

# Lifeworks Emergency Procedures

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## Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to guide staff in responding effectively during various types of emergencies when out in the community.

## Procedure

**Location:** Lifeworks' Community Services

**Date Revised:** 5/22/2025

Anytime there is potential danger, a life-threatening situation, emergency evacuations, medical emergencies, emergency lockdowns, or if additional assistance is needed:

1. **Call 911** State the emergency and follow the guidance given by the 911 operator. For a mental health crisis, say "I want a Crisis Intervention Team Officer", or Text MN to 741741 for mental health crisis help, or call \*\*CRISIS (\*\*274747) for mental health crisis help in metro counties.

**Then, as appropriate, call:**

- a. **Mental Health Crisis Intervention Team Numbers:** if the client's Support Plan/Support Plan Addendum instructs or if a person threatens suicide. **The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline): Dial, text, or chat **988** or call toll free 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or visit the website: [www.988lifeline.org](http://www.988lifeline.org)  
There is also a Lifeworks' employee resource listed as well.  
Employee Assistance Program: Hartford at 1-800-964-3577
- b. **Poison Control's number:** **1-800-222-1222**

**As soon as possible after making initial appropriate calls:**

2. **Notify your supervisor**
3. **Call Facilities & Transportation Departments at: 651-454-2732**, if applicable.
4. **Call 651-365-3745** to inform the Crisis Communication Team of the crisis if staff are unable to contact their team manager.

**The following emergency situations and responses are found within this document starting on page 4:**

- Immediate Evacuations: Fire, Bomb Threat, Gas Leak
- Immediate Assistance Needed: Medical Emergency, Suicide Threat
- Immediate Assistance Needed: Missing/Elopement of person (client)
- Immediate Lockdown: Violent or Other Threatening Situation
- Immediate Safe Areas: Natural Disasters-Blizzards, Tornados, or other Severe Weather

**Essential Medical Needs**: essential medications for Day Support Services and treatments are withheld during an emergency and communicated to the appropriate health care professional (Lifeworks health consultant or the clients' nurse/ doctor/ guardian) for notification and direction. Currently, any clients' requiring essential medical services are accompanied by a staff and are responsible to provide any essential care needed. Alert 911 to any life-threatening situations.



**Support needed for those with mobility, hearing, visual, and speech impairments:** each Lifeworks staff is expected to assist with any person in need of assistance by anyway necessary to remove the person from danger to safety.

**Designated Responsible Personnel & Assignments:**

Type:	Primary Personnel Assigned:	Secondary Personnel Assigned:
Designated Staff in Charge:	Direct care staff	Coverage direct care staff or team manager that day.
Assistance to clients needing support:	Each direct care staff is responsible for the clients assigned to them.	All direct care staff/other personnel are required to assist as needed if able.
Maintaining essential emergency contact lists:	Direct care staff are responsible for updating information in Lifeworks system	Coverage direct care staff that day

**Reporting Requirements:** The Team Manager, Supervisor or lead staff in charge is responsible for completing an Emergency Report or actual emergency within 24 hours.

- Follow the Emergency Report Procedure and Incident Tracking in CRM Procedure for reporting requirements and directions.

## Emergency Procedures:

### Fire/Evacuation Procedures:

#### In Case of a Fire:

- Remain Calm & **REACT**:
  1. **R**- Remove those in immediate danger.
  2. **E**- Ensure that the room door is closed.
  3. **A**- Activate the Fire Alarm or paging system (if not already done).
  4. **C**- Call 911 & Notify Team Manager or Designee.
  5. **T**- Try to extinguish fire is safe to do so, use PASS:
    - **P**- Pull the Pin in the handle.
    - **A**- Aim the nozzle at the base of the fire.
    - **S**- Squeeze the lever (trigger) slowly.
    - **S**- Sweep from side to side.
- All staff should assist in any way necessary with any persons in the building to evacuate.
- Meet at designated external meeting area.
- The designated staff in charge will bring the emergency contact information for client(s) to the meeting area.
- The designated staff will take attendance to account for all clients they are responsible for.
- **Do not re-enter the building until authorized by fire department/police/designee.**

#### Unable to Evacuate:

- Call 911 giving your location.
- Close door & place a towel or another type of cloth/object under the door to assist in preventing smoke from entering.
- If smoke enters room, stay low as heat and gases tend to rise.

#### If you are on Fire:

**STOP** where you are, **DROP** to the floor or ground and **ROLL** your body to smother the fire.

### Natural Disasters or Severe Weather/Safe Area Procedures:

**In Case of Severe Weather/Blizzard/Tornado WARNING, the staff first informed of it should:**

1. Remain Calm.
2. Assist persons in need of support to a designated interior safe area.
3. Notify 911 if a life-threatening situation occurs
4. Notify your Team Manager for further instructions.
5. Remain listening to the National Weather Service System for weather alerts and updates on cellphones.
6. Stay away from doors, windows, outside walls and corners because they attract debris.
7. All staff should assist in any way necessary with persons in need of support in the building to designated safe areas.
8. The designated staff in charge will bring the emergency contact information for client(s) to the meeting area.
9. The designated staff will take attendance to account for all clients they are responsible for.

**If A Watch is issued:**

- Be ready to act quickly & take shelter.
- Designated staff in charge should monitor the Weather App on their cellphone for an increase in level to warning.
- See Transportation during a Warning section below.

**Transportation during a WARNING:**

- If inclement weather begins while clients are at Lifeworks, staff will follow the *Interruption of Lifeworks' Services Due to Dangerous Weather Policy and Procedure*. The Team Manager & Program Supervisor/designated staff in charge will continue to monitor weather conditions based on the local weather forecasts or reported by the Weather Radio Alerts and report to the **Lifeworks Transportation Department at 651-454-2732**.
- If it is not possible to send clients home safely, all staff will remain with client(s) to provide care for client(s) until it is safe for them to return home, and the warning has expired.
- Residences of clients and contracted transportation will be notified accordingly.
- Contracted transportation providers may choose to arrange early pick up of clients. Lifeworks will follow their recommendation for picking up clients.

**Utility Failure Procedures:**

**If Natural Gas Leak or a Ventilation Odor is Suspected or Present, the staff who discovered it should:**

1. Remain Calm & do not turn on switches or electrical equipment including telephones if there is a suspected gas leak.
2. Notify an employee at the business you are at.
3. **The designated staff in charge and client(s) they are responsible for must evacuate immediately.**
4. Staff should assist persons needing support.
5. The designated staff in charge will bring the emergency contact information for client(s) to the meeting area.
6. The designated staff will take attendance to account for all clients they are responsible for.
7. From the external designated meeting area, the designated staff in charge will call 911 and contact Team Manager for further instructions.
8. **After all persons have been evacuated, no one should enter the building for any purpose.**
9. The designated staff in charge will notify the Transportation Department of the emergency, if applicable.
10. **Staff should not smoke or start vehicles close to the building.**
11. Staff will be informed by the business when it is safe to re-enter the building or go home.
12. If services for the day are to be suspended, the Transportation Department will assist program staff with making arrangements for clients' transportation.

**Electrical Power Outage:**

- Remain Calm and in place. Await instructions from the business.
- Designated staff in charge will notify the Team Manager or Designee for further instructions.
- If evacuation is necessary, notify persons in the building & use your cellphone flashlight or flashlight to assist with safety.
- Assist persons in need of support to the designated external meeting area.
- If applicable, the designated staff in charge will bring the client(s) emergency contact information to the meeting area.
- The designated staff in charge will bring the emergency contact information for client(s) to the meeting area.
- The designated staff will take attendance to account for all clients they are responsible for.

**Facility Problem (roof, plumbing, loss of water, loss of Heat or A/C etc.):**

- Remain Calm.

- If full evacuation is necessary, notify persons in the building & assist all persons in need of support to the designated external meeting area.
- If applicable, the staff in charge must notify Team Manager or Designee for further instructions.
- If applicable, the designated staff in charge will bring the emergency contact information for client(s) to the meeting area.
- The designated staff will take attendance to account for all clients they are responsible for.

**Network Problem:**

- Designated staff in charge must call the IT Service Desk by **calling 651-365-3786** or create a ticket by emailing [D365-IT@lifeworks.org](mailto:D365-IT@lifeworks.org) from a remote device with cellular service and inform the Team Manager or Designee if necessary.

**Medical Emergency Procedures:****In the event of a Medical Emergency, the person who discovered the emergency should:**

1. Remain Calm & do not move the person in distress unless necessary.
2. If possible, delegate Staff or persons to:
  - Call 911 if a life-threatening situation occurs
  - Designated staff in charge will notify the Team Manager or Designee for further instructions. Call 651-365-3745 to inform the Crisis Communication Team if necessary.
  - If suicide threat, contact the Mental Health Crisis Intervention Team for assistance first if appropriate (dial, text, or chat 988), see suicide threat section below.
  - If possible, staff will attend to the person and provide assistance; trained staff will provide first aid & CPR as needed or directed by the 911 dispatcher until relieved by person or EMS.
  - If possible, staff will wait for the police and ambulance to arrive and direct them to the emergency. Locate client's medical profile and any protocols, DNI/DNR orders, if applicable.
3. If applicable, all staff should assist persons away from the area to another location or part of the room to ensure their safety and protect the privacy of the person.
4. Whenever possible, a Lifeworks staff will accompany the client to the hospital and remain there until the guardian, family or residential staff arrives.
5. Lifeworks will act as the authorized representative in a medical emergency if a client's legal representative cannot be reached or is delayed in arriving, or they do not have a legal representative and they are unable to decide or communicate for themselves.

**If a person threatens Suicide, the person who identified the situation should:**

1. Remain calm and do not leave the person alone.

2. Follow Medical Emergency procedure & notify immediately, also:
- Contact the Mental Health Crisis Intervention Team for assistance (dial, text, or chat 988) unless the threat of harm is imminent to self, call 911 immediately & ensure procedure is followed.
  - If the threat of harm is imminent to others, call 911 immediately & if necessary and follow the Violent or Other Threatening Situations Emergency Procedure.
  - Listen to the person; do not act shocked, judgmental or debate. Accept their feelings as they are, be understanding, remind them help is available and things will get better.
  - Ask direct questions like “Are you thinking of hurting yourself?”, “What are you thinking of doing?”, “Do you have a plan?” etc.
  - Remember that suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem, suicide is about stopping the pain and not about death.

**If a drug overdose is discovered or suspected, the person who discovered the emergency should:**

1. If the person is unconscious, having convulsions, or is not breathing, follow the medical emergencies procedure above immediately.
2. If the person who took the drug is not having symptoms, do not wait to see if symptoms develop; call the poison control center **1-800-222-1222** immediately.
3. Answer the poison control center’s questions and follow their recommendations.

### **Biohazard Accidents Procedures:**

**In the event of a Biohazard Accident, the person who witnessed or discovered the biohazard accident should:**

1. Remain Calm
2. Remove all persons from the affected area.
3. If applicable, block off the area of the biohazard accident to prevent anyone from coming into contact.
4. If applicable, notify the business and contact Team Manager or Designee for further instructions.

### **Bomb Threat Procedures:**

**In the event of a Bomb Threat, the person who received the call should:**

1. Remain Calm, be courteous, listen, do not interrupt the caller, and keep the caller talking, pretend difficulty hearing, if caller seems agreeable to further conversation, ask questions (see below), and remember defusing techniques (listed in violent or other threatening situations).

2. Delegate persons to notify business & evacuate immediately. Assist persons in need of support to the designated external meeting area.
3. Delegate persons to call 911.
4. Contact Team Manager or Designee for further instructions. Team Manager will call 651-365-3745 to inform the Crisis Communication Team of the crisis
5. If applicable, the designated staff in charge will bring the client(s) emergency contact information or client roster to the meeting area.
6. If applicable, the designated staff will take attendance to account for all clients they are responsible for.

**Questions to ask of Caller if caller seems agreeable to further conversation:**

- When will it go off (hour, time remaining)?
- Where is it located (building, area)?
- What kind of bomb, what does it look like?
- What kind of package?
- What will cause it to explode?
- How do you know so much about the bomb?
- Where are you now, where are you calling from?
- What is your name and address?

**Document the Caller to assist in Identifying:**

- Is the caller male or female, young or old?
- How was their voice (speed, tone, characteristics, accent, etc.)?
- Is there any background noise?
- Did the caller appear familiar with the building by the description of the bomb location?

## **Violent, Possession of Weapons, Or Other Threatening Situations/ Lockdown Procedures:**

**In the event of a Violent, Possession of Weapons, or Other Threatening Situation, the person who is aware/witnesses should:**

1. Remain Calm and remember to use defusing techniques below.
2. Overcome denial, recognize signs of danger, and respond.
3. Do not take any threats lightly.
4. Delegate persons to notify where the situation is at.
5. Run, Hide, Fight
  - Run-

- Assist all persons in need of support to immediately evacuate the area. Go to the closest business to seek emergency shelter.
- Hide-
  - Assist all persons in need of support into lockdown in the designated areas where you can hide and or deny the violent person access.
- Fight (Last resort)
  - If your life or the lives of others are at risk, you make the personal decision to try to attack and incapacitate the violent person to survive

**Defusing Techniques:**

- Two key elements are ventilation and active listening:
  - Vent- involves letting the other person speak, giving them a chance to “vent” and discharge their anger. Do not argue, offer advice, or defend oneself or department.
  - Active Listening- after the person has calmed down, let the person know your listening by validating they are upset, verification that you understand what they are saying/feeling, and reflective questioning, allowing the person to ask questions to get the person to slow down and consider what they are talking about.
- Avoid an extreme reaction to the anger or threat, remain calm, use relaxation techniques like deep breathing, counting, etc.
- Move slowly and speak in a slow, smoothing tone.
- Shift your focus from trying to placate the customer to trying to defuse the immediate situation.
- Always remember that it is difficult, if not impossible, to reason with an irrational individual.
- Do not try to be a hero. If it is safe to do so, walk away from the situation and get help; never put your own safety in jeopardy.

**Do not take any threats lightly, report any threats or violent incidents to your Team Manager and Human Resources immediately if it does not result in a lockdown. Lifeworks has a No Weapons Policy.**

**Evacuate:**

1. Have an escape route and plan in mind.
2. Leave belongings behind.
3. Prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter may be.
4. Do not attempt to move wounded people.
5. Call 911.
6. Go to the closest business to seek shelter.

**While in Lockdown:**

- Lock and/or barricade all doors where possible with heavy furniture. Cover any windows or openings that have a direct line of sight into a hallway. Shut off lights, if possible, try to give the impression that the room is empty.
- Evacuate through another exit (door or window) if it can be done.
- If you cannot evacuate, try to remain quiet, low to the ground, behind furniture when possible.
- Silence cell phones (put on vibrate or silent mode).
- Call 911.
- **Do not leave area unless there is an actual fire or as directed by police or designated authority with an “All Clear”**

**Fight:**

If you are unable to evacuate or go into lock down, attempt to distract or incapacitate the violent person/active shooter as a last resort. Throw items, yell, and create noise and movement with the intent of reducing the person’s ability to shoot accurately.

- Notify Team Manager or Designee for further instructions. If necessary, call 651-365-3745 to inform the Crisis Communication Team of the crisis.
- If applicable, the designated staff in charge will take attendance to account for all persons present once an evacuation has occurred or a lockdown has ceased.

**Missing, Elopement or Unauthorized Absence Procedures:****In the event of a Missing Person, the person who identified the situation should:**

1. Remain Calm and keep the surrounding people calm.
2. Notify Team Manager or Designee of the situation.
3. Designated staff in charge will check the building and surrounding areas for 5 minutes and report back to the Team Manager or Designee.
4. Contact any known locations the person or client would go if the person or client has a history or follow the client’s Support Plan/Support Plan Addendum regarding any elopement history. Ask other people if they have any information regarding the person or client missing.
5. If the client or person is not found within the 5 minutes, the Designated staff in charge will call 911.
6. Call 651-365-3745 to inform the Crisis Communication Team of the crisis.
7. Stay in the location last known of the missing person until the person is located or the Team Manger/police provide further direction.

**In the event of an Elopement, the person who identified the situation should:**

1. Remain Calm.
2. Notify Team Manager or Designee of the situation.

3. The designated staff in charge should follow, if possible, the client to ensure they are safe.
4. If the designated staff in charge is not able to follow or convince the client to return, the designated staff in charge will call 911 unless the client's Support Plan/Support Plan Addendum states otherwise.
5. Call 651-365-3745 to inform the Crisis Communication Team.
6. Contact any known locations the client would go if the client has a history or follow the client's Support Plan/Support Plan Addendum regarding any elopement history. Ask other people if they have any information regarding their intended location.

**In the event of an Unauthorized Absence:**

1. If a client is scheduled at a site (job or program) and does not show up, contact the client or residence to find out the reason for the unauthorized absence.
2. If the client's location is unknown, contact their mode of transportation if applicable.
3. If the client's location is still unknown, follow the steps for a missing person.

## Resources

245D Intensive Incident Procedure

245D Intensive Incident Policy

Emergency Preparedness Plan Process

Emergency Report/Drill Log Policy and Procedure

Emergency Report/Drill Form

CARF folder in I: Drive

Emergency Book

Crisis Communication Policy

Reviewing Incident Reports Procedure

Internal Investigation and Review Procedure

Interruption of Lifeworks' Services Due to Dangerous Weather Policy and Procedure

MN Statute 245D

CARF

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