

Columbia College Lockdown Procedure

Definitions

Emergency responders—police, fire department, or emergency health services personnel in uniform

Evacuation—when all students, staff, and visitors leave the building in response to safety concerns, such as fire or smoke, bomb threat, chemical spill, etc.

Lockdown—actions taken to conceal students in a secure location in response to a threat of violence inside the college.

Person-in-charge—the president of the college or designate identified as required – Caroline Edworthy, Patrick Simmons, Laurie Opitz, Sharron Burns, Carey Thomson, or Bruce Skorobohach.

Objective

A lockdown is conducted when it is determined that the safest response to a threat to physical safety is to have students and staff remain in a secure location until the emergency is resolved.

Rationale

Emergencies are dynamic in nature. The exact location or the seriousness of the threat may not be confirmed and may move or change without warning. Having students and staff remain in a secure area mitigates risk by reducing their exposure to danger. Evacuations conducted in the absence of reliable information may result in a loss of student supervision and unnecessarily expose students to danger.

Responsibility

Any staff member who witnesses a situation wherein a lockdown situation is needed is responsible for initiating a lockdown. Police are responsible for responding to and investigating violent incidents.

During a violent incident, police will assume command and control of the response and investigation but will liaise and work closely with college administration and other emergency services throughout the process.

Description of a Lockdown

A lockdown is characterized as having all staff and students remain in a secure (locked or barricaded) location, such as a classroom or office. Normally, students are positioned in the corner of the room either sitting or lying on the floor. The goal is to avoid detection by remaining out of sight with window blinds closed and classroom lights turned off. Students and staff outside the building move immediately to an exterior safe area away from and out of sight of the buildings.

Lock Doors to Building

In addition, the building exterior doors are secured to prevent unauthorized persons from entering.

Fire Alarm: If the fire alarm is activated during a lockdown, staff must determine if it is safer to remain in the secure location or evacuate.

If there are indications of fire or smoke, staff should determine the safest route and immediately evacuate to the exterior safe area or an approved interior location.

Criteria for Initiating a Lockdown

A lockdown may be conducted for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, the following:

- A violent, or potentially violent, incident inside one or more school buildings
- A violent, or potentially violent, incident in the areas surrounding the school buildings
- An unauthorized visitor with unknown intent who is behaving in an inappropriate manner

Preparing for a Lockdown

As with building evacuations, lockdowns must be planned and practiced in order to ensure quick and safe implementation. The college must have posted procedures in every office and classroom that prepares staff and students to respond during a lockdown. Staff need to review these procedures with their students on a regular basis and the college will have a lockdown drill at least once a year.

Building Considerations

Areas Where Students Congregate: All teaching spaces or other spaces where students may congregate should be examined to determine how quickly and effectively they can be secured. In addition, areas should be examined to determine where the students should be positioned to avoid detection. It may be necessary to have coverings put in place to cover the window in the doors that can be used when the lockdown is announced.

Encounters with Police

Police officers entering a school that has reported a dangerous person will critically evaluate everyone they encounter as a potential threat. Therefore, for their safety, students and staff should be trained to respond in the following manner if they meet with police in the building during a lockdown:

1. Stop moving immediately.
2. Place your hands where they can be seen.
3. Follow directions quickly and precisely.

Emergency Medical Situations

Staff should be as prepared as practical to manage medical emergencies without leaving the secured area during a lockdown.

Students and staff with known life threatening medical conditions such as anaphylaxis and asthma should have their prescribed medications on hand for administration. Staff should report any life threatening illnesses or injuries to the administration immediately without leaving the secured area.

Washroom Considerations

Experience has shown that students and staff may be required to remain in lockdown for considerable time. At the same time students and staff must not leave a secure area during a lockdown.

Consideration should be given to addressing physiological (washroom) needs during an extended lockdown.

Initiating a Lockdown

The person-in-charge will normally be responsible for deciding when lockdown will be initiated; however, if the person-in-charge is not immediately available, any staff person who has determined that a lockdown is necessary is given the authority and training to initiate a lockdown. Our current telephone system is capable of being used as a public address system. The staff member who is initiating the lockdown needs to dial 802 and the announcement will be broadcast through every phone.

In the case of a lockdown, as it is with a fire alarm, speed in initiating a lockdown is essential to minimize the risk of injury. It is far better to err on the side of caution and initiate a lockdown at the first indication of danger rather than wait until the danger is confirmed.

Once the decision is made, the person-in-charge will use the most expedient means to initiate the lockdown. If the person-in-charge chooses to use the public address system to initiate a lockdown, he or she should use plain, clear language, with specific directions.

For example,

“Attention all staff, initiate lockdown now.” “Attention all staff, initiate lockdown now.” “Attention all staff, initiate lockdown now.”

NOTE: It is imperative that the script chosen to initiate a lockdown is used consistently across the entire college. The script should be posted in the immediate vicinity of the public address system to aid the person making the announcement.

Specific Staff Person-in-Charge

1. Announce the lockdown with simple, clear directions, for example: *“Attention all staff, initiate lockdown now.”* (Repeat three times.)
2. Initiate contact with 911 to request assistance as appropriate.
3. Liaise with the responding emergency services.

4. Take all actions necessary to ensure the safety of students and staff.

Administration Staff

1. Follow the directions of the person-in-charge.
2. If the person-in-charge is not immediately available, initiate lockdown.
3. Lock the doors to the administrative offices.
4. Assist with communications.
5. Turn cell phone to vibrate only

Faculty members

1. If it is safe to do so, check the area immediately outside the classroom for students and bring them inside. Check nearby washrooms for students and bring them to the classroom.
2. Lock the classroom doors or otherwise secure the room from entry.
3. Turn off all lights, close exterior window blinds, cover interior windows if required, and position students in the classroom where they cannot be seen from the corridor.
4. Ensure that all students remain in the classroom.
5. Turn personal cell phones to vibrate.
6. Ensure that all students remain calm and quiet.
7. Check attendance and note the names of missing students and students from other classes.
8. **DO NOT** open the classroom door for any reason during a lockdown
9. If not supervising students, take refuge in a secure location unless directed otherwise by the person-in-charge.

Students

1. Follow the directions of the facilitator and other staff.
2. Turn cell phone to vibrate. Do not use it unless directed by a staff person.

3. If there is no facilitator in the classroom, close and secure the door, take cover, and wait for staff or police to find you.
4. If in an unsupervised area (washroom, change room, etc.), and it is safe to do so, quickly move to a supervised classroom; otherwise take shelter out of sight and wait for staff or police to find you.
5. Remain calm and quiet.

Terminating a Lockdown

Terminating a lockdown shall be communicated to each classroom individually by the person-in-charge, and/or the police, by using a master key to enter the room. As well as the public address system. If a master key is not available or the entrance is otherwise secured, a means of identifying the person requesting entry should be used.

Training Drills

Before the Drill

1. Prepare a draft of how the lockdown drill should proceed (who does what, when, and how).
2. Conduct a staff-only training session followed by a walk-through.
3. All college staff should participate in the training.
4. Conduct a debrief of the staff-only walk-through.
5. Advise the college personnel or police dispatch of the drill date and time. This is done to avoid someone mistakenly reporting an actual event.

During the Drill

1. Record how long it takes to clear hallways (maximum 30 seconds).
2. Check to ensure doors are secured.
3. Check if anyone can be seen through classroom windows
4. Check for anyone found in hallways/washrooms.

After the Drill

1. Have facilitators conduct a classroom debrief with students
2. Conduct a staff debrief.
3. Implement any recommended changes to the college emergency plan.
4. Plan future practice drills.

LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

What to do when you hear: “ATTENTION ALL STAFF, INITIATE LOCKDOWN NOW”

- **Go to the nearest classroom or safe place out of hallways or common areas.**
- ***Do not hide in washrooms.**
- **Help students who have disabilities.**
- **Close and lock the door.**
- **If the door does not have a lock, barricade the door with tables, desks, any furniture in the room.**
- **Close blinds where possible.**
- **Move away from windows and doors.**
- **Turn off the lights.**
- **Put cell phones on vibrate mode. Do not make any non-essential calls.**
- **Sit on the floor or crouch behind desks and be quiet.**
- **The facilitator will take attendance.**
- **Do not answer or open the door once it has been secured until you are officially advised or are certain it is Emergency Response personnel at the door.**

Terminating a lockdown shall be communicated to each classroom individually by the person-in-charge, and/or the police, by using a master key and a ‘safe word’ to enter the room.