
Crowd Management Policy

Purpose

Sets forth procedures for deploying crowd managers to any facility or event on campus that is attended by >1000 people or where required by the NJ Division of Fire Safety.

To Whom Does the Policy Apply

Ramapo College community

Related Documents

- New Jersey Uniform Fire Code N.J.A.C. 5:70-3, 403
- <https://www.ramapo.edu/ehs/fire-safety/>

Contacts

College Fire Marshal (201).684.6252

Enforcement of Policy

The policy will be enforced by the College Fire Marshal, with assistance from the Office of Public Safety and Events & Conferences. The Division of Fire Safety will enforce applicable provisions of the New Jersey State Fire Code.

Background

The New Jersey Division of Fire Safety is the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) over all New Jersey State Colleges and Universities. Ramapo College has adopted this Crowd Management Policy in accordance with the State of New Jersey requirements.

The 2015 International Fire Code as adopted under the New Jersey Uniform Fire Code, requires any facility or event involving the gathering of more than 1,000 people have at least one person on site properly trained in managing the crowd.

Why Are Crowd Managers Required?

Tragic events have shown that fire isn't the only thing that can cause a rush to the emergency exits. It is important that employees are trained to effectively manage crowds in an emergency. In most cases, having properly trained staff can save lives.

Since the crowd crush at the E2 Night Club took 21 lives in Chicago (February 17, 2003) and the inferno at The Station nightclub (February 20, 2003) that claimed 100 lives (the fourth-deadliest nightclub fire in U.S. history), changes have been made to the codes and standards governing safety in assembly occupancies.

These incidents sparked awareness about the fire code issues in nightclubs and other places of assembly. Those issues surround crowd management - controlling groups of people at clubs, conventions, and other gatherings, and making sure that facilities are equipped to handle such crowds so that the occupants can get out alive.

Crowd Management Basics

During an emergency, event patrons often have to make decisions about where the best exit is located, when to exit, and how to remain safe. The crowd manager plans for emergencies at each venue to keep people safe. They can manage and direct the audience to a safe exit before injury occurs.

Crowd Management utilizes the **FIST** acronym in planning the event needs:

F - The crowd force (or energy)

I - The Information upon which the crowd acts

S - The physical space involved both in terms of individual density and larger scale architectural features

T - Time the duration of the incident.

Crowd Managers should utilize the **ESCAPE** acronym to ensure a safe event space:

E - Exits

S - Storage

C - Capacity

A - Aisles

P - Protection

E - Emergency Lighting

Crowd Management Terms:

Critical Occupancy - Critical occupancy is the gradual accumulation and overloading of a pedestrian space, beginning at levels below 3 ft²/person (0.28 m²/person) until it reaches the plan view area of the human body of about 1.3 to 1.5 ft² (0.12 to 0.14 m²).

Flight Response - The flight response occurs where people are fleeing either from a real threat, such as a fire or explosion, or from a perceived, but otherwise nonthreatening, event. Flight responses may be labeled as panics and stampedes, but closer examination shows that rapid group movement away from the threat was a reasonable reaction.

Craze - A craze is a competitive rush to obtain some highly valued objective. Crazes may happen when spectators attempt to get closer to celebrities, gain entry into a popular event, or, more unfortunately, where food is being distributed to starving victims of a disaster.

Crowd Surge - A crowd surge occurs when the energy of a crowd increases to the point the crowd surges forward in a wave.

Crowd Manager Supervisor - A crowd manager supervisor receives additional training in incident management, planning and directing their team. Crowd Manager Supervisors have a higher level of training and may fulfill duties in the event operations center or command post along with public safety, event management, police/fire/EMS services and other partners. Crowd Manager Supervisor must ensure that a building safety inspection was completed. The Crowd Manager Supervisor must wear identifiable clothing that distinguishes him or her from the general audience (i.e., uniform or other identifying apparel). When only one Crowd Manager is required, they shall act as the Supervisor.

Event Coordinator - The Event Coordinator is the person who is responsible for the venue or event. The Crowd Managers will report directly to the Event Coordinator. The Crowd Manager and Event Coordinator

may be the same person so long as their duties do not conflict. The Crowd Management Event Check List is a resource provided to assist the Event Coordinator with the planning of events that require crowd managers.

Procedure

When a large gathering is planned on College property, the Event Coordinator must complete the **Special Events Fire Safety Registration Form**. The form must be sent to the College Fire Marshal who will review the plans and event request. This document provides general guidelines and permit requirements for those who plan a large gathering as part of a College program.

Requirements

A crowd manager must have passed an approved Crowd Manager Training program.

The duties of the Crowd Manager will be to:

- Complete the Fire and Building Safety Checklist prior to the event.
- Ensure that an Emergency Exit Announcement is made at the beginning of the event.
- Knowing primary and alternate egress routes and exit locations for the venue.
- Knowing how to return lights to full brightness and having the ability to use the public address system (if available).
- Knowing the approximate number of persons on site during an event, the maximum occupancy load of the venue, and ensuring that the latter is not exceeded.
- Having prior knowledge of the events activities in order to distinguish between event performances, theatrics, etc. and emergency situations.
- Notifying the Event Coordinator of safety issues that are identified prior to the event.
- Maintain clear egress paths throughout the event.
- Direct and assist event attendees in evacuation during an emergency.
- Establishing contact with emergency response personnel when they arrive to relay pertinent information about the emergency such as cause, status, injuries, and facility information.

Emergency Exit Announcement

The Crowd Manager Supervisor or their designee is responsible for ensuring that an announcement is made at the beginning of each event that contains the following information:

1. The locations of the exits from the venue.
2. What to do during a fire alarm activation and any venue specific instructions.
3. How to identify Crowd Managers, if assistance is needed.

The following is a "sample" announcement that may be used.

- *Good evening, may I have your attention for an important safety announcement.*
- *In the event of fire, emergency, or building evacuation, please note at least two exits at this time **(the announcer should point to all of the exits from the room)**.*
- *Upon activation of the building fire alarm, immediate evacuation is required. College Public Safety Officers will act as Crowd Managers assist with a safe and orderly evacuation.*
- *Once outside, follow additional directions to proceed to an Evacuation Assembly Area. Please wait for an "All-Clear" announcement to be made before re-entering the building.*

N.J. Uniform Fire Code Regulations

403.2 Group A Occupancies

An approved fire safety and evacuation plan in accordance with Section 404 shall be prepared and maintained for Group A occupancies, other than those occupancies used exclusively for purposes of religious worship with an occupant load less than 2,000, and for buildings containing both a Group A occupancy and an atrium. Group A occupancies shall comply with Sections 403.2.1 through 403.2.4.

403.2.1 Seating Plan

In addition to the requirements of Section 404.2, the fire safety and evacuation plans for assembly occupancies shall include a detailed seating plan, occupant load and occupant load limit. Deviations from the approved plans shall be allowed provided the occupant load limit for the occupancy is not exceeded and the aisles and exit accessways remain unobstructed.

403.2.2 Announcements

In theaters, motion picture theaters, auditoriums and similar assembly occupancies in Group A used for noncontinuous programs, an audible announcement shall be made not more than 10 minutes prior to the start of each program to notify the occupants of the location of the exits to be used in the event of a fire or other emergency.

Exception: In motion picture theaters, the announcement is allowed to be projected upon the screen in a manner approved by the fire code official.

403.2.3 Fire Watch Personnel

Fire watch personnel shall be provided where required by Section 403.12.1.

403.2.4 Crowd Managers

Crowd managers shall be provided where required by Section 403.12.3.

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403.4 Group B Occupancies

An approved fire safety and evacuation plan in accordance with Section 404 shall be prepared and maintained for buildings containing a Group B occupancy where the Group

B occupancy has an occupant load of 500 or more persons or more than 100 persons above or below the lowest level of exit discharge and for buildings having an ambulatory care facility.

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403.12 Special Requirements for Public Safety

Special requirements for public safety shall be in accordance with Sections 403.12.1 through 403.12.3.3.

403.12.1 Fire Watch Personnel

Where, in the opinion of the fire code official, it is essential for public safety in a place of assembly or any other place where people congregate, because of the number of persons, or the nature of the performance, exhibition, display, contest or activity, the owner, agent or lessee shall provide one or more fire watch personnel, as required and approved. Fire watch personnel shall comply with Sections 403.12.1.1 and 403.12.1.2.

403.12.1.1 Duty Times

Fire watch personnel shall remain on duty while places requiring a fire watch are open to the public, or when an activity requiring a fire watch is being conducted.

403.12.1.2 Duties

On-duty fire watch personnel shall have the following responsibilities:

- 1. Keep diligent watch for fires, obstructions to means of egress and other hazards.*
- 2. Take prompt measures for remediation of hazards and extinguishment of fires that occur.*
- 3. Take prompt measures to assist in the evacuation of the public from the structures.*

403.12.2 Public Safety Plan for Gatherings

Where the fire code official determines that an indoor or outdoor gathering of persons has an adverse impact on public safety through diminished access to buildings, structures, fire hydrants and fire apparatus access roads or where such gatherings adversely affect public safety services of any kind, the fire code official shall have the

authority to order the development of or prescribe a public safety plan that provides an approved level of public safety and addresses the following items:

1. Emergency vehicle ingress and egress.
2. Fire protection.
3. Emergency egress or escape routes.
4. Emergency medical services.
5. Public assembly areas.
6. The directing of both attendees and vehicles, including the parking of vehicles.
7. Vendor and food concession distribution.
8. The need for the presence of law enforcement.
9. The need for fire and emergency medical services personnel.

403.12.3 Crowd Managers for Gatherings Exceeding 1,000 People

Where facilities or events involve a gathering of more than 1,000 people, crowd managers shall be provided in accordance with Sections 403.12.3.1 through 403.12.3.3.

403.12.3.1 Number of Crowd Managers

The minimum number of crowd managers shall be established at a ratio of one crowd manager for every 250 persons.

Exception: Where approved by the fire code official, the number of crowd managers shall be permitted to be reduced where the facility is equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system or based upon the nature of the event.

403.12.3.2 Training

Training for crowd managers shall be approved.

403.12.3.3 Duties

The duties of crowd managers shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Conduct an inspection of the area of responsibility and identify and address any egress barriers.
 2. Conduct an inspection of the area of responsibility to identify and mitigate any fire hazards.
 3. Verify compliance with all permit conditions, including those governing pyrotechnics and other special effects.
 4. Direct and assist the event attendees in evacuation during an emergency.
 5. Assist emergency response personnel where requested.
 6. Other duties required by the fire code official.
 7. Other duties as specified in the fire safety plan.
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Crowd Management Event Check Sheet

Event Coordinators should use this check sheet as a worksheet for all events.

- One Crowd Manager assigned for every 250 occupants (unless otherwise approved by the DFS).
- Crowd Managers must have received appropriate training.
- Make sure all EXITS are clearly marked and illuminated.
- Make sure all EXITS are clear of obstructions, inside and out; that the path is clear out and away from the building; exterior stairways and means of egress free of snow, ice, and debris.
- Make sure all EXIT doors are accessible, unlocked, operational.
- Be familiar with the POSTED OCCUPANT LOAD; this is the maximum number allowed.
- Clear aisles and egress paths.
- Ensure that the fire alarm and fire sprinkler systems are operational.
- Ensure available fire extinguishers are functional (pressure indicator in green and no obvious issues preventing them from functioning); inspection tags are current.
- Make sure EMERGENCY LIGHTING is working.
- Prevent OVERCROWDING; count the number of people in and count the number of people out.
- Make the Emergency Exit Announcement; the Crowd Manager will make sure an announcement providing the location of all exits is made.
- Have a plan on emergency evacuation and alternate routes; designate evacuation assembly areas.
- Perform a Post-Event analysis of any safety issues identified.