



# Participant Safety Handbook



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## Introduction

This handbook provides a quick reference to important safety information. For more detailed safety information concerning your home or workplace please contact your Case Manager, landlord, or supervisor.

***We believe that safety is not only important to everyone but is also everyone's responsibility.***

## Emergency Procedures

Community Catalysts of California's ability to address emergencies depends on the cooperation and participation of all members of the community.

### ***Before an emergency occurs***

- KNOW the established emergency procedures for your home and/or worksite
- KNOW the hazards of any materials or equipment in your home and/or work area and the precautions to take to avoid or minimize associated risk
- KNOW two means of escape from your area
- KNOW the locations of fire alarm pull stations
- KNOW the location of portable fire extinguishers and how to use them
- KNOW the location of the nearest first aid kit

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## Emergency Evacuation Plan

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Each participant should have an emergency evacuation plan. Your evacuation plan should contain the following:

- Emergency telephone numbers
- Designated meeting point



- Information such as whether the building has automatic sprinkler system, smoke detection and/or manual pull stations

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## Fire

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If you discover a fire, an explosion, or smoke in your home and/or worksite, activate the fire alarm system immediately at nearest fire pull station to evacuate the building (see “Evacuation procedures” below).

After sounding the fire alarm, call 911 from a safe location. Provide the address, floor, suite/apt number, and any known special hazards at the location. Do not assume that someone else has called.

If the fire is in an unoccupied room, try to close the door to retard the spread of smoke and heat; do not take any unnecessary risks in doing this.

Only if the fire is small and you have received training in fire extinguisher operation should you attempt to extinguish the fire; **do not** take any unnecessary risk in doing this!

When the police and/or fire fighters arrive direct them to the fire.

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### *Evacuation Procedures*

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- When a fire alarm sounds, evacuation is required.
- Walk, do not run, to the nearest exit and proceed outside. Close doors as you leave.
- Do not use elevators during a fire emergency.
- If the fire alarm stops, continue to evacuate and warn others who may attempt to enter the building.
- Leave the building and move away from it, keeping walks and drives open for arriving firefighters. Proceed to your prearranged meeting spot.
- Everyone must follow the orders of the fire and police departments.

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### *Fire Extinguishers*

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Make sure you know the location and type of the nearest fire extinguisher. If you use a fire extinguisher, do not return it to its cabinet or bracket. Report the use of the extinguisher immediately to the owner to have it refilled or replaced.

Only individuals who have received training on how to use a fire extinguisher should use them.

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### *Clothing Fires*

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If your clothing is on fire, do not run. If a shower is near by, get under the shower and let the water flow over the burned area until medical help arrives. Otherwise, the universal instruction is **stop, drop and roll**. Immediately drop to the floor and roll repeatedly to extinguish the flames, holding your hands over your face to protect it from the flames.

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## **Hazardous Material Release**

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If you discover a hazardous biological or chemical spill, immediately evacuate the area. If the spill creates a risk of or causes fire, explosion, or injury, call 911.

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## **Power Outage**

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In the event of a power outage it may be difficult to see well enough to maneuver. Every room should have a flashlight where it can be easily accessed during a power outage. Use the flashlight to assist you in maneuvering through the building. Turn everything off including computers, copiers, fax machines, coffee pot, etc. Do not open the refrigerator or freezer.

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## **Severe Thunderstorms**

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A ***Severe Thunder Storm Watch*** is when conditions are favorable for severe weather that includes rain, hail, lightening and thunder. You could continue normal activities with caution.

A ***Severe Thunderstorm Warning*** is when severe thunderstorms are occurring in the area. Be prepared to move to a place of shelter if threatening weather approaches. Stay indoors away from windows until the storm passes. If large hail begins to fall, seek shelter.

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## **Floods**

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- Follow work-site or home evacuation plan
- Move immediately to higher ground or stay on high ground.
- Evacuate city if directed by officials.

- Avoid walking or driving through flood waters. Turn Around, Don't Drown! Just 6 inches of moving water can knock you down and 2 feet of water can sweep your vehicle away. Electrical charges may be present in water from damaged electrical wires.

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## Earthquake

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In the event of an earthquake there is little time to react. When you first feel shaking, immediately take cover under something sturdy – a table, for example. If you cannot reach cover, crouch in an interior corner away from windows, shelves, or cabinets. Do not try to get outside. If you are outside at the time of the earthquake, move away from the sides of buildings, overhead wires, or other hazards. If you are driving, pull over to the side of the road and stop. Avoid over passes and power lines. Stay inside the vehicle until the shaking is over. Be prepared for aftershocks.

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## Bomb Threat

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Take any bomb threat seriously, and report it immediately to the police.



If you receive a written bomb threat, do not handle it any more than necessary. Place it in an envelope to preserve possible fingerprints. If you receive a telephone threat, note the exact time of the call and attempt to write down the exact words of the caller. Ask the caller to repeat information. Get as much information as possible by asking when the bomb is set to explode, what kind of bomb it is, where it is located, and what it looks like. If possible, signal another person and write a note explaining the call is a bomb threat. The other person can then alert the police. Give all of the information you obtain to the police when you talk to them.

## Theft and Missing Property

Theft or missing property should be reported to the police and your supervisor immediately. The police will take a report of the loss and of the circumstances surrounding the loss.

## Suspicious Persons

If you see suspicious persons in your home or on the property, report it to the police department if necessary. You should provide a complete

description of the person, what he or she is doing, his or her last known location, and his or her direction of travel (if known). Follow any directions given to you by the police and **do not** confront the suspicious person. If warranted, the police will remove the suspicious person from the premises, issue them a trespass warning, or arrest them.

## Active Shooter

While Community Catalysts California offices are located in areas that are felt to be safe, violence can happen anywhere and staff is trained on the importance of workplace security.

Staff will assist any person in the office with mobility impairment, hearing impairment, visual impairment or intellectual disability.

**RUN, HIDE, FIGHT** is the order of action according to the FBI as well as law enforcement agencies across the nation in light of recent happenings in our country.

**RUN** -- If there is a situation within the office that you feel could become violent, get out of the building, following the evacuation plan if that is the safest escape, and call 911.

**HIDE** -- If you cannot get out of the building and the situation appears life threatening, seek protective cover, and call for help using a cell phone. Stay on the line with 911 dispatchers even if you cannot communicate with them. They will likely locate you through the GPS on your phone. Silence the ringer on your phone so that you do not give away your position. By keeping the phone connected, dispatchers can hear background noise and assess the situation, perhaps. Lock/block the door, hide behind a large object and remain very quiet

**FIGHT** – If there is no alternative, and you must fight, attempt to incapacitate the shooter with physical aggression. Improvise a weapon, if possible.

## Security

All participants should heed the following steps to ensure their personal safety.

### *While At or Away from Home*

- Lock all windows and doors to the outside.
- Never prop open a door for someone who will be joining you or allow strangers to enter with you.
- Never leave your purse or wallet unattended.

### *When Walking at Night*

- Walk with someone you know if possible.
- Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings.
- Plan the safest route to your destination, and use the same route every time.
- Walk briskly and confidently in the center of the sidewalk.
- Avoid dark areas and shortcuts.
- If you think you are being followed, head quickly for a lighted area, a group of people, or telephone. If you have a cell phone, get it out.
- Consider carrying chemical spray or personal alarm.
- Be careful when walking to or from public transportation.
- Have your car or house keys out and in hand as you approach your vehicle or home.
- Do not hitchhike.

## **Medical Treatment**

### *Whenever you encounter a person who is ill or injured, follow these steps:*

- Keep victim as comfortable as possible.
- Do not move the victim any more than is necessary for his or her safety.
- Never administer liquids to an unconscious victim.
- Do not remove objects that may be embedded in the victim's skin.

### *Life-Threatening Injuries and Illnesses*

Life threatening conditions include severe chest pains, gunshot wounds, severe burns, hemorrhaging, severe head injuries, and open (compound) fractures, among others.

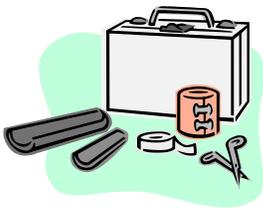
In the event of a life threatening medical situation, call 911. Paramedics will respond for treatment and transportation to the hospital emergency room.

### *Other Injuries and Illnesses*

If you encounter an injured or ill person, help that person seek medical attention.

## **Bloodborne Pathogens**

While exposure to bodily fluids and other potentially infectious materials is relatively rare during the course of a day, the possibility of exposure does exist. For your protection, an understanding of exposure is needed.



Bloodborne pathogens include HIV, Hepatitis B virus, and Hepatitis C virus. Exposure can occur via a percutaneous injury, such as a needle stick or cut with a sharp object, or by contact of mucous membranes or non-intact skin with blood, tissue, or body fluids that are contaminated with visible blood.

Observing universal precautions is the single best strategy to reduce the risk of exposure to bloodborne pathogens. This involves treating all human blood and potential infectious human material as if it were known to be infectious.

If exposure should occur, thoroughly wash and/or irrigate the exposure site.

## **Chemical Safety**

Knowing and understanding the hazards of the chemicals you use is one of the first steps in ensuring a safe home and/or workplace. The term **chemical** applies not only to laboratory chemicals, but also includes all industrial chemicals (e.g., paint, oils, cleaning agents) and office supplies (e.g., toner).

Every chemical poses an inherent hazard that must be respected. When the hazards of the chemical are defined, listed, and understood, proper safety measures may be instituted to protect your health and safety.

To maintain chemical safety, follow the following steps:

- Know what chemical substances are in your home/workplace.
- Know what health hazards may be caused by overexposure.
- Label chemical containers and use hazard signs as necessary.

## **Civility, Mutual Respect, and Violence**

The participants of Community Catalysts of California are expected to deal with others with respect and consideration. Each participant is expected to treat other members with civility, recognizing that disagreement and informed debate are valued. Demeaning, intimidating, threatening, or violent behaviors may affect the outcome of services and are not acceptable in the standard for civility and respect.

### *Violence and Safety*

Violence is behavior that causes harm to a person or damage to property or causes fear for one's safety or the safety of others. Examples include physical contact that is harmful and expression of intent to cause physical harm. Such behavior is unacceptable at Community Catalysts of California.

Weapons of any kind are prohibited at office locations.

Anyone who is involved in or witnesses behavior at an office, home or worksite that poses imminent danger should immediately contact the police. In situations that do not involve imminent danger or for advice on the appropriate course of action, contact your Case Manager.

Visitors, vendors, and family members are expected to comply with this policy.



## Acknowledgment of Receipt

Community Catalysts of California wants each participant to understand as much of the Safety Handbook as possible. If you need additional assistance in order to fully understand the Safety Handbook, ask the supervisor for assistance. You also must sign an "Acknowledgment of Receipt" agreeing that you have received this handbook. If you have any questions regarding this handbook, ask the supervisor before you sign.

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## Acknowledgment of Receipt Form

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Please detach and return the completed form to your supervisor.

I \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print Participant Name)

Hereby acknowledge that on this date \_\_\_\_\_, I received a complete copy of the Community Catalysts of California ***Participant Safety Handbook***.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Participant Signature)

***Thank you and Welcome to  
Community Catalysts of California!***

Veterans Community Services  
5605 El Cajon Blvd.  
San Diego, CA 92115  
1-800-974-9909