



Career and Technical Student Organization

Guidelines for Safer Travel

to

State and National Meetings



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BE PREPARED IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

State and national conferences are intended to provide fun and exciting opportunities for students and advisors. While rare, there are emergency situations that do occur at these conferences. This guide will serve to prepare advisors and students for emergency situations. Please be extremely familiar with this information and be prepared for an emergency. Your students and others will look to you for leadership in an emergency situation. Don't be caught unprepared.

Be assured that each member of the hotel staff is trained to handle emergency situations and have assigned duties during emergencies. As a student organization advisor, your responsibility will be to make sure students are prepared, remain calm, and follow the direction of the hotel staff. Your first priority will be the safety of all students attending the conference.

BEFORE LEAVING FOR CONFERENCE

1. Understand all local policies for emergency procedures. Know when to contact your principal, parents, and the local school board.
2. Provide all parents and school officials (principal, school secretary, other teachers, etc.) with emergency contact information.
 - hotel address and phone number
 - state advisor's name
 - name of each advisor and chaperone along with their cell phones and hotel room numbers if known in advance
 - the conference agenda with departure and arrival times noted
 - a list containing the name, home phone number, and parent of each student attending the conference
3. Discuss with students what emergency items to pack for the trip (band aids, prescription medication, Tylenol, flashlight with fresh batteries, emergency contact information at home, etc.). Obtain a written document from parents indicating any prescription medicine taken by their child, strength, and dosage. Students should carry any prescription medication in the original container.
4. Prepare a folder/envelope for you to keep containing all medical release information and emergency contact information for each student. Obtain more than one emergency phone contact for parents—cell phone, work phone, or phone number of other relatives, neighbors, and/or friends. Parents should provide authorization for advisors to obtain medical treatment, if necessary. Parental permission should also be obtained for their child to use the pool and/or exercise equipment.
5. Discourage parents, relatives, and friends from visiting students except during special recognition activities. If the student must leave conference early, proper identification must be made and parental permission received before the student will be released from the property for any reason.
6. Talk with students and parents about money needed during the conference. Make sure they understand an estimated cost for meals and sightseeing. Help students understand how to budget their money for the entire trip. Encourage them to use traveler's checks. Take the opportunity to have a guest speaker from AAA or a travel agency.

UPON ARRIVAL AT CONFERENCE

Tour the interior of the building!

- Sleeping Rooms
 - All students and advisors should know the location of all sleeping rooms for chapter members. Let students know where everyone is located.
 - Post a sign-in and sign-out sheet on the advisor's sleeping room door. Students should sign in and sign out so the advisor may locate them in an emergency situation. (A sample sheet is available on page 13.)
 - Point out the location of the emergency evacuation plan on the back of the sleeping room door.
 - Investigate emergency exits closest to the students' sleeping rooms. Students should be able to identify at least two emergency exit routes should the primary exit route be inaccessible.
 - Discuss the importance of identifying visitors before opening the door. If a hotel staff or security person knocks on the student's door, the student should contact the advisor, or the student should call the hotel front desk to identify the reason for the visit before allowing anyone to enter the room. No one should be allowed in the room except for the occupants. Pizza or food delivery transactions can occur in the hallway or in the presence of the advisor.
 - Point out the door viewer, chain locks, and dead bolt locks.
 - Point out the sprinkler system in the room. Direct students not to tamper with the sprinkler.
 - Check out the windows to see if they open. If they do, instruct students to use extreme caution when the windows are open.
 - Do a practice fire drill from the students' sleeping rooms. Actually walk down the exit stairs. Help students understand the signs on the exterior of the exit doors to plan any escape. Hotels may have several levels beyond the ground floor, so students need to be familiar with the appropriate door opening to the outside.
 - Students should not leave valuables in the room in plain view.

- Ask students to always take along at least one other person if they leave their room for small chores such as trips to the ice machine or vending area.
- Event and Activity Rooms
 - Review the conference program and visit each conference room. Make sure students know where they should be at all times. Let them know your schedule, so they may find you at any time during the day and evening.
 - Tour the hallways and meeting rooms. Discuss escape routes for each area the students will be occupying during their stay.
- Hotel (General)
 - Point out the location of fire extinguishers and sprinklers. Discuss the importance of not tampering with these items.
 - Help students to recognize the uniforms of hotel personnel including the security staff.
 - Locate and travel on the elevators. Locate the emergency phone and/or alarm button within the elevator. Discuss with students the importance of being calm when an elevator is stalled. Discuss appropriate elevator behavior (not pushing all the floor buttons, sounding the alarm in a non-emergency situation, pressing the stop button, forcing the doors to open, etc.).
 - Visit the pool or other guest facilities. Help the students identify safety rules for each area. Request that students are extra cautious in the pool area where wet surfaces are extremely slippery.

Tour the exterior of the building!

- Talk about safety on hotel balconies.
- Review vehicle traffic situations. If students will be outside, discuss the best routes to avoid high-traffic areas.
- Choose a "special" meeting place outside the building should an evacuation be called by the hotel. This location should not be near any major entrances, exits, or roads because emergency vehicles entering or exiting the hotel will need complete access.

DURING THE CONFERENCE

1. Plan a fun activity together each day such as afternoon snacks in the advisor's room, discuss the day's activities poolside or outside, or visit exhibits together.
2. Students should report any lost or stolen items to the advisor immediately.
3. Request students report any suspicious circumstances or people to you and then contact hotel security.
4. Always travel in groups of two or three. Adopt the "buddy" system.
5. Never wear a conference name badge outside the conference facilities. Criminals identify strangers to the area and target conference participants who are unfamiliar with their surroundings.
6. Always wear a conference name badge during conference activities. Conference planners use name badges to identify participants. Without an official name badge, you will not be allowed into conference activities.
7. Encourage students to be cautious with their money. They should not talk about the amount of money they brought with them or the amount they are carrying with them. Carry purses close to the body and wallets in the front pocket. Traveler's checks are advisable.
8. Prepare students to be good tourists. Be familiar with directions before leaving the hotel. Never look like a tourist. Introduce students to the Concierge or identify a safe place to ask for directions.
9. Discuss an appropriate dress code for conference and leisure activities. Students should avoid dressing provocatively.
10. Ask students not to visit the room of someone who is not a member of your student organization.
11. Students should be quiet and mannerly while in the hotel. Discuss with students the good reputation of the student organization and encourage them to respect hotel staff and other guests. Particularly discuss the noise level late at night and running in the hallways.
12. Students are not to bring to conference or use during conference any illegal substances, alcoholic drinks, or drinks that appear alcoholic.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Advisor Checklist:

Carry a list of students and emergency contact information with you at all times. If the building is evacuated for an emergency, the list may serve as an attendance roster to determine if all students are safely out of the building.

Airport Safety

- Most airports request passengers to arrive at least two hours prior to plane departure due to the strict security procedures. If there is a large amount of luggage or a large delegation traveling together, allow more than two hours.
- Make sure students do not carry any knives, nail clippers, files, scissors, spray containers, or anything that may be construed as a weapon or a danger on the plane. Follow this rule: "If in doubt, leave it at home." Students carrying these items may be removed from the group for a more detailed security check, and your group may become separated.
- Carry-on bags should be limited to only one bag plus a small bag or purse. There may be longer delays if many students have carry-on bags. Process as many bags as possible through check-in. Make sure check-in baggage is properly labeled with name, address, and telephone number.
- Emphasize appropriate and mature behavior. Discuss with students appropriate conversation. Warn students that joking, acting threateningly, and horseplay will be taken very seriously and dealt with sternly by airport police/security.
- Students should carry their ID in a safe, secure place, as it will be asked for several times during security checks.
- Airports are notorious for attracting panhandlers, pick pockets, and scam artists. Warn your students to stay with the group and avoid any contact with strangers in and around the airport.
- Advise students to have control of their own luggage at all times. Warn them to not agree to carry something for a stranger.
- Arrive early enough to give your students a lesson on reading and understanding signs and schedule prompters in the airport.

- Prior to the trip, discuss safety on the airplane. For many students, this will be their first time on an airplane. Talk to them about airplane etiquette and safety. Discuss the importance of listening to announcements and following directions. Flights to Washington, DC, require everyone be seated 30 minutes before landing. Disobeying this request will cause the student to be restrained and arrested.
- Check with the airline for any special instructions. Also check out the website for the Transportation Security Administration for any new airport rules and regulations at www.tsa.gov/public.

Bomb or Terrorist Threats:

The security and hotel staffs are trained to handle emergency situations. Please instruct students to listen carefully when any hotel staff is giving directions during an emergency situation.

When attending a conference in the Louisville region, it is important to note that the Louisville Airport is in close proximity to all conference hotels. In the event of an *airport* emergency, the hotels may be used as evacuation centers. In the event of this type of emergency, students and advisors must remain calm and follow directions from the hotel staff.

Crisis Management:

If a student has committed a violation of any policy/law and must be disciplined and/or sent home, an advisor must stay with the student *at all times*. Students may feel very desperate and should not be left alone or with another student. The local advisor should notify the state advisor if any violation of policy/law occurs.

During competitive events, students place undue pressure upon themselves to do well. At the end of awards, some students may feel they have let their parents and you down. Be aware of students' actions and reactions after a competitive event loss. Reassure all students you are proud of their work.

Earthquake:

If there is structural damage and injuries following an earthquake, the fire alarm procedures for the hotel should be followed.

Fire:

- Students should have practiced an evacuation for a fire emergency and should know where to meet their advisor. (See Upon Arrival section.)
- If for some reason students cannot get out of their room, they should immediately call the hotel operator for assistance, wet a towel and place it at the bottom of the door, and hang a towel from the window. Use a cell phone to call 911 if the hotel operator cannot be reached. Give the hotel name, room number, and number of people in the room.
- The hotel staff will immediately call down elevators. The elevators should not be used in a fire emergency situation.
- Hotel staff will assist with evacuation.
- Make sure the hotel is aware of any handicapped students who may need special assistance during an evacuation.

Medical Emergencies:

Medical emergencies need an immediate response and attention. Develop a plan for a student's illness.

If a student or advisor needs medical attention, inform security staff. Hotel and security staffs may be able to render first aid in situations in which they are certified.

Power Outages:

Hotels are equipped with emergency lighting systems. Encourage students to bring a flashlight (with fresh batteries) along with them prior to leaving for the conference.

Tell students to remain in their sleeping room during a power outage, or gather everyone in a few preassigned rooms. Students may become injured if they begin wandering the hallways.

Robbery:

Students should not argue with, fight, or attempt to follow a robber. They should report any robbery immediately to the advisor, who will contact the hotel staff. Their security staff will take the appropriate action.

Stalled Elevators:

Instruct students to remain calm during this situation. They should not randomly start pushing buttons. If they have been given the previously mentioned orientation, students should be able to find the alarm button or call box in the elevator. They should be able to calmly answer such questions as: How many people are in the elevator? Is anyone hurt or ill? What was the last floor passed?

If the lights go out while the elevator is stalled, remain calm and help others. Do not ignite any lighters or matches.

Tornado Warnings:

Be aware in advance of the safe areas in the hotel during tornados and severe weather. In general, safe areas are away from top floors, away from windows, and out from underneath wide-span rooms such as those found in big meeting rooms. Students should keep clear of lobbies and elevators. The safest areas will be in hallways or closed interior meeting rooms on the lower floors. Sit against the wall with knees up, face between knees, and arms covering the head.

Executive West Tornado Procedures (similar in all hotels):

- ❑ The switchboard operator will announce three times over the PA system, "The hotel is under a tornado warning; go to an interior hallway; and stay away from windows."
- ❑ The switchboard operator will begin calling each room starting with the top floor working down. Other hotel staff will personally contact handicapped guests or those who may need assistance in evacuating the sleeping room.
- ❑ All elevators will be returned to the 1st floor and locked off. The pool and restaurant areas will be cleared.
- ❑ Once the warning has been lifted, the operator will announce, "All clear" over the PA system three times. Security will walk the hallways to personally inform guests they may return to their activities.

CONSEQUENCES FOR SAFETY VIOLATIONS

Students should be aware of the consequences for falsely reporting an emergency. They should understand that emergency personnel should not be called unless there is an actual emergency. Tampering with fire alarms, activating sprinklers, or making bomb threats will result in the student receiving disciplinary action following the local school policy, CTSO Operational Guidelines Handbook, and established policies of the student organization.

"Students shall not participate in any activity that might cause personal injury to himself or herself or the person. Any participant found in violation of hotel safety codes or criminal laws may be sent home at the students'/parents'/guardians' expense. The chapter advisor will contact the parents/guardian and the school principal.

The State Career and Technical Staff Person has the right to take immediate action when violations occur, including sending individuals home at their own expense. In the event this occurs, the local advisor or the assigned chaperone will contact the parent/guardian and the school personnel." (CTSO Operational Guidelines Handbook)

