

**WAC 296-831-300 Panic button requirements.** (1) Adult entertainment establishments must provide an accessible panic button in each room in the establishment in which an entertainer may be alone with a customer, and in bathrooms and dressing rooms. An entertainer may use the panic button if the entertainer has been harmed, reasonably believes there is a risk of harm, or there is another emergency in the entertainer's presence. The entertainer may cease work and leave the immediate area to await the arrival of assistance.

(2) For the purposes of this chapter, the accessibility of a panic button must be determined in coordination with, and based on, recommendations provided by entertainers on the appropriate location for placement of a panic button based on the entertainer's point of use. Establishments must assess the accessibility of panic buttons at least annually.

(3) Panic buttons, and their associated alarm(s), must be silent (discreet) at the entertainer's point of use, while still effectively alerting whomever the establishment has determined to be responsible for responding to emergencies. Panic buttons that trigger a recognizable (audible/visual/tactile) alarm at the entertainer's point of use may be used in specific locations within an establishment where alarms are required only if:

(a) The establishment has assessed its business operations and alarm system with the required safety and health committee (see WAC 296-800-130 Safety committees/safety meetings—Summary); and

(b) The committee has unanimously determined that such an alarm would be more effective for a particular location within the establishment where an alarm is required. In such cases, this determination is limited to a particular location within the establishment and must be documented along with other required safety committee documentation.

(4) Establishments must test and maintain its alarm system regularly to ensure that it will function as intended when needed.

(a) Testing must be performed at least annually.

(b) Establishments must keep a record that includes the dates of all testing or maintenance performed and any pertinent details, such as errors corrected or adjustments made.

(5) By July 1st of each year, establishments must submit to the department proof of compliance with the requirements of subsections (1), (2), and (4) of this section. The information submitted to the department must include:

(a) Name and address of the adult entertainment establishment;

(b) Unified business identifier number;

(c) A list, map, or other visual of the establishment, containing the locations of all panic buttons in the establishment; and

(d) Maintenance records demonstrating that panic buttons have been maintained and are confirmed to be in working condition.

(6) A sample panic button checklist that establishments can use to assist in identifying panic button and response procedure related hazards in their workplace, and to aid establishments in evaluating what performance criteria will address the violence-based hazards in their establishment, is provided below:

<b>PANIC BUTTON CHECKLIST</b>
If the response to <i>any</i> of the following questions in this checklist is "NO," and if no other alternative hazard controls are in place for the identified hazard, panic buttons are likely not effective.

<b>PANIC BUTTON CHECKLIST</b>		
<b>Do panic buttons and panic buttons systems exclusively rely on establishment owned/leased/etc., equipment or services?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
The above covers the complete chain of events from the initial signaling at the entertainer's point of use through notification and to response from the establishment. The rule does not prohibit entertainer owned devices supplementing the devices provided by establishment (e.g., as a backup method).		
<b>Do panic buttons require only a single action to activate (such as a single push/pull/tap, etc.)?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Panic buttons which require multiple actions (such as using a number pad to unlock/dial a cell phone, or selecting a channel/frequency on a portable radio, or pressing a button and then speaking) would require an entertainer to extend their exposure to a hazard in order to seek relief from it. Multiple action devices are not compliant.		
<b>Do panic buttons and the associated signal or alarm latch?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Once triggered, panic buttons' alarms continue to both alarm and identify the location of the used panic button(s) without requiring ongoing action of the entertainer. Panic buttons requiring ongoing actions of the entertainer (continued holding/pressing, etc.) would require an entertainer to extend their exposure to a hazard in order to seek relief from it.		
<b>Do panic buttons systems resist tampering?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Once triggered, panic buttons' alarms are not easily reset at the panic button (entertainer's point of use) itself, especially using the same action that activated it. Panic buttons which can be readily turned off or reset by customers would delay response actions and allow continued exposure to the hazard.		
<b>Do panic buttons reduce or minimize inadvertent activation or false alarms?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
False alarms increase the likelihood of delayed, deprioritized, or ignored alarms. Buttons, switches, etc., which are protected, shouldered, recessed, or flush with top surface/bracket/etc. reduce the likelihood of false alarms.		
<b>Do panic buttons systems identify the location of the triggered panic buttons?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Uncoordinated response to panic buttons increases the likelihood of response actions being delayed or otherwise inadequate.		
<b>Do panic buttons trigger distinct (or independent) alarms?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
If an establishment requires installation of multiple alarms or alarm systems, and response procedures dictate that after the triggering of a panic button, uninvolved entertainers should continue entertaining while the establishment conducts response activities, then panic buttons alarm systems (and response procedures) would need to independently continue to fully function during an alarm (or multiple alarms). Indistinct alarms, or alarms where the establishment cannot identify/respond to multiple simultaneous alarms, increase the likelihood of response actions being delayed or otherwise inadequate.		
<b>Are panic buttons' alarms discreet at the entertainer's point of use?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
If no, document the date and details of the safety and health committee meeting where the determination was made that use of nondiscreet alarms at the entertainer's point of use is appropriate. Subsection (3) of this section requires that panic buttons and their associated alarm(s) must be silent (discreet) at the entertainer's point of use, unless the criteria in subsection (3) (a) and (b) of this section are met.		
<b>Do panic buttons alarms produce recognizable signals to perform actions under the APP, Emergency Action Plan, etc.?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
At the establishment's point of reception, alarms must be recognizable in the conditions under which they will be used. The following can obscure alarms sufficiently enough to make an alarm unrecognizable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Areas subject to noise/music at volumes equal or above the volume of an alarm;</li> <li>- Areas subject to strobing lighting equal or above the amount of illumination of an alarm;</li> <li>- Areas with sufficient distance, intermediary materials, or the room/building configuration itself, impairs alarm signals to the point that they are no longer recognizable.</li> </ul>		
<b>Are panic buttons provided by the establishment in each room in the establishment in which entertainers may be alone with a customer, and in bathrooms and dressing rooms?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>

**PANIC BUTTON CHECKLIST**

For the purposes of this question, "*alone*" means outside of direct line-of-sight of other establishment personnel, entertainers, employees, etc., such as in private or semi-private booths, rooms, etc.

<b>Are panic buttons that are permanently installed in the workplace, located within immediate reach?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>

Panic buttons must be kept free of obstacles blocking their use (doors, furniture, mop buckets, boxes, coat racks, etc.).

<b>Are panic buttons in good working order? If not, are entertainers informed of, and excluded from, areas lacking required panic buttons protection (e.g. during power loss, wireless service loss, etc.)?</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>

Keep a record of, and inform entertainers of, nonfunctional/improperly working panic buttons until replaced or repaired.  
 Where nonfunctional/improperly working panic buttons are present:  
 - Use signage or otherwise inform entertainers prior to working; and  
 - Use written procedures and policies in Accident Prevention Plan that prohibit or restrict access to relevant areas.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, 49.17.060, 49.17.470, chapter 49.17 RCW, and 2024 c 250. WSR 24-24-074, s 296-831-300, filed 12/2/24, effective 1/2/25. Statutory Authority: Chapter 49.17 RCW and RCW 49.17.470. WSR 22-10-070, § 296-831-300, filed 5/3/22, effective 7/1/22.]