



Widener University



Widener

**CAMPUS SAFETY &
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

Emergency Preparedness Guide (EPG)

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS GUIDE • 2026

This guide serves as a quick-reference resource to help you prepare for, manage, and respond to emergencies and crises. Many of the procedures included here are adapted from the Widener

University Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), the University's internal emergency management framework.

The guide should be readily accessible in classrooms, offices, and other workspaces, and used to support sound judgment and common-sense decision-making during an incident. Please take time to review the information and become familiar with how to respond to the situations outlined in the following sections.

Faculty and staff are expected, when it is safe to do so, to provide leadership and guidance to students and visitors during emergencies.

Additional information and safety resources are available through the Widener University Office of Campus Safety: <https://www.widener.edu/campus-safety>

How to Use This Guide

This guide is organized to help you quickly find what you need during an emergency. Use it to reference protective actions, locate emergency contacts, and follow step-by-step procedures for a wide range of incidents.

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- **Protective Actions (Evacuation, Shelter-in-Place, Lockdown):** Explain what to do in the first moments of an emergency.
- **Incident-Specific Procedures:** Outline how to respond to situations, from medical emergencies to severe weather.
- **Reporting and Resource Information:** Provides contact numbers, apps, and links for getting help or submitting concerns.

Keep this guide accessible in classrooms, offices, and other workspaces. Faculty and staff should be prepared, when it is safe to do so, to help guide students and visitors during emergencies.

Introduction

Scope

This plan applies to all Widener University faculty, staff, departments, and community members within the University. It outlines roles, responsibilities, and procedures to be followed during emergencies that impact the safety of community members of the University.

The Emergency Preparedness Guide (EPG) is effective immediately upon promulgation and supersedes all previously developed public facing plans or guides at Widener University.

About Campus Safety

Security services at Widener University are provided across all three campuses to support the safety and well-being of students, employees, and visitors. The Main Campus in Chester is staffed by a university-operated Campus Safety department, while the Delaware Law School and Commonwealth Law School campuses are currently serviced by Allied Universal, a private security contractor. Both Chester and Delaware have campus security personnel who are responsible for 24/7 coverage, incident response, and coordination with local emergency responders as needed. Commonwealth Law is not 24/7, but on a normal day, Campus Security personnel work until 11PM and have extended hours during certain times of the year (Ex. Finals).

Campus Safety & Security Contact Information:

- **Main Campus – Chester, PA**
 - Location: Ground level of Old Main
 - Phone: 610-499-4200
 - Provider: Widener University Campus Safety
 - Staffing: Approximately 42 personnel
- **Delaware Law School – Wilmington, DE**
 - Location: Lobby of Concord Residence Hall

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- Phone: 302-477-2200
- Provider: Allied Universal (contracted security)
- Staffing: Approximately 9 personnel
- **Commonwealth Law School – Harrisburg, PA**
 - Location: Lobby of the Law Library Building
 - Phone: 717-541-1911
 - Provider: Allied Universal (contracted security)
 - Staffing: Approximately 4 personnel

Emergency Communications

Emergency/Important Phone Numbers

Department/Agency	Phone Number	Email
Campus Safety – Chester Campus	610-499-4200	campussafety@widener.edu
Campus Safety – Delaware Campus	302-477-2200	-
Campus Safety – Commonwealth Campus	717-541-1911	-
Police/Fire/EMS	911	-

Alert Systems

Omnilert Notification System

Used to distribute time-sensitive alerts via text, email, and voice across the entire campus community.

LiveSafe App

A mobile app that allows students, staff, and faculty to report concerns, access safety resources, receive real-time alerts, and communicate directly with Campus Safety. The app enhances engagement and two-way communication with Campus Safety.

Protective Actions Procedures

These procedures provide clear, easy-to-follow actions for anyone on campus during an emergency. They are designed to support quick decision-making, reduce harm, and help individuals stay safe until help arrives. Faculty and staff are encouraged to provide guidance to students and visitors whenever it is safe to do so.

Evacuation

Evacuation places distance between you and a hazard such as fire, hazardous materials release, structural danger, or unsafe conditions.

When to Evacuate

- When a fire alarm sounds.
- When Campus Safety, emergency personnel, or official alerts direct you to leave in person or via Omnilert.
- When you personally observe immediate danger (smoke, structural issues, strong chemical odors).

What to Do

1. **Leave Immediately** – Stop what you’re doing and exit the building. Close all doors behind you.
2. **Use Stairs** – Elevators may fail or be unsafe during evacuations.
3. **Know Your Routes** – Follow posted evacuation maps and use the nearest safe exit.
4. **Assist Others** – Help others who may need assistance, if you can do so safely.
5. **Remain Clear** – Stay away from building entrances so responders can access the building.
6. **Do Not Re-Enter** – Remain outside until an “all clear” is issued by Campus Safety or emergency responders.

Shelter-in-Place

Sheltering-in-place protects you from *environmental* hazards such as severe weather, hazardous materials, or outdoor air quality issues.

When to Shelter-in-Place

- Severe storms or tornado warnings
- Environmental/chemical hazards outdoors
- Air quality alerts
- Nearby police activity requiring people to stay indoors but not lockdown

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What to Do

1. **Seek Shelter** – Go to an interior room, hallway, or space away from exterior windows and doors.
2. **Stay Inside** – Remain indoors until official guidance gives an “all clear”.
3. **Monitor Alerts** - Follow updates via Omnilert, LiveSafe, or Campus Safety communication channels.
4. **Be Prepared** – Keep essential supplies nearby (water, phone charger, medication if needed).

Lockdown

Lockdown protects you from immediate threats of violence, such as an active assailant or unsafe person on campus.

When to Lock Down

- Reports of an active shooter or active assailant
- Threats of violence occurring inside or near your building
- Direction from Campus Safety or Omnilert alerts

What to Do

1. **Run (Escape)** – If you can safely leave the area:
 - a. Evacuate quickly, leaving belongings behind.
 - b. Keep hands visible as you exit.
 - c. Move far away from the threat and call 911 and Campus Safety.
2. **Hide (Shelter)** – If escape is not possible:
 - a. Lock or barricade doors using heavy furniture.
 - b. Turn off lights and silence phones.
 - c. Stay low, out of sight, and behind solid cover.
 - d. Remain still and quiet.
3. **Fight** – Only as an absolute last resort:
 - a. If directly confronted and no other option exists, use improvised tools to disrupt or disarm the attacker.
 - b. Work as a group if possible.

After the Threat

- Follow instructions from Campus Safety and other law enforcement agencies.
- Do not leave until you are instructed by authorities.

Incident Specific Procedures

Active Shooter / Assailant

What to Do

- Run, Hide, Fight guidance (above)
- Call Campus Safety or 911 once you are in a safe location to do so

Bomb Threat

Examples: Threats over phone, text, written, verbal

What to Do

- Gather as much information as you can
 - Exact wording, phone number, caller details
- Call Campus Safety or 911
- Follow instructions from emergency personnel

Suspicious Object

Examples: Wires, strange odors, excessive tape, no return address

What to Do

- Do not touch it
- Leave the area
- Call Campus Safety or 911

Suspicious Behavior

Examples: Following people, attempting restricted access, unusual surveillance, threatening comments

What to Do

- Do not confront the individual
- Call Campus Safety or 911
- Remember to run, hide, fight if necessary

Medical Emergencies

Examples: Fainting, allergic reactions, broken bone, seizures, cardiac emergency

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What to Do

- Call 911 for life-threatening emergencies
- Notify Campus Safety so they can guide responders
- Check responsiveness
- Provide first aid if trained

Elevator Failure

What to Do

If you are *inside* an elevator and it fails:

- Call Campus Safety
- Do NOT attempt to exit between floors
- Wait for trained personnel

If you are *outside* an elevator (bystander):

- Do not attempt forced entry
- Call Campus Safety immediately

Facility Emergency

Examples: Flooding, utility/HVAC issues, structural issues

What to Do

- Call Campus Safety
- Follow directions of responders

Fire Emergency

Examples: Visible smoke, fire, fire alarm activation

What to Do

- Call Campus Safety or 911
- Follow evacuation procedures (above)

Weather Emergency

Examples: Severe thunderstorms, winter weather, extreme heat

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What to Do

If you are outdoors when severe weather hits:

- Seek shelter in the nearest building
 - Stay away from windows and glass (follow Shelter-in-Place Procedures)
- Avoid trees, metal structures, and open fields
- Do not shelter in vehicles unless no building is available

Reporting

- Call Campus Safety to report hazards or damage
- Call 911 about any medical emergencies or injuries

Hazardous Materials / Chemical Odors

What to Do

- Evacuate area immediately
- Call Campus Safety or 911 to report exact location & description of odor
- Follow instructions from responders
- Do NOT pull fire alarm unless directed (some chemicals react to alarms)

Infectious Disease Outbreak

An infectious disease outbreak is an occurrence of cases of disease that is more than expected, or cases clustered by time, space, or common behaviors.

Examples: influenza, covid-19, norovirus, measles etc.

Student Health Services works closely with local and state public health authorities, including the Delaware County Health Department and the Pennsylvania Department of Health, to monitor and respond to outbreaks.

What to Do

- Check your university email, and the campus website regularly for official updates.
- Stay home (or in your residence hall room) if you have fever > 100.4 and/or active nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.
- Contact Student Health Services, a healthcare provider or local and state health care officials for guidance on testing, treatment, or next steps.
- Follow isolation or precaution guidance from Student Health Services, health care providers or local and state health officials.

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- Practice good hygiene: Handwashing, covering coughs/sneezes, avoid sharing personal items and staying up to date on recommended vaccinations.

Reporting

- Notify Student Health Services, a healthcare provider or local and state health officials if diagnosed with a reportable infectious disease.
- Notify faculty if illness affects your attendance.

Power Outage

What to Do

- Remain calm and stay in place unless unsafe.
- Use flashlights, never candles.
- Turn off electronics to avoid surge damage.
- Labs: stop experiments if safe; close chemical containers; secure equipment.
- Some doors may fail-secure; wait for responders if locked out/in.
- Report outages to Campus Safety.

Utility Loss

Examples: HVAC failure, loss of heating or cooling, gas leak, water main break, indoor flooding

What to Do

HVAC Failure / Loss of Heating & Cooling

- Move to another area of the building if temperature becomes unsafe.
- Labs: close fume hood sashes and stop work if ventilation is compromised.
- Report temperature extremes or failed ventilation immediately.

Gas Leak

- Do NOT operate light switches or equipment.
- Evacuate immediately.
- From a safe location, call Campus Safety or 911.

Water Main Break/Indoor Flooding

- Avoid standing water near electrical outlets.
- Move to higher floors.
- Report immediately.

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Weather-Related Operational Disruptions

Examples: Winter weather causing remote school

What to Do

- Watch for official Omnilert and email alerts.
- Expect guidance on delayed openings, early dismissals, sheltering locations, or remote operations.
- For winter weather: use caution on walkways and stairs.
- For extreme heat: hydrate, seek shade or cooling spaces, report heat-stress symptoms.

Special Settings & Populations

Residence Halls: Follow RA instructions; know evacuation routes (i.e. building exits) and assembly areas. Assembly areas are located a minimum of 150 feet away from the building and follow the same assembly plan used during fire drills.

Laboratories: Maintain posted emergency procedures and spill kits.

Events/Large Gatherings: Identify exits and shelter locations; designate an event safety lead.

Minors on Campus: Ensure program leaders know emergency procedures and reunification procedures.

Accessibility & Areas of Refuge

Using building floor plans, identify area of refuge. Persons with mobility, visual, auditory or cognitive disabilities should pre-plan assistance. In an evacuation, move to an Area of Refuge and notify Campus Safety of the exact location.

Roles & Responsibilities

Faculty/Staff: Lead students/visitors during emergencies when safe; account for your group at assembly areas; report missing persons and last-known locations.

Supervisors/Dept Leads: Maintain updated phone trees and continuity plans; ensure staff training and drills.

RAs & Student Leaders: Reinforce procedures in housing and student spaces.

Fire Extinguisher PASS Method

Only use a fire extinguisher if trained and safe to do so

A fire extinguisher should only be used on small, contained fires when you have:

- Been trained
- Have a clear exit behind you, and
- The fire is not spreading

Use the PASS Method:

P – Pull the pin

A – Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire

S – Squeeze the handle to discharge.

S – Sweep from side to side at the base until extinguished.

Do NOT attempt to fight a fire if:

- The fire is larger than a small wastebasket
- Smoke is filling the area
- You don't know what is burning
- You don't have an exit route
- You feel unsafe at any time

If any condition is unsafe: Evacuate immediately and close doors behind you.

Reporting Mechanisms

Private Reporting

Campus Safety:

- Contact: 610-499-4200
- Available 24/7

Title IX Office:

- Use the [link](#) below to fill out a reporting form:
 - https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?WidenerUniv&layout_id=40

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Confidential Resources

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

- Contact: 610-499-1261
- Open Monday-Friday 9AM-5PM

Student Health Services

- Contact: 610-499-1183
- Open Monday-Friday, 8:30AM-4:30PM

Delaware County Victim Assistance Center

- Contact: 610-566-4342
- Available 24/7

Delaware County Domestic Abuse Project

- Contact: 610-565-4590
- Available 24/7

Behavioral Threat/Violence Prevention Section

Early intervention is critical for preventing violence. Community members should report concerning behaviors before they escalate.

Behaviors of Concern May Include:

- Threatening or intimidating comments.
- Fixation on weapons, violence, harm, or past attacks.
- Stalking harassment, or unwanted contact.
- Sudden behavioral changes indicating distress.
- Attempts to access restricted or sensitive areas.
- Reports from peers or faculty about fear for safety.

What to Do:

- Report immediately to Campus Safety and file a CARE report.
- Do NOT confront the individual directly unless safety demands it.
- In imminent danger, call 911.

What the CARE Team does:

- Reviews reports of concerning behavior.

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- Coordinates responses with counseling, Threat Assessment Team, student affairs, Campus Safety, and other partners.
- Provides support services, safety planning and wellness interventions.

Emergency Preparedness on Campus

Timely Warnings

- Initiated when a Clery crime poses an ongoing or serious threat to the campus community.
- Campus Safety or University Relations drafts and issues the warning in coordination with Emergency Management.
- Distributed via Omnilert, campus email, and University website; physical postings may be used if electronic systems are unavailable.
- All warnings are reviewed and documented for Clery compliance.

Example of Timely Warnings:

"Timely Warning – Robbery – Main Campus: A robbery was reported near 15th & Walnut at 9:15 PM. Suspect fled east on Walnut Street. No injuries reported. Increased patrols in area. Report tips to Campus Safety."

Emergency Notifications

- Initiated when a situation presents an immediate threat to health or safety on campus.
- Authorized by Campus Safety, Emergency Management, or University Leadership.
- Campus Safety or University Relations drafts and issues emergency notifications in coordination with University Leadership.
- Disseminated through multi-modal systems including Omnilert, campus email, signage, and official social media, accounts.
- Follow-up messages are issued as the situation evolves, coordinated between Campus Safety, Emergency Management and University Relations.

Example of Emergency Notification: "Emergency Alert Main Campus: Shelter-in-Place now due to police activity near University Center. Lock doors, stay away from windows. Updates to follow. "

Personal Preparedness

Recommended Kit: phone charger, battery, small first-aid kit, medications, flashlight, water/snack, contact list. Faculty may keep a basic kit in classrooms/offices if appropriate.

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Personal Safety

Situational Awareness

- Always stay alert to your surroundings.
- Report unusual behavior, unsafe conditions, or concerning comments to Campus Safety 24/7 or other Reporting Tools (see below).

Walking Safety

- Walk in well-lit, populated areas.
- Avoid distractions like headphones or texting.
- Use the LiveSafe app for SafeWalk or to quickly contact Campus Safety.

Office/Classroom Safety

- Keep personal belongings secured.
- Know evacuation routes and shelter locations in your building.
- Keep doors locked in restricted or after-hours spaces.

Travel Safety (On-Campus)

- Use campus shuttles when available.
- If alone at night, request an escort through Campus Safety or SafeWalk through LiveSafe app.
- Do not prop open exterior building doors.

Personal Preparedness

- Keep your phone charged.
- Ensure you are signed up for Omnilert alerts.
- Know emergency numbers for your Widener campus.
- Maintain awareness of University communications and weather advisories.
- Ensure your emergency contact is up-to-date:
 - Visit MyWidener → Search “FERPA & Emergency Contacts” to update your emergency contact information.

If You Feel Unsafe

- Move to a populated area.
- Call Campus Safety immediately.
- Use LiveSafe to report the situation discreetly.

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Emergency Quick Reference Page

Emergency & Campus Contact Information

Department/Agency	Hours of Operation	Phone Number
Campus Safety – Chester	24/7	610-499-4200
Campus Safety – Delaware	24/7	302-477-2200
Campus Safety – Commonwealth	24/7	717-541-1911
Police/Fire/EMS	24/7	911
Student Health Services	Mon-Fri, 8:30AM-4:30PM	610-499-1183
Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS)	Mon-Fri, 9AM-4PM	610-499-1261
Delaware County Victim Assistance Center & Domestic Abuse Project	24/7	610-566-4342 & 610-565-4590

Reporting Tools

CARE Team Reporting: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?WidenerUniv&layout_id=43

Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Reporting:
https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?WidenerUniv&layout_id=40

Hazing Online Complaint Form:
https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?WidenerUniv&layout_id=42

Emergency Actions

Evacuate – Leave immediately; use stairs; stay clear of entrances; do not re-enter.

Shelter-in-Place – Go to an interior room; stay inside; monitor alerts.

Lockdown – Run if safe, hide if you cannot run, fight only as last resort.

Safety Apps & Alerts

Omnilert: University emergency alert system for immediate notifications.

LiveSafe App: Report concerns, access safety resources, SafeWalk, and two-way communication with Campus Safety.