
AUSTIN CONVENTION CENTER

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Client Safety Guide



Security Division

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Section 1: Purpose

The purpose of this document is to highlight some of the planning and actions that will be taken by Austin Convention Center Department (ACCD) staff to ensure the safety of our clients, exhibitors and patrons prior to, during and after an emergency event.

An emergency is an unexpected occurrence requiring immediate action. Its cause may be man-made or natural and may include weather events, medical events, chemical or biological hazards, fire or smoke, explosions, civil disturbances or violence.

The actions in this plan establish a coordinated effort between ACCD staff and local authorities in an integrated emergency management framework with the goal being the safety and security of all during an emergency event.

Section 2: Overview and Management

ACCD staff should be notified immediately in the event of an emergency. The Convention Center has twenty four (24) hour unarmed security; seven days per week. The quickest means available should be used to notify emergency personnel of an event:

- Cell Phone or Telephone call to 911
- Telephone 404-4111 - ACCD Security Control Center.
- Telephone 4111 - ACCD Security Control Center from a house phone.
- ACCD Radio - ACCD Event Coordinator.
- Activate a Fire Pull Station
- Direct Communication with any ACCD staff
- Notify using house call box

If phone calls are made to 911 in an event, additional notification of ACCD staff should be made when time permits. Please remain calm when reporting any emergency event and be prepared to describe the nature of the event (medical, smoke/fire, disturbance) and a specific location. The location may be an external street or an interior room or hall number. Once notified, ACCD staff will assist in directing emergency responders towards the location of the emergency.

An immediate assessment of the facts related to a reported emergency event will occur and notifications will be made to appropriate ACCD Security and Safety staff and external emergency responders. Below is general information regarding the primary responsibilities for ACCD staff during an emergency event.

- Incident Commander for ACCD (ACCD IC) - Responsible for overall management of the incident. Will coordinate the on-site emergency plan and assist external emergency responders.
- Event Coordinator - Liaisons/communicates with any event clients and/or show management and coordinates with ACCD IC.

External components of the incident management team may include command from first responders (fire, medical, law enforcement) depending on the type of emergency event.

The ACCD IC will coordinate with any first responder commanders. ACCD emergency management personnel will muster in an identified, secure location (command center) that will be determined by the emergency event site and will be announced by the ACCD IC. The command center where emergency management personnel meet may be outside of the facility or may be in the ACCD Security Control Center. The ACCD operates Security Control Centers in both the Austin Convention Center and the Palmer Events Center.

Section 3: Emergency Events

I. Facility Evacuation or Shutdown

A. Facility Evacuation

An evacuation could occur or be ordered due to any number of emergency events or a combination of event types. The following are important considerations in the event of a facility evacuation:

- When a general alarm sounds, evacuation of the facility is required.

International Fire Code #104.11.2 - Provides that “no person shall obstruct the operations of the fire department in connection with extinguishment or control of any fire, or actions relative to other emergencies, or disobey any lawful command of the fire chief or officer of the fire department in charge of the emergency, or any part thereof, or any lawful order of a police officer assisting the fire department.”

- An announcement over the public address system advising all persons to proceed to the nearest exit is made. **Remain calm** and proceed in an orderly manner to the nearest exit outside. If there is a need to move away from the facility, ACCD staff will direct evacuated persons to alternative areas of safety.
- Additional important information may be provided over the public address system. Strobe lights will also activate during the emergency announcement.
- Elevators will return to level one for emergency personnel use only.
- Evacuation chairs are available to assist in the evacuation of mobility impaired persons.
- ACCD Incident Command (IC) personnel, Security and other staff will respond.
- ACCD Event Coordinator communicates with ACCD IC and keeps client and show management staff apprised of the situation.
- The ACCD IC will coordinate with emergency first responders to determine when the emergency has passed and the facility is safe. The ACCD IC will coordinate with the Event Coordinator to manage an orderly re-entry plan. The Event Coordinator will liaison with the client or show management personnel to assist in this plan.
- **NO PERSONNEL WILL ENTER THE FACILITY UNTIL THE “ALL CLEAR” ORDER HAS BEEN GIVEN BY THE ACCD IC.**

B. Facility Shutdown

- A facility “shutdown” may occur if there is a significant event of an emergency nature occurring in close proximity to the ACCD facility location and that, due to the dynamic circumstances of the event it is reasonably clear that the safety and security of those in the facility may be seriously compromised unless the facility is temporarily secured or put in “shutdown.” The ACCD IC will communicate the status of an event that requires a shutdown with Event Coordinators, who will liaison with clients or show management.

II. Medical Emergency

If it is a life threatening or serious medical emergency please contact 911 immediately. Do not attempt to render aid or medical assistance unless you are qualified to do so or advised by 911 operators. Please contact ACCD Security or staff when feasible. If an on-duty EMT is available in-house they will respond after notification. Do not attempt to move the person unless there is an active emergency facility evacuation in progress.

Automated External Defibrillator (AED) units are located throughout the facility for emergency use. The AED units are prominently marked with signs posted above. In addition to AED units in the main facilities, there is one AED located in each of the ACCD parking garages at 5th Street and 2nd Street.

Section 3:

Emergency Events *continued*

III. Civil Disturbance/Solicitation

The public may express their first amendment right on the exterior public walkways of the facility, as long as pedestrian traffic entering the facility is not impeded or unsafe acts committed.

- Immediately notify ACCD Security or an ACCD Event Coordinator of the location and the nature of the issue or disturbance.
- The Event Coordinator is responsible for informing the client of the situation and discussing options with the client or show management.
- ACCD IC will respond to the location and will insure necessary notifications are made.
- If external responders are notified, the ACCD IC will meet with other responders and brief them regarding the circumstances.

IV. Power Outage

Main Power Supply

If the main supply of power fails, the facility has emergency generators to power all designated emergency lighting and exit signs. Patrons should remain in place until the emergency system activates.

Isolated Power Outage

Notify ACCD Security or the Event Coordinator of the location and extent of the problem. ACCD facilities personnel will verify the cause of the outage and remedy or contact the appropriate City of Austin (COA) department.

If necessary, facility evacuation procedures, as described above (I), will be implemented.

V. Hazardous Material

The Austin Convention Center Department subscribes to the safe use and handling of chemical or flammable substances used and brought into ACCD facilities. Given the size and number of events held within the ACCD facilities, the potential for a hazardous material event is still a possibility. If you notice a hazardous material has been spilled or if you suspect an unauthorized material has been brought into a facility, go immediately to a safe location and notify ACCD Security of the possible hazard.

Please include the following information:

- The location
- The type of chemical or substance
- Any injuries or contamination

From a safe location prevent others from entering the immediate area of the hazard

If necessary, facility evacuation procedures, as described above (I), will be implemented.

Section 3: Emergency Events *continued*

VI. Weather

The ACCD Security Control Center monitors severe weather reports 24/7. Upon the receipt of severe weather watches or warnings issued by the National Weather Service (NWS) or by the COA Emergency Management System for the Central Texas counties of Travis, Williamson, Hays, Bastrop, and Caldwell, the following weather alert procedures are followed:

Severe Weather or Tornado

- ACCD Security notifies the ACCD IC, Event Coordinators and other ACCD staff.
- The ACCD Event Coordinator notifies the client or show management staff.

Weather alert information is provided to Event Staff and other ACCD staff while the ACCD IC monitors the local conditions. Contingency weather relocation plans are readied in the event a weather relocation order is issued for the facility. In the event that the ACCD IC orders relocation to storm shelters within the facility, the following will occur:

- The relocation order will sound throughout the facility. ACCD staff will be assigned to assist in directing facility occupants into the closest storm shelters. In general, sheltering orders will include direction of facility occupants, clients and staff to internal areas of the facility, away from external walls and windows.
- Additional information and direction will be announced through the public address system during the relocation.
- If an EMT is on-duty at the facility they will be readied in the event there are medical needs during the relocation.
- If additional emergency responders are needed at the facility, the ACCD IC will coordinate with the responders.
- The Event Coordinator will liaison with clients and show management and keep them updated on the relocation efforts and weather updates

If necessary, facility evacuation procedures, as described above (I), will be implemented.

VII. Flooding

- ACCD Security notifies the ACCD IC, Event Coordinator and other ACCD staff of the flooding and provides additional information on the extent and location of the problem.
- The ACCD Event Coordinator notifies the client or show management staff of the flooding.
- The ACCD IC will coordinate with other emergency first responders as needed.
- The Event Coordinator will liaison with clients and show management staff and keep them updated on the situation.

If necessary, facility evacuation procedures, as described above (I), will be implemented.