

PENTICTON AND DISTRICT SOCIETY FOR COMMUNITY LIVING

POLICY: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

SERVICE AREA: ALL AREAS

APPLIES TO: ALL PERSONNEL, SERVICE RECIPIENTS, STUDENTS, VISITORS
AND VOLUNTEERS

SCOPE

The emergency response policy applies to all PDSCL employees, volunteers, persons served, tenants, visitors, and any buildings, grounds, or facilities owned, operated, rented, leased, or supervised by the organization. The policy includes guidance on both preparation and response measures before, during, and after an emergency.

PREAMBLE

The Penticton and District Society for Community Living (PDSCL) is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all individuals associated with the organization. This policy establishes emergency response guidelines to assist personnel, volunteers, and service recipients in responding effectively to emergencies occurring on or near PDSCL premises. These guidelines are intended to mitigate risk, minimize injury, and ensure a structured approach to crisis management until public safety officials or appropriate emergency response personnel arrive.

This policy does not provide detailed instructions for trained emergency responders beyond the initial response phase, nor does it outline procedures for property recovery following an incident. However, it ensures that necessary plans and tools are in place to protect people and property effectively.

DEFINITIONS

Minor Emergency: Any incident, potential or actual, that does not significantly impact the overall operations of PDSCL. Examples include power brownouts, minor water leaks, false fire alarms, or routine maintenance issues.

Major Emergency: An incident, potential or actual, that affects an entire building or disrupts the general operation of PDSCL. A major emergency typically requires assistance from external emergency services and an organized internal response. Examples include power outages, fires, major vehicle accidents, snow emergencies, bomb threats, or hazardous material (HAZMAT) spills.

Disaster: A significant event that severely impairs or halts PDSCL operations. A disaster often involves casualties, major property damage, and a need for coordinated response efforts involving external emergency services. In such cases, an Emergency Command Centre will be established. Examples include hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, severe fires, and nuclear disasters.

Epidemic/Pandemic: A widespread outbreak of disease that significantly disrupts PDSCL operations at a community, national, or global level. PDSCL will coordinate with health authorities such as Interior Health, BC Housing, Community Living BC, and the BC Ministry of Health to follow appropriate protocols and make necessary service adjustments.

POLICY STATEMENT

The Board of Directors authorizes the CEO to oversee the emergency and safety plan. The CEO or their designated representatives will act as emergency coordinators, determining the scope of an emergency and implementing appropriate response measures.

All PDSCL staff and persons receiving services will be thoroughly oriented on the emergency and safety plan. Any minor or major emergencies must be reported to the CEO, who will, in turn, notify the Board of Directors if further action or communication is required.

PDSCL is committed to fostering a culture of preparedness by ensuring staff members engage in emergency response discussions with individuals receiving services. Emergency contact numbers are prominently posted near all telephones. Coordinators and managers are equipped with cell phones, and residential facilities have telephones with an 8-hour battery backup. Additional landline phones with jacks may be required for certain locations.

Evacuation procedures are clearly outlined through posted exit diagrams at all PDSCL service areas. Staging areas for emergency evacuations will be predetermined by management, and all personnel, volunteers, tenants, and individuals served will be made aware of these locations.

EMERGENCY AND SAFETY PLAN

PDSCL maintains an Emergency and Safety Plan for all sites to ensure comprehensive preparedness. These plans include detailed emergency procedures, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and resources necessary for effective crisis response. The Emergency and Safety Plan is designed to safeguard residents, tenants, clients, staff, and visitors across all PDSCL-operated locations.

Each Emergency and Safety Plan incorporates an emergency preparedness kit, which includes essential supplies tailored to each specific site and, where applicable, individual needs of residents or clients. These emergency preparedness kits are:

- Designed to address the unique requirements of each PDSCL location.
- Maintained to ensure they remain stocked with necessary supplies.
- Reviewed and updated on an annual basis to confirm compliance with safety standards.

The organization is responsible for ensuring these emergency preparedness kits are readily accessible and in good condition at all times. In the event of an emergency or evacuation, designated staff members will ensure the kits accompany individuals to safety.

All Emergency and Safety Plan outlines the procedures for:

1. Safety Responsibilities and Duties
2. Emergency Phone Call Procedure
3. Emergency Phone Numbers
4. Emergency Safety Team - Policies -Procedures
5. Fire Safety
6. If you discover a fire
7. If you hear the fire alarm
8. How to use a fire extinguisher
9. Evacuation Drills
10. Forest Fire Emergency
11. Staff Medical Emergencies
12. Resident Medical Emergencies
13. Snow Storm
14. Earthquakes
15. Power failure for the whole building
16. Robbery/Crime Prevention
17. Bomb Threat
18. Death of a Person
19. Lock Down Procedure
20. Missing Person
21. Gas Leak
22. Shut off locations
23. Building Maintenance
24. Emergency Kit Contents
25. Emergency Kit Review Checklist
26. Emergency and Safety Plan Staff Orientation Sign-Off

EMERGENCY RESPONSE MANAGEMENT

CEO and Management Responsibilities:

- Maintain an updated emergency response strategy that aligns with regulatory requirements and best practices.
- Conduct annual reviews of all emergency preparedness procedures and resources.
- Ensure that all personnel receive training on emergency protocols.
- Establish an Emergency Command Centre when necessary.
- Maintain open communication with relevant health and emergency response authorities.

Staff Responsibilities:

- Familiarize themselves with emergency response protocols and evacuation procedures.
- Ensure individuals served are aware of and prepared for emergency situations.
- Assist in the maintenance and review of emergency preparedness kits.
- Follow all instructions issued by management or emergency response personnel.

COMMUNICATION AND RECORD-KEEPING

The CEO will maintain a portable binder containing all relevant emergency contact information and key documentation for individuals served. This binder will be accessible in case of an emergency to ensure the appropriate response and coordination of services.

The CEO will report all major emergencies, as well as minor emergencies that pose further consequences to the organization, to the Board of Directors in a timely manner.

This policy is an integral part of PDSCL's commitment to ensuring a safe and prepared environment for all individuals involved with the organization. Regular evaluations and updates will be conducted to uphold the highest standards of emergency readiness.

PROCEDURE

Preparation:

1. The Emergency and Safety plan for all worksites must be reviewed annually. A physical copy of the Emergency and Safety plan must be kept at all worksites.
2. All staff, volunteers, and persons receiving services must be trained through the Emergency and Safety Plan for sites which includes procedures for emergencies such as fires, earthquakes, snowstorms, power outages, bomb threats, and medical emergencies upon hire or placement.
3. Staff, volunteers, and persons served must be familiar with PDSCL's Evacuation and Society Closure policies and procedures.
4. Emergency telephone numbers must be posted by all telephones.
5. Emergency safe spots in each service area must be identified and communicated to all occupants.
6. Essential emergency supplies, including flashlights, batteries, and first aid kits, must be stored in each service area and taken by staff during an emergency.
7. Fire exit diagrams must be posted in all service areas.
8. Each program must maintain a portable binder containing pertinent service recipient information for emergency use.
9. Staff must review power outage procedures regularly.
10. Staging areas for emergency evacuations must be determined and all staff, volunteers, and service recipients informed accordingly.

During an Emergency Disaster:

1. Stay calm and assist others.
2. If necessary, turn off water, gas, and electricity at main switches.
3. Tune in to emergency broadcasts via radio or designated communication channels.
4. Staff must take keys for all vehicles when evacuating.
5. During an earthquake, stay outside if already outside; avoid buildings, trees, and power lines.
6. In a vehicle, pull over safely, avoiding overpasses and power lines.

During an Epidemic/Pandemic:

1. Follow all directives from health authorities.
2. Keep stakeholders informed of service changes or restrictions.
3. Require sick individuals and staff to stay home.
4. Protect vulnerable populations as required by health authorities.
5. Increase facility sanitation and hygiene measures.
6. Adjust staffing levels according to official guidance.

After an Emergency Disaster:

1. Evacuate safely, avoiding elevators.
2. Follow all Society Closure protocols.
3. Assist injured individuals and seek medical aid as needed.
4. Keep communication lines open for emergency use only.
5. Follow instructions from emergency authorities before returning to work.
6. Utilize emergency supplies efficiently to sustain essential needs.