



# FCCLA Meeting Emergency & Crisis Policy

*Updated May 2015*

## **I. Introduction**

Though the likelihood and impact of crisis varies from event to event, we know that, in today's world, the risk is always present.

The FCCLA Board of Directors believe that the following policy and procedures will make our participants more safe and our staff better prepared so that everyone may have an enjoyable time at our national meetings and conferences.

Unfortunate events can occur quickly and without warning, so planning is a crucial first step toward a calm and effective response.

All meeting participants should use this document to be completely prepared should an emergency or crisis occur. Together, we'll continue to provide The Ultimate Leadership Experience.

## **II. Emergency Contact Plan**

All meeting attendees are required to should submit emergency contact information as part of the meeting registration process. Conference personnel should have immediate access to this information as needed while on site and during the entire event.

## **III. State Association Primary and Secondary Emergency Contacts**

Conference personnel should have on record a list of all primary and secondary emergency contacts for all state associations. This information should be requested and gathered from state associations as part of the meeting registration process. Conference personnel should have immediate access to this information as needed while on site and during the entire event.

## **IV. Notifying Emergency Contacts**

Emergency contacts should be notified immediately – as soon as the situation is safe – should an emergency or crisis occur. As part of the registration process, all registrants should submit accurate emergency contact information. Conference personnel should have immediate access to contact information as needed while on site and during the entire event.

The Executive Director will guide the notification process, which could include phone calls, text messages, emails, information posted on the FCCLA website, or any other method of communication that he/she deems appropriate for the situation. All conference personnel should follow the directions of the Executive Director throughout the emergency notification process.

## **V. Conference Evacuation Plan**

### *Default Evacuations (Fire/Smoke Alarms)*

If you see fire or smell smoke, follow these guidelines to report the situation and exit the building:

- Remain calm. Conference facilities have sophisticated and efficient fire alarms and suppression systems and many exit doors.
- Call 911 and report the exact location of the fire if known (room number, aisle number, area description, etc.).
- When reporting a fire and no telephone is available, notify the nearest security officer or event staffer.
- Proceed calmly to the nearest emergency exit, and exit the building immediately.
- If there is an actual fire, an audible alarm will sound.
- Do not attempt to use elevators.
- Try to assist disabled or elderly persons who may need assistance exiting the building.
- Do not re-enter the building until instructed to do so by fire department or conference personnel.

### *Discretionary Evacuations*

In the event of a crisis, you may need to evacuate the building. Should that become necessary, you would receive instructions about what to do and where to go by emergency and conference personnel. In such an instance, you should follow these instructions:

- Remain calm.
- Be attentive for instructions.
- Leave the facility through the nearest exit as instructed.
- Do not take time to retrieve personal property.
- If possible, assist elderly and disabled persons.
- Do not loiter or wait for others.
- Do not try to re-enter the building.
- Listen for the “all clear” signal before attempting to return to the building.

## **VI. Emergency Procedures**

### *Medical Emergency*

If you see an ill or injured person, one of the most important things you should do is request assistance in getting medical help. Medical personnel may be stationed at a first aid station located in your event area and can assist you immediately. If no personnel are stationed there, look for conference personnel or a house phone or use your cell phone to call 911.

Should a medical emergency occur, you should follow the guidelines below:

- Remain calm.
- Check for injuries.
- Do not move him/her, unless they are in danger.
- Call for help to get medical assistance immediately.
- Reassure the victim that help is on the way.
- Do not attempt to perform first aid or CPR unless you are trained and certified to do so.
- Stay with the individual until emergency personnel arrive.

### *Bomb Threats*

Every bomb threat is treated as a serious matter. Most bomb threats are received by telephone. If you receive a bomb threat, keep the caller talking and get as many details as possible. This can provide important information that can help diffuse the situation and give clues to the location of a bomb.

In the event of a bomb threat, follow these instructions:

- Remain calm.
- Do not hang up on the caller. Attempt to keep the caller talking as long as possible so you can get as much information as you can.
- Listen for voice-identifying characteristics and background sounds.
- Try to remember the exact words used by the caller (e.g., location of device, explosion time, etc.).
- Try to write the conversation down.
- Have someone else call 911 and provide the dispatcher all important details.
- Follow the instructions of emergency responders.

### *Suspicious Packages*

Should you encounter a suspicious package, follow these security guidelines to report the package and keep yourself and others safe:

- Do not touch or move the package.
- Alert conference personnel of the package.
- Note and share the location and general description of the package, explaining why you found the package suspicious.
- Follow the instructions of conference personnel.

### *Severe Weather Events*

Weather can change quickly, and the best protection is to be aware of what's happening by paying attention to severe weather alerts and news/weather outlets. Follow these guidelines for severe weather events.

## Earthquake

If you are inside a building:

- Stay where you are until the shaking stops. Do not run outside. Do not get in a doorway, as this does not provide protection from falling or flying objects, and you may not be able to remain standing.
- Drop to the ground onto your hands and knees so the earthquake doesn't knock you down.
- Cover your head and neck with your arms to protect yourself from falling debris.
- If you are in danger from falling objects, and you can move safely, crawl for additional cover under a sturdy desk or table.
- If there is low furniture or an interior wall or corner nearby, and the path is clear, these may also provide some additional cover.
- Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls, and anything that could fall, such as light fixtures or furniture.
- Hold on to any sturdy covering so you can move with it until the shaking stops. Stay where you are until the shaking stops.
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If you are outdoors when the shaking starts, move away from buildings, streetlights, and utility wires. Once in the open, drop to the ground, cover your head and neck, and remain as still as possible. Stay there until the shaking stops. This might not be possible in a city, so you may need to duck inside a building to avoid falling debris.

If you are in a moving vehicle, stop as quickly and safely as possible and stay in the vehicle. Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses, and utility wires. Proceed cautiously once the earthquake has stopped. Avoid roads, bridges, or ramps that the earthquake may have damaged.

## Tornado

- Go the lowest building level. If there is no basement, go to the center of a small interior room on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors, and outside walls. Put as many walls as possible between you and the outside.
- Get under a sturdy table and use your arms to protect your head and neck.
- Do not open windows.
- If you are not in a sturdy building, there is no single research-based recommendation for what last-resort action to take because many factors can affect your decision. Possible actions include:
  - Immediately get into a vehicle, buckle your seat belt, and try to drive to the closest sturdy shelter. If your vehicle is hit by flying debris while you are driving, pull over and park.
  - Take cover in a stationary vehicle. Put the seat belt on and cover your head with your arms and a blanket, coat, or other cushion if possible.

- Lie in an area noticeably lower than the level of the roadway and cover your head with your arms and a blanket, coat, or other cushion if possible.

#### Winter Weather and Storms

- Stay indoors during winter storms.
- Walk carefully on snowy, icy walkways.
- Dress properly for cold weather to prevent frostbite and hypothermia.
- Keep dry. Change wet clothing frequently to prevent a loss of body heat. Wet clothing loses all of its insulating value and transmits heat rapidly.
- Do not drive if the conditions are unsafe.

#### Thunderstorms and Lightning

- Use a battery-operated weather radio for updates from local officials.
- If needed, use flashlights, not candles.
- Avoid contact with corded phones and devices, including those plugged into electricity for recharging. Cordless and wireless phones not connected to wall outlets are OK to use.
- Avoid contact with electrical equipment or cords.
- Avoid contact with plumbing. Do not wash your hands or take a shower. Plumbing and bathroom fixtures can conduct electricity.
- Stay away from windows and doors, and stay off porches or balconies.
- Do not lie on concrete floors, and do not lean against concrete walls.
- Avoid natural lightning rods such as a tall, isolated tree in an open area.
- Avoid hilltops, open fields, the beach, or a boat on the water.
- Take shelter in a sturdy building. Avoid isolated sheds or other small structures in open areas.
- Avoid contact with anything metal.
- If you are driving, try to safely exit the roadway and park. Stay in the vehicle, and turn on the emergency flashers.

## **VI. Lockdown Procedures**

In some circumstances, it will be safer for those in a room or building to remain inside. Should conference personnel determine the need for you to go under a lockdown, you should follow these guidelines to stay informed and protect yourself:

- Remain calm.
- Follow the instructions of conference personnel.
- Be attentive for instructions.
- Go into an interior room with few windows, if possible.
- Close the door and remain quiet.

- Barricade the door if materials are available.
- Assist any elderly or disabled persons.
- Do not try to leave the room or building.
- Stay in your assigned area.
- Listen for the “all clear” sign given by conference personnel before attempting to leave the room or building.

### **VIII. Offsite Meeting Location**

Prior to any meeting or conference, national staff should designate an offsite meeting location. This offsite meeting location should be publicized in the programs of all national events.

### **IX. Offsite Staff Operation Center**

Prior to any meeting or conference, national staff should designate an offsite staff operation center location. This offsite staff operation center location should be publicized in the programs of all national events.

### **X. Continuity of Leadership**

Should the Executive Director of FCCLA be unable to perform his/her duties under the guidelines of this plan, the following leadership succession is in place.

Persons are listed in the order of succession with the first position listed being first in line, the second position listed being second in line, etc.

- Director of Finance
- Director of Conferences
- Director of Communications
- Director of Programs
- Director of Membership

### **XI. Communicating the Plan**

Emergency contacts, evacuations plans, lockdown procedures, and the offsite meeting location should be included in the programs of all national events.

## **XII. General Safety Tips**

### *For Advisers:*

- Before traveling to the meeting, collect parental consent forms and emergency contact forms from students and bring these forms with to the event. Keep them handy by carrying them with you in a binder or folder.
- Take a digital photo of each student traveling with you to the meeting using your phone or camera. Have the photos readily available with you either on your phone or on a flash drive. In the unlikely event that a student becomes lost, the photos will help convention staff and local authorities to locate him or her.
- Remind your students of the general safety tips and emergency procedures included in this document.

### *For Students:*

#### Hotel Safety

- Read the emergency instructions on the back of your hotel room door. Familiarize yourself with the fire escape route.
- Count the number of doors between your room and the nearest exit.
- Do not leave your door open, and always use the dead bolt.
- Do not open your hotel door to anyone you don't know. Call the front desk to verify hotel staff, security guards, and others requesting entrance to your room.
- If you encounter questionable individuals, report them to the front desk.
- Do not say your room number in public.
- Do not leave valuables out in the open. Many hotels provide lock boxes for your security.
- Keep your room key with you at all times.

#### Parking Safety

- Always lock your car and/or bus doors.
- Do not leave valuables in view inside the car or bus.
- Do not store an extra key under the car/fender, etc.
- If you must lock valuables in your vehicle, hide them in the vehicle before you arrive at the parking lot/garage.

#### Public Transportation Safety

- Use call boxes or emergency intercoms that are available.
- Be aware of emergency exit and fire extinguisher locations.
- Keep your belongings with you at all times.
- Follow the instructions of drivers and conductors.



## General Safety

- Go for the RED.
  - R = React: Take information around you seriously. Pay attention.
  - E = Evaluate: Judge the level of threat to your safety or the safety of others.
  - D = Decide: Decide if you need to take immediate action or seek help.
- Do not wear FCCLA badges or nametags outside of FCCLA events.
- Travel in groups.
- Refrain from visiting with strangers.
- Make sure your adviser knows where you are.
- Be aware of what's happening around you.
- Carry a cell phone. Make sure people closest to you know how to reach you. Make sure you know how to reach other members of your group, including chapter members, chaperones, and your adviser.
- Report emergencies immediately.
- Locate emergency exits and fire alarms.