



To: SMC Faculty and Staff

Re: Emergency Evacuation & People with Disabilities

Before an emergency:

- Invite people with disabilities to identify their need for assistance in the event of an emergency and encourage recruitment of volunteers to assist in an emergency, by announcing in class, syllabus, or memo. Suggest that they practice lifting and/or communication techniques before an event occurs. For useful information go to www.cdihp.org/guide.html
- Those occupying a multi-story building (i.e., Drescher Hall, AET, Business, Cayton Center, Science, etc.) should identify whether an Area of Evacuation Assistance (a fire-resistant area with an emergency communication link) exists and inform students and visitors of its location.
- Spend the time necessary to know the escape routes of the buildings you occupy.

During an emergency evacuation:

- If the person is in immediate danger and cannot wait for professional assistance, ASK the person with disabilities if you can help BEFORE attempting any rescue technique or giving assistance. Ask the person how best assisted or moved, and whether there are any special considerations.
- DO NOT use elevators, unless authorized to do so by fire or police personnel.
- DO NOT attempt to lift a person occupying a wheelchair down a flight of stairs. If an evacuation chair or similar device is available, make sure the person is secured properly. Wheelchairs will be evacuated later.
- If the person has blindness or other visual impairment, DO NOT grasp the person's arm; rather, ask the person to hold onto your arm as you exit, especially if there is debris or a crowd. Give verbal instructions/information.
- If the person is deaf or has other hearing loss, get the attention of the person by touch and eye contact, offer visual cues to the evacuation route, pointing toward exits or evacuation maps posted at elevators.
- If a person cannot exit the building, an enclosed room or stairwell with the door closed, away from smoke, is the safest place to wait for emergency personnel. Immediately notify Area Emergency Coordinator (bright yellow vest) or emergency personnel about anyone who remains in the building and the specific location.
- Be aware that many people have "hidden" disabilities (heart conditions, asthma, seizures, emphysema) that may be exacerbated by the emergency event.