

# REGULATION

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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**Related Entries:** EBA-RA, EBJ-RA

**Responsible Office:** Chief Operating Officer  
School Safety and Security

**Related Sources:** *Code of Maryland Regulations*, 13A.02.02.01-.04; Maryland State Department of Education *Emergency Planning Guidelines for Local School Systems and Schools*; Montgomery County Public Schools *Emergency Response and Management Manual for Schools*

### Emergency and Disaster Preparedness

#### I. PURPOSE

To provide for the safety of all persons on Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) grounds, through the development and maintenance of the comprehensive local emergency preparedness plans

#### II. BACKGROUND

MCPS is required by Maryland laws and safety standards to plan and prepare for the safety of its students and employees in the event of an emergency.

#### III. DEFINITIONS

- A. *Emergencies* are violent or traumatic events on school grounds during regular school hours or during school-sponsored activities; or events in the community that affect normal school functioning. Emergencies may include, but are not limited to, bomb threats, criminal activities, accidents, fires, explosions, medical emergencies, hazardous materials incidents, and weather-related events.
- B. MCPS *grounds*, as it applies to emergency planning requirements, means MCPS owned or leased buildings and the land that surrounds the school building.
- C. *Principal/director* refers to the administrator responsible for a school or office as appropriate.

**IV. PROCEDURES**

- A. MCPS must comply with all federal and state requirements for emergency planning and preparedness, which include the following:
1. The central administration Emergency Response Plan (ERP), required by Maryland regulation, which details how MCPS addresses mitigation, prevention, preparation, response, and recovery to an emergency that impacts the school system
  2. School Emergency Plans (SEPs), required by Maryland regulation, which detail how each MCPS local school addresses mitigation, prevention, preparation, response, and recovery to an emergency
  3. Emergency action plans and fire prevention plans required by Maryland Occupational Safety and Health (MOSH) which must include, but are not limited to, procedures for emergency evacuation, procedures to be followed by employees who remain to operate critical plant operations before they evacuate, and procedures to be followed by employees performing rescue or medical duties
  4. Circumstances may occur that require additional procedures in the event of an emergency evacuation. Procedures will need to be tailored to the unique circumstances involved.
- B. The MCPS Department of School Safety and Security (DSSS) and the Systemwide Safety Programs (SSP) Unit collaborate to provide technical assistance to MCPS schools and facilities, as follows:
1. DSSS publishes and maintains the *Emergency Response and Management Manual for Schools*.
  2. DSSS ensures that each school and facility has all required emergency plans on file and that the plans are updated in compliance with Maryland regulations.
  3. SSP monitors Emergency action plans and fire prevention plans, to ensure compliance with MOSH standards.
- C. In addition to fire drills, Maryland law requires MCPS to conduct the following six emergency preparedness drills each year at all schools and facilities:

1. Evacuation
2. Shelter in place
3. Reverse evacuation
4. Lockdown
5. Drop, cover, and hold
6. Severe weather

D. On-site Emergency Teams

1. A principal/director has the responsibility to see that the school or facility has an on-site emergency team (OSET) and that its members are prepared to implement required emergency plans.
2. The OSET's responsibilities include the following:
  - a) Develop and review the required emergency plan(s)
  - b) Conduct emergency preparedness drills in accordance with Maryland regulations
  - c) After an emergency occurs, participate in the debriefing process and revise emergency plans as needed
3. Principals/directors, in cooperation with their OSETs, shall evaluate and update required emergency plans annually.

E. Evacuation and Shelter at MCPS Properties

1. When there is an emergency, there may or may not be time to transport students to their homes; or it may be necessary to evacuate students and staff to an alternate building due to the emergency affecting the site.
2. Only the superintendent of schools or designee is authorized to close school, send students home, or relocate students to an alternate location.
3. The plans for evacuation or shelter at MCPS properties are addressed, as required, in each school or facility's emergency plan(s).

**Regulation History:** Formerly Regulation No. 243-5, September 30, 1981; reprinted April, 1988; revised October 14, 1999; revised July 29, 2015.