



# WAEPA CHECKLIST

Worldwide Assurance for Employees of Public Agencies, Inc.

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## Security at Federal Buildings

A recent survey found that one third of Federal Employees said that they or a colleague had been threatened or harassed while doing their jobs. Employees are increasingly considering themselves to be on the front lines of changes happening in our society. Whether facing a person with a knife, or being threatened by a biological attack, the simple steps in this WAEPA Checklist may help you stay safe.

### Protecting Civilian Employees

Federal government buildings are protected by the Federal Protective Service (FPS), which protects more than 9,500 federal facilities visited daily by roughly 1.4 million people.

The Federal Emergency Dismissal Protocol calls for the General Services Administration (GSA), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to consult and decide on the operating status of the Federal Government and Federal buildings during an emergency. These agencies have on-going access to critical information provided by Department of Homeland Security (DHS), law enforcement and other related agencies that inform respective decision-making. Each agency is a part of the network that would immediately receive confirmed reports on any situations.

In a natural or man-made event (such as a terror incident), FEMA, GSA and OPM will convene their principals for a review of the situation and make decisions for each of their respective areas of responsibility. The agency's access to confirmed reports in the event of an emergency will help provide management with guidance appropriate to ensure employee safety.

Immediate notification of changes to the operating status of the Federal Government will be relayed to key Federal and local authorities. Following this notification, the news media, the Federal Executive Board and other outlets across the National Capital Region and the Nation will be alerted to the change in operational status.

### Security Requirements at Each Agency

Safety Equipment Provided by the Federal Government. Each agency determines the risks faced by its employees, develops a comprehensive strategy and assesses the benefits provided by any protective equipment (such as escape hoods and protective suits). These decisions are based largely on the time it takes for an agency to evacuate the building, and other information gained through a threat assessment. Employees should check with their agency's security/safety



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personnel to learn the status of any protective equipment provided.

Agency Occupant Emergency Plans (OEP). Federal agencies that operate in buildings managed by the U.S. General Services Administration are required to establish an Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP). The OEP is a short-term emergency response program that establishes procedures for safeguarding lives and property.

Each Federal building has unique factors that may affect the security measures that should be taken to protect employees. Some of those factors are the location of the building, proximity to other prominent landmarks or buildings, building design features, and the mission of the agencies housed within. For this reason, security measures and evacuation procedures are tailored to meet the unique features of each facility.

### Threat Assessment

The primary basis by which security measures are determined is through a facility threat assessment. The Federal Protective Service (FPS) conducts recurring threat assessments for GSA-controlled property (agencies in buildings not managed by GSA usually deal with the FBI or local police for emergency preparedness and or threat assessments).

### Continuity of Operations

Agencies must have plans in place that allow the business of government to continue during emergency situations. Designated Continuity of Operations (COOP) facilities should be able to manage the staff needed to support important missions and to facilitate government operations. Not all key staff may be designated to report to COOP sites.

### Emergency Personnel

Some agencies create a cadre of “mission-critical” emergency employees who are expected to remain in contact with their agencies at all times during any closure situation and may be called to work during emergencies dealing with national security, extended emergencies, or other unique situations. Agencies must identify the emergency situations in which “mission-critical” emergency employees will be expected to report for work and whether such employees must report for work at their regular worksites or alternative worksites.

### Shelter-in-Place Protocols

It is possible that some types of emergency events may make evacuation of a Federal building dangerous. In this situation, an agency may decide to Shelter-In-Place (SIP). SIP is a protective



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action taken where a facility's occupants take refuge inside an area of the building with no or few windows. In general, a facility will SIP when one of the following emergencies occurs outside the building: severe weather (tornado, hail, etc.), civil unrest, gunman/sniper, or a biological, chemical or radiological threat.

Management will decide whether to SIP Up (proceed to a higher level), SIP Down (proceed to a lower level), or SIP In (proceed to an interior area) within the facility after conducting a threat analysis of the situation based on the type of threat and its location. During a SIP event, occupants should pay close attention to announcements made on the facility's public address system.

### What Employees Can Do

#### Know Your Agency's Safety Plan.

Employees should familiarize themselves with the procedures that have been put into place at their agency, as well as the means of notification that an agency will use to inform and instruct them.

As an employee, you may have questions about what is being done to protect your safety. Be sure to ask your manager to explain the agency procedures that are in place. In addition, pass any suggestions for improved building security to your manager. Your manager may need to contact his or her supervisor about your

questions and suggestions. Be sure to follow up so that your concerns are fully addressed.

Special Needs Employees. Within every agency's Occupant Emergency Plan (OEP), there is a component that addresses the concerns of employees who may need assistance during an emergency. Managers should be aware of these procedures and communicate this information to employees with special needs. Managers should also be proactive in asking employees with special needs about the questions and concerns they may have about emergency procedures. One practical step to protect individuals with disabilities is to establish a "buddy" system. This buddy system should be fully integrated into the agency OEP.

Stay Aware of Your Surroundings. Be on the look out for, and report, any suspicious activity. Observations and awareness of the surroundings may prevent incidents from occurring and/or give responders valuable information if an event does occur.

Employee Volunteers (part of every agency's OEP) are used to assist in effective evacuation and other duties during an emergency. During evacuation drills, employees should make a mental note of identifying garments (arm bands, caps, etc.) worn by floor team leaders,



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monitors and other volunteers. Whether it is serving as a floor manager, stairwell monitor, or keeping track of fellow employees during a crisis, volunteers are critical to protecting fellow employees. You can take additional steps to learn CPR and first aid to assist others during emergencies. Please consider volunteering for this important role.

Create a Personal Safety Kit. There are some items that employees may wish to assemble in a personal safety kit that is stored at their workspace. These could be used in the event of an attack or other emergency.

Items that may be appropriate for these kits include: additional dosages of any medication that an employee requires, bottled water, long-sleeved shirt or jacket, and emergency contact numbers. You may also think about adding such small items as snack food, an extra pair of glasses or other “comfort” items you think are necessary.

### Biological Threats

A biological attack is the deliberate release of germs or related substances. To affect individuals adversely, these substances must usually be inhaled, ingested, or enter through cuts in the skin. Some biological agents such as smallpox can be spread from person to person while others like anthrax do not

cause contagious diseases.

Different than a conventional explosive or attack, biological attacks may not be immediately evident. Some of the normal indicators of this type of attack would be an increase in the number of illnesses reported by local health care workers or a large number of dead or sick animals throughout your area. These attacks are normally discovered by emergency response personnel in reaction to the indicators listed above.

What Should You Do? In the event that you witness a suspicious attack using an unknown substance, there are a number of things you can do to protect yourself and your family. First, leave the immediate area as quickly as possible and protect yourself by finding something to place over your nose and mouth. Any layered material like a t-shirt, handkerchief, or towel may help prevent particles of the substance from entering your respiratory system. If you have a long-sleeved shirt or jacket, they would be useful in covering exposed skin. They may also prevent bacteria from entering cuts you may have. If you are indoors and the suspected attack takes place outdoors, remain inside unless told otherwise by authorities. Report the attack to emergency personnel.

You can also take precautionary measures such as keeping



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immunizations up-to-date and making sure you practice good personal hygiene. A healthy body will be able to better fight any potential contamination by biological agents. In the event that anyone around you becomes ill, do not automatically assume that it is from the suspected attack as many of the symptoms from these attacks resemble common illnesses. Seek the medical advice of your physician.

### Chemical Threats

Chemical attacks differ from biological attacks in that a toxic gas or liquid is used to contaminate people or the environment. The prevalent symptoms you would experience from a chemical attack are tightness in the chest, difficulty breathing, blurred vision, stinging of the eyes, or loss of coordination.

It is worth noting that the public routinely accepts the risks posed by accidental release of chemicals. The response to an emergency event involving chemicals, however, is the same regardless of whether the emergency is a result of intentional or unintentional actions.

What Should You Do? If you witness a suspected chemical attack outdoors, move away from the area as quickly as possible. If you cannot leave the area, try to get inside, away from direct exposure and follow your instructions to shelter-

in-place. If you are inside and an attack occurs in your building, try to leave the area if possible. If not, move to a safe location in the building and shelter-in-place.

If you suffer any of the symptoms mentioned above, try to remove any clothing you can and wash your body with water or soap and water if available. Do not scrub the area, as this may wash the chemical into the skin. Seek medical assistance as soon as possible. If you see someone experiencing these symptoms, keep them away from others as much as possible, and try to keep them comfortable.

While extensive decontamination requiring disrobing is a possibility, this will normally only occur if you become a casualty of the agent or are evacuated and require medical treatment in a "clean" medical facility. This procedure may be required to prevent the spread of contamination.

### Nuclear Explosions and Radiological Contamination

A nuclear blast consists of tremendous thermal (heat), light, and blast energy. The blast can spread radioactive waste capable of contaminating the air and surrounding landscape. While this type of attack is less likely than a biological or chemical attack, the remote possibility



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of its occurrence means you should be prepared.

What Should You Do? If a nuclear explosion occurs, immediately drop and stay down until any blast wave passes over you and it is safe to get up. Debris can often cause injuries from a nuclear explosion so it is often safer to remain down until debris stops falling. Do not look at the blast.

When it is safe to do so, seek shelter inside a building or basement. Since dirt or earth is one of the best forms of protection from radiation, put as much shelter between you and the potential contamination as possible. If it is safe to leave without going in the direction from which the blast came, you should decide whether to leave the area to minimize the amount of time you spend exposed to radiological contamination. You should always try to place as much shielding and distance between yourself and the contamination as possible and limit the amount of your exposure by leaving laterally or upwind from the area when it is safe to do so.

### Dirty Bombs

Dirty bombs are regular explosives that have been combined with either radiation causing material or chemical weapons. While most news reports talk about radiological dirty bombs, chemical

agents may be used as well. Blasts from these types of weapons normally look more like a regular explosion, and the contamination spread is not often immediately noticeable. While this type of attack normally spreads contamination over a more localized area, you should be prepared to follow many of the same procedures as listed above.

### After an Attack

After experiencing any of these types of attacks, tune to your local channels for information and instructions. Emergency responders are trained and equipped to evaluate and react to threats rising from these incidents. After a nuclear blast, you may be unable to get a signal from radio or television stations for a period of time. This is expected, so be persistent.

### How to Make Your Federal Building Safer

Employees should increase awareness of any suspicious activity and report concerns to the appropriate security and law enforcement personnel. The better you are prepared to respond to emergencies, the better you will be able to care for yourself and your colleagues in the event of a real threat or act of violence.



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### Common Sense Advice:

- Know whom to contact in an emergency.
- Don't be reluctant to seek assistance.
- Report suspicious persons or packages.
- Know your role in cases of emergency.
- Know your Occupant Emergency Plan.
- Wear your identification badges.
- Be cautious of phone and open area discussions.
- Protect computer passwords.
- Don't leave your computer unattended.
- Report unusual requests for information.
- Know what to do with suspicious packages/letters.
- Know where guards are posted.
- Fully cooperate with security checks.

### **How to Handle Suspicious and Possibly Contaminated Mail**

#### General Precautions for Mail Handling:

- Examine unopened envelopes/packages and look for suspicious features
- Handle incoming mail in a designated separate mail area.
- Wash your hands after mail is opened.
- Restrict mailroom access to authorized persons.

#### Features of suspect mail:

- Excessive postage, no postage, or non-canceled postage.
- No return address or fictitious return address.
- Improper spelling of names, titles, or locations.
- Unexpected envelopes from foreign countries
- Suspicious or threatening messages written on packages.
- Postmark with different location than return address.
- Distorted handwriting or cut and paste lettering.
- Unprofessionally wrapped packages or excessive use of tape, strings, etc.
- Packages marked Fragile-Handle with Care, Rush-Do Not Delay, Personal or Confidential.
- Rigid, uneven, irregular or lopsided packages.
- Packages discolored or an unusual odor.
- Packages with soft spots, bulges, or excessive weight.
- Protruding wires or aluminum foil.
- Visual distractions.

#### If you receive a suspicious package, letter, or object:

- Remain calm.
- Do not open the package or letter.
- Do not shake or empty the contents of a suspicious package or envelope.
- Do not carry the package or envelope, show it to others, or allow others to



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examine it.

- Put the package or envelope on a stable surface; do not sniff, touch, taste, or look closely at it or any contents that may have spilled.
- Do not touch your body and risk spreading the contagion – stay away especially from the eyes and mouth.
- Shut off window air conditioning units and fans.
- Isolate the package and close off the room by shutting all doors and windows.
- Thoroughly wash hands with soap and water.
- Report to supervisor, local police and FBI (using 911 will connect you to these sources).
- Contact the Federal Protective Service regarding incidents in Federal buildings.
- Advise coworkers to avoid the area.
- Don't leave area until told by responding units.
- Ensure all persons who have touched the letter wash their hands with soap and water.
- List all persons who have touched the letter and who were in the area when the letter was opened.
- Shower with soap and water.

### Actions for a Telephone Threat

- Stay calm and courteous.
- Report threat immediately to 911.
- Report threat to the Federal Protective Service.
- Write down the time, incoming

extension number and exact wording of the threat.

- Do not allow this phone line to be used again to allow law enforcement the ability to trace the call.

### Actions for a Chemical/Biological Threat

Ask the following questions:

- What chemical / biological agent is it?
- When is the agent going to be released?
- Where is it right now? (Building/Floor/Room)
- Who put it there?
- What does it look like?
- What will cause it to spread?
- What will trigger it?
- Where did you get the agent?
- Why are you doing this?
- What is your name?
- What is your phone number/address?
- Write down description of caller's voice (gender, age, tone, accent, speech impairments)
- Write down background noises.

### Actions for a Bomb Threat

- Keep calm. Keep talking.
- Don't hang up.
- Signal a co-worker to get an extension.
- Ask caller to repeat the message and write it down.
- Repeat questions, if necessary.





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- Ask where the bomb is and when it is set to go off.
- Listen for background noises.
- Write down noises, gender, pitch of voice and accent.
- Ask person's name, exact location, phone number.
- Signal a co-worker to call FPS, guard or local police.
- Notify your immediate supervisor.

### Faced with a Gun, Knife, or Weapon Threat

- Stay calm. Quietly signal for help.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Stall for time.
- Keep talking – but follow instructions from the person who has the weapon.
- Don't risk harm to yourself and others.
- Never try to grab a weapon.
- Watch for a possible chance to escape to a safe area.

### Emergency Numbers Card

Create an [Emergency Numbers Card](#) with all the important numbers you'll need:

- Emergency Phone Numbers
- Federal Protective Service
- Building Security
- Police/Sheriff
- Fire Department
- Ambulance
- Health Unit

### Emergency Contact Information

Federal Protective Service (FPS)  
Headquarters is in Washington, D.C.  
(877) 437- 7411

### Federal Protective Service - Field Offices

#### Region 1 - Boston, Massachusetts Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Maine, Rhode Island, and Connecticut

10 Causeway Street, Room 935  
Boston, MA 02222  
Phone: **(617) 565-6360**

#### Region 2 - New York, NY New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, and Virgin Islands

26 Federal Plaza, Room 17-130  
New York, NY 10278 Phone: **(212) 264-4255**

#### Region 3 - Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia

701 Market Street, Suite 4200  
Philadelphia, PA 19106  
Phone: **(215) 521-2150**

#### Region 4 - Atlanta, Georgia Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South



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### **Carolina, and Tennessee**

Martin Luther King, Jr. Federal Building  
180 Spring Street  
SW Atlanta, GA 30303  
Phone: **(404) 893-1500**

### **Region 5 - Chicago, Illinois Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin**

Kluczynski Federal Building Room 2360  
230 South Dearborn Street Chicago, IL  
60604  
Phone: **(312) 353-1496**

### **Region 6 - Kansas City, Missouri Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska)**

601 E. 12th Street  
Room 1712 Kansas City, MO 64106  
Phone: **(816) 426-2155**

### **Region 7 - Grand Prairie, Texas Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma**

1901 N. State Hwy 360, Ste 500  
Grand Prairie, TX 75050  
Phone: **(817) 649-6200**

### **Region 8 - Denver, Colorado Colorado, Wyoming, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, and Utah**

Denver Federal Center Building 44  
West 6th Avenue & Kipling Street

P.O. Box 25266 Denver, CO 80225  
Phone: **(303) 236-6707**

### **Region 9 - San Francisco, California California, Arizona, Nevada, and Hawaii**

450 Golden Gate Avenue 5th Floor Room  
5474  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
Phone: **(415) 522-3440**

### **Region 10 - Federal Way, Washington Alaska, Washington, Idaho, and Oregon**

32125 32nd Avenue  
South Federal Way, WA 98001  
Phone: **(253) 815-4700**

### **National Capital Region (NCR-11) Washington DC, Virginia, and Maryland**

1900 Half Street, SW Suite 5000  
Washington, DC 20536  
Phone: **(202) 245-2300**

*Other sites include the Far East and the  
Caribbean.*