

Participants' Guide to Implementing an Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Plan

Preamble:

This document provides guidelines and an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of those supporting an employee with a temporary or permanent disability, in the event of an emergency.

All planning, implementation and monitoring of Individualized Workplace Emergency Response Plans (IWERP) will be kept confidential according to the University's privacy policies and will be shared only with those that need to have this information.

Roles and Responsibilities:

Employees with a disability are responsible for identifying accommodations needed in the event of an emergency that may not be apparent, such as a mental health or chronic condition. However, employees **are not** required to disclose the diagnosis or particulars of their disability or condition.

The information within the IWERP will be discussed between the employee, their manager and the Health and Disability Management Specialist when an employee's work location or job changes, or when an employee experiences any temporary (ie. broken arm) or permanent changes to their accommodation needs.

Managers play an important role and must discuss emergency information and procedures with all new full time and limited term employees as well as those that have been internally transferred to another area of the university. Managers are also encouraged to refer to the [New employee orientation](#) website as well as the university's [Health and Safety](#) website.

Process steps:

1. Discuss university information and procedures, including how employees find out about emergency situations and what actions are expected in specific types of emergencies. Refer to the [General procedures](#) section of the Health and Safety website to find out more about [Accident reporting](#) and [Hazard reporting](#).
2. Review any department/faculty specific emergency and evacuation plans and consult with Maureen.calhoun@dc-uoit.ca, Health and Safety Officer, or Scott Bronson@dc-uoit.ca, Manager, Public Safety, Security and Emergency Management, for further support and/or details.
- ▼ 3. Work together to complete the Individualized Emergency Response Form.
4. Make sure information is available in a format that is accessible for the employee.
5. Provide the employee with a copy of the completed and signed plan and retain a copy for your own files.
6. With the employee's authorization, provide copies of IWERP to the Health and Safety Officer, area Fire Warden and any other individuals who have been designated to assist in an emergency. Having this information, will allow for emergency response teams to

take appropriate action in the event of an emergency or when an employee may be working alone.

7. Review the plan on an annual basis as well as when there are changes to the employee's work location, job or disability, etc. Changes must be documented.

Points to Consider When Completing the IWERP:

- An employee with a respiratory condition such as asthma may require help walking long distances or with climbing stairs, especially when smoke, dust, fumes or chemicals are present in the air.
- Conditions such as arthritis or a temporary disability such as a broken leg may make it difficult for the employee to use stairs.
- Pulling a fire alarm may be difficult for an employee that has limited manual dexterity.
- A person with a speech disability may need different ways to communicate in an emergency.
- A person with a mental health condition may have trouble dealing with high anxiety, panic or stress in an emergency.
- Building awareness within your department/faculty will be critical. Not everyone can quickly hear or see an alarm or emergency and quickly leave the location when necessary.
- Practicing evacuations and fire drills and accounting for accommodations in advance is strongly advised.