## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

[Organization Name] is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all employees and any visitors to its workplace. As such, [Organization Name] has developed the following policy to guide its employees and managers in the event of emergency situations. Preparing for emergencies is a critical part of our health and safety commitment.

DEFINITIONS

An “emergency” is a situation or an impending situation that constitutes a danger of major proportions that could result in serious harm to persons or substantial damage to property and that is caused by the forces of nature, a disease or other health risk, an accident, or an act whether intentional or otherwise (*Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, R.S.O., 1990).

Some common types of emergencies include:

* Fires or explosions;
* Medical emergencies;
* Severe weather and earthquakes;
* Major power failures; and
* Hazardous material spills.

POLICY

In order to ensure that in the event of an emergency, all of [Organization Name]’s employees are prepared for their roles and responsibilities, the following plans must be followed. These emergency plans are necessary to:

* Keep employees, visitors, and first responders free from any further injuries;
* Succeed in managing life-threatening situations;
* As much as possible, minimizing any damage to equipment, machinery, tools, and any part of the environment; and
* Ensuring a return to work as safely as possible.

In the event of any workplace injuries of any kind, [Organization Name] will follow the appropriate reporting requirements, as per the (Insert legislation, e.g., the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act, and/or the Collective Agreement, as applicable).

Accessibility Considerations

As per the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA), [Organization Name] will ensure that individualized response plans are created for any employees who identify that they will need assistance during an emergency due to a permanent or temporary disability. These responsibilities include:

* Providing individualized emergency response information to the employee;
* With the employee’s consent, sharing this information with the person(s) who will be designated to aid them during an emergency;
* Reviewing the information contained in an employee’s emergency response plan when:
  + The employee changes work locations (e.g., to a different floor or office);
  + The employee’s overall accommodation needs are being reviewed; and
  + When [Organization Name]’ general emergency response policies are being reviewed.

[Organization Name] will ensure that regardless of whether the disability is permanent (e.g., vision loss), or temporary (e.g., broken limb), employees are afforded the same level of accommodations required.

The following four major elements have been considered for this Emergency Preparedness and Response Policy:

1. Prevention (use of the policies and procedures to follow to avoid or minimize any emergencies);
2. Preparation (the actions and procedures to take to ensure that [Organization Name] and its employees are ready to effectively respond);
3. Response (the actions to be taken in the event of an emergency); and
4. Recovery (how employees and supervisors can return to normal business operations).

Planning Team

At [Organization Name], a planning team will be established, consisting of (Insert names and positions of those on the team) in order that the emergency response planning includes all departments. Senior management will be involved with the planning and will ensure to support its implementation. The planning team is responsible for:

* Assessing any risks or hazards to the workplace;
* Developing specifics for the emergency response plan;
* Implementing the plan (including communicating and training the plan to employees);
* Testing the plan by holding drills on a (Insert schedule) basis; and
* Improving or modifying the plan as additional information becomes available.

The planning team will also ensure that it retains:

* Up-to-date emergency contact information for all employees, including supervisors;
* A schedule which outlines who will be on shift so that they may be checked off in the event of an evacuation; and
* A list of emergency names and contacts (e.g., poison control, etc.) that is kept in (Insert various locations).

Fire or Explosion Preparedness

At [Organization Name], there is a (Insert alarm-type) that will be triggered in the event of a fire.

In the event of a fire:

* Employees are to evacuate, following the below evacuation procedures;
* The fire must be reported, and the information must include:
  + Who is reporting the fire;
  + What has happened (to the best of the person’s knowledge);
  + Where it has happened (Insert address);
  + If there are any injuries; and
  + Whether there are others who may be in the path of the fire.

**Evacuation Procedures**

In the event the fire alarm sounds, or there is an emergency situation that requires evacuation, [Organization Name] employees must remain calm and proceed in an orderly fashion. (Insert specifics for your location – e.g., on every floor there is a captain who will remain behind to ensure that all employees have evacuated the floor.)

Employees are to proceed down the stairs – the elevator is never to be used in the event of an emergency – and through the (Insert location) door. In the event the (Insert location) door is blocked or unavailable, employees are to proceed to (Insert location of secondary emergency door). Once employees are out of the building, employees are to proceed to the designated meeting spot at (Insert location of meeting spot) so that everyone can be counted. The (Insert position of the captain) will have a copy of the schedule to ensure that all employees are accounted for.

Medical Emergency Preparedness

In the event of an emergency, employees are reminded that the first aid kits are located (Insert locations of first aid kits). In addition, the following employees are first aid trained (Insert names of those trained). (If the workplace has an automated external defibrillator, insert its location here.)

If an employee comes across a medical emergency, they are directed to call for help (911) immediately. They also need to survey the area around the injured person to ensure that there aren’t any hazards that could affect their own safety before moving towards the injured person.

If the employee is first aid trained, they should follow the instructions provided during their first aid training in assessing the person, the environment, and the need for additional support. If the situation requires it, be prepared to provide aid for life-threatening situations, including bleeding, loss of a pulse, or loss of breathing.

A reminder to employees that all emergency numbers can be accessed at: (Insert location of emergency numbers).

Employees are to provide assistance to first responders as they arrive, including by noting anything that could help the injured party, and providing any information requested by the first responders.

After the medical emergency has passed, the employee will be requested to provide a statement outlining what occurred, which may help in preventing any further occurrences. The employee is to provide the statement to (Insert position, or where the employee is to direct the statement).

Severe Weather and Earthquake Preparedness

As there may be different levels of preparedness required for severe/inclement weather or earthquakes, the following procedure is for immediate danger due to an earthquake, or storm. In the event of a “weather watch”, [Organization Name] will closely monitor the inclement weather situation, and immediately notify employees if emergency procedures need to be started. In the event of a “weather warning”, the below procedure should be followed. [Organization Name] will ensure that the following procedure is practiced at minimum (Insert timeframe, e.g., every quarter, etc.).

In the event of severe weather or an earthquake, employees are to:

* Proceed to the nearest “safe place.”
  + This safe place could consist of a desk, or sturdy table, or against an interior wall, provided that there aren’t any bookcases, cupboards, windows, or any other kind of furniture that could fall during an earthquake.
* Employees are to protect their eyes by keeping their heads down.
* As after-shocks could follow an earthquake, it is important for employees to wait in their safe place until the shaking stops, and then proceed with a personal inventory, making sure that they are not injured.
* Employees should look carefully for hazards such as fire, including damaged electrical lines, broken gas lines, etc.
* If an evacuation is necessary (and as directed by the emergency captain), employees are directed to always use the stairs, not the elevator.
* Once outside, employees should move away from buildings, trees, streetlights, and any overhead wires, covering their head as they move.

Major Power Outage Preparedness

At [Organization Name], there are (Insert safety measures, e.g., portable generators or emergency lights) in the event of a major power outage. During an outage, the (Insert position) will phone the utility company to verify whether the outage is widespread. Employees are to safely gather in the (Insert location(s) – there may be multiple, depending on the number of floors in the building).

Employees are to ensure that there aren’t any persons in the elevators, and that no one attempts to use the elevators. In the event of a medical emergency during an outage, (Insert captain) will direct employees as needed in order to provide space for emergency services. 911 is only to be called if an emergency is life-threatening; emergency services will be overwhelmed in the event of a power outage.

[Organization Name] has the following items to use in the event of a power outage (Insert items and their locations here).

As instructed, employees may be required to unplug their computers and other electrical appliances to guard against surges when the power returns. The doors to the refrigerators must be kept closed.

Hazardous Material Spill Preparedness

At [Organization Name], all WHMIS procedures are followed to prevent any leaks, spills, or damage due to hazardous materials. However, as accidents may occur, [Organization Name] will follow the below steps to ensure the safety of all employees and visitors to the workplace.

When a spill occurs,

1. The first step is for employees to communicate that there is a spill to others in the area.
   1. As required, the (Insert position of safety captain) may commence evacuation procedures.
2. If evacuation procedures are not required, the next step will be to control the spill by closing the container, or righting what spilled over.
   1. Note: [Organization Name] has the following PPE available in the event of a spill (Insert appropriate PPE).
3. The next step is to contain the hazard by ensuring that it does not spill over into any other places (this could include spreading sand, kitty litter, etc.), to prevent any open paths for the liquid.
   1. If the employee cleaning up the spill must leave the area for any reason, they are instructed to block off the area where the spill occurred with the use of caution tape or caution cones or any other method to prevent access.
4. The next step is to clean the spill and check for damages. If any cleaning materials come into contact with a hazardous substance, they should be disposed of immediately, unless they can be safely disinfected. [Organization Name] will follow all applicable WHMIS procedures and will never instruct employees to perform clean-up work that goes against the stated instructions on the SDS sheet. Employees are to verify which chemicals may be used to clean up spills, prior to their use.
   1. In the event of damage to property, [Organization Name] will ensure that the area continues to be blocked off until the appropriate repairs can be made.