

Fire Emergency Procedures for Persons with Disabilities



Sheridan College recognizes our students with disabilities may require additional support in the event of an emergency. If you are a student with a disability and would like an individualized emergency plan, please notify Security. Security will notify Sheridan's Emergency Preparedness department to initiate the process and support the development of the individualized plan.

Students are not required to disclose their diagnosis, however they must be prepared to describe and discuss the required accommodations. For personal safety your plan must be shared with instructors, relevant Fire Warden(s), Emergency Assistants (if required), Accessible Learning Services, and the Director, Security, Parking & Emergency Preparedness.

Please note that this opportunity is also available to students with temporary disabilities such as broken bones, illness or recent surgery. In these circumstances an individual emergency response plan will be put in place for the duration of the disability.

Sheridan Students with Disabilities Emergency Evacuation Plan

This procedure applies for all students with disabilities (including short-term disabilities) requesting an individualized emergency evacuation plan.

Identifying the need:

It is the responsibility of the student to notify Security of the need for an individualized emergency evacuation plan. It is the responsibility of Sheridan College to ensure that a plan is developed and approved in a reasonable amount of time.

Students may require a plan for short term or long term needs. It is important to establish what kind of supports a student may require in the event of an emergency. A needs assessment will be conducted by the Office of Emergency Preparedness to identify the unique requirements of the individual requesting the plan. Important things to consider during the needs assessment include:

1. Will the student require an alternative method of notification of a fire?
2. Is there a useable circulation path in the building the student will be attending class?
3. Does the student require the assistance of an emergency assistant?
4. Location of primary and secondary exits in each building, applicable to the student.

Developing the plan:

Plans are developed using the Students with Disabilities Emergency Planning Form (appendix H). This process is led by the Emergency Preparedness department with support from Accessible Learning Services and in consultation with the student and any emergency assistants. The planning form will focus on the needs for evacuation, notification, circulation paths, emergency assistants and designated waiting areas.

Notification of Fire:

If the student has a hearing impairment and is in a location unequipped with strobes, an emergency assistant can be assigned to notify that the fire alarm system is sounding and the need to evacuate.

Circulation Paths:

Due to the unique characteristics of each building at Sheridan College, the plan developed for each student will need to take into consideration the layout of each building the student will be occupying.

A circulation path will be pre-determined contingent on the buildings, classrooms and floors the student will be attending. For each individualized plan created, the circulation plan will be reviewed with the student with disabilities and any emergency assistants. In addition, a floor plan of the relevant buildings will be provided to the student and emergency assistant(s), highlighting the circulation path.

To be considered a useable circulation path, the path must meet one of the following criteria:

- A person with disabilities is able to travel unassisted through to an exit
- A person with disabilities is able to travel unassisted through the circulation path to a designated waiting area
- A person with disabilities is able to travel unassisted through the circulation path to an adjoining building not in alarm
- A person with disabilities is able to travel through to an exit with the assistance of an emergency assistant
- A person with disabilities is able to travel through the circulation path to a designated waiting area with the assistance of an emergency assistant
- A person with disabilities is able to travel through the circulation path to an adjoining building not in alarm with the assistance of an emergency assistant

Circumstances will determine if the student with disabilities is evacuated or stays in a designated waiting area. If safe to do so, an effort to evacuate the building should be made first before any consideration of using a designated waiting area.

If elevation differences are involved i.e. stairs, paths with useable ramps will be exercised. If ramps are inaccessible and travelling to an exit is dependent on assistance, emergency assistants may decide to

move the person with a disability down the staircase, if they deem safe to do so. The emergency assistants, if certified on carrying techniques, may choose to use them to safely transport a person with disabilities down the stairs and to an exit, only if safe to do so.

Emergency Assistants:

When assessing the needs of the individual, it may be determined that an emergency assistant is required to provide assistance to the student during an evacuation. Assistance may be required for the following reasons:

- Student with disabilities requests the assistance
- Student has a mobility impairment and is unable to easily go up and down stairs
- Student has a hearing impairment and is unable to be warned of danger by the fire alarm signal
- Student has trouble operating door locks, latches and other devices due to impairments of their hands or arms

This list is not exhaustive and is to be used as a guideline. Each individual requesting a plan will be assessed on their individual needs.

Appointed Emergency Assistance will consist of:

- Friends
- Classmates
- Professors
- Floor Fire wardens

When it is determined an emergency assistant is required, a backup will also be found and trained. If the student with disabilities has a mobility impairment and requires the aid of others to go down the stairs, at least two emergency assistants are mandatory. Two backups will also be found and trained.

What assistance will the emergency assistant provide?

Guidance

- Explaining how and where the person needs to go to get to the usable circulation path
- Escorting the person to and/or through the useable circulation path

Minor Physical Effort

- Offering an arm to assist the person to/through the useable circulation path
- Opening doors in the useable circulation path

Major Physical Effort

- Carrying a student with a disability down the stairs

Notification to Fire Warden Captain

- If deemed unsafe to evacuate a person with a disability by the emergency assistant, the emergency assistant must report this to the building's Fire Warden Captain who in turn, will advise the Chief Fire Warden via conference call. The Chief Fire Warden will notify the Fire Department on site.

Emergency assistants must be involved in the development of the plan and provide their signature attesting to their understanding and willingness to participate. A backup emergency assistant must also be identified and included in the process.

Designated Waiting Areas:

A primary and secondary waiting area will be rooms predetermined on each floor, within a building, relevant to the person with a disability. The rooms selected will serve as a temporary haven from the effects of smoke and fire. The room will have a door which can be closed, a phone to call 911 and a window facing the fire route. The primary and secondary waiting areas will be rooms on opposite ends of the floor near an exit.

Designated waiting areas vary from building to building and will be carefully identified for each individualized plan developed. The student and their emergency assistant will be made familiar with their designated waiting areas.

Approving the Plan:

Plans must be signed by the requesting student, any identified emergency assistants and the Director of Security, Parking and Emergency Preparedness.

Communicating the Plan:

If a student requires the plan to be provided in accessible format, it will be provided in accordance with the accommodations detailed in the student's accommodation plan.

For personal safety a student's plan must be shared with their instructors, relevant Fire Wardens, emergency assistants (if required), Accessible Learning Services and the Director, Security, Parking and Emergency Preparedness.

Training:

The plan will be practiced with the student's emergency assistants and relevant Fire Wardens once approved and in conjunction with any fire drills. The student with the disability and all emergency assistants will be trained on the essentials of the individualized plan. This training will be focused on notification methods, circulation paths, compartmentalization as a principle of life safety, designated waiting areas and carrying techniques where required.

Reviewing the Plan:

Plans will be reviewed at the beginning of each new term in which the student is enrolled.

To initiate the emergency planning process for students with disabilities, or if you have any questions, contact:

Elena Futia

Administrative Assistant, Security, Parking, Emergency Preparedness

elena.futia@sheridancollege.ca

905-815-4190 Internally: 4190

This document is available in alternate formats upon request and will be provided in accordance with a student's individual accommodation plan.