

Special Assistance Needs and Disability Emergency Building Evacuation Plan

The content of this document is for informational purposes only.

It is not intended for medical or legal advice.

This document provides a general guideline of evacuation procedures for people with special needs and/or disabilities in case of fire and other building emergencies. Grinnell students and employees who may require special assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation should consider filling out the Grinnell College Special Assistance/Emergency Preparedness form (**next page**). Employees and students who require special assistance are encouraged to develop their own facilities evacuation plans and identify their primary and secondary evacuation routes from each building they use. For general information about access to Grinnell College, please contact the Director of Campus Safety & Security at 269-4600.

Individual emergency evacuation plans should include:

1. Developing familiarity with evacuation options.
2. Seeking evacuation assistants willing to help in case of an emergency.

NOTE: Most Grinnell College buildings have accessible exits at the ground level floor, which can be used during an emergency. In other buildings, individuals should work with the College's Director of Safety & Security to identify safe areas to stay during an emergency until rescue assistance arrives or to arrange for alternative methods of accessibility. Elevators cannot be used because they have been shown to be unsafe to use in an emergency and in most campus buildings they will not work as they are automatically recalled to the ground floor.

GRINNELL COLLEGE

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE / EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FORM*

~Complete this form ONLY if you may need special assistance in an emergency~

Name

1) Employee Student at

2) Do you require special assistance in an emergency—including any special equipment, medication, or device—please describe:

3) Primary Campus or off Campus Location (*Students who live on campus, use your dorm room.*)

Building: Room Department (employee only):

4) How can we contact you?

Telephone #: _____

Cell phone #: _____

TTY #: _____

Email Address:

Other:

5) Emergency contact person: Name:

Telephone #:

Email Address:

PLEASE RETURN TO: Stephen Briscoe, Director of Campus Safety & Security
1432 East Street
Grinnell College, Grinnell, IA 50112
641-269-4600
(TTY) 7 (711) or <http://www.hamiltonrelay.com> (Ask that they contact 641-269-4600 to relay message if needed).

YOU WILL BE CONTACTED TO DISCUSS A PLAN

**Completing this form is voluntary. The information provided is confidential and will be used only for emergency purposes.*

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I. EVACUATION GUIDELINES

The evacuation of the building during a fire alarm is required, regardless of cause. In accordance with regulatory requirements and Grinnell College policies and procedures, everyone must evacuate a building in which a fire alarm is sounding. Fire alarms include, but are not limited to accidental alarm, false alarm or conditions caused by fire and/or smoke.

Individuals requiring special evacuation assistance in the event of an alarm should evacuate according to the terms of their plan and by following the directives of on-site emergency personnel.

The following are the Emergency Evacuation Guidelines for persons with special needs and/or disabilities at Grinnell College. As standard practice:

Persons with limited mobility: Individuals who walk with canes, crutches, walkers, etc. and those who utilize wheelchairs should decide whether or not they can descend stairs or evacuate a building in an emergency with little assistance from others.

If not, they should:

Stay in place within their room or office, or
Move to an area of refuge, as described below (see page 5).

Persons who are blind or have low sight -Persons who are blind/low sight can, with the assistance of others, evacuate a building using the stairs, if they are familiar with their immediate surroundings and frequently traveled routes and if stairs are safe to use.

If the blind/low sight person is unfamiliar with the emergency evacuation route, they should either:

Stay in place, within their room or office, or
Move to an area of refuge, as described below (see page 4).

Persons who are deaf/hard of hearing -Some buildings on campus are equipped with fire alarm strobe lights; however, many are not. Emergency instructions can be given by writing a note to evacuate. Reasonable accommodations for persons who are deaf/hard of hearing may be met by modifying the building fire alarm system or through other alternative methods.

Students with special needs and/or disabilities needing accommodations should contact the Director of Campus Safety & Security, Facilities Management, The Office of Diversity and Achievement, Human Resources Office, Student Affairs and the Treasurers Office.

A. Evacuation Options

Persons with special needs and/or disabilities have four basic evacuation options:

Horizontal evacuation: using building exits to the outside ground level or going into unaffected wings of multi-building complexes.

Stairway evacuation: using steps to reach ground level exits from the building.

Stay in Place: unless danger is imminent, remaining in a room with an exterior window, a telephone and a solid or fire resistant door. If individual requiring special evacuation assistance remains in place, they should dial 911 immediately and report their location to emergency services, who will in turn relay that information to on-site emergency personnel. If phone lines fail, the individual can signal from the window by waving a cloth or other visible object.

If you remain in the room:

Notify others (if possible) that you are doing so.

Close the door to prevent smoke and fire entry.

If necessary, pack under the door with towels, blankets or other appropriate material.

Call 911 and report your location so that on-site emergency personnel can be informed and respond.

Move to the window with a brightly colored cloth to wave so that emergency personnel can see where you are. **DO NOT** break the window unless absolutely necessary, since doing so could injure you or others and allow smoke to enter the room.

The **Stay in Place** approach may be more appropriate for sprinkler protected buildings or buildings where an area of refuge is not nearby or available (see page 4). It may also be more appropriate for an occupant who is alone when the alarm sounds.

Area of refuge: An area of refuge is an area that can be used as part of the required means of egress for persons that are disabled. *These areas, located on floors above or below the buildings' exits, can be used by disabled persons until rescue can be facilitated by the Fire Department.* Campus Safety & Security can assist in identifying these locations. Areas of refuge can be pressurized stair enclosures, open air exit balconies, or fire rated corridors or vestibules adjacent to exit stairs and pressurized elevator lobbies. Many campus buildings feature fire rated corridor construction that may offer safe refuge. Taking a position in a rated corridor next to the stair is a good alternative to a small stair landing crowded with the other building occupants using the stairway.

With an evacuation assistant, go to an area of refuge away from obvious danger. The evacuation assistant should then go to the building evacuation assembly point and notify the onsite emergency personnel of the location of the person with a disability. Emergency personnel will determine if further evacuation is necessary.

II. DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR AN EVACUATION

Knowledge and preparation by both persons with special needs and/or disabilities and persons without disabilities is the key to reducing the impact of emergencies. When developing a plan, safety needs should be determined on a case-by-case basis because they vary with each individual and building. **Persons with disabilities utilizing Grinnell College's campus are asked to take responsibility in developing their personal emergency evacuation plans. The Director of Campus Safety and Security, and/or other appropriate school disabilities liaisons** will work with students to develop their plans and consult appropriate campus resources.

A. Confidentiality

If you wish to develop an evacuation plan or discuss developing a plan with someone with a disability and are concerned about confidentiality, it is recommended that:

If you are a student with a disability or other special needs during an emergency, contact the Campus Safety & Security Office, Stephen Briscoe, Director, 1432 East Street, (641) 269-4600.

If you are a member of the faculty, staff or an employee with a disability, or wish to assist a disabled member of the faculty, staff or employee, contact the Human Resources Department, Director Kristin Lovig, (641) 269-4800 or the Campus Safety & Security Office, 269-4600.

B. General Tips for Developing a Plan

Make two plans ---one for use if you can be assisted by others and one if you are alone.
Ask others for input, such as community directors, staff, faculty, supervisors, and co-workers or Campus Safety & Security.
Choose two evacuation routes for each building (see "Evacuation-Options", pages 5&6).
Set up a buddy system (See Section C for information on Buddy system)
Do not consider using elevators in your plan.
Consider alternative carry and/or communication methods, if necessary.
Think about your needs for preparedness kits, for example, disability related equipment, communication devices, service animal food, and three days worth of medication, if applicable.
Have a list of all your medications (name, dose, frequency, and name of doctor).
Attach written instructions to all disability related equipment.
Consider using door/window markers so emergency personnel will know your location.
Contact the Grinnell College Office of Safety & Security when you are in buildings after hours.
Have easy access to emergency contact information at all times.
Participate in drills and review effectiveness of plan.
Share individual plans for a building with the Grinnell College Department of Safety & Security and key persons who regularly work or live in the building.

C. Buddy System

Buddies need to be willing and capable of assisting in an evacuation.

Persons with disabilities and buddies must be able to contact each other quickly.

Designate at least two buddies.

- Persons with disabilities should train buddies when their plans are completed.

III. TIPS FOR PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES IN A EVACUATION

A. General Guidelines – For an Emergency

- Obtain the disaster supplies kit that has been prepared ahead of time, as designed in your individual plan.
- Follow basic emergency safety guidelines, as outlined in the Grinnell Emergency Procedures Handbook.
- Call emergency personnel, if possible.
- Determine need to evacuate or stay in place.
- If evacuating, inform emergency personnel of area headed to and type of assistance needed.
- If unable to contact emergency personnel, move to planned designated area.
- Ask others to notify emergency personnel of need for assistance.
- If trapped, get the attention of others by calling out or striking objects together to make noise.
- If not in immediate danger, stay in place or move to area of refuge until emergency personnel determine nature of the situation.
- Be careful of falling things as you leave a building.

Follow the directives of the Grinnell Police Department, Grinnell Fire Department, the Campus Safety & Security Office, and other on-site emergency personnel. The emergency personnel on the scene will decide if the evacuation is necessary.

B. Tips for Persons who use Wheelchairs

Preparedness kits should include:

- Heavy gloves for making your way over glass or debris.
- Extra battery for electric wheelchairs.
- Patch kit for punctured wheels.
- Flashlight.
- Store a lightweight manual wheelchair, if available.
- Arrange and secure furniture and other items to provide barrier free paths of travel.
- In tornadoes and hurricanes once in a safe and protected place, lock wheels, bend over

your knees and cover your head.

- If a small stair landing is chosen as the area of refuge, consider waiting until heavy traffic has passed before entering.
- If you are in bed or out of your wheelchair, seek cover under the bed, a desk, or a table.

C. Tips for Deaf or Hard of Hearing Individuals

Preparedness kits should include:

- Pen, paper and flashlight to communicate in the dark
- Extra hearing aid batteries
- Batteries for TTY and light phone signaler
- Request both audible and visual smoke alarms in your office and home.

D. Tips for Persons who are Blind/Low Vision

Disaster supply kits should include:

- Extra folding white cane.
- Heavy gloves for feeling your way over glass or debris.
- Colored cape or poncho worn for visibility by others.

When preparing your evacuation plan ask for information in alternate formats, if needed, such as building evacuation instructions. You should know where the nearest telephones and alarm boxes are located, how to describe your location, and where emergency medical kits are located. You should also consider marking emergency supplies with large print or Braille, if helpful and you should check to make sure that evacuation signage is adequately marked for your needs. Practice your evacuation route periodically both with your service animal and white cane.

E. Tips for Persons with a Service Animal

Include instructions in your plan for service animals.

Some dogs fear metal grated steps. If your evacuation route has these kinds of steps, get your dog accustomed to the route. If the only stair rail is on your left side where a service dog should typically be, accustom the dog to heeling down the right side if you do not intend to work the dog on the steps. Be cautioned that if a dog typically stops at each new flight others behind you may panic. Heeling the dog may be safer in some instances.

F. Tips for Persons with Learning Disabilities

When making your plan for evacuation:

- Ask for information in alternate formats, if needed.
- Review general building evacuation guidelines and ask questions if you do not understand something.

- See if your evacuation routes have signage that is easy to follow.
- Ask someone to guide you during an evacuation if you feel you need help.
- Ask someone to write down information if you have a hard time understanding oral directions.
- Practice your evacuation route(s) regularly.

G. Tips for Persons with Limited Communication

- Determine how you will best communicate with others during an emergency.
- Consider having evacuation and emergency instructions written down on a card, carried at all times and placed in an easy to see location.
- Have batteries for communication equipment in preparedness kit.

H. Tips for Persons with Psychological Disabilities

Your preparedness kit should include at least three days worth of needed medication, if necessary.

When developing plan, consider strategies to reduce the stress of emergencies by:

- Identifying areas of refuge that have two-way communication devices.
- Check directional signage for exits and designated area of refuge in your planned evacuation route.

I. Tips for Persons with Developmental Disabilities

When you plan for an evacuation:

- Review general building evacuation guidelines and ask questions if you do not understand.
- Request evacuation and emergency information in alternate formats if needed.
- Make sure that your evacuation routes have signage that is easy to follow.
- Ask someone to guide you during an evacuation if you feel you need help.
- Practice your evacuation route(s) regularly.

J. Tips for Persons with Medical Conditions That May Impact Your Ability to Evacuate a Building or Follow Emergency Instructions

Medical conditions include, for example, pregnancy, respiratory or cardiac problems.

- Ask for assistance walking down stairs.
- Remember to bring medication or inhalers when evacuating.
- Consider taking rest periods during evacuation, if possible.

K. TIPS FOR ASSISTING PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES IN AN EVACUATION

A. General Guidelines

- If needed, inquire about office, class, and events, in accessible locations.
- Ensure that egress routes and areas of refuge are clear and properly marked.
- Participate in and help identify gaps in evacuation plans during practice drills.
- Provide adequate notice that a potential danger exists and that evacuation should begin.
- Offer assistance, but let the person explain what help is needed.
- Do not carry a person except in the most extreme of circumstances.
- Be aware that a service animal's sense of direction may become confused during an emergency.
- Do not abandon the person after exiting a building. Lead to a safe place with others.

B. Assisting Persons who Use Wheelchairs

- Be familiar with designated areas of refuge and location of evacuation equipment for wheelchair users.
- If the person is unable to speak clearly, look for a sign on the chair with printed instructions.
- Only in situations of extreme danger should untrained people attempt to carry a person in a wheelchair.
- Prior to moving the person, check for life-support equipment.
- Be aware that wheelchairs have parts not designed to handle the stress of lifting.
- If you and/or others cannot safely carry a person up/down stairs, don't. Instead:
- Position the person in the safest place possible, according to the emergency.
- Alert emergency personnel of person's location.

C. Assisting Deaf or Hard of Hearing Persons

- Provide the person with a flashlight from their preparedness kit so they can signal their location and to help with lip reading in the dark.
- Get the attention of the person before speaking and look at them when speaking.
- Use facial expressions and hand gestures to communicate.
- Use short sentences.
- Use written notes to indicate emergency and instructions, for example, "Fire! Go out rear door now!"
- Check to be sure you are understood.
- Be patient. The person may have difficulty understanding the urgency of your message.
- Be aware that the person may not be able to hear oral commands issued by authorities.
- When out of danger, offer to make phone calls if a TTY is not available.

D. Assisting Persons who are Blind/Low Vision

- During an emergency, announce your presence when entering the person's area.
- Offer your elbow. Do not grab the person's arm or hand.
- Communicate throughout the evacuation by describing in advance physical barriers or action to be taken such as, "Take two steps down."

E. Assisting Owners of Service Animals

- Do not pet or offer food or water without the permission of the owner.

- Plan for the service animal to be evacuated with the owner.
- In the event that you are asked to handle the service animal while assisting the individual, hold the leash and not the harness, if present.

F. Assisting Persons with Learning Disabilities

- During an evacuation, be patient.
- Give instructions slowly and clearly.
- Offer to accompany them as their sense of direction may be limited.
- Encourage the person to practice their evacuation route(s) regularly.

G. Assisting Persons with Limited Communication

- Look for an instruction card on the person.
- During an evacuation, give clear instructions.
- Maintain eye contact with the individual to insure all directions are heard and understood.

H. Assisting Persons with Psychological Disabilities

- Understand that the person may have difficulty concentrating, handling stress, and initiating personal contact.
- Help reduce stress during an emergency by offering to escort the person through the evacuation.
- Give clear and simple instructions.

I. Assisting Persons who are Developmentally Disabled

- Be aware that they may be unable to understand the emergency and could become disoriented or confused about the proper way to react.
- During an evacuation, give instructions slowly and clearly.
- Encourage the person to practice their evacuation route(s) regularly.

J. Assisting Persons with Medical Conditions

- Offer assistance walking down stairs.
- Find ways to reduce the person's stress, exertion, and exposure to dust or smoke.
- Remind the person to bring medication or inhalers.
- Allow rest periods during evacuation if possible.

K. Assisting Persons with Mobility Limitations -Non Wheelchair Users

- Do not interfere with person's movement.
- Clear displaced and fallen obstacles from egress routes.
- If the stairs are crowded, you may act as a buffer.

V. CAMPUS RESOURCE CONTACT INFORMATION

Students

[Steve Briscoe](#)

Director of Safety & Security

1432 East Street

Grinnell, IA 50112

(641) 269-4600 Phone

(641) 269-4802 Fax

(TTY) 7 (711) or <http://www.hamiltonrelay.com> (Ask that they contact 641-269-4600 to relay message if needed).

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[Kristin Lovig](#)

Director of Human Resources

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Grinnell, IA 50112

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Office of the Treasurer

Jim Mulholland
Assistant Treasurer
Old Glove Factory
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Grinnell, IA 50112
(641) 269-3500

Facilities Management

Chris Bair
Environmental and Safety Coordinator
1917 6th Avenue/Facilities Mgt NE OFC
Grinnell, IA 50112
(641) 269-3300

Other Resources

Grinnell Fire Department

- Emergency Line: 911
- Non-Emergency: (641) 236-2650

Grinnell Police Department

- Emergency Line: 911
- Non-Emergency: (641) 236-2650

Student Affairs

- (641) 269-3700 Phone
Dean of College Office
- (641) 269-3000 Phone
Facilities Operations & Management
- (641) 269-3300 Phone
Student Health Services
- (641) 269-3250 Phone