

Boston College
Campus Safety and Security Policies
Fire Safety Program

Introduction

The Higher Education Opportunity Act (“HEOA”) and its implementing regulations require each institution of higher education that maintains on-campus student housing to establish certain fire prevention and safety procedures and programs and to make annual disclosures regarding these procedures and programs as well as statistics regarding fires in its housing facilities. Boston College maintains this policy to promote fire safety and awareness at the University and to enable the University to comply with these HEOA requirements.

Policy

Boston College complies with the HEOA fire safety policies and reporting requirements by (i) maintaining a fire log and statistics regarding any fires in on-campus housing facilities; (ii) maintaining fire safety systems in all student housing facilities; (iii) conducting regular fire drills in student housing facilities; (iv) maintaining evacuation plans for each student housing facility; (v) providing and publicizing fire safety and training programs for students and employees; and (vi) annually disclosing the fire statistics and fire safety program information as required by the HEOA as part of the University’s annual campus security and fire safety report. (See “[Campus Safety and Security Policies -- Required Disclosures and Reports](#),” for additional information.) The components of Boston College’s fire safety program are described more fully below.

Fire Log and Fire Statistics

The Director of Environmental Health and Safety is responsible for maintaining a fire log that includes information regarding the nature, date, time and general location of each reported fire in an on-campus housing facility. Upon receipt of any information regarding such a fire, the Director shall ensure that the information is included in the log within two business days. The most recent 60-day period of this log is open for public inspection in the Boston College Environmental Health and Safety Office during normal business hours.

In addition to the information available in the public log, the Director of Environmental Health and Safety shall be responsible for gathering the following additional information for each reported fire included in the log: (i) the cause of each fire (such as an intentional or unintentional action, a mechanical failure, or an act of nature); (ii) the number of persons who received fire-related injuries that resulted in treatment at a medical facility, including University Health Services; (iii) the number of any deaths related to the fire; and (iv) the value of property damage caused by a fire, which shall be the estimated replacement cost of any structure and contents that were damaged by fire or related smoke, water, and overhaul. This information will be provided in the annual campus security and fire safety report for each fire occurring in on-campus housing facilities during the three most recent calendar years. On or before October 1 of each year, the Director of Environmental Health and Safety shall also provide the fire statistics to the General Counsel for the purpose of reporting to the Department of Education.

In the event of a fire, residents should pull the nearest fire alarm or call 911, and once outside, notify the Boston College Police at 617-552-4444, who shall promptly report the fire to the Director of Environmental Health and Safety for inclusion in the fire log. The Director of Residential Life shall also promptly report any fire in any residence hall to the Director of Environmental Health and Safety. Any other person wishing to report the occurrence, or suspected occurrence, of a fire for inclusion in the fire log should contact the Boston College Environmental Health and Safety Office at 617-552-0300.

Fire Safety Systems

The University maintains a variety of fire safety systems (such as alarm systems, fire and smoke detectors, and sprinkler systems) in its on-campus housing facilities, in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. The specific systems for each housing facility are described in the annual campus security and fire safety report.

Fire Drills

The Office of Environmental Health & Safety works with the Office of Residential Life to conduct at least two fire drills during each year in each of the residence halls. These drills are usually conducted early in each semester. Fire drills are also conducted on a quarterly basis at the Campus School and on a monthly basis at the Child Care Center. The number of drills conducted in each residence hall will be reported in the annual campus security and fire safety report.

Residential Fire Safety Restrictions

The University's Residential Life Agreement includes a number of rules and restrictions designed to enhance fire safety in student housing facilities, including rules governing portable electrical appliances, smoking and open flames. While the rules vary slightly for each residence, any source of open flame (e.g., candles and incense), as well as smoking in, and within 20 feet of, any residence hall is strictly prohibited.

The University also prohibits the use of certain portable electrical appliances, including: certain kinds of lights and lamps; non-UL approved power strips; extension cords without surge protection; grills (except in modular housing); and space heaters and heating blankets. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety continually monitors the use of portable electrical appliances and reserves the right to restrict the use of any additional appliances that may pose an unnecessary safety risk. A complete list of non-approved items can be found at [Residential Life, Fire Safety Policies](#).

Only buildings with kitchens or kitchenette areas may have any heat producing kitchen appliance (e.g., toasters, coffee-makers). Students living in a residence hall with a kitchen or a kitchenette should consult with their building's Resident Director to get a complete list of permitted kitchen appliances.

The University conducts random health and safety inspections each semester to enforce these fire safety rules. Any violation will be recorded and students in violation may be subject to disciplinary action.

Evacuation Procedures

During freshman orientation, incoming students are also informed generally about the University's evacuation procedures and how to obtain a copy of an Emergency Evacuation Plan ("EEP"). Each residence hall has a site specific EEP, which is maintained by the Environmental Health and Safety Office. Copies are held by the Resident Hall Director and made available, upon request, to occupants of each housing facility. The EEP's may also be requested by contacting [Environmental Health and Safety, Fire Safety](#) at 617-552-0300

The EEP contains a description of each of the following:

- The plan's purpose
- Preferred means of reporting fires and other emergencies
- Emergency escape procedures
- Procedures to be followed by employees and staff who remain to control critical building operations before they evacuate
- Procedures to account for all occupants after emergency evacuation has been completed
- Rescue and medical duties for those employees who perform them
- The alarm system

Residents are also encouraged to review the floor plans located on the exit doors leading from each residential space. These floor plans show fire extinguisher locations and emergency exits for the building.

Fire Safety Education and Training

Boston College hosts several fire safety training opportunities for students, staff and faculty each year.

The Office of Environmental Health and Safety conducts fire safety presentations at a number of scheduled events and upon request. The presentations typically include instruction on best practices for fire prevention, what to do in the event of an emergency, fire extinguisher training, and an overview of evacuation procedures.

In the event of a fire or fire alarm, all employees and students are instructed to promptly evacuate in accordance with the plans for the building in which the fire occurs, using stairs instead of elevators, and to

follow the instructions of the designated building safety contact, resident assistant, and police and fire department, as applicable.

Review of the Fire Safety Program

The Director of Environmental Health and Safety shall review this policy and all aspects of University's fire safety programs at least once annually to determine if any changes or improvements are warranted. If the Director, in consultation with other appropriate University administrators, determines that future improvements in fire safety are necessary, the plans for any such improvements will be included in the annual campus security and fire safety report.

Approved: William P. Leahy, S.J.

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