



Dispute Resolution Center OF THURSTON COUNTY

Safety Policies

In Revision, April, 2020

This document is to address safety and preparedness policy and procedures that may be necessary within the business of the Dispute Resolution Center of Thurston County (DRC), 2604 12th Ct. SW, Ste. A-2, Olympia, WA. This is not intended to be an all-inclusive list of potential safety measures for any situation. All emergency response is dependent on numerous factors which need to be independently evaluated. Below is a list of elements and incidents that are addressed:

- a. Reporting
- b. Building Security
- c. Visitor & Client Protocols
- d. Emergency Preparedness

A. Reporting

All emergencies are to be reported to the local emergency response by dialing 911, via office desk phone or cell phone. Call 911 prior to becoming involved in attempting to resolve the emergency. Be prepared to provide:

- Name
- Location (Address and within the building)
- Phone number
- Nature of emergency
- Any steps being taken to resolve the emergency

B. Building Security

Opening: The first employee of the morning will lock DRC's interior door behind them. After securing the doors the employee will conduct a walk-through of the entire building to note any discrepancies, damage, or safety concerns. Once a second employee or a volunteer is on premises, DRC's interior door can be left unlocked for public access.

Closing: At the end of the workday each employee will notify co-workers and volunteers of their departure. When the 2nd to last employee leaves, they will lock DRC's interior door and the buildings main entrance if no other tenants are onsite. No public access will be allowed when there is only one employee or volunteer present.

C. Visitor & Client Protocols

General Visitor Greeting & Triage:

It will be required that an employee will physically greet anyone entering the office from the entrance, as they are able. As a customer service organization, employees and volunteers will greet and interact with all visitors in a professional manner.

If the visitor is a person seeking DRC services, staff are to provide them with appropriate literature, phone numbers or website information as necessary. If they are seeking a particular person, staff are to instruct them to wait at the entrance while you notify the appropriate person.

If the visitor is seeking mediation services, and time and workload allow, staff may conduct an in-person intake. Staff will inform co-workers of this decision and take the person into the mediation room to conduct the intake.

If the visitor is not seeking DRC services, staff will politely inform them of the services provided by DRC and ask them to leave the premises. Staff shall not invite the person past the reception area.

If staff do not feel safe with the individual, or situation, they will request assistance to “cover” front desk phone and/or ring front desk bell. This will allow **all** DRC employees and volunteers present to know of the situation and respond to the location. If needed, someone should call 911 as soon as possible.

Client Relations & Safety Screening:

INSERT: weapons-free zone designation and safety protocol, once developed

INSERT: domestic violence assessment safety protocol

INSERT: drug and alcohol impairment safety protocol, once developed

If volunteers or staff do not feel safe with the individual, or situation, they will request assistance from whomever else is in the building. As necessary, a 911 call shall be made as soon as possible.

D. Emergency Preparedness

Fire

In the event the building, or its contents catch on fire, the office’s smoke alarms should activate. If the fire is small in size, activate 911, then locate the nearest fire extinguisher and use it according to the manufacturer’s directions to extinguish the blaze. Keep a watch until the fire is declared out by the local fire department.

If the fire cannot be extinguished by the use of a fire extinguisher, evacuate the building. Remember to gather personal items (i.e. phone, keys, wallets/purses) if safe to do so. Follow the evacuation routes to either the outside entrance or the hall doors. Assemble in the designated area (blue mailbox in next suite over). **DO NO RE-ENTER THE BUILDING.** Notify fire department of any missing personnel.

In the event a person’s clothing catches on fire: remove the item if possible (scarf, coat, etc.) and extinguish with a fire extinguisher. Do not attempt to stomp on the item. If it is not possible to remove the item, employ stop-drop-roll to extinguish the fire.

In the event you cannot safely evacuate from a fire:

- Go to a room as far as possible from the fire
- Close the door and seal the cracks
- Hang something noticeable from a window, if possible

Smoke detectors are located above the public entry way, above the Conciliator’s office and will sound off 3 beeps in the event of detecting smoke.

Carbon Monoxide

In the event of a carbon monoxide leak:

- Turn off appliances, or other sources of combustion at once.

- Immediately get fresh air into the premises by opening doors and windows.
- Call a qualified technician and have the problem fixed before restarting appliances.
- If anyone is experiencing symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning: headaches, dizziness, vomiting, call the fire department and immediately move to a location that has fresh air. Do a head count to be sure all persons are accounted for.
- Do not re-enter the premises until it has been aired out and the problem corrected

Carbon monoxide detectors are located above the public entry way, above the door of the Conciliator's office and will sound off 4 beeps in the event of detecting carbon monoxide.

Earthquake

In the event of an earthquake: use "Drop-Cover-Hold" under a desk or similar sturdy object. If no desks are available; stand near an inside wall or under a door frame. Stay covered until all shaking and aftershocks have passed.

Assess yourself and your immediate surroundings for injury of life threatening damage. Evacuate to the assembly area.

Tsunami

Olympia is considered outside of known/projected tsunami zones.

Utility Failure Protocols

1. **Power:**

Call Puget Sound Energy to get a status report on the outage. Notify both the Executive Director and the Community Engagement Manager if they are not onsite during the outage.

To prevent surge damage upon power's return, turn off power strips for electronic equipment, fans, lamps, etc. Depending on the severity of the outage, evacuate or staff the building as deemed appropriate. For procedures related to the Conciliation office and Caseload Manager Database refer to the "System Down Procedure" [hard copy located in yellow folder in rack on conciliator desk].

2. **Server:** When the office electrical power goes out and then comes back on, re-set the server by pushing its power button. The server is tied in to our internet and phone service, so resetting it may be sufficient to bring the phones and internet back on line.

3. **Internet:** Go to the Cisco Linksys router. Push the blue reset button. If pushing the reset button doesn't work, pull out the power cord next to the re-set button, wait 60 seconds, and then plug the power cord back in.

4. **Telephone:** Begin by checking if there is a Comcast outage in the area. If not, call Olympic Telephone and be prepared to examine the telephone modem (the skinny tower highest up in the corner of the tech closet) while on the phone with them. See Jody re: re-setting the modem, if not so directed by Olympic Telephone. For a prolonged phones down scenario, notify the Community Engagement Manager, who will place a notice on the DRC website.

Infectious Disease Response

Infection Control:

In the event of an infectious disease concern, the Executive Director shall ensure that signs are posted regarding effective hand-washing protocols and disinfectants are available for use by staff and volunteers. Staff will communicate with volunteers and clients about the reminders and resources in place for effective infection control. A temporary practice of eliminating the greeting handshake may be instated for volunteers, clients, and staff alike, as deemed appropriate by any of the individuals present.

Further information and resources can be obtained at:

<https://www.fema.gov/>

<https://mil.wa.gov/emergency-management-division>

<http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/em/>

<http://olympiawa.gov/news-and-faq-s/disasters-and-emergency-information.aspx>