



Shelter-in-Place, Lockdown, Evacuation Guidance

The purpose of this document is to provide clear and consistent guidance to students, faculty, staff, and visitors on how to respond during emergency situations. These procedures are designed to protect life, reduce confusion, and support coordinated response efforts until emergency responders arrive or the situation is resolved.

In any emergency, the safety of students, faculty, staff, and visitors is the highest priority.

- Always follow instructions from emergency responders and RISDAAlert notifications.
- Call 911 for any immediate, life-threatening emergency.

Emergency Notification System (RISDAAlert)

RISD uses RISDAAlert to communicate critical information with our campus during emergencies. Notifications may be sent via:

- Text message
- Email
- Phone call
- Website and intranet updates

Follow the instructions in the most recent RISDAAlert message as long as it is safe to do so. Please note that alerts may be incomplete at first, but as the situation evolves, updates will be provided.

To ensure that you receive the information you need in the event of a campus emergency, we offer three notification methods:

- **Email notifications**
 - All RISD email addresses (@risd.edu) are automatically enrolled in the system and will receive RISDAAlerts.

- **SMS text message notifications**
 - RISD students, faculty and staff must designate a cell phone number in Workday to receive text notifications.
- **Push notifications**
 - RISD students, faculty and staff may download the RISD Mobile app from the Apple App Store or Google Play and enable push notifications.

Emergency Response Actions

Note on Terminology: Usage of the terms "shelter in place" and "lockdown" is not standardized across agencies and institutions, including RISD. What they encompass varies depending on the situation. For example, a “lockdown” at RISD could include securing some or all campus buildings, and restricting or disabling card access, but this depends on the specific circumstances requiring the lockdown.

Therefore, when you receive a "shelter in place" or "lockdown" alert from RISD, pay full attention to the specific instructions in the alert. Read or listen to the entire message carefully and take the necessary protective actions to keep safe while you await further guidance.

The sections below outline how RISD typically uses these terms, and what may distinguish “shelter in place” from “lockdown”, so you can better understand what actions to take depending on the situation.

Shelter in Place: Used when it is safer to remain indoors due to hazards outside the building. Examples include:

- Severe weather (hurricane, tornado, extreme winds)
- Hazardous material release
- Police activity in the surrounding area

Actions to take:

- Move indoors immediately
- Close and lock all exterior doors and windows
- Move to interior rooms or hallways away from windows
- Turn off fans, heating, or air-conditioning systems if instructed
- Remain sheltered until emergency officials issue an “All Clear”

Do not leave the building unless instructed by emergency officials. When safe, notify family members or Public Safety of your location and that you are safe. Shelter together with others when possible.

Lockdown: It is possible that RISD will lock doors and turn off card access to all or part of the campus, during a lockdown. Used when there is an immediate threat inside or very near a building. Examples include:

- Active shooter
- Armed or violent intruder
- Any situation involving immediate personal danger

Actions to take:

- Lock all doors immediately
- Barricade doors using furniture if possible
- Turn off lights
- Silence electronic devices (but keep them nearby for updates, if possible)
- Move out of sight and stay low
- Remain quiet and calm
- Lockdown with others in your area whenever possible

Important guidance:

- Do not open the door for anyone unless directed by law enforcement
- Follow police commands exactly when encountered
- Remain in lockdown until an official “All Clear” is announced

Evacuation: Used when remaining in the building is unsafe. Examples include:

- Fire or smoke
- Gas leak
- Structural damage
- Flooding or other unsafe building conditions
- Anytime a building alarm has sounded (do not assume it’s a drill)

Actions to take:

- Leave the building immediately using the nearest safe exit
- Do not use elevators unless directed by emergency officials
- Assist others only if it is safe to do so
- Take personal belongings only if they are immediately accessible
- Move to the designated assembly area or a safe distance away and await further instructions
- Always follow instructions from first responders and notify them of anyone remaining in the building

Do not re-enter the building until emergency officials declare it safe.

During Any Emergency

- Call 911 if you are in immediate danger or need urgent medical assistance
- Follow instructions from:
 - Emergency responders
 - RISDAAlert notifications
 - Campus officials
- Avoid spreading rumors or unverified information
- Keep phone use to a minimum to preserve emergency communications

After an Emergency

- Follow official guidance before returning to buildings or resuming activities
- Report injuries, hazards, or damage to campus officials
- Seek medical attention or counseling services if needed
- Continue to monitor RISDAAlert for updates or follow-up instructions

Important Reminders

- Do not leave a safe location unless instructed
- Do not re-enter evacuated buildings without authorization
- Official instructions may change as conditions evolve
- Your cooperation helps ensure the safety of the entire community

Individuals with Disabilities

Prior to an emergency, all persons with disabilities should register with the Coordinator of Disability Support Services or Human Resources.

Students with physical disabilities living in residence halls who may require special assistance to respond to emergency situations should contact the Disability Support Services Office for steps to follow should their building need to be evacuated.

Students with disabilities living off campus should develop and practice their own evacuation plans as part of a comprehensive fire safety plans. The Coordinator of Disability Support Services can assist with home and fire safety advice.

Assisting Individuals with Disabilities or Access Needs

- Offer assistance but do not assume help is needed
- Ask how you can best assist
- If evacuation is not possible, move to a safer location or area of refuge
- Inform emergency responders of the individual's location and needs
- Stay with the individual if it is safe to do so