Introduction

Partners in Preparedness

The Office of Public Safety (OPS), as part of the Core Emergency Response Team (CERT) at Ithaca College, is committed to bringing safety and security awareness to the forefront of your day-to-day activities because a safe and secure environment requires resolve and response by all community members at all times.

Each and every member of our campus community has a role in an emergency; foremost is knowing what to do and where to go for instruction and guidance. In order to ensure the best coordinated response, we must recognize our individual and collective readiness responsibility. As such, the information contained in this publication is intended to advance a participatory approach to emergency preparedness and response, because community comprehension and collaboration are key in the event of an emergency.

Please commit to the sizeable responsibility you share for your personal safety and the safety of those around you through familiarization of the information presented in this guide. Be ready! Be safe!

Reporting Emergencies

Timely information sharing is absolutely critical to our success in protecting our community. For emergency conditions occurring on and immediately surrounding the campus, the Ithaca College Office of Public Safety is the best point of contact because we can respond quickest and are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, year round. When you contact IC’s Office of Public Safety, the on-duty dispatcher will initiate contact with appropriate authorities and/or emergency care providers as needed, to include police, fire, or emergency medical responders.

Immediately report any dangerous conditions, safety hazards, and unusual/suspicious persons, vehicles, or packages to the IC Office of Public Safety by dialing 911 from any Ithaca College campus phone or 607-274-3333 from any other phone.
You may also use the emergency call boxes (blue-light phones) that are strategically located throughout the campus and offer direct, two-way communication with the Office of Public Safety dispatcher, at all times (24 hours a day, seven days a week, year round). Dialing 911 from a cell phone will put you in contact with the Tompkins County Emergency Dispatch Center, which will relay information to the IC Office of Public Safety as necessary.

**Emergency Notification System (ENS)**

Ithaca College utilizes an emergency notification system (ENS), in conjunction with Blackboard Connect to enhance the College’s ability to reach all students, faculty, and staff with time-sensitive information during unforeseen events or emergencies. The ENS is part of the College’s overall emergency planning effort. The system uses voice, e-mail, and text messaging to allow Ithaca College officials to provide pertinent details and instruction on appropriate responses during critical incidents. In order to receive these important messages all three ways, you must provide contact information via an online form. By default, ENS messages go to all active Ithaca College e-mail accounts and to faculty and staff office telephones that are listed in the campus directory. We strongly encourage all members of the campus community to take advantage of the opportunity to provide multiple contact options. For more information on the College’s ENS and to sign up for this service, visit www.ithaca.edu/emergencynotification. **Sign up now!**

The ENS will be used when it is imperative to contact students, faculty, and staff as quickly as possible. This can include, but is not limited to, cancellation of classes due to severe weather conditions, a fire or a chemical leak requiring the evacuation of a building or closing of a portion of the campus, or an ongoing criminal incident that requires members of the campus community to take action to ensure their safety.

**Outdoor Warning System (OWS)**

In addition to the ENS, the College has installed an outdoor public address warning system. The system features two siren towers, with one located on the roof of the Campus Center and the other situated near the upper-campus athletic fields. In the event of an emergency, and depending on the circumstances, a siren tone may be used to alert the campus community, followed by a loudspeaker message giving information and instructions on how to respond. The OWS is another component of the College’s comprehensive emergency response plan. **A test transmission of both the ENS and OWS systems is conducted early in both the fall and spring semesters.**

---

**Timely Warning – Public Safety Alert (PSA)**

In the event of certain crimes or unsafe conditions that pose an immediate or ongoing threat to the health or safety of the campus community, whether on or immediately near the campus, a campus-wide public safety alert (PSA) will be issued. The PSA is issued by the Office of Public Safety in collaboration with the Office of Media Relations, using the College e-mail system for distribution to students, faculty, staff, and the College student newspaper, the *Ithacan*. The Office of Public Safety will also post notices on the College’s myHome at Ithaca web portal and the Office of Public Safety website at www.ithaca.edu/sacl/safety/alerts. Both sites are immediately accessible via computer by all faculty, staff, and students. Additionally, following electronic dissemination of a PSA, the Office of Public Safety will coordinate with the Office of Residential Life to post copies of the PSA in each residence hall and at the main entry doors of on-campus facilities.

Depending on the seriousness of the crime or condition, and in situations that pose an immediate or ongoing threat to the campus community thereby requiring more immediate notification, the Office of Public Safety will coordinate with the Office of Media Relations for multiple methods of dissemination and provide pertinent information on the situation as well as appropriate response. Multilayered communication methods may include the campus-wide emergency notification system (ENS) and/or outdoor warning system (OWS), Intercom, the College’s website home page, and a recorded message on the emergency hotline at 607-274-1495.

For more detailed information on the College’s timely warning policy and the issuance of public safety alerts, refer to the College’s *Annual Security and Fire Safety Report*, available on the Office of Public Safety website at www.ithaca.edu/sacl/safety/docs/AnnualSecRep.
Shelter in Place and Evacuation – Definitions and Guidelines for Action

Shelter in Place

What It Means to Shelter in Place
One of the instructions you may be given in an emergency situation is to “shelter in place” due to an imminent or developing dangerous condition. Seeking shelter (going inside) or sheltering (staying inside) means to immediately move to the nearest building and await further instruction. Sheltering in place is used when there is not time to evacuate or when certain conditions may render it unsafe to do so. If you are asked to shelter in place, select a small, interior room if possible, with no or few windows. Stay away from doors and windows and limit movement.

Why You May Need to Shelter in Place
For emergencies whereby guidelines for shelter in place are appropriate, information will be provided by College authorities via the ENS and/or OWS. It is important to take actions to maximize personal safety by knowing what to do if advised to shelter in place.

Examples of Conditions That Render Sheltering in Place the Potentially Best Option
- Severe weather (e.g., lightning, tornado, high winds)
- Active shooter/sniper
- Riot or civil disturbance
- Hostage situation
- Road, traffic, and/or transportation shutdown
- Special events/demonstrations
- Influenza pandemic or other infectious disease (i.e., isolating an immediate area and potentially exposed persons)
- Hazardous materials or conditions outdoors (e.g., chemical spill, pipeline rupture)

Guidelines for Sheltering in Place
Upon receiving a message to shelter in place, remain calm and begin assessing your surroundings. Action steps must be quick and immediate:
- Stop what you are doing right away (i.e., classes, work, and business operations).
- Stop where you are and look for the best accessible space for sheltering. Do not risk exposure by moving to another building whether by foot or by vehicle.
- Select interior room(s) with the fewest windows or vents. If the emergency involves severe weather, choose a location on the lowest floor possible. The room(s) should have adequate space for everyone to be able to sit in. Avoid overcrowding by selecting several rooms if necessary. Large storage closets, utility rooms, and copy and conference rooms without exterior windows work well.
- Avoid selecting a room with mechanical equipment like ventilation blowers or pipes. It is ideal to have a hard-wired telephone in the room(s) you select.
- Close and lock all windows, exterior doors, and any other openings to the outside, where possible. If advised there is danger of an explosion, close the window shades, blinds, or curtains.
- Have the phone available if you need to report a life-threatening condition. Be mindful that cellular telephone equipment may be overwhelmed or damaged during an emergency.
- Bring everyone into the room(s). Shut and lock the door(s). Be alert for ENS updates until you are told all is safe or you are told to evacuate. These updates may call for evacuation of specific areas.

Sheltering in the Event of an Active Shooter Situation
Without placing yourself in harm’s way and when safe to do so:
- Lock and barricade doors
- Turn off lights
- Close blinds
- Block windows
- Turn off radios and computer monitors
- Silence cell phones
- Keep occupants calm, quiet, and out of sight
- Keep yourself out of sight and take adequate cover/protection

See Active Shooter section for more information.

Supplies for Sheltering in Place
For the workplace, where you may potentially be confined for several hours, the following supplies are suggested:
- Flashlight
- Battery-powered radio
• Water
• Food (e.g., high-energy foods such as protein or granola bars; packed/prepared foods such as crackers, dry cereals, and canned food)
• Medications (if you use prescription medications, keep a small supply available)

For more information on emergency preparedness, consider the following websites:
American Red Cross at www.redcross.org

Evacuation

Guidelines for Evacuation
• Elevators should not be used; occupants should exit by way of accessible stairwells.
• Landings and stairwells should be checked for individuals who may need assistance due to a mobility impairment or a disability.
• Evacuation must be timely and orderly; don’t stop or stay in the area in order to retrieve personal belongings.
• Move quickly and calmly; if a relocation site is indicated, go there and await further instruction.
• If you cannot evacuate, move to the nearest window and signal for help and contact the Office of Public Safety at 607-274-3333.

Evacuation

What It Means to Evacuate
Evacuate means leave the indicated location (whether it is indoors or outdoors) at once. Evacuation requires all community members to exit a building or area and in some instances the campus. Depending on the situation, evacuation may mean moving offsite but within the vicinity of the campus (such as the opposite side of the street), or moving to a remote location not immediately contiguous to the campus (such as a neighboring facility). Evacuation is more commonly the case in the instance of a fire, for example. One primary factor in determining evacuation (versus sheltering in place) is whether a backup building (emergency shelter) or safe space (secure room) is readily available, and whether evacuation can be facilitated without jeopardizing the life and safety of the masses. However, there may be cases where evacuation is not an option. Rather, circumstances may arise where there is a campus-wide or community-wide disaster of such magnitude that evacuation is rendered unsafe and sheltering in place is a better option, or even a requirement.

Examples of Conditions That Render Evacuation the Potentially Best Option
• Severe weather (e.g., flooding, loss of power supply)
• Damage or dangerous conditions posed by the facility rendering it unsafe for occupancy
• Fire
• Explosion
• Chemical spill (isolating an immediate area and potentially exposed persons)
• Loss of utilities/power failure (HVAC)
• Water supply failure
• Radiological and hazmat incidents
• Nuclear attack, bombing, or other assaults by air
• Airborne biological/environmental contaminants present
• Mass casualty events

Emergency Conditions

Active Shooter

An active shooter is a person who appears to be actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a populated area. In most cases active shooters use firearms, and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims. These situations are dynamic and evolve rapidly, demanding immediate deployment of law enforcement resources to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to innocent victims. College campuses are not immune to serious or violent crime. This section provides guidance on what to do if you find yourself in an active shooter situation and describes what to expect from responding police officers.

In general, how you respond to an active shooter will be dictated by the specific circumstances of the encounter, bearing in mind there could be more than one shooter involved in the same situation. If you find yourself involved in an active shooter situation, try to remain calm and use the following guidelines to help you plan a strategy for survival:
• If an active shooter is outside your building, you should immediately seek cover in an attempt to conceal yourself and hide from the shooter. Proceed to a room that can be locked, close and lock all the windows and doors, and turn off all the lights; if possible, get everyone down on the floor and ensure that no one is visible from outside the room. One person in the room should call 911 or 607-274-3333, advise the dispatcher of what is taking place, and inform him/her of your location; remain in place until the police give the “all clear.” Unfamiliar voices may be the shooter attempting to lure victims from their safe space; do not respond to any voice commands until you can verify with certainty that they are being issued by a police officer.

• If an active shooter is in the same building you are, you should immediately seek cover in an attempt to conceal yourself and hide from the shooter. Determine if the room you are in can be locked and if so, follow the same procedure described in the previous paragraph. If your room can’t be locked, determine if there is a nearby location that can be reached safely and secured, or if you can safely exit the building.

• If an active shooter enters your office, classroom, or residence, try to remain calm. Call 911 or 607-274-3333 if possible and alert police to the shooter’s location; if you can’t speak, leave the line open, so the dispatcher can listen to what’s taking place. If there is no opportunity for escape or hiding, it might be possible to negotiate with the shooter; attempting to overpower the shooter with force should be considered a very last resort, after all other options have been exhausted. If the shooter leaves the area, proceed immediately to a safer place and do not touch anything that was in the vicinity of the shooter.

• If you decide to flee during an active shooting situation, make sure you have an escape route and plan in mind. Do not attempt to carry anything while fleeing; move quickly, keep your hands visible, and follow the instructions of any police officers you may encounter. Do not attempt to remove injured people; instead, leave wounded victims where they are and notify authorities of their location as soon as possible. Proceed to a safe location and do not leave campus until advised it is safe to do so by police.

What to Expect from Responding Police Officers

Police officers responding to an active shooter are trained to proceed immediately to the area in which shots were last heard; their purpose is to stop the shooting as quickly as possible. The first responding officers will normally be in teams; they may be dressed in regular patrol uniforms, or they may be wearing external bulletproof vests, Kevlar helmets, and other tactical equipment. The officers may be armed with rifles, shotguns, or handguns, and might also be using pepper spray or tear gas to control the situation. Regardless of how they appear, remain calm, do as the officers tell you, and do not be afraid of them. Put down any bags or packages you may be carrying and keep your hands visible at all times; if you know where the shooter is, tell the officers. The first officers to arrive will not stop to aid injured people; rescue teams composed of other officers and emergency medical personnel will follow the first officers into secured areas to treat and remove injured persons. Keep in mind that once you have escaped to a safer location, the entire area is still a crime scene; police will usually not let anyone leave until the situation is fully under control and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Until you are released, remain at whatever assembly point authorities designate.

General Guidelines for Action

• Secure immediate area
• Lock and barricade doors
• Turn off lights
• Close blinds
• Silence cell phones
• Block windows
• Turn off radios and computer monitors
• Keep occupants calm, quiet, and out of sight
• Keep yourself out of sight and take adequate cover/protection (e.g., concrete walls, thick desks, filing cabinets, or other cover may protect you from bullets)
• Place signs in exterior windows to identify the location of injured persons

Contacting Authorities

• Use 607-274-3333 to contact the Ithaca College Office of Public Safety dispatcher from a cell phone. Program this number into your cell phone now!
• Dialing 911 from a campus phone will also connect with the Ithaca College Office of Public Safety.
• Dialing 911 from a cell phone will connect you with the Tompkins County Emergency Dispatch Center. Be sure to give the call taker your exact location.

What to Report

• Your exact location: building name and office/room number
• Number of people at your specific location
• Injuries: number injured, types of injuries
• Assailant(s): location, number of suspects, race/gender, clothing description, physical features, type of weapons (long gun or hand gun), backpack, shooters’ identity if known, separate explosions from gunfire, etc.

If doubt exists for the safety of the individuals inside the room, the area should remain secured.
Hostage Situation

If you hear or see a hostage situation:
1. Immediately remove yourself from any danger.
2. Immediately notify the Office of Public Safety at 911 from any campus phone or 607-274-3333 from any other phone.
3. Be prepared to give the Office of Public Safety dispatcher the following information:
   - Location and room number of incident
   - Number of possible hostage takers
   - Physical description and names of hostage takers, if possible
   - Number of possible hostages
   - Any weapons the hostage takers may have
   - Your name
   - Your location and phone number

If you are taken hostage:
1. Remain calm, be polite, and cooperate with your captors.
2. DO NOT attempt to escape unless there is an extremely good chance of survival. It is safer to be submissive and obey your captors.
3. Speak normally, DO NOT complain, avoid being belligerent, and comply with all orders and instructions.
4. DO NOT draw attention to yourself with sudden body movements, statements, comments, or hostile looks.
5. Observe the captors and try to memorize their physical traits, voice patterns, clothing, or other details that can help provide a description later.
6. Avoid getting into political or ideological discussions with the captors.
7. Try to establish a relationship with your captors and get to know them. Captors are less likely to harm you if they respect you.
8. If forced to present terrorist demands to authorities, either in writing or on tape, state clearly that the demands are from your captors. Avoid making a plea on your own behalf.
9. Try to stay low to the ground or behind cover from windows or doors, if possible.

If you are in a rescue situation:
1. DO NOT RUN. Drop to the floor and remain still. If that is not possible, cross your arms, bow your head, and stand still. Make no sudden moves that a tense rescuer may interpret as hostile or threatening.
2. Wait for instructions and obey all instructions you are given.
3. Do not be upset, resist, or argue if a rescuer isn’t sure whether you are a terrorist or a hostage.
4. Even if you are handcuffed and searched, DO NOT resist. Just wait for the confusion to clear.
5. You will be taken to a safe area where proper identification and status will be determined.

Bomb Threats

If you receive a bomb threat by telephone, here are some helpful things to keep in mind:
- Remain calm. When the bomb threat is received, the person taking the call must remain calm and obtain as much information as possible.
- DO NOT put the caller on hold.
- DO NOT attempt to transfer the call.
- The person taking the call should immediately notify another staff person in the office, preferably while the caller is still on the line.
- Pay attention to the caller and his/her words and speech: does the caller have any distinguishing voice characteristics such as an accent, stuttering, or mispronunciations?
- Is the caller angry, excited, irrational, or agitated?
- Is the caller a man or woman, young, middle-aged, or old?
- If you have caller ID, note the phone number of the caller.
- Listen for background noises (traffic, train whistle, music, radio, TV, children, airplanes, etc).
- It is important to document all that you know and hear. This should include filling out the Bomb Threat Checklist (following page).
- Call the Office of Public Safety at 911 from a campus phone or 607-274-3333 from a cell phone.
- Do not evacuate until told to do so by the Office of Public Safety.
Bomb Threat Checklist

- Stay calm and collect all the information you can. Take notice of the caller’s voice and listen for any background noise.
- Name of call taker.
- Date and time received.
- Way the threat reported (telephone, e-mail, in person, by mail).
- Location threatened.
- Exact words used to make threat.

Questions to Ask the Person Making the Threat

- When is the bomb going to explode?
- Where is the bomb located?
- What kind of bomb is it?
- What does it look like?
- Who placed the bomb?
- Why was the bomb placed?
- Where are you calling from?

Severe Weather Conditions: Severe Thunderstorms or Tornadoes

The College is prepared to notify the campus community via the emergency notification system (ENS) and outdoor warning system (OWS) of severe weather emergencies.

The following terms are utilized by the National Weather Service:

- Watch – Conditions are right for a severe thunderstorm or tornado to develop. Continue with normal activities, but continue to monitor the weather.
- Warning – Radar or weather spotters have identified a severe thunderstorm or tornado. The College’s outdoor warning system may be activated if there is danger for the campus community.

If You Are Indoors

- Know the location of the appropriate area(s) for your facility. This can be a basement or a ground floor hallway with no windows, or a door frame.
- If you are unable to go to a room with no windows, get under a desk or table.
- Remain in a protected area until the threat has ceased or the danger has passed.
- Call the Office of Public Safety at 911 from any campus phone or 607-274-3333 from a cell phone to report injuries or severe damage.

If You Are Outdoors

- Seek shelter indoors.

If you cannot seek shelter indoors

- Try to get to a protected or safe area away from buildings, windows and glass, telephone or light poles, or any place where there could be falling debris.
- Find an area such as a ditch or ravine or a depression to shelter in.
- Lie face down and cover your head and face.
- Avoid any downed power lines.
- Call the Office of Public Safety at 911 from any campus phone or 607-274-3333 from a cell phone to report injuries and damage.

Fire or Hazardous Materials

In the event of a fire or hazardous materials emergency within a campus building, it is necessary and safest for occupants to evacuate. Without exception, everyone must evacuate.

A fire or hazardous materials emergency exists whenever the following occurs:

- A building fire evacuation alarm is sounding.
- An uncontrolled fire or imminent fire hazard occurs in any building or area of campus.
- There is the presence of smoke or the odor of burning.
- There is an uncontrolled release of combustible or toxic gas or other hazardous material, or a flammable liquid spill.
Surviving a Building Fire

1. Activate the building fire alarm.
   - Pull a fire alarm station on the way out.
   - If the building is not equipped with a fire alarm, knock on doors and shout on your way out.
2. Leave the building by the nearest exit.
   - Crawl if there is smoke: If you get caught in smoke, get down and crawl. Cleaner, cooler air will be near the floor.
   - Feel doors before opening: Feel the metal handle before opening any doors. If the handle is hot, do not open the door. If it is cool, brace yourself against the door, open it slightly, and if heat or heavy smoke are present, close the door and stay in the room.
   - If the nearest exit is blocked by fire, heat, or smoke, go to another exit or stairway.
   - Always use an exit stair not an elevator.
   - Elevator shafts may fill with smoke or the power may fail, leaving you trapped.
   - Close as many doors as possible as you leave. This helps to confine the fire. Stairway fire doors will keep out fire and smoke if they are closed and will protect you until you get outside.
   - Total and immediate evacuation is safest. Only use a fire extinguisher if the fire is very small and you have received training. Do not delay calling emergency responders or activating the building fire alarm. If you cannot put out the fire, leave immediately. Make sure the Office of Public Safety and the fire department are called, even if you think the fire is out.
3. If you get trapped, keep the doors closed.
   - Place cloth material (wet if possible) around and under door to prevent smoke from entering.
   - Be prepared to signal your presence from a window. Do not break glass unless absolutely necessary, as outside smoke may be drawn inside.
4. Notify emergency responders from a safe distance away from the building using one of the following methods:
   - Call 911 from a campus phone.
   - Call 607-274-3333 from a cell phone.
   - Locate an emergency call box (blue-light phone) to contact the Office of Public Safety dispatcher.

Signal for Help

Hang an object at the window (jacket, shirt) to attract the fire department’s attention. If there is a phone in the room, call 911 or 607-274-3333 from a cell phone and report that you are trapped. Be sure to give your room number and location. If all exits from a floor are blocked, go back to your room, close the door and seal cracks, open the windows if it is safe, wave something out the window, and shout or phone for help.

If You Are on Fire

Stop, drop, and roll: If your clothes catch on fire, stop, drop, and roll wherever you are. Rolling smothers the fire.

Obstacles

Storage of any items in the corridors to include bicycles, chairs, desks, and other items is prohibited in all exit ways, including stairwells. Blocked exits and obstacles impede evacuation, especially during dark and smoke conditions.

Suspicious Letters and/or Packages

The information and guidance in this segment was obtained from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Department of Homeland Security, and the United States Postal Service.

Identifying Suspicious Packages and Letters

Some characteristics of suspicious packages and letters include the following:

- Excessive postage
- Handwritten or poorly typed addresses
- Incorrect titles
- Title, but no name
• Misspellings of common words
• Oily stains, discolorations, or odor
• No return address
• Excessive weight
• Lopsided or uneven packaging
• Prominent wires or aluminum foil
• Visual distractions
• Ticking sound
• Excessive security material such as masking tape, string, etc.
• Marked with restrictive endorsements, such as “personal” or “confidential”
• Shows a city or state in the postmark that does not match the return address

Once a Package Has Been Identified as Suspicious

• Stay calm; do not panic.
• Do not move or handle a suspicious package.
• Call the Office of Public Safety at 911 from any campus phone or 607-274-3333 from a cell phone.
• If there is reason to suspect that a package may contain an explosive device based on characteristics described above, do not handle the package. Leave the area and contact the Office of Public Safety.
• If the suspicious letter or package is marked with a threatening message (such as “anthrax”) or if a suspicious powder or substance spills out of the package or envelope, follow these guidelines to assist the Office of Public Safety:
  • DO NOT CLEAN up a suspicious powder.
  • TURN OFF local fans or ventilation units in the area if you suspect that a device has been activated and the fan/ventilation switches are quickly and easily accessible.
• SHUT down air handling system in the building, if possible. Call the Office of Facilities at 607-274-3225 for assistance with HVAC and other building issues.
• LEAVE the area immediately. Close the door or section off the area to prevent others from entering. Call for help and keep others away from the area.
• WASH your hands with soap and water to prevent spreading any powder to your face.
• REMOVE contaminated clothing as soon as possible and place in a plastic bag or some other container that can be sealed. Give clothing bag to the emergency responders.
• SHOWER with soap and water as soon as possible if contaminated. Do not use bleach or other disinfectant on your skin.
• LIST all people who were in the area when the suspicious package was recognized.
• PROVIDE this list of people to the Office of Public Safety for followup investigations and to obtain advice from local public health authorities and outside law enforcement officials.

Emergency Response

Emergency responders from the Office of Public Safety will assess the situation. If the suspicious letter or package is marked with a threatening message, such as “anthrax,” or if a suspicious powder or substance has spilled, they will follow certain guidelines.

Resources

Federal Bureau of Investigation Advisory

Centers for Disease Control Anthrax Information
www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/anthrax

Guidance on Initial Responses to a Suspicious Letter/Container with a Potential Biological Threat (FBI/DHS/HHS/CDC coordinated document)