



# ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

Procedure No. 6114.7  
Date March 10, 2005

r Suspicious Packages

- I. **PURPOSE:** To provide administrative procedures for emergencies caused by fire, explosion, discovery of bomb or other suspicious device, or receipt of a bomb threat.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** The safety of students and staff is a primary goal of Prince George's County Public Schools. School system and building administrators shall cooperate toward that goal. The principal is responsible for taking all reasonable steps to minimize safety risks during school emergencies and will call upon the services of Prince George's County Fire Department, Prince George's County Police Department, and Prince George's County Public Schools' Department of Security Services for assistance as required. This Administrative Procedure is intended to coordinate those actions under the direction of the principal.
- III. **INFORMATION:** The Prince George's County Fire Code requires that "all fires or reported fires must be reported immediately...even though the fire was extinguished." Penalty for not reporting includes a possible fine, imprisonment or both; hence, reporting procedures must be accurate and timely. The general plan for reporting is as follows:
  - A. Students detecting fires, suspected bomb devices or suspicious packages shall report to the nearest staff member.
  - B. Staff detecting fires, suspected bomb devices, suspicious packages or who receive a report from a student shall report to the principal.
  - C. Principal shall direct all emergency actions, pending arrival of a fire/police official.

In this regard, every principal at each school shall have an emergency plan (consistent with COMAR 13A.02.02 and the Emergency Operations Procedures described in Section V of this procedure) to be included in the school/facility handbook which identifies physical areas of the school for individual faculty responsibility and defines emergency duty stations and responsibilities, including situations involving fire, bomb devices, suspicious packages or bomb threats. It is imperative that all alarm systems are in good working order. In evaluating alarm systems, follow procedures outlined in Attachment B.

- IV. **DEFINITIONS:** The following definitions apply to the content of these Administrative Procedures:
  - A. **Principal:** The principal, or principal's designee, non-school facility building manager, or other individual placed in charge of a facility.
  - B. **Emergency Plan:** A school plan which provides special organization and staff assignments designed to cope with emergency situations including fire, explosion, flood, inclement weather situations, and other emergencies requiring coordinated school actions under the direction of the principal.



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- C. Emergency Operations: When directed by the principal, activation of part or all of the Emergency Plan procedures for the particular emergency.
- D. Volunteer Search Team: Staff and faculty members who wish to volunteer to assist in a search or related emergency operation are assigned a specific area of the school/facility to check for fire, unidentified suspicious objects or students remaining when “emergency operations” are directed by the Principal. See Attachment A.
- E. Facility and Staff Volunteer Team: Faculty and staff volunteers will be identified prior to the beginning of each school year.

V. **PROCEDURES:**

A. Emergency Operations Procedures:

Emergency Procedure No.	Emergency	By Student	By Staff	Principal's Office Action
1	Fire or Explosion	Report to Staff	Report to Principal's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports to PGC Fire Dept (911)</li> <li>• Sounds Alarm-following regular fire drill procedures to extent practicable</li> <li>• Evacuates building/facility</li> <li>• Supervises building evacuation</li> <li>• Activates Volunteer Teams, as required</li> <li>• notifies Department of Security Services 301-499-7000</li> <li>• Prevents re-occupancy until authorized to do so by the police or fire department officials at the scene</li> </ul>
2	Discovery of Bombs, Incendiary Devices or Suspicious Packages	Report to Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound Alarm</li> <li>• Evacuate</li> <li>• Notify Principal's Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calls PGC Police (911)</li> <li>• Calls PGC Fire Dept. (911)</li> <li>• Calls PGCPD Department of Security Services 301-499-7000</li> <li>• Does not touch the suspected bomb or suspicious package</li> <li>• Evacuates building-using regular fire drill procedures to the extent practicable</li> <li>• Ensures all areas of possible danger are cordoned off</li> <li>• Relinquishes control of the scene to senior police/fire personnel</li> <li>• Maintains security-safety measures until removal of device</li> <li>• Prevents re-occupancy until authorized to do so by the police or fire department at the scene</li> </ul>
3	Bomb Threat	Report to Staff	Report to Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activates “Star 57” trap and trace on phone line</li> <li>• Fills out all possible Bomb Threat Checklist Sheet (Attachment C)</li> <li>• Calls PGC Police (911)</li> <li>• Calls PGCPD Department of Security Services 301-499-7000</li> <li>• Evaluates Possible Danger:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. If evaluated “probable hoax,” provides for quiet inspection of building to check</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



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				<p>for suspicious objects: DO NOT HOLD FIRE DRILL OR DISMISS CLASSES</p> <p>B. If evaluated as “strong possibility of danger” – DO NOT TOUCH and call PGC Fire Dept. (911)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Calls PGC Police (911)</li> <li>2. Calls PGCPD Department of Security Services 301-499-7000</li> <li>3. Commences following Emergency Procedure #2 above for Bombs or Incendiary Devices</li> <li>4. Clears the building and area at least 15 minutes before any suspected time of explosion</li> <li>5. Activates Search Teams as appropriate: ensures all search teams are cleared from building at least 10 minutes before any alleged or suspected time of explosion</li> <li>6. Keep all people clear from suspected danger areas</li> <li>7. Authorizes re-occupancy of buildings or areas not earlier than 15 minutes after alleged or suspected time of explosion</li> </ol>
4	False Alarms			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports event to PGC Fire Dept. (911)</li> <li>• Reports event to PGCPD Department of Security Services 301-499-7000</li> </ul>

B. Emergency Operations: When the principal initiates “emergency operations” in any of the above emergency situations, the following apply:

When the Alarm Sounds – (Note: Alarm may be sounded by automatic detection equipment.)

1. Evacuate the building/facility as outlined in handbook.
2. Volunteers, administrative personnel, and security personnel will begin search and damage control operations including:
  - a. Searching for location of fire, bomb, or suspicious packages, if it is not known.
  - b. If device is located, secure, if possible, and notify appropriate authority.
  - c. Close corridor doors.
  - d. Ensure all persons are out of the building.
  - e. Use fire extinguisher, if it is safe to do so.
  - f. Stand ready to report fire or emergency situation to appropriate public safety agency.



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3. Principal will relinquish control of the incident to the appropriate police or fire official on the scene.
- C. **Bomb Threats:** Bomb threats are difficult to assess. It is, therefore, important to obtain as much information as possible. Assessment will consist of deciding if the threat is a “probable hoax” or a “possible danger.” If there is any doubt, threats should be seen as real, use Emergency Procedure No. 3 above for bomb threats and Attachment C to record data.

**In all cases, activate “Star 57” trap and trace on phone line receiving the call. Maryland Annotated Code, Criminal Law Article 9-501, provides for imprisonment not exceeding 6 months or a fine not exceeding \$500 or both.**

- D. **False Alarms:** All false fire alarm incidents that originate on school property must be reported to the Prince George’s County Fire Department, Annotated Code of Maryland, Criminal Law Article 9-604 makes it unlawful for any person knowingly make or cause to be made a false alarm and shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a fine of not more than \$5,000, imprisonment not exceeding five years or both.

When false alarms occur, see Emergency Procedure No. 4 as outlined above.

- VI. **RELATED PROCEDURES:** Administrative Procedure 6114.1, Fire Drills and Administrative Procedure 2512.1, Attention to Fires and Safety Hazards.
- VII. **CANCELLATIONS AND SUPERSEDES:** This Administrative Procedure cancels and supersedes Administrative Procedure 6114.7, dated May 1, 1997.
- VIII. **MAINTENANCE AND UPDATE OF THESE PROCEDURES:** This procedure originates with the Department of Security Services and will be updated as necessary.
- IX. **EFFECTIVE DATE:** March 10, 2005.

Approved by:  
André J. Hornsby  
Chief Executive Officer

Attachments: 1 - Emergency Check Sheet  
2 - Handling of Repairs to Fire Alarm and Extinguishing Systems  
3 - Bomb Threat Checklist

Distribution: Lists 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, and 11