

**Agency of Human Services**  
**January 8, 2016**  
**House Human Services**  
**AHS Safety Planning Update**  
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Safety and security, especially for employees in the district offices, is a top concern across the Agency of Human Services. To address this concern there are three initiatives underway.

The first initiative is the formation of the AHS safety Committee. Initially, this workgroup was an emergency planning workgroup. The team was expanded to include representation from all departments as well as the field. The committee has three primary goals for 2016:

1. Develop a safety protocol for AHS
2. Ensure the emergency procedures roll out is completed
3. Develop a notification system for threats/events of concern in all buildings

The second initiative began in August, 2015. The AHS Secretary's Office, in collaboration with BGS, developed a plan to operationalize emergency procedures in every office building statewide over the course of 2016. Emergency Planning/Procedures will be implemented in at least one state building that houses AHS staff each month until all have been covered across the state. As you might imagine, some regions where staff are not co-located will be more challenging. However, the goal is to set forth a course where emergency procedures are documented, employees are trained, and evacuation drills will be practiced annually (at a minimum).

Emergency Preparedness means that employees understand the differences between a fire drill, hostile intruder, bomb threat, etc.; the Emergency Coordinating Manager and floor wardens will be identified; and staff understand the evacuation route and meeting place. To achieve this, AHS Central Office and BGS will work with local district and regional leadership teams to implement the following:

1. Customize emergency procedures using an Emergency Procedures template (see attached)
2. Managers will complete *Emergency Response in the Workplace* (45 minutes) training through the Online University
3. Managers meet with BGS and AHS CO team
4. All employees take *Emergency Response in the Workplace* training through the Online University (Building managers will be available to answer questions)
5. Evacuation routes will be reviewed
6. Evacuation Drill will be executed and de-briefed
7. All employees and managers take Hostile Intruder training (5 minute video)  
<http://bgs.vermont.gov/security/sip>
8. Hostile Intruder drill will be executed and de-briefed

## Statewide Implementation Schedule

District/Region	Schedule
St. Albans	Complete
Hartford	October, 2016
Rutland	August, 2016
Newport	In progress
Barre	Complete
Morrisville	February, 2016
Burlington	March and April, 2016
Waterbury	May, 2016
Bennington	July, 2016
Brattleboro	June, 2016
Springfield	August, 2016
St. Johnsbury	September, 2016
Middlebury	In progress

Please note that Emergency Procedures are not the same as the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP). The COOP is a planning document utilized by all departments to maintain essential functions and operations in the event of an emergency. For example, the COOP was activated for many AHS central and essential functions in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Irene. Emergency Procedures are a tool/resource to assist employees with planning and practice for emergencies that may require evacuating the building or instituting security measures.

Employee safety is our priority. Until this work is completed employees should refer to the BGS yellow flip pad **Emergency Procedures** as needed. In the event of an emergency or threat, employees should always complete the BGS online incident report at <http://bgs.vermont.gov/security/incidentreport>.

The third initiative is a partnership between BGS and AHS. The AHS COO and the BGS security team are working together to share information and to enhance communication. To that end, the AHS COO receives all BGS incident reports that involve the Agency of Human Services as well as a monthly and annual summary of incident reports. This system fosters ongoing communication and provides the information needed to look for trends. In 2016, we will work to improve the data captured in these reports.