
- Blockade the door with heavy furniture.
- Silence your cell phone and/or pager.
- Turn off any source of noise such as radios or televisions.
- Hide behind large items such as heavy cabinets or desks.
- Remain quiet. Do not answer a ringing phone as this would signal your presence in the room.
- If a shooter could be outdoors, stay away from windows

Take Action (Fight)

As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active threat by:

- Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her.
- Throwing items and improvising weapons.
- Yelling.
- Committing to your actions.

University Hall: Emergency Lockdown System

In addition to dozens of security cameras, University Hall has numerous Emergency Lockdown Buttons located throughout the building in classrooms and auditoriums. Properly used, they can help save lives. For more information, review the [University Hall Lockdown System Brochure](#).

On-Campus Training

Be sure to sign up for Active Threat training, offered by UMass Boston Police and the Office of Emergency Management. The training involves a brief video and provides participants with the opportunity to ask questions directly to UMass Boston Police Officers. For more information, please call 617.287.5104.

More Information

For more information, please review the helpful video, [Run Hide Fight](#), produced by the City of Houston's Office of Emergency Management.

Take this [FEMA training course](#) to learn how you can best prepare for and respond to an active shooter situation.

If you have questions or want to arrange an in-person training session on campus, please contact the Office of Emergency Management at 617.287.5104 or [UMass Boston Police](#) at 617.287.7799.

Blizzard/Winterstorm

Before the storm arrives:

- Stock up on food, water, medication and other necessities.
- Have batteries and flashlights on hand in case you lose power during the storm.
- Check out the [Red Cross](#) website to learn about what types of items you should have on hand.

As you gather supplies be aware that you may need to find shelter if your living space is damaged, or if you lose electricity for an extended period of time.

Pay attention to weather alerts. Look for televised and electronic alerts issued by the [National Weather Service](#), and tune in to local news for updates.

During/Right After the Storm:

- Stay indoors. Avoid exposure to blizzard conditions.
- Do not drive if conditions are unsafe or if authorities have declared a travel ban due to the storm.
- If you do go outside, be careful on snowy or icy walkways.
- If you shovel out a car, fully clear the area in and around the tailpipe.
- Avoid overexertion when shoveling snow.
- Watch for signs of frostbite (loss of feeling and whiteness or paleness in fingers, toes, ear lobes, tip of the nose or other extremities). If symptoms are detected, get medical help immediately.
- Watch for signs of hypothermia (uncontrollable shivering, memory loss, disorientation, incoherence, slurred speech, drowsiness, apparent exhaustion).
- If symptoms of hypothermia are detected, get the victim to a warm location, remove any wet clothing, warm the center of the body and give the victim warm, non-alcoholic beverages if they are conscious. Get medical help as soon as possible.
- Never use any gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices (generators, grills, stoves, etc.) inside enclosed areas.
- Install carbon monoxide alarms in central locations on every level of your home and outside of sleeping areas to provide early warnings of accumulating carbon monoxide.
- Use flashlights instead of candles if you lose electricity at night.

For more information on winter storm preparedness, please see the [American Red Cross](#) or [Ready.Gov](#) sites for more information.

Weather Alerts

The [Campus Closure Policy](#) dictates how the university will respond in the event of inclement weather.

If the university is closed due to a winter storm, the [UMass Boston Alert System](#) will notify all students and faculty via email. Those who have entered cell phone information into the system will receive text alerts. Everyone is encouraged to sign up for National Weather Service alerts as well.

The following are terms used by weather experts to describe predicted storms:

WINTER WEATHER ADVISORY

Winter Weather Advisories are issued when any of the following is expected within the next 12 to 24 hours:

- A winter weather event having more than one predominant hazard (i.e. snow and ice, snow and sleet, or snow, ice & sleet) meeting or exceeding advisory criteria for at least one of the precipitation elements, but remaining below warning criteria.
- Snow, Ocean Effect Snow, and/or Sleet.
- 3 inches averaged over a CT, MA, RI forecast zone in 12 hours.
- 4 inches averaged over a NH forecast zone in 12 hours.
- Snow and blowing snow
- Sustained or frequent gusts of 25 to 34 mph accompanied by falling and blowing snow, occasionally reducing visibility to less than 1/4 mi for more than 3 hours.
- Blowing snow
- Widespread or localized blowing snow reducing visibility to less than ¼ mi with winds faster than 35 mph.
- Black ice

WINTER STORM WARNING

Winter Storm Warnings are issued when any of the following is expected within the next 12 to 36 hours:

- A winter weather event having more than one predominant hazard, meeting or exceeding warning criteria for at least one of the precipitation elements.

Snow, ocean effect snow, or sleet.

- 6 inches averaged over a forecast zone in a 12 hour period.
- 8 inches averaged over a CT, MA, RI forecast zone in a 24 hour period.
- 9 inches averaged over a NH forecast zone in a 24 hour period.

BLIZZARD WARNING

Sustained winds or frequent gusts traveling faster than 35 mph. Considerable falling and/or blowing snow that frequently reduces visibility to less than ¼ mi for more than 3 hours. Blizzard conditions need to be predominant over a 3 hour period for this alert to be issued.

- [Campus Closure Policy](#)
- [National Weather Service Alerts](#)
- [How to Prepare for a Winter Storm](#)

Bomb Threat

- Download the [Department of Homeland Security Bomb Threat Call Procedures Checklist](#) and keep it near your telephone.
- Keep the number for [UMass Boston Police](#) on your telephone and be ready to call their dispatch line at 617.287.7777 or call 911.
- Download the [UMass Boston Bomb Threat Preparedness Brochure](#) to learn more about what to do in the event of a bomb threat.
- Familiarize yourself with Environmental Health and Safety's [Building Evacuation Plans](#).

If You Receive a Threat:

Telephone Threat:

- Remain calm and do not hang up.
- If possible, signal other staff to listen to call and/or make note of incoming phone number on screen
- Write down the exact wording of the threat.
- Use the Homeland Security checklist to note as many details of the call as possible.
- Be available for interviews with the building's emergency response team and law enforcement on the scene.

Verbal Threat:

Note in which direction the perpetrator leaves.

- Notify UMass Boston Police immediately by calling 617.287.7777 or 911.
- Write down the threat exactly as it was communicated.
- Note the description of the individual who made the threat.

Written Threat:

- Handle the document as little as possible. Make no alterations to it. Secure it until police arrive.
- Notify UMass Boston Police immediately by calling 617.287.7777 or 911.
- Note the date/time/location the document was found and any contextual information that may be helpful to law enforcement (events, situations, conditions that may be relevant).

Emailed Threat:

- Leave the message open on the computer. Do not delete it.
- Notify UMass Boston Police immediately by calling 617.287.7777 or 911.
- Print, photograph or copy the message and subject line. Note the date and time of the message.

Source: Office of Bombing Prevention (FBI/DHS)

If there is a Bomb Threat at UMass Boston

Remain calm. Know that the majority of phoned-in threats are hoaxes, but understand that each and every threat is taken seriously by law enforcement. When there is a bomb threat on campus, UMass Boston Police works with outside authorities to respond according to established law enforcement protocols.

If you receive an alert to evacuate a building, please respond calmly and quickly. Leave the area impacted by the bomb threat and wait for further instruction from law enforcement officials. Outside authorities will assist in searching the affected area and declaring the all-clear.

For further information related to building or campus-wide evacuations, please see the Campus Evacuation Policy.

Suspicious Package: Common Characteristics

A suspicious object may come in the form of a package or envelope. Some common characteristics include:

- Package or envelope with suspicious leaks, stains, or powdered substances
- Package is rigid, bulky, or has excessive tape/string
- Poor handwriting, misspellings, improperly addressed
- Excessive postage, no postage, or no/strange return address
- Ticking, vibration, abnormal sounds, strange odors
- Generic addressee and restrictive markings
- Unexpected and from someone unfamiliar
- Irregular placement of object

If You Find a Suspicious Package

If you find a suspicious package, call UMBPD at 617-287-7777.

Provide a detailed description of the item and its location.

Do not move, alter, open, examine, or disturb the item.

If You Already Handled the Item

If you already handled the suspicious package item, gently put it down in a secluded area and step away from the area. Leave the package where it is. Clear the immediate area until the police arrive. Wait in a safe place until police arrive. Emergency personnel will provide additional guidance after their assessment.

- [Office of Bombing Prevention Preparedness Brochure](#)
- [Bomb Threat Call Procedures](#)
- [Building Evacuation Plans](#)

Earthquake

If there is an earthquake:

- Drop, take cover under a sturdy piece of furniture, and hold on until the shaking stops.
- If you are not able to get on the ground safely, get as low as possible and protect your head and neck.
- Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls, and anything that could fall on you.
- Stay inside until the shaking stops. Do not use elevators. Move away from buildings if you are outdoors.
- Individuals who require assistance should actively seek first responders on the scene who will help them get to
- safety.

Become familiar with earthquake response actions by visiting online resources from the [Red Cross](#), [FEMA](#) and [Ready.Gov](#).

On Earthquakes in New England

Most people living in New England probably think of places like California or Japan when they hear of earthquakes. While Californians have learned to expect earthquakes, residents of New England typically consider the ground beneath their feet to be as solid as a rock.

Although the record of earthquake activity in the United States shows the highest level of activity in the western part of the country, earthquakes are quite common [in many areas of the eastern United States, even in New England](#). Notable examples of earthquakes that caused damage in New England and adjacent areas are the earthquake off the coast of Cape Ann, MA in 1755, two earthquakes near Ossipee, NH in 1940 and an earthquake near New York City in 1884.

- [Prepare yourself for an earthquake before one strikes!](#)

Emotional Distress

If a person's emotional distress is life-threatening, call [UMass Boston Police](#) at 617.287.7777.

Students

Being a student is not always easy, and there is no need to suffer alone. Anyone experiencing emotional distress should seek the services of the [University Health Services Counseling Center](#) at 617.287.5690.

If you are a student, staff, or faculty member concerned about a student's well-being, please see the [Dean of Students' website](#) for more information about how to help connect that person with the resources they may need. Contact them at 617.287.5800

Employees

Employees in emotional distress can access mental health resources through the [Office of Human Resources](#), 617.287.5150. Anyone concerned about an employee's well-being should reach out to Human Resources and report their concern.

- [Are you concerned about a distressed student?](#)
- [Student Code of Conduct](#)

Evacuation

- Familiarize yourself with evacuation routes, the [Campus Wide Evacuation Plan](#), and specific [building evacuation plans](#) before an emergency occurs.
- Take fire drills seriously and pay attention evacuation maps developed by the Office of Environmental Health and Safety. These are posted prominently in building lobbies.

In an Emergency

- Leave calmly and avoid the area so as not to impede first responders. Under no circumstances should anyone ignore a fire alarm or refuse to comply with an evacuation order.

People Requiring Additional Assistance

Some building occupants require assistance during building evacuation. Many building occupants who need assistance have voluntarily registered with the UMass Boston's [Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#). The list of individuals needing assistance will be provided to the Fire Safety Officer and UMass Boston Police.

There will likely be other staff, students, and visitors in the building who require assistance who are not on the list. Fire Safety Team Volunteers can help individuals needing assistance by directing them to areas of refuge (e.g. protected stairwells) and notifying emergency response personnel of the person's location. All people, regardless of their circumstances, need to take some responsibility for their safety in an emergency, which means being able to move away from any and all hazards.

If you'd like to learn more about building evacuation routes on campus, contact [Environmental Health and Safety](#) at 617.287.5445.

If you have any questions about evacuation policies or procedures, contact the [Office of Emergency Management and Business Continuity](#) at 617.287.5104

- [Building Evacuation Plans](#)
- [Campus-Wide Evacuation Plan](#)



Facilities & Construction

To learn more about new construction on campus, see the [Construction Updates](#) section of the UMass Boston website.

Call 911 if you see a facilities issue that poses an immediate emergency. If you observe an urgent but non-threatening facilities issue, such as a broken pipe or maintenance problem, report it to the [Facilities Department](#) at 617.287.5450.

Fire

To report a fire:

Call 911 or pull a fire pull-station.

If a Fire Alarm Signals Building Evacuation

- Exit calmly and remain at least 50 feet away from the building.
- Do not congregate in catwalks.
- Do not use elevators.
- Individuals needing assistance who are unable to exit on the ground floor or via catwalks should seek refuge in enclosed stairwells and call 911 to report their location to rescuers.

For more information about fire safety, visit the [Fire Safety](#) section of the Environmental Health and Safety website.

- [Read more about fire safety at the U.S. Fire Administration website](#)

Hazardous Materials

Know and obey the [safety rules for laboratories](#).

Hazardous Materials Emergency

If there is a lab emergency, call 911 immediately.

Controlled Release

If there is a controlled spill or release, report it to Environmental Health and Safety, 617.287.5445.

For more information about lab and chemical safety, please visit the [Environmental Health and Safety](#) website.

- [Learn about different types of hazardous waste](#)

Hurricane

Sign up for [National Weather Service alerts](#). Have an emergency plan for your house or apartment, and keep an emergency supply of food and water on hand. Have medications and essentials in a “[go bag](#)” in case you are told to evacuate by authorities. Stay indoors during the hurricane and away from windows and glass doors. Close all interior doors; secure and brace external doors. Take refuge in a small interior room, closet, or hallway on the lowest level.

Learn more about hurricanes by visiting the [National Weather Service National Hurricane Center](#) website. The [American Red Cross](#) and [Ready.Gov](#) both offer great hurricane preparedness tips.

Be aware that UMass Boston is in [Massachusetts Hurricane Evacuation Zone B](#). If campus is closed due to a hurricane, you will be notified via the UMass Boston Alert System.

- [Prepare for a Hurricane!](#)



Medical Emergency

Call 911 if someone is having a medical emergency. State the location and nature of the emergency. Stay with the person until help arrives if it is safe to do so.

Pandemic

Maintain good health and hygiene and get a flu shot each flu season. Seek medical treatment if necessary. If you think you might have the flu, seek medical attention immediately. Visit the [University Health Services](#) website for information and updates on health risks.

For more pandemic flu and health information, please see the [World Health Organization](#), [Centers for Disease Control](#), [Massachusetts Department of Public Health](#) and [Boston Public Health Commission](#) websites.

- [Prepare for Pandemic or Influenza Now!](#)

Suspicious Activity

Report It!

If something seems wrong, report it as suspicious and let the authorities investigate. If someone's behavior seems suspicious, report it to [UMass Boston Police](#), especially if you think the person could be dangerous. The UMass Boston Police emergency line on campus is 617.287.7777. The non-emergency number is 617.287.7799. Use this number to report information about suspicious behavior that does not present an immediate threat.

- [How to go about reporting suspicious activity](#)

Tornado

Storm Resources

[Be alert to changing weather conditions and sign up for local weather text alerts from the National Weather Service](#) and/or local media outlets such as:

- [WUMB-FM \(91.9\)](#)
- [WBZ-TV \(Channel 4\)](#)
- [WCVB-TV \(Channel 5\)](#)
- [WHDH-TV \(Channel 7\)](#)
- [WFXT-TV \(Channel 25\)](#)

If there is a tornado warning, seek shelter immediately. Go to the lowest building level and seek shelter in the center of a small interior room or hallway, away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls.

Learn more about tornado preparedness from [Ready.Gov](#) and [FEMA](#).

- [Prepare yourself for a tornado before one strikes!](#)



Unattended/Suspicious Item

If you see an unattended or suspicious item, report it immediately to UMass Boston Police at 617.287.7777. Do not touch the item. Provide a detailed description of the item and its location. Do not report suspicious items to any other campus office.

- [Access an FBI poster showing how to identify suspicious mail items](#)
- [Learn about reporting suspicious items/suspicious activity](#)