

**FIRE SAFETY PLAN  
PART 1 – BUILDING INFORMATION SECTION**

**BUILDING ADDRESS:** Sigma Nu (SN) 556 West 113<sup>th</sup> Street

**BUILDING OWNER / REPRESENTATIVE:**

Name: Trustees of Columbia University  
 Address: 535 West 116<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10027  
 Telephone: (212) 854-2797

**BUILDING INFORMATION:**

**Year of Construction:** 1896

**Type of Construction:**  Combustible  Non-Combustible

**Number of Floors:** 4 Above ground 1 Below ground

**\*Sprinkler System:**  Yes  No

**Sprinkler System coverage:**  Entire Building  Partial (complete all that apply):

Dwelling Units: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Hallways: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Stairwells: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Compactor Chute: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other: Basement

**Fire Alarm:**  Yes  Transmits Alarm to Fire Dept./Fire Alarm Co.  No

**Location of Manual Pull Stations:** Each floor by stairwell

**Public Address System:**  Yes  No

Location of Speakers:  Stairwell  Hallway  Dwelling Unit  Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Means of Egress** (e.g., Unenclosed/Enclosed Interior Stair, Exterior Stair, Fire Tower Stair, Fire Escapes, Exits):

Type of Egress	Identification	Location	Leads to
Unenclosed Interior	None	Hallway	Roof and Lobby
Interior Stairs	None	Basement	Front and Back
Fire escape	None	Back	Roof and Backyard

**Other Information:** \_\_\_\_\_

# **FIRE SAFETY NOTICE**

**IN THE EVENT OF FIRE, STAY CALM. NOTIFY THE FIRE DEPARTMENT AND PUBLIC SAFETY AND BE GUIDED BY THEIR DIRECTIONS. IF YOU MUST TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION, USE YOUR JUDGEMENT AS TO THE SAFEST COURSE OF ACTION, GUIDED BY THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:**

## **YOU ARE IN A NON-COMBUSTIBLE (FIREPROOF) BUILDING**

### **IF THE FIRE IS IN YOUR ROOM OR SUITE**

- Close the door to the room or suite where the fire is and leave the room or suite.
- Make sure **EVERYONE** leaves the room or suite with you.
- Take your keys or access card.
- Close the door. If possible, leave the door unlocked.
- Alert people on your floor by knocking on their doors on your way to the exit.
- Use the nearest stairwell to leave the building.
- Activate the fire alarm system by pulling the fire alarm located by stairs.
- **DO NOT USE THE ELEVATOR.**
- Call (212) 854-5555 once you reach a safe location. Do not assume the fire has been reported unless firefighters are on the scene.
- Meet the members of your suite or floor at a pre-determined location outside the building. Notify the firefighters or Public Safety if anyone is unaccounted for.

### **IF THE FIRE IS NOT IN YOUR ROOM OR SUITE**

- When the fire alarm sounds, you must evacuate the building.
- Open the door slowly to check for fire, heat or smoke condition in the hallway.
- If you can safely exit your apartment do so and follow the instructions above for a fire in your room or suite.
- If you cannot safely exit your room or suite, call 911 and Public Safety (212-854-5555) and tell them your building, floor, room or suite number and the number of people in your room or suite.
- Seal the doors to your room or suite with wet towels or sheets, and seal air ducts or other openings where smoke may enter.
- Open windows a few inches at the top and bottom unless flames and smoke are coming from below.
- Do not break any windows.
- If conditions in the room or suite appear life-threatening, open a window and wave a towel or sheet to attract the attention of firefighters.
- If smoke conditions worsen before help arrives, get down on the floor and take short breaths through your nose. If possible, retreat to a balcony or terrace away from the source of the flames, heat or smoke.



6. Keep all doorways and windows leading to fire escapes free of obstructions, and report to the owner any obstructions or accumulations of rubbish in the hallways, stairwells, fire escapes or other means of egress.
7. Window gates are only installed if absolutely necessary for security reasons. Columbia University will install only approved window gates. Do not install window gates with key locks. A delay in finding or using the key could cost lives. Columbia maintains the window gate's opening device so it operates smoothly. Familiarize yourself and the members of your household with the operation of the window gate.
8. Familiarize yourself and members of your floor or suite with the location of all stairwells, fire escapes and other means of egress to get off your floor and out of the building.
9. With your Resident Advisor and the members of your suite or floor, prepare an emergency escape route to use in the event of a fire in the building. Choose a meeting place a safe distance from your building where you should all meet in case you get separated during a fire.
10. Decorative greens, such as Christmas trees and holiday wreaths are not permitted in any University building including individual rooms or suites within Columbia Housing. Exercise care in the use and placement of fresh cut flowers or live plants. If possible, keep them planted or in water. Do not place them in public hallways or where they might block egress.

## **BUILDING INFORMATION**

### **Building Construction**

In a fire emergency, the decision to leave or to stay in your apartment will depend in part on the type of building you are in.

Residential buildings built before 1968 are generally classified either as "fireproof" or non-fireproof." Residential buildings built in or after 1968 are generally classified either as "combustible" or "non-combustible." The type of building construction generally depends on the size and height of the building.

A "non-combustible" or "fireproof" building is a building whose structural components (the supporting elements of the building, such as steel or reinforced concrete beams and floors) are constructed of materials that do not burn or are resistant to fire and therefore will not contribute to the spread of the fire. In such buildings, fires are more likely to be contained in the apartment or space in which they start and less likely to spread inside the building walls to other apartments and floors. **THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE BUILDING IS IMMUNE TO FIRE.** While the structural components of the building may not catch fire, all of the contents of the building (including furniture, carpeting, wood floors, decorations and personal belongings) may catch on fire and generate flame, heat and large amounts of smoke, which can travel throughout the building, especially if room, suite or stairwell doors are left open.

A "combustible" or "non-fireproof" building has structural components (such as wood) that will burn if exposed to fire and can contribute to the spread of the fire. In such buildings, the fire can spread inside the building walls to other apartments and floors, in addition to the flame, heat and smoke that can be generated by the burning of the contents of the building.

**Be sure to check Part I (Building Information Section) of this fire safety plan to see which type of building you reside.**

## **Means of Egress**

All residential buildings have at least one means of egress (way of exiting the building), and most have at least two. There are several different types of egress:

**Interior Stairs:** All buildings have stairs leading to the street level. These stairs may be enclosed or unenclosed. Unenclosed stairwells (stairs that are not separated from the hallways by walls and doors) do not prevent the spread of flame, heat and smoke. Since flame, heat and smoke generally rise, unenclosed stairwells may not ensure safe egress in the event of a fire on a lower floor. Enclosed stairs are more likely to permit safe egress from the building, if the doors are kept closed. It is important to get familiar with the means of egress available in your building.

**Exterior Stairs:** Some buildings provide access to the apartments by means of stairs and corridors that are outdoors. The fact that they are outdoors and do not trap heat and smoke enhance their safety in the event of a fire provided that they are not obstructed.

**Fire Tower Stairs:** These are generally enclosed stairwells in a “tower” separated from the building by air shafts open to the outside. The open air shafts allow heat and smoke to escape from the building.

**Fire Escapes:** Many older buildings are equipped with a fire escape on the outside of the building, which is accessed through a window or balcony. Fire escapes are considered a “secondary” or alternative means of egress, and are to be used if the primary means of egress (stairwells) cannot be safely used to exit the building because they are obstructed by flame, heat or smoke.

**Exits:** Most buildings have more than one exit. In addition to the main entrance to the building, there may be separate side exits, rear exits, basement exits, roof exits and exits to the street from stairwells. Some of these exits may have alarms. Not all of these exits may lead to the street. Roof exits may or may not allow access to adjoining buildings.

**Be sure to review Part I (Building Information Section) of this fire safety plan and familiarize yourself with the different means of egress from your building.**

## **Fire Sprinkler Systems**

A fire sprinkler system is a system of pipes and sprinkler heads that when triggered by the heat of a fire automatically discharges water that extinguishes the fire. The sprinkler system will continue to discharge water until it is turned off. When a sprinkler system activates, an alarm is sounded.

Sprinkler systems are very effective at preventing fire from spreading beyond the room in which it starts. However, the fire may still generate smoke, which can travel throughout the building.

Columbia Housing buildings are equipped with interior sprinkler systems in corridors, compactor chutes, room areas below grade or boiler rooms. All apartment buildings constructed or substantially renovated after March 1999 will be required by law to be equipped with fire sprinkler systems throughout the building.

**Be sure to review Part I (Building Information Section) of this fire safety plan to learn whether your building is equipped with fire sprinkler systems.**

## **Interior Fire Alarm Systems**

All Columbia Housing buildings are equipped with interior fire alarm systems that are designed to warn building occupants of a fire in the building. Interior fire alarm systems generally consist of a panel located in a lobby or basement, with manual pull stations located near the main entrance and by each stairwell door, smoke detection in common areas, heat or smoke detectors in all living space, water flow alarms and duct detectors. Interior fire alarm systems in Columbia Housing buildings automatically transmit a signal for a Fire Department response.

**Be sure to review Part I (Building Information Section) of this fire safety plan to learn whether your building is equipped with an interior fire alarm system and whether the alarm is transmitted to the Fire Department, and familiarize yourself with the location of the manual pull stations and how to activate them in the event of a fire.**

### **EMERGENCY FIRE SAFETY AND EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS**

**IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE, FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS OF FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL, PUBLIC SAFETY AND YOUR RESIDENT LIFE STAFF. HOWEVER, THERE MAY BE EMERGENCY SITUATIONS IN WHICH YOU MAY BE REQUIRED TO DECIDE ON A COURSE OF ACTION TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR SUITE OR FLOOR.**

THIS FIRE SAFETY PLAN IS INTENDED TO ASSIST YOU IN SELECTING THE SAFEST COURSE OF ACTION IN SUCH AN EMERGENCY. PLEASE NOTE THAT NO FIRE SAFETY PLAN CAN ACCOUNT FOR ALL OF THE POSSIBLE FACTORS AND CHANGING CONDITIONS; YOU WILL HAVE TO DECIDE FOR YOURSELF WHAT IS THE SAFEST COURSE OF ACTION UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCE IS.

#### **General Emergency Fire Safety Instructions**

1. Stay calm. Do not panic. Notify the Fire Department as soon as possible. Firefighters will be on the scene of a fire within minutes of receiving an alarm.
2. Because flame, heat and smoke rise, generally a fire on a floor below your suite or room presents a greater threat to your safety than a fire on a floor above your suite or room.
3. Do not overestimate your ability to put out a fire. Most fires cannot be easily or safely extinguished. Do not attempt to put the fire out once it begins to quickly spread. If you attempt to put a fire out, make sure you have a clear path of retreat from the room.
4. As you exit the building during a fire alarm or actual fire, close all doors as you exit to confine the fire. **NEVER USE THE ELEVATOR**, it could stop between floors or take you to where the fire is.
5. Heat, smoke and gases emitted by burning materials can quickly choke you. If you are caught in a heavy smoke condition, get down on the floor and crawl. Take short breaths, breathing through your nose.
6. If your clothes catch fire, don't run. Stop where you are, drop to the ground, cover your face with your hands to protect your face and lungs and roll over to smother the flames.

## **Evacuation Instructions If The Fire Is In Your Room or Suite (All Types of Building Construction)**

1. Close the door to the room where the fire is, and leave the room or suite.
2. Make sure **EVERYONE** leaves the suite with you.
3. Take your keys or access card.
4. Close the door. If possible, leave the door unlocked.
5. Alert people on your floor by knocking on their doors on your way to the exit.
6. Use the nearest stairwell to exit the building. Pull the fire alarm located near exit.
7. **DO NOT USE THE ELEVATOR.**
8. Call (212) 854-5555 once you reach a safe location. Do not assume the fire has been reported unless firefighters are on the scene.
9. Meet the members of your floor or suite at a predetermined location outside the building. Notify responding Public Safety Officers or firefighters if anyone is unaccounted for.

## **Evacuation Instructions If The Fire Is Not In Your Room or Suite**

### “NON-COMBUSTIBLE” OR “FIREPROOF” BUILDINGS:

1. New York State Education Law mandates occupants evacuate buildings upon receipt of a fire alarm. The State Education Law also mandates conducting fire drills in all education facilities. The New York City Fire Department recommendation to remain in a non-combustible or fireproof room or suite is based on buildings without automatic fire detection equipment and buildings that are not required to conduct fire drills. Considering the fact that the automatic detection equipment found in Columbia Housing transmits the earliest possible notification of an alarm, the safest action is to evacuate immediately unless conditions become dangerous when trying to leave.
2. As you exit your room or suite, open the door slowly to check for fire, heat or smoke condition in the hallway.
3. If you can safely exit your apartment, follow the instructions above for a fire in your apartment.
4. If you cannot safely exit your apartment or building, call 212 854-5555 and give them your building name, floor, suite or room number and the number of people that are with you in the room or suite.
  - a. Seal the doors to your room or suite with wet towels or sheets, and seal air ducts or other openings where smoke may enter.
  - b. Open windows a few inches at top and bottom unless flames and smoke are coming from below. **DO NOT BREAK ANY WINDOWS.**
  - c. If conditions in the room or suite appear life-threatening, open a window and wave a towel or sheet to attract the attention of firefighters.
  - d. If smoke conditions worsen before help arrives, get down on the floor and take short breaths through your nose. If possible, retreat to a balcony or terrace away from the source of the smoke, heat or fire.

## “COMBUSTIBLE” OR “NON-FIREPROOF” BUILDING

1. As you exit your room or suite, open the door slowly to check smoke or fire condition in the hallway.
2. Exit your apartment and building if you can safely do so, following the instructions above for a fire in your suite or room.
3. If the hallway or stairwell is not safe because of smoke, heat or fire and you have access to a fire escape use it to exit the building. Proceed cautiously on the fire escape
4. If you cannot use the stairs or fire escape, call 212 854-5555 to notify Public Safety, give your building, floor, room or suite number and the number of people you are with.
  - a. Seal the doors to your room or suite with wet towels or sheets, and seal air ducts or other openings where smoke may enter.
  - b. Open windows a few inches at top and bottom unless flames and smoke are coming from below. **DO NOT BREAK ANY WINDOWS.**
  - c. If conditions in the room or suite appear life-threatening, open a window and wave a towel or sheet to attract the attention of firefighters.
  - d. If smoke conditions worsen before help arrives, get down on the floor and take short breaths through your nose. If possible, retreat to a balcony or terrace away from the source of the smoke, heat or fire.