

Evacuation of Persons with Disabilities

Please, be aware that people with disabilities, who may be entirely self-sufficient under normal circumstances, may need extra assistance in an emergency.

Note to students and staff with disabilities: You are strongly encouraged to contact the Student Disability Services (208-732-6260) to arrange for an individualized safety plan.

For all College of Southern Idaho community members: In the event of an emergency, observe the following evacuation procedures for people with disabilities:

1. Be aware of areas of refuge in your buildings that have been designated for wheelchair users and others with disabilities.
2. Be aware that people with disabilities often need more time in an emergency.
3. Rescue, Fire, Police personnel and Campus Security will check all exit corridors and exit stairwells for trapped persons, including persons with disabilities who are unable to use stairs.
4. If possible, prepare an emergency plan in advance with students and coworkers with disabilities.
5. Offer assistance.

TYPES OF DISABILITIES:

PEOPLE WITH MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS:

1. Persons using wheelchairs on ground level floors can evacuate along with other persons provided there is no debris or blocked access obstructing the exit path.
2. People with mobility impairments are often concerned about being dropped when being lifted or carried. Ask permission.
3. In order to carry a third person, in a safe manner, while descending stairs, two persons must use specific techniques, which must be learned and practiced prior to an actual emergency. If you do not know their techniques, or if the person does not wish to be carried, tell the person using the wheelchair to remain in the area of rescue assistance and/or stairwell. Immediately seek help from Public Safety, Police and/or Fire personnel.

PEOPLE WITH VISION LOSS:

1. Help guide a person with vision loss by asking the person if he/she would like to take your arm at the elbow. DO NOT grasp the arm of a person with low vision or blindness. Give the person verbal instructions as you guide the person, advising about steps, rough terrain, walking through doorways, debris, etc. as you approach these areas. Verbal compass directions, estimated distances and directional terms are the most familiar 'tools' for persons with vision loss.

2. A guide dog could become confused or disoriented in a disaster. People who are blind may have to depend on others to lead them, as well as their dog, to safety during a disaster.

PEOPLE WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT:

Hearing impaired persons should be told individually of the emergency and how to respond, as soon as the emergency is identified. Write directions on paper, if necessary.

PEOPLE WITH RESPIRATORY ILLNESSES:

Many respiratory illnesses can be aggravated by stress. In an emergency, oxygen and respiratory equipment may not be readily available. People with respiratory illnesses should be referred to emergency personnel. **If there is someone experiencing respiratory problems call 911, then call Security at 6605.**

PEOPLE WITH OTHER DISABILITIES: Ask the person how you can help them most effectively. Be calm and reassuring. If the person is not able to evacuate safely, lead the person to an area of rescue assistance and/or stairwell and tell the person to wait there. You then can seek help from Public Safety, Police and/or Fire personnel immediately.