

Emergency Management & Evacuation Policy

For Australian Small & Medium Enterprises

Template Version 1.0 | December 2024

Important Notice

This template is provided as a general guide only and should be customised to your specific workplace. We recommend having this policy reviewed by a WHS professional or legal advisor before implementation to ensure compliance with your state or territory legislation.

1. Purpose

This policy establishes the emergency management and evacuation procedures for [Company Name] to ensure the safety of all employees, contractors, visitors, and others in the event of an emergency.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All employees, including full-time, part-time, and casual workers
- Contractors and subcontractors
- Visitors and customers
- All [Company Name] premises and work locations

3. Types of Emergencies

This policy covers response to the following types of emergencies:

- Fire
- Medical emergencies
- Severe weather events (storms, floods, cyclones)
- Building structural issues
- Hazardous substance spills or releases
- Security threats (armed intruder, bomb threat)
- Utility failures (gas leak, power outage)
- Natural disasters (earthquake, bushfire)

4. Emergency Control Organisation

4.1 Structure

[Company Name] maintains an Emergency Control Organisation (ECO) consisting of:

- Chief Warden – overall coordination of emergency response
- Area/Floor Wardens – responsible for specific areas/floors
- First Aid Officers – provide first aid assistance
- Communications Officer – manages internal and external communications

4.2 Identification

ECO members are identified by coloured helmets or vests:

- Chief Warden – White
- Area/Floor Warden – Yellow
- First Aid Officer – Green with white cross

4.3 Training

All ECO members must complete:

- Initial emergency warden training
- Annual refresher training
- Participation in emergency drills

5. Emergency Response Procedures

5.1 Fire

Upon discovering a fire:

- Raise the alarm using the nearest break-glass alarm or call 000
- Alert others in the immediate area
- If trained and safe to do so, attempt to extinguish using appropriate equipment
- If unable to extinguish, evacuate immediately
- Close doors behind you
- Proceed to the assembly point
- Do not use lifts

5.2 Medical Emergency

In a medical emergency:

- Call 000 for ambulance
- Alert the nearest First Aid Officer
- Stay with the person and provide reassurance

- If trained, provide first aid assistance
- Clear the area and ensure access for emergency services
- Do not move the person unless in immediate danger

5.3 Severe Weather

When severe weather is forecast or occurring:

- Monitor weather warnings via BOM
- Secure outdoor items
- Move away from windows and glass
- If tornado/cyclone imminent, shelter in internal rooms away from windows
- Do not drive through floodwaters
- Follow instructions from emergency services

5.4 Security Threat

If an armed intruder or security threat:

- Call 000 immediately if safe
- If safe to evacuate, do so
- If evacuation not safe, hide – lock doors, turn off lights, stay silent
- Barricade if possible
- Only confront as a last resort
- When police arrive, keep hands visible and follow instructions

5.5 Bomb Threat

If you receive a bomb threat:

- Stay calm and keep the caller talking
- Note details: time, exact words, voice characteristics, background noise
- Ask: Where is the bomb? When will it explode? What does it look like?
- Immediately notify management/Chief Warden
- Do not use mobile phones or radios near suspected device
- Evacuate if instructed

6. Evacuation Procedures

6.1 Alarm Activation

When the evacuation alarm sounds:

- Stop work immediately
- Follow instructions from wardens
- Leave the building via the nearest safe exit

- Do not use lifts
- Assist visitors and people with disabilities
- Proceed to the designated assembly point
- Do not re-enter until authorised by Chief Warden

6.2 Assembly Points

The designated assembly point(s) for this workplace:

- [Primary Assembly Point – insert location]
- [Secondary Assembly Point – insert location]

Assembly points are indicated by green and white signs.

6.3 Accounting for Personnel

At the assembly point:

- Wardens will conduct a roll call
- Report any missing persons to the Chief Warden immediately
- Report any known injuries or persons requiring assistance
- Remain at the assembly point until further instructions

7. People with Disabilities or Requiring Assistance

[Company Name] maintains Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) for employees who may require assistance during evacuation. This includes:

- People with mobility impairments
- People with vision or hearing impairments
- Pregnant employees
- People with medical conditions

Managers must ensure PEEPs are developed for relevant employees and communicated to wardens.

8. Emergency Equipment

[Company Name] maintains the following emergency equipment:

- Fire extinguishers – inspected every 6 months
- Fire blankets – inspected annually
- First aid kits – restocked as required, audited quarterly
- Emergency lighting – tested every 6 months
- Fire detection and alarm system – tested monthly
- Emergency exits – inspected monthly

Equipment must not be obstructed, damaged, or tampered with.

9. Training and Drills

9.1 Training

All employees must:

- Receive emergency procedure induction within first week
- Know location of emergency exits, extinguishers, and first aid
- Understand the alarm signals
- Know the location of assembly points

9.2 Drills

[Company Name] conducts:

- Evacuation drills at least twice per year
- Tabletop exercises for specific scenarios annually
- Drills will be evaluated and feedback documented

10. Communication

During an emergency, communication will be via:

- Public address system
- Emergency alarm
- Verbal instructions from wardens
- Mobile phone/SMS for remote workers

Following an emergency, debriefing and updates will be provided to all staff.

11. Emergency Contact Numbers

Key emergency contacts:

- Emergency Services: 000
- Poison Information Centre: 13 11 26
- SES (Floods/Storms): 132 500
- Chief Warden: [Insert contact]
- Building Management: [Insert contact]

12. Responsibilities

12.1 Management

- Establish and maintain emergency procedures
- Appoint and train ECO members
- Provide emergency equipment and resources

- Ensure regular drills and reviews

12.2 Wardens

- Maintain training currency
- Lead evacuations in their area
- Conduct searches and head counts
- Report to Chief Warden

12.3 All Employees

- Familiarise themselves with emergency procedures
- Participate in drills
- Report hazards and concerns
- Follow warden instructions during emergencies

13. Review

This policy and associated procedures will be reviewed:

- Annually
- Following any emergency or drill
- When changes occur to premises or work activities
- When legislation changes

Employee Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read and understood [Company Name]'s Emergency Management & Evacuation Policy. I understand my responsibilities and agree to comply with the emergency procedures.

Employee Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____