

Houghton College Campus Evacuation Plan

Introduction:

A crisis can affect any campus and at times it will be appropriate to evacuate all or part of a campus in response to that crisis. Events, including but not limited to, natural disasters, accidents, and terrorism may necessitate the need for evacuation.

Since each disaster is unique in scope, magnitude, and nature this plan will need to be flexible to accommodate the specific needs as they may arise. All decisions within this plan and all Houghton Emergency plans shall have the following priorities in order:

- Protection of life
- Prevention of personal injury
- Protection of property and/or services
- Preparations to return to normal function

The purpose of this plan is to provide an effective means to quickly prepare for and complete an evacuation. The scope of this plan will be to:

- Identify the need
- Convene and communicate the need to the Emergency Management Team (EMT)
- Determine a course of action
 - Communicate that action to the community
 - Carry out the evacuation

Identify the need:

Upon being notified of an emergency on campus, the Safety and Security Officer on duty will take immediate action to secure the scene and protect people as appropriate. The officers will also simultaneously, or as soon as possible, notify the DSS or designee of the situation. This may be done using residence life staff or any others available to help.

Should the DSS and/or the EMC determine that an immediate evacuation is necessary (either full or partial), they will order an evacuation of the appropriate area and communicate the decision to the community via WENS, mass email, and word of mouth using residence life staff. Events that might warrant this may include a credible bomb threat, structural damage to an occupied building, etc. It would be exceptionally rare that a full evacuation would be ordered without convening the EMT.

Convene Emergency Management Team (EMT):

Except in the rare situation where an immediate evacuation is necessary, the EMT will be convened to discuss the emergency situation in accordance with the principles established in the base Emergency Preparedness Plan. The EMT will be apprised of all information available about the threat and consult with police and other local authorities as appropriate. Based on their findings of the threat, they may order an evacuation of a particular building or buildings, or possibly a campus evacuation. Upon deciding for an evacuation, the EMT will notify the campus using WENS, mass email, and direct communication through all available Student Life personnel.

The EMT will consult on any information provided to the press. The Vice President for Advancement or a designee will be the spokesperson for Houghton College to the press. No press or media people will be allowed in the EMT meetings. As per the Public Relations media plan, preparations will be made for the arrival of external media so their questions will be answered accurately and consistently by a representative from the Public Relations department.

Course of Action:

If evacuation is considered, the EMT will decide on one of the following actions:

- No evacuation necessary
- Shelter in place
- Partial evacuation
- Complete campus evacuation

No evacuation:

It may be determined by the EMT that no evacuation procedures need to take place

Shelter in Place:

The EMT may decide that it is preferable to order a “shelter in place” order rather than an evacuation. In this case, the college community will be advised to take advantage of the shelter provided by the buildings on campus, especially if there are airborne contaminants in the area. Should this be advised, the community will be advised to stay inside until the threat subsides. The following practices will be advised:

- Close and lock doors and windows
- Turn off ventilations systems
- Move to an interior room on a higher floor if possible
- Seal gaps under doors and around windows
- If you must go out or find that harmful vapors enter your shelter, covering your mouth with a damp cloth may provide minimal breathing protection.
- Stay inside until instructed that it is safe to leave

Partial evacuation:

In the event that a building or area is determined unsafe and needs to be evacuated, the EMT will order a partial evacuation.

- The community will be notified using WENS, mass email, posting signs, and word of mouth.

- Safety and Security, Facilities personnel, and Residence Life staff will be used to search and evacuate if no immediate threat exists in the area to be evacuated.
 - Teams of 2-3 people will go room to room with a prepared announcement from the EMT instructing everyone to leave. Exterior doors will be locked and signs posted on all exterior doors stating that the building is closed.
 - Should someone refuse to leave, document their name and location and report that to the DSS as soon as possible. He or she will decide whether to let them stay at their own peril, send additional staff to remove them, or send law enforcement to remove them.
 - If residence halls are evacuated, Safety and Security will disable the access systems so students cannot re-enter the designated building.
- Houghton Volunteer Fire Department (HVFD) personnel and police/emergency personnel will be called in to search and evacuate if there is imminent danger in the areas to be evacuated.
- Fire alarms may be utilized for building evacuations, except in the case of bomb threats. **Never activate a fire alarm in a building where a bomb is suspected.** The alarm can actually activate a bomb under some circumstances.
- Facilities staff will work with Safety and Security to set up a safety perimeter around the evacuated area.
 - This includes being prepared to provide barricades and close off streets and sidewalks as the need is determined.
 - HVFD personnel and police will be used to control traffic points as necessary
- If appropriate, the EMT will call for the campus to gather in one of the predetermined central gathering locations (Nielsen PEC or Campus Center). Here the community can be advised corporately, a roster can be compiled to compare against student lists, and changes in plans can be implemented immediately.
 - The central gathering locations also have rudimentary medical facilities that can be used to treat any injured and prepare them for transport to an appropriate medical facility.
 - Housing and other Residence Life staff will be called upon to create the roster of attendance at the central gathering location.
- The Technology Services Department will post appropriate announcements on the web site as approved by Public Relations Department. These announcements will:
 - Keep the public informed of the situation
 - Give students and faculty/staff instructions
 - Announce buildings and areas that are closed
 - Provide dates or times when facilities will re-open

Complete Campus Evacuation:

A complete evacuation of the Houghton College Campus is a major endeavor and not without risk. The EMT would not call for a complete evacuation except under extreme situations that would render the campus unsafe and unable to function such as structural integrity issues in most buildings, or an expected pandemic. Should a complete campus evacuation be ordered, the following considerations need to be made:

- All the steps for a partial evacuation will be implemented as above.

- Determine if any personnel need to remain on campus such as:
 - Safety and Security to protect people, facilities and assets
 - Facilities staff to maintain building functions such as heat and refrigeration
 - Tech services staff to maintain integrity of technology and records
- The EMT will determine the timetable for evacuation.
- If at all possible, a complete campus evacuation decision will be announced to the community as a whole at the gathering site where a timetable and specific instructions can be given to everyone. Once announced here, notification will be made via WENS and mass email.
 - Students will be advised to go to their homes if possible
 - Those without transportation will be staged in an off campus site such as the Houghton Wesleyan Church, Houghton Academy, or Fillmore Central School until transportation can be arranged
 - The Office of Inter culture Student Programs will be responsible to find temporary locations for international students.
 - Houghton College will use college vehicles and any other transportation at its disposal to transport students to off campus evacuation sites as necessary.

Post evacuation:

After an evacuation is completed, the EMT will meet as soon as possible to evaluate and establish a plan for restoring Houghton College back to normal function. They will consider:

- Restoring campus to function:
 - When can Residence Halls and Food Service open and resume operations
 - When classes can reasonably resume
 - What generally must be accomplished before classes can reasonably resume
 - Creative ways to function until normal function can resume (internet, alternate sites, collaborating with other institutions, etc.)
- Evaluation:
 - How things went and issues that need to be addressed
 - Relations with local agencies such as HVFD, police, etc.
 - Acknowledgements to those who helped
 - Continuing investigation by police
 - Establish future meeting date for EMT for full evaluation