

# Equipment & Facilities

## Boston EMS Headquarters Access

Supersedes: 09-19-01

Effective: 12-05-11

### Background

Boston EMS is committed to ensuring a safe and secure working environment. In early 2011, the Department consolidated its headquarters to a single building located in the larger Northampton Square Complex. The complex houses the South End Fitness Center, a parking garage and BPHC housing and allows access to Boston Medical Center. The shared use of the complex coupled with multiple entrances presents challenges specific to controlling access to EMS Headquarters. As such, the Department developed the “Boston EMS Headquarters Access Policy” to establish a series of procedures aimed at improving building security and enhancing employee safety. Every Boston EMS employee is responsible for playing a role in ensuring that the Department’s headquarters is safe and secure.

### Headquarters Hours of Operation

Boston EMS’ official business hours are 8AM – 5PM, Monday through Friday, except holidays. The reception desk on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor is staffed accordingly. However, because Boston EMS is a 24/7 operation, department employees and visitors are often in the building outside of official business hours.

### Building Entrances

Boston EMS Headquarters can be entered in four different ways:

- Via the 785 Albany Street door (*main entrance for visitors*)
- Via the elevators from the Northampton Square Parking Garage (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> floors)
- Via the 4<sup>th</sup> floor from 35 Northampton Street (*wheelchair accessible entrance*)
- Via the unmarked door on the Massachusetts Avenue side of the building (*employee only*)

Individuals without card key access attempting to enter headquarters through 785 Albany Street must be buzzed into the building. Visitors seeking access for non-Boston EMS purposes (i.e. seeking access to the South End Fitness Center, BMC, etc.) should be directed to enter the complex via the 35 Northampton Street entrance. Only individuals with business at Boston EMS Headquarters will be allowed to enter through 785 Albany Street.

**Upon admittance to headquarters, all visitors are required to check-in at the 4<sup>th</sup> floor reception desk regardless of their entry route.**

Only employees shall have the ability to enter headquarters via the unmarked door on the Massachusetts Avenue side of the building.

Employees shall not prop open exterior doors or admit unauthorized persons into the building at any time.

### **BPHC Security**

BPHC Security provides 24/7 security services for the entire Northampton Square Complex including Boston EMS Headquarters. Two security officers are stationed in the Northampton Square Parking Garage in an office located directly to the right of the garage entrance. **BPHC Security can be reached immediately by phone at 617-534-5847.** If BPHC Security is unavailable, employees should dial 9-1-1.

BPHC Security routinely conducts security checks on all floors of headquarters 7 days a week at various times, both during and outside official business hours. If BPHC Security notices suspicious behavior they will alert a member of the Office of the Chief or Professional Standards as soon as possible. If unavailable, they can also alert Boston EMS Dispatch Operations. If an officer notices any maintenance related issues, he/she will contact the Boston EMS Director of Facilities.

### **Employee Identification Cards**

When in the building, department members not in uniform should wear a valid identification card (ID) issued by Boston EMS or BPHC AT ALL TIMES. The ID must be visible on the employee's person.

Employees must report lost or stolen ID cards to Professional Standards (617-343-1144) immediately so card access can be deactivated. Further, employees reporting a lost or stolen ID card will follow the steps outlined in the department's "Care and Use of Department Equipment" policy.

### **Outside Visitors**

Outside visitors regularly frequent headquarters during and outside official business hours. It is therefore imperative that all employees follow the guidelines issued below to ensure safety and security.

#### *Visitor Information*

1. Employees expecting a visitor should direct him/her to enter through one of three visitor access points: 785 Albany Street, the Northampton Square Parking Garage or 35 Northampton Street.
2. Upon entry to Boston EMS Headquarters, all visitors should proceed to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor reception area. Employees should instruct visitors to arrive 5-10 minutes early to ensure ample time for the registration and ID issuance process.
3. Employees may direct first time visitors to the department website for headquarters access instructions found at <http://www.cityofboston.gov/ems/contact.asp>.

#### *Reception Desk Notification*

1. Whenever possible, employees shall notify the reception desk at least 24 hours in advance of a visitor's arrival, providing the information outlined below:
  - Visitor's name
  - Visitor's title and organization
  - Date and time of visit
  - Nature of visit
  - Contact information of the person to alert upon visitor's arrival

**Notification shall be sent via email to [receptiondesk@bostonems.org](mailto:receptiondesk@bostonems.org).**

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2. If an employee is hosting a large group (10+ people) during official business hours, he/she will make every effort to provide attendance information as far in advance as possible (no less than 24 hours) as a courtesy to reception desk personnel. Whenever possible, employees will also attempt to collect RSVPs to help ensure a more definitive list of attendees.
3. If an employee regularly hosts an event with a large group (10+ people), either during or outside of official business hours, he/she will provide the reception desk with details including the meeting name, Boston EMS contact, and meeting frequency. He/she will also provide meeting date, time, location and attendee information if available.

### *Visitor Registration, ID Issuance and Exit*

1. **All visitors are required to register at the reception desk on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor.**
2. Upon registration, visitors will be issued a temporary sticker ID with photo which must be worn in a visible location on their person at all times while on Boston EMS premises. Any employee hosting a visitor is responsible for ensuring the person is wearing the issued sticker ID.
3. Once a visitor arrives and is issued a visitor ID, the reception desk will notify the visitor's host via phone or email. If the host is available, he/she can greet the visitor on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor or the reception desk will direct the visitor to the meeting location. If the host is unavailable, the visitor will be required to wait on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor until he/she receives further direction.
4. The host is responsible for ensuring the visitor remains attended for the length of the visit. Further the host will ensure the visitor does not have access to unauthorized portions of the building. At the end of the visit, the host will direct the visitor to exit headquarters.
5. If an employee is expecting a visitor outside of official business hours, he/she will be responsible for directing the visitor to the 35 Northampton Street entrance or arranging for an alternate entrance. Visitors arriving outside of official business hours will not be issued visitor IDs. Therefore, it is even more imperative that the host account for visitor whereabouts and ensure proper exit of the building upon the meeting's conclusion.

**Note: Uniformed visitors from other city public safety agencies as well as city employees wearing valid employee ID cards do not need to be issued a temporary sticker ID.**

### *Noncompliance*

1. Visitors who do not follow the guidelines outlined above may be asked to leave the building and may be placed on the "deny entry" list (see below).

### **Packages**

Upon delivery, reception desk personnel will alert recipients by phone or page that a package has arrived. The recipient, if available, will arrange for someone to come to 4<sup>th</sup> floor reception to meet and sign for his/her package. If unavailable, reception desk personnel will store the package in a secure location on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor.

### **Suspicious Behavior**

Employees shall immediately report suspicious persons or behavior to BPHC Security (617-534-5847) or the Boston Police (9-1-1). Reported persons/behaviors should also be brought to the attention of the Office of Safety (617-343-1166).

If an employee feels uncomfortable exiting the building or walking to his/her car alone, the department recommends the use of the buddy system. Alternatively, the employee

can contact Professional Standards (617-343-1144) or BPHC Security (617-534-5847) to arrange an escort.

### **Reception Desk Panic Button**

The 4<sup>th</sup> reception desk is equipped with a panic button to be used only in the event of an emergency. Reception desk staff can find an orange panic button under the reception desk to the right of the computer screen. If the button is pressed, an alert will sound in BPHC Security and an officer will immediately be dispatched to 4<sup>th</sup> floor reception. Any time the button is pressed, even in error, an officer is required to respond.

Once the issue is resolved, reception desk staff must reset the panic button using the white horseshoe shaped key located in the top drawer of the reception desk. Note, BPHC Security also has a copy of the reset key.

**In the event of immediate danger reception desk staff should dial 9-1-1 and press the panic button.**

### **Deny Entry**

Visitors who are unauthorized to be in Boston EMS Headquarters can be classified as “deny entry” in the Boston EMS visitor ID system. If such an individual arrives at the 4<sup>th</sup> floor reception desk and attempts to obtain a visitor ID, reception desk staff will receive a “deny entry” notification. Further, the system will automatically send an email alert to [denyentry@bostonems.org](mailto:denyentry@bostonems.org) which is distributed to Pro Standards, BPHC Security, the Office of Safety, Command Staff, Captains, the Director of Administration and Finance and the Director of Facilities. Reception desk staff should immediately contact BPHC Security (617-534-5847) for assistance if needed.

If an employee feels an individual is a threat to security and should be denied future entry, he/she should contact Pro Standards (617-343-1144) who will work with reception desk staff to classify the individual as “deny entry” in the visitor ID system. Pro Standards will further alert BPHC Security (617-534-5847).

### **General Safety Guidelines**

All employees must play a part in ensuring department safety and should follow the guidelines below:

- Do not admit unauthorized persons into the building.
- Report suspicious persons or behavior to BPHC Security (617-534-5847) or the Boston Police (9-1-1). Please also alert the Office of Safety (617-343-1166).
- Do not prop open exterior doors at any time.
- Direct all visitors to report to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor reception area for registration and ID issuance.
- When in the building, non-uniform staff must wear a valid identification badge (ID) issued by Boston EMS AT ALL TIMES.
- Report a lost or stolen ID card to Professional Standards (617-343-1144) immediately so card access can be deactivated.
- Use the buddy system whenever possible when walking through the parking garage or at night when exiting the building.
- Secure department vehicles when not in use.
- To the extent possible, park department vehicles on the lowest level of the parking garage closest to the headquarters entrance.