

■ Floor Warden Training - Introduction

A floor warden is an individual assigned to coordinate the handling of emergency situations in a particular area of the building. When necessary, floor wardens are also responsible for handling building evacuations. They direct the evacuation of their assigned floor or area to the nearest emergency exit, checking that all individuals have left the area as they themselves exit.

Floor wardens advise individuals not to use elevators, and help ensure an orderly and safe stair evacuation; enlist help to assist individuals with mobility issues and direct individuals to their assigned evacuation Emergency Assembly Area or Safe Refuge Area. Floor wardens are on the front lines of emergency response when a fire occurs.

Quick actions, clear thinking and calm leadership are vital to ensuring the safety of building occupants during a fire emergency.

Emergency experts recommend that you prepare for emergencies with an all-hazards approach. That means the preparedness steps you take for a fire will go a long way in preparing for any emergency situation.

By learning the emergency procedures already in place for responding to fire evacuation, the floor warden will also be preparing to respond to other potential hazards and threats.

The potential impact on a facility is the same regardless of the source of the threat. History has shown that you can never be completely prepared for every emergency; however, history has also demonstrated that those with a well thought-out and rehearsed plan fare much better and recoup much faster than those who are not ready.

Floor wardens must remain calm when faced with an emergency. Don't panic. Avoid an impulsive reaction. Before you respond impulsively, **"S.T.O.P."**

STOP
THINK
OBSERVE
PLAN

Individuals with Limited Mobility

1. Assign two assistants with back-ups for each individual with limited mobility.
2. Ensure property management is updated with anyone in your suite that has limited mobility. (This information will be kept with property management, in the Fire Control Room and with building security in the event of an emergency.)
3. Work with HR to ensure the safety of employees with limited mobility and to ensure compliance with HIPAA and ADA.
4. Mobility issues can range from individuals who may have physical disabilities but can also include respiratory, hearing, obesity, or temporary issues such as a broken leg or pregnancy. It is important to understand the full range of these issues.

Evacuation - 6 Steps to Remember

If an Alarm Sounds:

Step 1: Alert Occupants and Facilitate Evacuation

Upon activation of an alarm, floor wardens should quickly tour the floor and alert all occupants that a fire alarm has sounded and evacuation is required. Particular attention should be given to isolated offices/areas and individuals who may be hard of hearing. An assertive manner and authoritative voice will help motivate those who are hesitant about evacuating. Instruct occupants to use the exit stairwells, not the elevators, to evacuate the floor.

Step 2: Close Doors

While checking the floor and alerting occupants, the floor warden should also be closing the doors to all rooms. Closing doors helps to prevent fire from spreading, as well as limiting the spread of smoke and toxic gases.

Step 3: Remind Evacuating Occupants of Their Meeting Place

As tenants exit the floor, a floor warden should remind them to keep to the right in the stairwell and where the re-assembly point is. It is also a good idea to remind individuals not to enter a floor where the alarm is sounding and remain at the meeting place until notified.

Step 4: Inform Fire and Life Safety Director of Any Problems

Individuals remaining on the floor or in the stairwell should be reported to the building's Fire and Life Safety Director. This will help ensure that firefighters are sent to assist those in need if evacuation is required.

Step 5: Assign Assistants to Those Individuals Who Have Limited Mobility

Two individuals (and alternates) should be assigned to each individual whose limited mobility would prevent their evacuating by way of the exit stairwells. This should be done before a fire emergency so that all three individuals will have time to become familiar with their course of action.

Step 6: Ensure Everyone Made it to the Safe Refuge Area

Attendance is probably the most difficult aspect of the planning process and it can mean different things depending on the size of the organization. This is a critical step in ensuring that all the individuals in the group made it safely to the assembly area. Those not accounted for should be reported back to the building's Fire and Life Safety Director.

Safe Refuge Area: Two Tiers

It is recommended there be two designated assembly areas for each assembly group.

1. The first assembly area should be at least 300 feet from the building and should not be directly in the line of site from the building. In the event of a fire the assembly area should be far enough away to not be vulnerable from shattered glass or smoke.
2. The second area is the back-up location which should be farther away from 800 to 1500 feet. This is generally to be used if the first area is compromised or can be used for other types of emergencies like bomb threats or an active shooter incident.

Communicate the following information to property management:

- Name and contact information of the floor wardens
- List of individuals with limited mobility
- Safe refuge area locations