



**SECTION:** Health and Safety

**POLICY:** HS 03

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Formerly the Business Continuity Policy:  
December 2022; July 2022; February 2017;  
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## **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE POLICY**

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### **PREAMBLE**

Contact Brant is committed to ensuring the health and safety of all employees and any visitors to its workplace. As such, Contact Brant has developed the following policy to guide its employees and managers in the event of emergency situations. Preparing for emergencies is a critical part of our health and safety commitment.

An Emergency Response Plan is also part of this Business Continuity Policy to ensure compliance with the Ontario Regulation 191/11 Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005.

In the event of any workplace injuries of any kind, Contact Brant will follow the appropriate reporting requirements, as per (Part VII – Notices (sections 51 to 53.1) of the OSHA and in Ontario Regulation 420/21 - Notices and Reports Under Sections 51 to 53.1 of the Act – Fatalities, Critical Injuries, Occupational Illnesses and Other Incidents (O. Reg. 420/21)., e.g., the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act, and/or the Collective Agreement, as applicable).

### Definitions

An “emergency” is a situation or an impending situation that constitutes a danger of major proportions that could result in serious harm to persons or substantial damage to property and that is caused by the forces of nature, a disease or other health risk, an accident, or an act whether intentional or otherwise (Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, R.S.O., 1990).

Some common types of emergencies include:

- Fires or explosions
- Medical emergencies
- Severe weather and earthquakes
- Major power failures
- Hazardous material spills
- Infectious diseases, including COVID-19
- Technological disruptions.

## **POLICY**

In the event of an emergency, Contact Brant will have emergency plans to prepare employees for their roles and responsibilities which are necessary to:

- Keep employees, visitors, and first responders free from any further injuries;
- Succeed in managing life-threatening situations;
- As much as possible, minimize any damage to equipment and any part of the environment; and
- Ensure a return to work as safely as possible.

## **PROCEDURES**

1. The following four major elements have been considered for this Emergency Preparedness and Response Policy:
  - Prevention (use of the policies and procedures to follow to avoid or minimize any emergencies);
  - Preparation (the actions and procedures to take to ensure that Contact Brant and its employees are ready to effectively respond);
  - Response (the actions to be taken in the event of an emergency); and
  - Recovery (how employees and supervisors can return to normal business operations).
2. Accessibility Considerations: As per the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), Contact Brant will ensure that individualized response plans are created for any employees who identify that they will need assistance during an emergency due to a permanent or temporary disability. These responsibilities include:
  - Providing individualized emergency response information to the employee;
  - With the employee's consent, sharing this information with the person(s) who will be designated to aid them during an emergency;
  - Reviewing the information in an employee's emergency response plan when:
    - The employee changes work locations (e.g., to a different floor or office);
    - The employee's overall accommodation needs are being reviewed; and
    - Contact Brant's general emergency response policies are being reviewed.
  - 2.1. Contact Brant will ensure that regardless of whether the disability is permanent (e.g., vision loss), or temporary (e.g., broken limb), employees are afforded the same level of accommodations required.
3. Planning Team: Contact Brant will establish a planning team, consisting of the Management Team, to ensure emergency response planning includes all areas, and supports implementation. The planning team is responsible for:
  - Assessing any risks or hazards to the workplace;
  - Developing specifics for the emergency response plan;
  - Implementing the plan (including communicating and training the plan to employees);
  - Testing the plan by holding drills on an annual basis
  - Improving or modifying the plan as additional information becomes available.

- 3.1. The planning team will also ensure that it retains:
  - Up-to-date emergency contact information for all employees;
  - A schedule which outlines who will be on shift so that they may be checked off in the event of an evacuation; and
  - A list of emergency names and contacts (e.g., poison control, etc.) that is kept on the Health and Safety bulletin board by the photocopier.
4. In the event of any workplace injuries, Contact Brant will follow the appropriate reporting requirements, as per the OHSA and Regulations.
5. Fire or Explosion Preparedness: At Contact Brant, there is an alarm system that will be triggered in the event of a fire through the security system, which calls 911.
  - 5.1. **Fire Safety Plan**: The Chief Executive Officer will ensure there is a Fire Safety Plan developed, staff are oriented to and annually review the Fire Safety Plan, an annual fire drill is held to familiarize staff with emergency evacuation procedures, and the floor plan is posted near exits
  - 5.2. Employees will familiarize themselves with the posted office floor plan, including locations of fire extinguishers, and exits.
  - 5.3. *In the event of a fire*:
    - When an employee becomes aware of a fire, immediately notify other occupants of the building by calling out “Fire”.
    - Employees are to evacuate, following the evacuation procedures below;
    - Call 9-1-1. The fire must be reported, and the information must include:
      - Who is reporting the fire;
      - What has happened (to the best of the person’s knowledge);
      - Where it has happened (the Contact Brant office at 255 Colborne Street, Units 1 & 2));
      - If there are any injuries; and
      - Whether there are others that may be in the path of the fire.
    - If the fire is small and in a contained area, employees should utilize a fire extinguisher, and follow-up with a call to the fire department to ensure the fire is extinguished fully.
  - 5.4. *Evacuation Procedures*: In the event the fire alarm sounds, or there is an emergency situation that requires evacuation, employees:
    - Must remain calm and exit the building in an orderly fashion.
    - Proceed to the nearest exit door.
    - Proceed to, and remain at, the designated meeting spot at the corner of Colborne and Wharfe St.
    - Keeping safety in mind first, if there is time, lights should be turned off and doors closed to minimize the spread of fire.
    - Wherever possible, the Emergency Captain (one of: the CEO, a Manager, or the Executive Assistant) will ensure that all employees have evacuated the Contact Brant office area before leaving the

building.

- The CEO or alternate will ensure that all employees are accounted for at the designated meeting spot.
- Employees will not re-enter the building until the fire department has indicated it is safe to do so.

6. Medical Emergency Preparedness: In the event of an emergency, employees are reminded that the first aid kits are located in the kitchen cupboard

- 6.1. At least 2 employees will be trained in first aid and their names will be posted on the Health and Safety bulletin board.
- 6.2. If the employee is first aid trained, they should follow the instructions provided during their first aid training in assessing the person, the environment, and the need for additional support. If the situation requires it, be prepared to provide first aid for life-threatening situations, including bleeding, loss of a pulse, or loss of breathing.
- 6.3. If an employee comes across a medical emergency, they are directed to call for help (911) immediately. They will then survey the area around the injured person to ensure that there are no hazards that could affect their own safety before moving towards the injured person.
- 6.4. All emergency numbers can be accessed at the Health and Safety bulletin board by the photocopier. Employees are to provide assistance to first responders as they arrive, including by noting anything that could help the injured party and providing any information requested by the first responders.
- 6.5. After the medical emergency has passed, the employee will be requested to provide a statement outlining what occurred, which may help in preventing any further occurrences. The employee is to provide the statement to the CEO or alternate.

7. Severe Weather and Earthquake Preparedness: As there may be different levels of preparedness required for severe/inclement weather or earthquakes, the following procedure is for immediate danger due to an earthquake or storm.

- 7.1. In the event of a “weather watch”, Contact Brant will closely monitor the inclement weather situation and immediately notify employees if emergency procedures need to be started.
- 7.2. In the event of a “weather warning” for severe weather or an earthquake, employees are to proceed to the nearest “safe place” - this could consist of a desk or sturdy table, or against an interior wall, provided that there aren’t any bookcases, cupboards, windows, or any other kind of furniture that could fall.
  - Keep their head down to protect their eyes.
  - As after-shocks could follow an earthquake, wait in their safe place until the shaking stops and then proceed with a personal inventory, making sure that they are not injured.

- Look carefully for hazards such as fire, including damaged electrical lines, broken gas lines, etc.
  - Once outside, employees should move away from buildings, trees, streetlights, and any overhead wires, covering their heads as they move.
- 7.3. *Temporary Office Closures*: When the local school boards cancel school transportation and close schools in the City of Brantford due to weather or environmental conditions, including but not limited to tornadoes, earthquakes and blizzards, the Contact Brant office will be temporarily closed so employees do not have to travel into work. The Chief Executive Officer or alternate will identify when the office will re-open.
- Employees are expected to complete work at home. Employees should plan ahead when weather forecasts implicate poor weather the next day, to be prepared to work at home in case of office closure.
8. Major Power Outage Preparedness: There are emergency lights in the building in the event of a major power outage. During an outage, the CEO or alternate, will verify whether the outage is widespread.
- 8.1. Employees are to safely gather in the front entrance area.
  - 8.2. 911 should only be called if an emergency is life-threatening; emergency services will be overwhelmed in the event of a power outage.
  - 8.3. Contact Brant has the following items to use in the event of a power outage: Exit signs and emergency lighting in hallways will remain on;.
  - 8.4. As instructed, employees may be required to unplug their computers and other electrical appliances to guard against surges when the power returns. The doors to the refrigerators must be kept closed.
9. Technological Disruptions Preparedness: Major technological disruptions could occur due to human error, cyber-attacks and hacker activity.
- 9.1. The Chief Executive Officer will ensure the following are in place to minimize risk: adequate back-up systems, firewalls, policies regarding computer and internet use, use of passwords, and use of a Password Manager tool.
  - 9.2. Employees will ensure use of passwords and will bring any concerns regarding IT resources or access to the attention of the Administrative Assistant or, management, who will connect with IT contracted services.
10. Infectious Disease/Pandemic Preparedness – Refer to the *Communicable Disease Prevention Policy* and the *COVID-19 Workplace Safety Plan Policy*
11. Hazardous Material Spill Preparedness: WHMIS procedures will be followed to prevent any leaks, spills, or damage due to hazardous materials. Contact Brant will follow all applicable WHMIS procedures and will never instruct employees to perform clean-up work that goes against the stated instructions on the SDS sheet.

11.1. As accidents may occur, Contact Brant will follow these steps when a spill occurs to ensure the safety of all employees and visitors to the workplace:

- The first step is for employees to communicate that there is a spill to others in the area. As required, the CEO or alternate may commence evacuation procedures.

- If evacuation procedures are not required, control the spill by closing the container or righting what spilled over. Contain the hazard by ensuring that it does not spill over into any other places, preventing any open paths for the liquid.

Note: Contact Brant has PPE available in the event of a hazardous spill (e.g, latex gloves, face masks, etc.).

- If the employee cleaning up the spill must leave the area for any reason, they will block off the area where the spill occurred with the use of caution tape or caution cones or any other method to prevent access.
- Clean the spill and check for damages. Employees are to verify which chemicals may be used to clean up spills prior to their use. If any cleaning materials come into contact with a hazardous substance, they should be disposed of immediately unless they can be safely disinfected.
- In the event of damage to property, Contact Brant will ensure that the area continues to be blocked off until the appropriate repairs can be made.