

# Standard Operating Procedure for the Office of the Fire Marshal

## 214.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to establish guidelines, procedures, and responsibilities of the Office of the Fire Marshal (OFM) at the University of Maryland, Baltimore Police Department (UMBPD).

## 214.2 SCOPE

The OFM plays a crucial role within the UMBPD in maintaining public safety and is responsible for developing and managing programs to keep University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) students, faculty, and staff safe from fire. The OFM acts on behalf of the Maryland Office of the State Fire Marshal, serving as the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) for the campus community. Full-time OFM employees are expected to be designated as Special Assistant State Fire Marshals.

Pursuant to Public Safety Article, Title 6, §6-304(c) and (d), of the Maryland Code, Special Assistant State Fire Marshals are deputized for the enforcement of laws per §6-305(a)(1) and (2), §6-307, §6-310 and §6-319. This designation does not convey any power of arrest. This designation must be renewed annually through the State of Maryland - Department of State Police - Office of the State Fire Marshal.

The OFM is only authorized to act as the authority having jurisdiction at property owned by the University of Maryland, Baltimore. OFM may provide guidance and recommendations for leased property which houses UMB employees and students, but OFM does not have authority unless the property is owned by the university.

## 214.3 RESPONSIBILITIES

The Director, Office of the Fire Marshal holds the roles of both the University Fire Marshal and the Chief Fire Protection Engineer. The Director serves as the legally appointed authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) and provides the final judgement on all matters related to fire and building code compliance. The Director is responsible for maintaining, updating, and developing all university programs, policies, and procedures related to fire safety with the ultimate goal to prevent fire and injury.

The Fire Protection Engineer (FPE) is responsible for maintaining a basic working knowledge of building and fire protection codes and regulations to assure compliance. The FPE assists with implementing fire protection programs and procedures, reviews construction plans and submittals, participates in inspection, testing, and maintenance of fire protection systems, inspects existing facilities, investigates fires, and performs other duties to promote occupant safety and prevent fires at UMB. The FPE may also be referred to as a Fire Inspector and/or a Deputy Fire Marshal.

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The Fire Protection Assistant (FPA) is responsible for assisting with all operations of the OFM. The FPA assists with fire prevention efforts, participates in inspection, testing, and maintenance of fire protection systems, inspects existing facilities, responds to fire alarm activations, develops, and provides training for stakeholders, operates the hot work permit program, and performs other duties to promote occupant safety and prevent fires at UMB. The FPA may also be referred to as a Fire Inspector and/or an Assistant Fire Marshal.

Life Safety Technicians are student interns that support the office through the Federal Work Study (FWS) program. Life Safety Technicians are responsible for developing, preparing, and providing training, performing inspections, assisting with office tasks, and developing outreach content.

Specific responsibilities of the department include, but are not limited to:

- (a) **Fire Safety Program:** Develop and implement all university-wide programs to reduce the risk of fire and promote occupant safety.
- (b) **Construction and Renovation Projects:** Provide technical expertise and involvement in all construction projects to ensure compliance with fire and life safety codes, standards, and contract documents. Involvement from project start through final completion, with responsibility to review conceptual, design, and construction documents, review fire protection submittals and shop drawings, perform inspection and acceptance testing of fire protection systems, and issue final occupancy permits.
- (c) **Inspect Existing Facilities:** Survey existing facilities, document findings, and take steps to address code deficiencies. Sponsor and develop projects to address fire safety concerns.
- (d) **Emergency Response:** Respond to fire alarm activations and other emergencies as requested. Assist emergency responders by providing building specific guidance and by monitoring fire protection and life safety systems. Investigate and document nuisance alarms and develop recommendations to prevent future nuisance alarms.
- (e) **Fire Investigation:** Serve as lead investigator for all fires to determine origin, cause, and what (if any) breakdown in fire protection plans or procedures occurred. Document findings and provide recommendations to leadership to decrease the likelihood of fire.
- (f) **Inspection, Testing, & Maintenance:** Advise the Department of Operations and Maintenance on proper inspection, testing, and maintenance of existing fire protection systems and features. Serve as the technical expert on all such systems and offer guidance when issues arise. Review contractor's reports for accuracy and completeness, and ensure steps are taken to address deficiencies.
- (g) **Education & Outreach:** Provide and develop safety resources for the university and surrounding community. Provide and develop fire safety training to prepare and protect building occupants and other stakeholders.
- (h) **Fire Drills:** Conduct and document fire drills twice per year in all occupied buildings owned by the university. Correct deficiencies and train occupants on UMB Fire and Emergency Evacuation Procedures.
- (i) **Code Consulting:** Provide technical expertise to the university community on all matters related to fire, building, and life safety codes.

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- (j) Hot Work Permits: Serve as the permit authorizing individual for the university and manage all hot work processes at UMB. Hot work processes include welding, heat treating, grinding, thawing pipe, powder-driven fasteners, hot riveting, torch-applied roofing, or any other application that produces or uses sparks, flames, or heat.
- (k) Special Events: Involvement includes plan and logistic review, site inspections, fire watch, and/or crowd control for events with temporary structures and tents, large occupant loads, cooking and/or food truck operations, and unique hazards.

The Director or his or her designee is responsible for accomplishing these tasks.

#### **214.4 PROCEDURES**

Office of the Fire Marshal employees are not emergency responders. The department is not staffed 24/7 and is only staffed during normal business hours. OFM will respond to fire alarm activations and other situations involving potentially hazardous conditions when notified by the UMB Police Communications Center and/or the Office of Emergency Management.

When responding to a fire alarm activation or potentially hazardous condition, the personal safety of the employee comes first and supersedes all steps listed below. The employee should not act or perform any action which will put themselves in danger.

For routine fire alarm activations:

1. Travel by foot or vehicle to the impacted building.
2. Check-in with the Incident Commander and/or Operations & Maintenance upon arrival.
  - (a) If the Incident Commander is not yet on-scene, check the status of the Fire Alarm Control Panel or Graphic Annunciator Panel to determine the location of the alarm.
  - (b) If no hazardous conditions are present, check the device in alarm.
3. If normal building operations will be impacted for an extended time, alert the UMB Emergency Administration & Finance Campus Operations group of the incident using Signal.
4. Assist Baltimore City Fire Department (BCFD) with the investigation into the source of the alarm or call. Assist by escorting, providing direction, providing access, communicating with internal university points of contact, etc. as requested by BCFD.
5. Remain at or near the Fire Alarm Control Panel or building entrance to relay information to and from BCFD.
6. Once BCFD gives an All-Clear of the scene, coordinate with Operations and Maintenance to reset the fire alarm system, elevators, fire shutters, HVAC, and any other impacted building system.
7. Once all building systems have been reset and restored to normal, give an All-Clear message to the on-scene UMBPD officers to allow building occupants back into the building.

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8. Submit an incident report including a summary, timeline of events, corrective actions, and lessons learned.