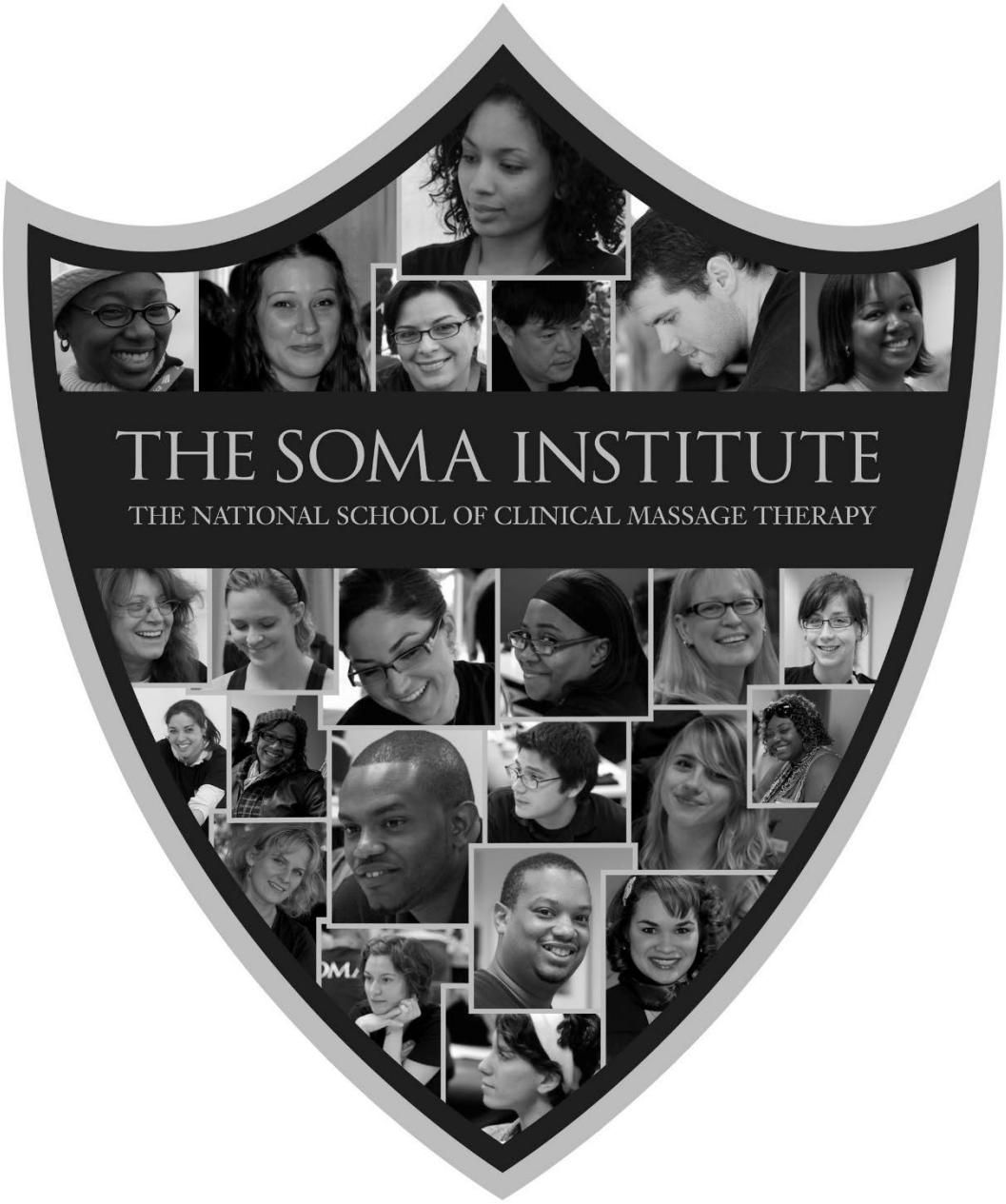

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Effective Date: July 14, 2026, Last Reviewed/Updated: July 14, 2026/Updated: October 28, 2026

Emergency Preparedness Plan

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School Information

The Soma Institute – National School of Clinical Massage Therapy
122 S. Michigan Avenue, Suite 5008
Chicago, Illinois 60603

ACCET ID: 1113

Plan Administrator: James Cussen, Vice President of Operations & Financial Aid

Effective Date: July 14, 2026
Last Reviewed/Updated: July 14, 2026

Emergency Management Team and Contact Information

Emergency Contacts:

Service	Contact Information
Emergency Services	911
Illinois Emergency Management Agency	217-782-2700
Chicago Police (Non-Emergency)	312-745-4290
Chicago Fire Department (Non-Emergency)	312-746-5841

Emergency Management Team:

Incident Commander:
Joan Hannant, Founder & President

Responsibilities:
- Overall emergency decision-making
- Authorization of evacuations and lockdowns
- Liaison with police, fire, and emergency responders

Phone: 312-878-4641

Email: joanhannant@soma.edu

Safety & Security Officer:

James Cussen, Vice President of Operations & Financial Aid
Responsibilities:

- Hazard assessment
- Securing affected areas
- Structural damage reporting
- Verification of complete building evacuation

Phone: 312-972-9197
Email: jcussen@soma.edu

Communications Coordinators:

Tilda Williams
Student Records Director
Phone: 312-878-4639
Email: twilliams@soma.edu

Kathleen Walton O'Neil
Administrative Assistant
Phone: 312-939-2723
Email: koneil@soma.edu
Responsibilities:

- Emergency notifications
- Communication with students, faculty, and staff
- Notification of regulatory agencies, landlord, and other stakeholders

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Evacuation / Assembly Leads:

- Sarah McBride
- Kyle Gyrion
- Lynee Spencer
- Devin Gobrick
- Shakeyah Brazelton
- Michael Hovi

Responsibilities:

- Clear assigned areas
- Assist evacuation efforts
- Direct individuals to assembly locations

Building Evacuation Procedures

Overview:

Depending on the nature of the emergency, 122 S. Michigan Avenue may be subject to either:

- **Partial Evacuation** – Occupants relocate to a safer area within the building.
- **Full Evacuation** – All occupants exit the building and proceed to a designated assembly area.

The Incident Commander (IC) is authorized to order evacuations based on the threat level and affected areas.

Faculty Responsibilities:

Faculty members should:

- Know evacuation routes for all classrooms they use.
- Review posted evacuation routes at the beginning of each semester.
- Identify assembly locations for students.
- Ensure emergency contact information is readily available.
- Identify a student with a cell phone if the instructor does not carry one.

Student Responsibilities:

Students should:

- Follow directions from faculty and staff.
- Remain at designated assembly areas until released.
- Not re-enter the building until authorized.

Evacuation Procedure:

1. React immediately.
2. End conversations and phone calls.
3. Shut down equipment if time permits.
4. Leave immediately without unnecessary delay.
5. Take only readily accessible personal belongings.
6. Close doors behind you without locking them.
7. Follow instructions from emergency personnel.

Note: Personal safety always takes precedence over property or information.

Assembly Locations:
After evacuation, proceed to one of the following assembly areas:

1. Steps of the Art Institute of Chicago (122 S. Michigan Avenue)
2. Millennium Park Fountain Area (18 S. Michigan Avenue)

Evacuation/Assembly Leads will coordinate gathering and accountability procedures.

Accountability Procedures:
Students:
Faculty are responsible for accounting for all students.

Employees:
Supervisors are responsible for accounting for their employees.
Any missing individuals must be reported immediately to the Incident Commander.

Assisting Persons with Disabilities

Self-Identification

Students, staff, and faculty requiring assistance are encouraged to notify:

Tilda Williams
Phone: 312-878-4639

Evacuation Assistance Procedures

1. Move individuals with disabilities to the nearest protected stairwell whenever possible.
2. Notify responding emergency personnel of their location.
3. Do not transport individuals down stairwells without trained emergency personnel assistance.

General Guidelines

- Protected exit corridors and stairwells are the safest refuge areas.
- Elevators must not be used during emergencies.
- The Safety & Security Officer will check stairwells and evacuation routes for stranded individuals.

Special consideration should be given to individuals with visible and non-visible disabilities.

Shelter-in-Place / Lockdown Procedures

Lockdowns may occur during:

- Severe weather
- Armed aggressor situations
- Hazardous environmental conditions
- Nearby public safety incidents

Classroom Procedures

- Close and lock doors.
- Use barricade devices if available.
- Turn off lights.
- Silence phones.
- Stay away from windows.

Office Procedures

- Remain in a secure office.
- Lock doors.
- Turn off lights.
- Silence phones.

Common Areas:

- Move immediately to the nearest secure, lockable room.
- Do not leave your secured location until authorized by law enforcement or the Incident Commander.

Medical Emergencies

Immediate Response

1. Call 911.
2. Designate a person to meet emergency responders outside the building.
3. Provide location information and guide responders to the scene.

Basic First Aid

While awaiting EMS:

- Apply pressure to bleeding wounds.
- Elevate injured areas when appropriate.
- Use available materials as dressings.
- Stay calm and reassure injured individuals.

Fire Prevention and Response

Fire Prevention Measures:

Common fire hazards include:

1. Blocked exits and corridors.
2. Improper extension cord use.
3. Storage in hallways and mechanical rooms.
4. Improper storage of flammable materials.
5. Propped-open fire doors.
6. Obstructed extinguishers or alarms.

Report hazards immediately to:
James Cussen
312-972-9197

Fire Response Procedures

If Fire Is Discovered

1. Alert occupants.
2. Activate the nearest fire alarm.
3. Call 911.
4. Notify the Safety & Security Officer.
5. Evacuate immediately.

During Evacuation

- Check doors for heat before opening.
- Stay low in smoky conditions.
- Use stairs only.
- Never use elevators.
- Move calmly to assembly areas.

Important Safety Rules

- Fire extinguishers should only be used by trained personnel.
- Do not re-enter the building until cleared by the Fire Department.

Natural Hazards

Earthquakes:

Minor Earthquakes

- Drop, cover, and hold on.
- Stay away from windows and tall furniture.
- Assess for injuries after shaking stops.
- Report damage to the Safety & Security Officer.

Major Earthquakes:

- Evacuate if structural damage exists.
- Use stairs only.
- Assist injured individuals when safe.
- Report utility damage and missing persons immediately.

Tornadoes:

Upon issuance of a tornado warning:

- Move immediately to interior shelter areas.
- Follow posted shelter-location instructions.
- Stay away from windows.

After the storm:

- Conduct search and rescue activities if appropriate.
- Account for all students, faculty, and staff.
- Watch for electrical hazards, structural damage, and broken glass.

Flooding:

Recommended actions include:

- Move critical equipment to higher ground.
- Disconnect power where appropriate.
- Deploy sandbags.
- Inspect fire protection equipment.
- Protect valuable assets and records.

Avoid contact with downed power lines and report utility hazards immediately.

In the event school facilities are unusable, alternative classroom facilities will be leased as soon as possible. Faculty will be granted remote equipment and access to curriculum material. Administrative staff will work remotely until office space is secured.

Hurricanes:
Before the Storm

- Develop a family emergency plan.
- Know evacuation routes.
- Prepare emergency supply kits.
- Follow official evacuation orders.

During the Storm

- Stay indoors.
- Avoid windows and glass doors.
- Move to an interior room.

After the Storm

- Avoid downed power lines.
- Leave areas where gas leaks are suspected.
- Follow local emergency guidance.

Active Shooter, Terrorism, Assaults, and Workplace Violence

Purpose:

Violent incidents can occur with little or no warning. All students, faculty, and staff should be familiar with the **Run, Hide, Fight** response model.

Contact:

James Cussen, Safety & Security Officer
312-972-9197

Emergency notifications will be issued immediately.

RUN
When safe to do so:

- Evacuate immediately.
- Leave belongings behind.
- Help others when possible.
- Call 911 once safe.

Be prepared to provide:

- Location
- Description of suspect(s)
- Weapons observed
- Number of injured persons

HIDE

If evacuation is not possible:

- Lock and barricade doors.
- Turn off lights.
- Silence phones.
- Stay out of sight.
- Remain quiet.

Only leave when instructed by law enforcement.

FIGHT

As a last resort and only when your life is in immediate danger:

- Act aggressively.
- Improvise weapons.
- Attempt to incapacitate the attacker.
- Commit fully to your actions.

Hostage Situations

If taken hostage:

- Remain calm.
- Avoid confrontation.
- Comply with instructions.
- Observe details that may assist law enforcement.
- Request medical care when necessary.

Breaking Up Fights and Use of Force

Guiding Principles

Soma Institute prioritizes the safety and dignity of all individuals. Never ignore escalating aggression.

Response Procedures

Call for Help

Call 911 immediately if:

- Weapons are present
- Serious injury is threatened
- Violence is escalating

Make Your Presence Known
Use calm, clear commands such as:

- "Stop."
  "Separate."
  "Step Back."

Create Space

- Separate individuals when safe.
- Remove bystanders.
- Avoid arguing or escalating tensions.

Assess for Weapons
Consider the possibility of weapons and switch to the Run, Hide, Fight protocol if necessary.

Do Not Chase
Do not pursue individuals into unsafe locations or off property.

Incident Reporting and Follow-Up

After any significant incident:

- Complete an incident report.
- Document all involved parties and witnesses.
- Record actions taken and outcomes.
- Submit reports to administration.

Students involved in physical violence may be prohibited from returning to campus until meeting with the President regarding conduct expectations.