



## **Chapter 2: Emergency Response and Safety Procedures**

Tornado Response and Shelter Operations Procedure – Activity Center .....	2
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## **Tornado Response and Shelter Operations Procedure – Activity Center**

### **Purpose**

To ensure the safety of students, employees, and visitors during a tornado warning by outlining responsibilities for notification, movement, access, and accountability for those sheltering in the Activity Center.

### **1. Definitions**

- Tornado Watch: Conditions are favorable for tornado development. Monitor weather updates and be prepared to take action.
- Tornado Warning: A tornado has been sighted or indicated by radar in Osage County. Immediate sheltering is required.

### **2. Notification**

When a Tornado Warning is issued:

1. RAVE Alert Notification will be sent to all faculty, staff, and students.
2. Supervisors, instructors, and building coordinators will direct occupants to proceed immediately to the designated shelter area within the Activity Center or a safe location within their existing buildings.
3. Individuals outdoors near the Activity Center should move quickly to the building if safe to do so.

### **3. Shelter Location – Activity Center**

- The designated shelter area is located on the lower level (north side) of the Activity Center, in the locker room hallway and interior corridors.
- Avoid all areas with windows, glass doors, gym spaces, and open areas such as the main court or lobby.

### **4. Shelter Procedures**

When moving to or within the shelter:

1. Remain calm and move quickly but safely.
2. Bring essential items only (phone, keys, ID, emergency bag if available).
3. Assist individuals with mobility limitations. Elevators should not be used during severe weather events.
4. Once inside the shelter:
  - Move to interior hallways or rooms away from windows.
  - Sit or kneel facing an interior wall and cover your head and neck.
  - Remain quiet and listen for official updates.
5. The Campus Operations will monitor weather alerts and issue an “All Clear” when it is safe to exit.

## **5. Access and Chain of Command**

If the Activity Center doors are closed at the time of a tornado watch, the following procedure applies:

1. The Activity Center Coordinator will unlock and open the front doors.
2. If the Activity Center Coordinator is unavailable, the Residential Life Coordinator will unlock and open the front doors.
3. If the Residential Life Coordinator is unavailable, the Director of Auxiliary Services will unlock and open the front doors.
4. If none of the above are available, the Vice President of Operations will unlock and open the front doors.

Communication Protocol:

- During a tornado watch, the individual responsible for unlocking doors will send a text message confirmation to verify that doors are being opened.
- If confirmation is not received within one (1) minute, the next person in the chain of command will assume responsibility and proceed immediately to unlock the doors.
- Once doors are confirmed open, a follow-up message will be sent to the chain of command confirming shelter access.

## **6. Post-Event Actions**

After the National Weather Service Issues the “All Clear”

1. Exit Safely: Leave the shelter in a calm and orderly manner once the “All Clear” has been officially communicated.
2. Report Conditions: Immediately notify the Vice President of Operations of any injuries, structural damage, or safety hazards observed.
3. Follow Emergency Guidance: Comply with all directions provided by emergency personnel, particularly regarding restricted or unsafe areas if a tornado touchdown has occurred.
4. Incident Review: The Office of Campus Operations, in coordination with Activity Center staff, will conduct a post-incident review and debrief to evaluate response and recovery actions.
5. Building Closure: The staff member who initially opened the Activity Center for sheltering will ensure the facility is properly secured and closed once all occupants have safely exited and the “All Clear” has been confirmed.