

Sample Safety and Security Procedures for Law Office Policies and Procedures Manual

[The following is a sample format for a safety and security section of an office manual. This should be used only as a general guide. Safety procedures must be tailored to each office and to each building.]

Safety And Security

1. Emergency telephone number. In an emergency call 911, then immediately notify the BUILDING SECURITY DESK at _____. All phones are equipped with a sticker listing these emergency numbers. You should give the following information when reporting an emergency:

- Address
- Floor, Suite
- Type of Emergency
- Your Name
- Your Telephone Number

2. Safety monitors. Complete lists of monitors are maintained by the receptionist. In case of emergency, notify the Building Security Desk, the receptionist, and the Office Manager.

3. Report all incidents. All incidents of fire, no matter how minor, must be reported to building security. All incidents regarding security, including fires, should also be reported to the Office Manager. This includes thefts, suspicious persons, obscene phone calls, bomb threats or other such incidents.

4. Emergency areas and equipment

a Corridor speakers are connected to the building security desk, allowing security professionals to communicate with a floor in danger and control evacuation of that floor. In an emergency you should remain calm and listen for instructions, which will be given over the building public address system.

b. Building safety stairwells are specifically constructed to ensure safety from fire for those within them. The internal stairwells (near the reception and library areas) should not be used in an emergency.

c. Smoke detectors are located throughout the office and automatically signal the electronic console at the building security desk if smoke is detected.

d. Overhead sprinklers are placed in every room or area and are automatically tripped by heat.

e. Fire doors at the internal stairwells and in elevator lobbies will shut automatically during a fire. Their purpose is to impede the spread of fire from one area or floor to another. Stay away from them to avoid injury.

f. Security doors at the ends of the elevator lobbies are designed to unlock if smoke is detected during off-hours; this will permit those in the elevator lobbies access to the safety stairwell. To unlock the door, break the glass above the lock with the hammer. Do not break the glass except in an emergency in which you need to exit the elevator lobby and the doors are locked.

g Fire alarms are located outside the safety stairwell doors.

h. Fire extinguishers are located in the lunch room and directly outside all rest rooms.

5. Evacuation Procedures

a. Listen for instructions from the corridor speakers on each floor. Building security personnel will give detailed instructions as they coordinate evacuation routes and send emergency personnel to affected floors.

b. Follow the safety monitors' direction. If you are told to evacuate by way of a specific safety stairwell, go directly to that stairwell. If you are told to go to the reception area, do so and wait further directions there.

- (1) Walk single file.
- (2) Move quickly, but do not run.
- (3) Do not stop to go back to pick up anything.
- (4) Do not smoke.
- (5) Do not talk, unless necessary.
- (6) Before opening a door, feel it. If it is hot, do not open it. Keep a fire confined to a small area.
- (7) When the monitors are sure that the floor has been

completely evacuated, they will close doors behind them. This will slow the spread of a fire.

c. Use ONLY the safety stairwells. NEVER use the elevators; NEVER use the firm's internal stairwells.

- (1) Walk up or down the stairs single file on your right. Emergency and fire personnel may be using the stairs and have been instructed to keep to the left.
- (2) Merge into people already in the stairwell. Do not push.
- (3) When you reach the floor to which you have been directed, do not congregate near the stairwell. Move away from the stairwell and wait for further instructions.
- (4) Women should remove high-heeled shoes.
- (5) If you are relocated to ground level, move away from the building, at the very least, across the street. Do not go into the lobby or stand on the outside sidewalks. You may not be safe, and you will hinder emergency and fire personnel.

6. Specific emergencies

a. Fire.

- (1) First call 911, then call the building security desk and report the fire.
- (2) Notify a receptionist or the main switchboard (0).
- (3) Use fire extinguishers with care and only if you know how. Generally, however, report a fire rather than trying to fight it yourself.
- (4) Listen for instructions from the corridor speakers or safety monitors and follow relocation procedures if necessary.
- (5) If there is smoke on our floors,
 - (a) take short breaths; smoke inhalation is more dangerous than burns in most fires;
 - (b) crawl along the floor; the air is cooler and fresher closer to the floor since heated air rises;

- (c) hold your breath if forced to dash through flames.

b. Earthquake.

An earthquake emergency is different from a fire or explosion emergency. You are probably ly safer inside the building than outside.

- (1) Take cover under a desk or table or against a solid inside wall (one with no glass).
- (2) Stay away from fire doors located by internal stairs.
- (3) Stay away from windows, glass walls, and doors and walls with glass in them.
- (4) Stay clear of file cabinets, bookcases and free-standing partitions.
- (5) Floor monitors will direct immediate evacuation of the libraries, records center and reproduction center.
- (6) Do not leave your floor until you are told to do so by a monitor. There may be a second shock, and the elevators and safety stairwells must be inspected before they can be used.
- (7) Do not use the telephone unless you are injured or need help.
- (8) if you are in an elevator,
 - (a) Do not panic. The car will not fall.
 - (b) The elevator will automatically stop at the next floor, where you should exit.
 - (c) If the doors do not open, press the red alarm button and let the building office know where, who and how many you are. A public address system is installed in each car, and instructions will be given to you over this system. Do not try to force the door open or attempt to exit through the roof. The car may

immediately return to the lobby.

- (9) If you are outdoors, keep away from buildings, poles, wires, and walls. Go to a clear area where debris is not likely to fall.

c. Power Failure

- (1) An emergency power generator is located in the basement of the building. If the normal power supply is interrupted, the emergency system will take over in a matter of seconds to provide emergency lighting and limited elevator service. The engineering office will restore normal service as soon as possible.
- (2) Turn off all machines - computers, typewriters, adding machines, photocopy machines - to conserve power and avoid overload when power is restored.
- (3) Open all doors, shades and curtains to allow natural light to filter throughout the office.
- (4) Stay where you are, unless told by a monitor to evacuate.
- (5) If you are in the elevator, do not panic. The car will not fall. Press the red alarm button and let the building office know where, who, and how many you are. A public address system is installed in each car, and instructions will be given to you over this system.
- (6) All receptionists and safety monitors have flashlights at their desks.

d. Assault.

- (1) Scream - your voice is one of your best weapons.
- (2) Try to run from the assailant. If you are alone at night, try to reach a telephone.

e. Bomb Threat.

- (1) If you answer the phone and receive a bomb threat, do not panic. This call may be the only opportunity to obtain information about the bomb. Have someone else listen to the call without letting the caller know, if possible. Listen, except to tell caller that the building is occupied and that to prevent death and injury you must know:

- (a) When is the bomb going off?
 - (b) Where is the bomb?
 - (c) What kind of bomb is it?
 - (d) What does it look like?
 - (e) Why was it planted?
- (2) Call the building security desk or building office and tell them you have received a bomb threat. A security guard will discuss all the information you have obtained.
 - (3) Call the Office Manager or one of the receptionists. Speak only to one person, but reach at least one of them. Do not tell anyone else unless directed to do so.
 - (4) During or immediately after the call, fill out the bomb threat checklist at the end of this section.
 - (5) Do not touch any strange object. Report its location to a monitor, and follow the monitor's directions.
- (f) Medical emergencies.

For any injury or illness requiring emergency medical treatment:

- (1) First call 911, then call the building security desk. Security guards are on duty at all times and can arrange for medical treatment. Be sure to tell the security desk where you are, who you are, the types of emergency and your telephone number.
- (2) Notify any receptionist to get a first aid kit and find out which firm personnel might be able to render first aid while waiting for professional help to arrive.
- (3) Any on-the-job injury or illness which is related to job conditions should be reported to your supervisor and the personnel department.
- (4) When CPR is required (heart attack, fainting, blocked windpipe), call the receptionist on the floor you are on for the

names of CPR trained employees on that floor.

7. Office security.

The firm offices need to be secure because we have valuable items in the office, we are required by the ethical canons to protect the confidentiality of our client materials, and we own proprietary materials which enhance our ability to provide quality legal services to our clients.

a. Lobby doors. Lobby doors should never be propped open, especially during off-hours, and employees who find them open should shut them immediately. Firm employees are issued keys to permit them access to the offices during off hours. Under no circumstances should the keys be given to anyone who is not an employee of the firm.

b. Visitors. All visitors to the office must be greeted in the reception area and escorted to the appropriate office or conference room. Please discourage friends and relatives from entering our office directly. Anyone who sees an unescorted, unfamiliar person should tactfully ask that person who he/she is looking for and should offer assistance in locating that person or department. (Please note that a person may be found in private offices as well as in hallways.) If the person says he/she is in the wrong place, he/she should be escorted to the elevator lobby and onto an elevator. Those who are expecting visitors after hours should make arrangements for them to be permitted access to our floors. Standard forms for this purpose are available from the personnel department.