

# Volunteer Emergency Response Codes and Actions

**Purpose:** This document provides an introduction to AHS Emergency Response Codes and Plans for volunteers working in AHS facilities. It is intended as a supplement to site-specific information contained in the yellow Emergency Response Manual binders and on Quick Reference Guide posters.

CODE	WHAT IT MEANS	VOLUNTEER ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
<b>CODE BLUE</b> CARDIAC ARREST / MEDICAL EMERGENCY	Code Blue is activated when there is a cardiac arrest or other medical emergency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alert staff immediately.</li> <li>▪ Return to the person and stay with them until staff have arrived.</li> <li>▪ Provide first aid if you are trained.</li> <li>▪ Once staff have arrived, assist as directed.</li> </ul>
<b>CODE RED</b> FIRE	A Code Red is activated when someone smells smoke or sees fire.	<p><b>If you smell smoke or see fire, REACT:</b></p> <p><b>R</b> – remove those in immediate danger  <b>E</b> – ensure room door is closed  <b>A</b> – activate fire alarm  <b>C</b> – call Switchboard or 911  <b>T</b> – try to extinguish fire if safe to do so</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Do not use elevators, unless authorized by the Fire Department</li> <li>▪ If you are not in the affected area, remain where you are and await further instruction.</li> </ul>
<b>CODE WHITE</b> VIOLENCE / AGGRESSION	Code White is activated when there is an incident involving aggression or violence.	<p><b>If you are involved:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Call for help – remain calm</li> <li>▪ Maintain a safe distance; leave if able</li> <li>▪ Talk in a non-threatening voice – try to defuse the situation</li> </ul> <p><b>If you are not directly involved:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Return to your placement area if safe to do so.</li> <li>▪ Close and secure doors if able, as directed by AHS staff.</li> </ul>
<b>CODE PURPLE</b> HOSTAGE	Code Purple is activated when someone is being held hostage, or where there is a threat of violence with a weapon.	<p><b>If you are involved:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Call for help - remain calm</li> <li>▪ Avoid acts of aggression - do not talk unnecessarily</li> <li>▪ Do not negotiate with captor - try not to show emotion</li> <li>▪ Stay away from doors / windows if able</li> </ul> <p><b>If you are not directly involved:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Return to your placement area if it is safe to do so.</li> <li>▪ Close and secure doors if able, as directed by AHS staff.</li> </ul>

## VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY RESPONSE CODES | 2

CODE	WHAT IT MEANS	VOLUNTEER ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
ACTIVE ASSAILANT	Active Assailant plan is activate when a weapon is being used by person(s) actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people	<p><b>If you are in imminent danger:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>RUN</b> – if a safe exit is available to you</li> <li>▪ <b>HIDE</b> – out of the assailant’s view</li> <li>▪ <b>FIGHT</b> – as a last resort</li> </ul> <p><b>If the incident is not close to you:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Avoid unnecessary movement through building</li> <li>▪ Do not return to your placement area if it is close to the incident</li> </ul>
CODE YELLOW MISSING PERSON	Code Yellow is activated when a person is missing or abducted	<p><b>If a Code Yellow is activated for your site:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Observe for the missing/abducted person and any suspicious activity in your placement area and report to staff</li> <li>▪ Assist in the search as directed by staff</li> </ul>
CODE BLACK BOMB THREAT	Code Black is activated for a bomb threat or discovery of a suspicious item is following a bomb threat.	<p><b>If you receive a bomb threat:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Remain calm and note all information you receive about the threat.</li> <li>▪ Do not use cell phones or other electronic devices.</li> <li>▪ Call for help by alerting staff or using a <u>landline</u> phone.</li> </ul> <p><b>If a Code Black is activated for your area:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Notify staff of any suspicious items in your placement area</li> </ul>
SUSPICIOUS ITEM	Suspicious Item plan is activated when a suspicious item, letter or package is discovered.	<p><b>If you discover a suspicious item:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Do not touch it or let others touch it</li> <li>▪ Leave the immediate area.</li> <li>▪ Alert staff immediately.</li> <li>▪ Do not use cell phones or other electronic devices.</li> </ul>
CODE GREY SHELTER IN PLACE / AIR EXCLUSION	Code Grey is activated when a toxic or hazardous substance is present in the air outside the facility.	<p><b>If a Code Grey is activated for your site:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Report to your placement area if possible.</li> <li>▪ Await further instruction from staff.</li> <li>▪ Be prepared to evacuate if necessary</li> </ul>
CODE GREEN EVACUATION	Code Green is activated when an incident requires full or partial evacuation of the site.	<p><b>If Code Green is activated at your site:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Follow instructions of staff</li> <li>▪ Refer to your site-specific Code Green plan for designated muster points at your site. This will be covered in your Placement Orientation.</li> <li>▪ Assist in the evacuation of others if directed by AHS staff.</li> </ul>

## VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY RESPONSE CODES | 3

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<p><b>CODE BROWN</b> CHEMICAL SPILL / HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE</p>	<p>Code Brown is activated when chemical spill or hazardous substance release has occurred.</p>	<p><b>If you discover a chemical spill/hazardous substance release:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Avoid contact with the release/spill.</li> <li>▪ Alert staff in the area immediately.</li> <li>▪ Prevent others from entering the area of the release/spill if directed by AHS staff.</li> </ul>
<p><b>CODE ORANGE MASS CASUALTY INCIDENT</b></p>	<p>Code Orange is activated when an incident generates more casualties than available emergency department or urgent care resources can manage using routine procedures.</p>	<p><b>In a mass casualty incident:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ You may be contacted to assist. You have the option to respond to the call for help.</li> <li>▪ You may be assigned to duties outside of your normal volunteer assignment.</li> <li>▪ If responding, you must come to the facility with your AHS photo identification.</li> </ul>
<p>LOCKDOWN</p>	<p>Lockdown plan is activated when there is a need to restrict the movement of people within, into and out of a facility.</p>	<p><b>If a lockdown is activated for your placement area:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Await direction from staff.</li> <li>▪ Follow the instructions of staff to prevent others from entering the incident location, securing doors, or assisting in moving patients and visitors away from the threat.</li> <li>▪ Be prepared to evacuate.</li> </ul>
<p>SEVERE WEATHER</p>	<p>Severe Weather plan is activated to ensure safety in the event of a severe weather event</p>	<p><b>If there is an imminent tornado or tornado warning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Get In</b> – if outside, get inside a sturdy building</li> <li>▪ <b>Get Down</b> – if able, go to the lowest floor, and seek shelter.</li> <li>▪ <b>Get Covered</b> – if able, seek protection by covering your head with your arms or other things.</li> <li>▪ If able, go to the designated shelter area at your site.</li> </ul> <p><b>For all other Severe Weather events:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Monitor weather watches and warnings</li> <li>▪ Avoid traveling or going outdoors in poor weather conditions</li> </ul>

If you have any questions about Emergency Response Codes and Plans at your site, contact your local Volunteer Resources Department.

For general questions about Emergency/Disaster Management contact:

[emergencydisaster.management@ahs.ca](mailto:emergencydisaster.management@ahs.ca)