

**Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
Environment of Care Manual**

Title: Fire and Smoke Response “Code Red” Plan

Policy #: EC-36

Purpose:

In order to provide safe patient care as part of the medical center’s mission, the purpose and objectives of the Fire and Smoke Response “Code Red” Plan are to provide a Fire Safety Program which will reduce risks to employees, patients, providers, and visitors by addressing:

- Facility-wide needs in response to fire and/or smoke events;
- Departmental policies and procedures related to this plan; and,
- Training and education for all employees, Licensed Independent Practitioners (LIPs), volunteers, students, and others, as appropriate.

Policy Statement:

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC) will ensure adherence to the life safety and safe response to fire and/or smoke hazards as described in [the Life Safety/Fire Safety Management Plan \(Policy #EOC-04\)](#).

This procedure will address the process of safely responding to fire- and/or smoke-related events, including those that may require the assistance of external agencies.

BIDMC uses the acronym “R.A.C.E.” as a standardized procedure in the event of fire and/or smoke so that the preservation of life safety and property is maintained.

All staff will be trained at least annually on “Code Red” procedures and the proper use of fire extinguishers. Staff will be instructed to review department-specific evacuation plans that include written descriptions of emergency equipment locations, and primary and secondary evacuation routes and meeting points. Unannounced fire drills will be conducted regularly to assess staff response and knowledge of their roles and responsibilities per The Joint Commission (TJC) and the National Fire Prevention Association (NFPA).

The blocking, tampering, or covering of the following is prohibited by life safety codes and fire prevention regulations:

- I. Fire alarm pull stations, alarms, strobes, announcement devices, fire extinguishers, medical gas shutoffs, smoke detectors, electrical panels, and other similar fire and life safety equipment;
- II. Egress routes, doorways, and corridors.

Scope:

The Fire and Smoke Response “Code Red” Plan applies to all properties and facilities owned, occupied, or managed by BIDMC, including clinical, research, and administrative areas on the main campus and at offsite locations. In some cases,

certain responsibilities under the Fire and Smoke Response “Code Red” Plan are shared with or delegated to local managers and/or outside parties such as landlords, tenants, or contractors. As applicable to particular locations, the Fire and Smoke Response “Code Red” Plan also covers BIDMC patients, employees, clinical or research staff, LIPs, and visitors present in applicable properties/facilities.

Definitions:

Business Occupancy: Areas where patient care does not occur

Inpatient/Ambulatory Occupancy: Areas where patient care occurs

Horizontal Evacuation: Horizontal evacuation allows occupants to be removed from the area of a fire/smoke event without using stairs/elevators. When moving horizontally within the **same** building, the area of refuge must be located on the other side of a **smoke and fire** barrier. When moving horizontally to **another** building, the area of refuge must be located on the other side of a **smoke and/or fire** barrier.

Response Team: The Response Team consists of Public Safety, Maintenance, Environmental Health and Safety (EHS), and Environmental Services (EVS).

Shelter in Place: Patient care areas may passively and actively utilize the protection provided by the building. Occupants remain in place, at a safe distance and/or behind closed doors from the event as determined by the Fire Marshal, Response Team, or fire department, until the emergency is mitigated or until an evacuation is required, as determined by the Fire Marshal, Response Team, or fire department.

Situational Awareness: Knowing where one is and what is going on around oneself, allowing for higher alert levels, being more informed, and better decision-making

Vertical Evacuation: Use stairwells, or elevators if deemed safe by fire department, to evacuate building to the outside.

Procedure(s) for Implementation:

“Code Red” alarm activations may be initiated as a result of multiple factors, including any of the following: an actual fire or smoke event, a malfunction of the fire/smoke detection or suppression system, a scheduled drill activity, or vandalism. All staff and LIPs must respond to all fire alarms as if they were real. The fire alarm will be in effect until the situation is cleared by the fire department or, if during a drill, a member of the Response Team.

I. All Staff/LIPs in Area of Fire/Smoke Event - Immediate “Code Red” Response:

A. The following is a further explanation of staff/LIP response to a fire:

I. “R.A.C.E.”

Employees and LIPs are expected to respond immediately to any actual or suspected fire and/or smoke emergency by halting all activities, listening to the alarm signal and overhead announcement to determine

event location, and immediately responding to the event (if within staff jurisdiction) by following “R.A.C.E.”. Steps include:

Rescue – Anyone in immediate danger.

Alarm – For all locations, **activate** the nearest fire alarm. For BIDMC **Main Campus**, also **alert** the Code Line at **617-63(2-1212)**. When contacting the Code Line, employees must be prepared to give the following information: type of code (Red), location of emergency (campus, building, floor, and room number), caller’s name, and call back number. For **offsite** locations, **activate** the pull station and call **9-911** to notify first responders of the precise location of smoke/fire.

Contain and Clear – **Contain** the fire by closing all doors, windows, and other openings. **Clear** corridors of all equipment to allow for unobstructed evacuation. If gas is in the immediate vicinity of fire, shut off the piped compressed gas only by order of a clinician or the fire department after first assuring that all patients on life-saving gas are properly supplied.

Extinguish and/or Evacuate – Only attempt to extinguish manageable fires with portable fire extinguishers if comfortable and if it is safe to do so. If not capable of extinguishing, implement the department-specific evacuation plan and take direction from the Fire Marshal, Response Team, or fire department. This plan may include sheltering in place, horizontal evacuation of occupants to an area of refuge, or evacuation of the whole event area horizontally or vertically. Do not use elevators unless authorized by the fire department.

- **Business occupancies** must evacuate at all fire alarms and “Code Red” announcements;
- **Ambulatory and Inpatient occupancies** should “Shelter in Place.” In the event that containment has not been effective and/or the nature of the event demonstrates an immediate or expected threat to the life and/or safety of occupants, it may be decided by the Fire Marshal or Response Team to direct an evacuation prior to the local fire department arrival (refer to [EC-30 Evacuation Policy](#)).
- Situational awareness and await further direction from Response Team is critical during the early stages of an event.
- Staff will reassure patients and visitors that we will verify next steps and keep them informed.
- If smoke and/or fire cannot be easily contained in the area by closing doors/windows, staff is to immediately mobilize to evacuate patients in immediate danger. Primary and secondary evacuation routes are described in each department’s posted evacuation plan, located with posted maps.
- If available, evacuation priority is to move patients horizontally to an adjacent zone (behind fire/smoke doors in halls) utilizing the patient’s

own ambulatory ability, while in bed, or the use of any other readily available transport means. If horizontal evacuation is not available, use vertical evacuation down the nearest, unaffected stairwell.

II. Use of Fire Extinguisher:

Staff are not required to use a fire extinguisher at BIDMC. Prior to attempting to extinguish a fire, always be positioned with means of egress and not blocked by fire. To use a fire extinguisher, implement the “P.A.S.S.” acronym if safe to do so:

- **P**ull the safety pin at the top of the extinguisher;
- **A**im the nozzle, horn, or hose towards the base of the flame;
- **S**queeze the handle to discharge the extinguisher while standing approximately 8 feet away from the fire. If the handle is released, the discharge will stop;
- **S**weep the nozzle back and forth at the base of the fire. After the fire appears to be out, watch it carefully as it may reignite.

III. BIDMC Cooperation with First Responders

- Upon arrival, the fire department has ultimate authority in the event of a fire.
- Staff will immediately notify arriving responders of the nature of the event, location, type of patients in the area, and if there are any patients/others injured and/or in immediate danger.
- The fire department’s priorities are to 1) rescue persons in immediate danger, 2) address fire, smoke, or other dangers of the event, and 3) ensure the event risk is completely neutralized.
- Staff should adhere to the fire department’s direction. This may include, but is not limited to: immediate evacuation of an area, wing, or unit; shut off piped compressed gas; grant permission to use elevators for evacuation; request additional resources to assist with evacuation; or the shutdown of electrical feeds.
- Firefighters will not provide care for patients unless it is essential to the fire response (assist with patient evacuation). Patient care during a fire/smoke event is the responsibility of the medical center.

IV. Department Managers

EHS is responsible for developing department evacuation plans in collaboration with department managers. Department managers are responsible for ensuring all staff are appropriately trained in institution- and department-specific fire safety and response initially upon hire, after a job change, and annually thereafter. Department managers may serve as the Fire Marshal (FM) or they may assign others to serve as FM.

- **Additional Responsibilities**

The department manager/resource nurse/floor marshal in direct event proximity is responsible for directing staff to follow department-specific “Code Red” response. These steps may include, but are not limited to:

- Assume role/declare self as the FM or assign role to properly trained staff;
- Take direction from the Response Team upon alarm activation within department;
- Call the Code Line (2-1212) to report the specific location (for offsites, follow site-specific plan). Direct staff and LIPs in the area to follow “R.A.C.E.” For business occupancies, staff should immediately follow “R.A.C.E.” without looking for or waiting for the cause of the alarm;
- Move to a location where you can identify yourself as FM to the Response Team. Work with the fire department officer in charge to respond to the event in a cooperative manner;
- Maintain situational awareness throughout the event by receiving feedback from staff and presenting the immediate status of the event to the Response Team;
- Shut off piped compressed gas only: if gas is located in the immediate vicinity of fire; after assuring that all patients on life-saving gas are properly supplied; upon order by the fire department or a clinician with a thorough knowledge of the medical gas requirements of all patients on a floor or unit. Refer to [EC-71 Emergency Shut-Down of Oxygen, Vacuum and Other Medical Gases](#);
- Utilize a Public Safety responder to receive radio information on status of event and to communicate needs to Public Safety Dispatch based on incoming event details;

V. Public Safety/Security Responders

- **Officer #1** will initially respond to the building fire control panel to identify specific floor location if initial alert is only for the building. They will enter the event area and identify themselves to the FM. Officer #1 will maintain contact with the FM at all times to support communication of the event to and from Dispatch Assistance; to follow “R.A.C.E.”; to assist staff in locating the fire, containing and extinguishing the fire, if possible; and evacuating. Officer #1 and FM will meet the fire department upon arrival to provide immediate status of event;
- **Officer #2 (if staffing permits)** will respond to the floor above the event and identify themselves to the FM. They will stay with the FM and keep them apprised of the status of the event, communicate to dispatch with floor needs, and assist with evacuation;
- **Officer #3 (if staffing permits)** will meet the fire department and escort them to the event location. They will clear parking areas, or designate others to clear parking areas, for the fire department, as needed;
- **Officer #4 (if staffing permits)** will remain at the event floor exterior of the smoke compartment. Information will be relayed from Officer #1 to the Officer #4. Officer #4 will screen entry of personnel as well as

inform responders of status. They will consult with Maintenance for details of cause and necessary follow-up actions, including the “All Clear” notification;

- Complete the “Code Red” report after each event per Public Safety procedures for monthly dissemination to EHS.

VI. Public Safety Dispatch

- For the BIDMC Main Campus, the Public Safety Dispatch Office will monitor all fire alarm activity and will receive notification of alarm activation via the electronic system (printer/panel). For offsites, follow the site-specific plan;
- If a report of a “Code Red” has been placed through the Code Line, Public Safety will be notified via the MASCO communication operator and the “Code Red” (All Code) Pager;
- Once the Public Safety dispatcher is notified of a “Code Red”, the following procedures will be followed:
 - i. Notify the fire department to confirm receipt of alarm. Give the specific address of alarm location;
 - ii. Radio Public Safety and Maintenance personnel with the location of the “Code Red”;
 - iii. Ensure MASCO has initiated “Code Red” page notifications;
 - iv. Ensure MASCO is notified to announce the “All Clear” page when appropriate.

VII. Maintenance Operations

- Respond to “Code Red” event location, report to Public Safety Officer and provide assistance as needed to the event area. Assistance may include following “R.A.C.E.” and assisting staff/LIPs in immediate actions including locating fire, containment, extinguishing (if possible), and evacuation. For offsites, follow site-specific plan.
- Remain in the area to receive details of cause and necessary follow-up action from other Response Team members.
- Provide building-specific information to fire department, as needed (i.e., locate and shut valves, disable alarms, secure electrical or HVAC equipment, etc.).
- Ensure the Director of Maintenance, IS Help Desk, and other affected departments are alerted when a fire alarm event causes significant damages or when systems become impaired.
- Check the floor above and below event floor to ensure fire systems are operating correctly.
- Assist the rest of the Response Team as needed.
- Ensure fire system vendor resets the system once the “All Clear” is announced. Public Safety personnel will be responsible if Maintenance is not available.

VIII. Administrative Clinical Supervisor (ACS) (Off-Shifts and Weekends)

- Respond to the event location to provide general assistance to the unit. Upon arrival, receive status report from the Response Team and ascertain specific clinical or administrative support needs. ACS will assume role of FM as needed. For offsites, follow site-specific plan;
- Ensure Administrator on Call (AOC), or equivalent, is alerted of any event requiring evacuation of patients or adversely affecting patient care or business operations.

IX. Environmental Health & Safety (Normal Hours and On-Call)

- **Normal Hours:** Respond to event location to provide general assistance. Upon arrival, receive status report from other Response Team members. Provide assistance as necessary, including assuming role of FM and assisting staff/LIPs in immediate actions including locating fire, containment, extinguishing (if possible), and evacuation. For offsites, follow site-specific plan.
 - I. Immediately notify AOC, Emergency Management, and other key departments of any event requiring evacuation of patients or of any event adversely affecting patient care or business operations;
 - II. Obtain event details/status updates from Maintenance and review monthly Public Safety/Security reports;
 - III. Ensure drill/event logs and reports are completed properly and that corrective actions/repairs are properly addressed. Verify proper response from all department staff and responding "Code Red" groups;
 - IV. Ensure Director of EHS or designee is alerted of any details relating to fire events or life safety deficiencies noted during the event;
 - V. Notify the Health Care Quality (HCQ) Department to determine if event requires reporting to regulatory agencies, as appropriate.
- **On-Call:** EHS on-call personnel will contact Public Safety during off-hours to receive "Code Red" event information and respond appropriately.
- **Fire Drills:** EHS will conduct random, unannounced fire drills according to TJC and NFPA regulations, once per shift/per quarter/per building that imitate a true "Code Red" event. Staff will react how they would during a true "Code Red" event depending on their occupancy type and department-specific evacuation plan. Signatures of participants and responders will be collected and a report will be written up, sent to the department manager(s), and stored in the EHS TJC Fire Binder for survey.

X. MASCO Call Center Representatives

For the BIDMC Main Campus, MASCO Services is responsible for answering the Code Line and initiating an internal response:

- Operator will ask if caller has activated the pull station. If not activated, the Operator will instruct the caller to activate the pull station as soon as possible from a safe location near the event area;
- Ensure Public Safety Dispatch has been notified;
- Activate “Code Red” pagers reporting “Code Red, location” (See Appendix A for departments that are to be notified);
- Deliver overhead page “Attention please, ‘Code Red’ (building/floor and room number, if available)” three times. If the specific location is not initially identified, the first overhead and “Code Red” page will identify the building and “Standby for additional information.” The second overhead and page will provide specific location information;
- Once notified by Public Safety of “All Clear,” initiate the “All Clear” notification:
 - I. Activate “ALL CLEAR CODE RED, location” via Code Red pagers;
 - II. Deliver overhead page “Attention please, All Clear, ‘Code Red’ (building/floor/room number)” three times.

XI. Licensed Independent Practitioners (LIPs)

- In the event of “Code Red” activation, LIPs are required to halt current activities and execute “R.A.C.E.”, including taking direction from the Response Team;
- If not located in the event area, maintain situational awareness by listening for additional alarms, overhead announcements, and/or direction from unit staff;
- Stay with patients and stop/do not advance any procedures in case further action, including evacuation, is required;
- Reassure patients and await further direction from the Response Team.

XII. Environmental Services (EVS)

- Manager on Duty (MOD) from EVS will respond to “Code Red” by reporting to the event location, checking in with Public Safety, and awaiting further instructions;
- Based on the nature of the event, EVS will provide necessary staff and transport equipment.

II. All Staff, including LIPs, Outside of Event Area:

- a. Should a fire alarm activate, stay calm, remain in your department, and await further instruction from supervisor;

- b. Evacuate the building when instructed to do so based on the department-specific evacuation plan. Business occupancies are required to evacuate for all fire alarms. Patient care areas should utilize the “Shelter in Place” approach;
- c. Do not use the elevators to evacuate or transfer floors unless directed to by the fire department;
- d. If transporting a patient as the alarm sounds, do not board the elevator. Remain with the patient until the alarm clears or further instructions are given. Follow the direction of the Response Team.

III. Visitors

- a. Should a fire alarm activate in the department, visitors should stay calm and await for further instruction from the overhead announcement or BIDMC staff;
- b. Do not use the elevators to evacuate or move floors unless directed to by the fire department. If assistance is required to evacuate out of the building, contact a BIDMC employee who can alert first responders;
- c. Follow instructions by all BIDMC staff and the Response Team;
- d. Evacuate the building when instructed to do so based on the department-specific evacuation plan.

IV. Contractors

- a. Should a fire alarm activate in the department, contractors should stay calm and await for further instruction from the overhead announcement or BIDMC staff;
- b. Stop all work activities;
- c. Do not use the elevators to evacuate or move floors unless directed to by the fire department;
- d. Follow instructions by all BIDMC staff and the Response Team;
- e. Construction and renovation contractors will be available if they are the source of the alarm, but only if safe to do so. Provide information to BIDMC about the cause of the alarm and if any hazardous situations may exist. Evacuate the building when instructed to do so based on the department-specific evacuation plan.

Attachments:

Appendix A: Code Red Pager and Radio Contact List

Approved By:

Vice President Sponsor: Jarrod Dore, VP Capital Facilities and Engineering

EOC Committee: 7/12/23 K. Murray & J. Dore Co-Chairs

Requestor Name: Christine Powers, Director EHS

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10/18, 1/19, 4/19, 9/20, 7/23**

Eliminated:

Appendix A: Code Red Pager and Radio Contact List

A. Pager: For the BIDMC Main Campus, the following groups will receive the “Code Red” notification via “Code Red” pagers:

- Public Safety/Security Dispatch
- Environmental Health and Safety (all staff)
- Environmental Services Manager on Duty (MOD) “Code Red” pager
- Administrative Clinical Supervisor/Clinical Advisors (All Code pager)

For offsites, notification will be site specific.

B. Radio Notification: For the BIDMC Main Campus, Maintenance staff will be notified by 2-way radio by Public Safety Dispatch.