



After the Rescue!

Returning to Normal

Vital information

To be completed by team leader:

Incident #:	
Incident date:	
Incident time:	
Incident location:	
Responding department(s):	<input type="radio"/> Virginia Beach EMS Department <input type="radio"/> Virginia Beach Fire Department <input type="radio"/> Virginia Beach Police Department

Claims:

Claims correspondence address:	City of Virginia Beach Finance Department Risk Management Division 2400 Courthouse Dr Virginia Beach VA 23456
Claims phone number:	757-385-4217
Claims email address:	riskmanagement@vbgov.com

For you to complete:

Your insurance company's name:	
Your insurance company's phone number:	
Your insurance policy number:	
VIN of damaged vehicle, if applicable:	

Introduction

Forced-entry rescues, although sometimes necessary, can cause significant inconvenience afterwards. Knowing where to begin your recovery effort is important. We hope you find this information useful as you return things to normal.

Emergency responders may have forced their way through one or more doors, broken one or more window(s), or taken other urgent measures to gain access to people who might be suffering from serious illness or injury. Although they typically do their best to minimize any damage, it may be necessary for you to make some repairs. Recovery will take time and patience.

Use caution!

It is important to understand the risk to your safety and health even after emergency services personnel leave. Depending on what was damaged, you must be careful to avoid injury.

Enter any area where a forced entry took place slowly. Use adequate lighting and foot protection. Watch your head. Carefully examine the area for broken glass and for materials that may be loose or out of place. Ask the advice of the emergency responders, local building officials, your insurance agent, and trade specialists before starting to clean or make repairs.

Frequently asked questions

Q: Why did emergency responders force entry?

A: They were acting on a report of a possible or actual emergency. The report may have included only some of the facts, or it may have included assumptions made by people not actually present. The responders must assume their help is needed until they can verify otherwise. In their judgment, the risk of failing to help someone in distress outweighed the risk of doing a bit of repairable damage.

Q: How can I get a copy of the EMS report?

A: For the purpose of making a liability or insurance claim for forced-entry damage, you should start by contacting the city's Finance Department Risk Management Division. See the **Claims** contact information in the **Vital information** section of this guide.

What to do now

Who is the property owner?

If you are a renter, notify the property owner as soon as possible and get their guidance on how repairs should be made. Some of the following suggestions are only intended for the property owner.

Security and safety for yourself and your family

In many cases, your local hardware store, home improvement store, glass repair service, or car dealership can provide adequate help. Simple temporary repairs, like boarding up openings, may be appropriate until you can arrange for things to be restored to their original condition. If you lack the knowledge, skills, or abilities to make repairs yourself, consider reaching out to your family, friends, neighbors, congregation, or coworkers.

If you are unable to secure your residence and you have the means, you may want to consider a brief hotel stay until repairs can be made. For more serious situations, contact:

American Red Cross

24-hour Disaster Emergency Helpline

757-536-9859

Contact the Police Department at the non-emergency number (757-385-5000) to let them know that you will be away from your home.

Caring for pets

If you have pets, find and comfort them. Scared animals often react by biting or scratching. Handle them carefully, calmly, and gently. Consider having them stay elsewhere until your residence is secured well enough to keep them inside.

Contact your insurance agent

Contact your insurance company right away. Ask what to do about the immediate needs of your home. This includes covering doors, windows, and other openings.

Ask your insurance company what to do first. Some companies may ask you to make a list of everything that was damaged. They may ask you to describe these items in detail and say how much you paid for them.

If you do not have insurance

Your family, friends, neighbors, congregation, or coworkers might help you recover. You may have to dip into your savings, pay for repairs on credit, or borrow money -- then act diligently to pay off any debt.

Finances

Contact your credit card company if you need to request a temporary increase in your credit limit. If you intend to file any kind of claim, save all receipts for any money you spend on repairs, relocation, or other recovery needs. The receipts may be needed later by the insurance company. You will need the receipts to prove any losses claimed on your tax return.

Tips on how to handle the damage

There are companies with expertise at repairing forced-entry damage. They are listed in telephone directories and on the internet. Your insurer may prefer some companies over others, or may give you guidance on how to choose a repair service. It may be appropriate to ask for references from family, friends, neighbors, congregation, or coworkers.

Whether you or your insurer chooses a repair service, be clear on who will pay for things. Be sure to ask for an estimate of the cost for the work and agree to it in writing beforehand.

You may need to engage a team of experts to help you recover. Consider what kinds of services you will need:

- Securing your home from the environment and from theft
- Caring for animals
- Providing repair estimates
- Performing final repairs
- Storing household items
- Cleaning

Checklist for recovery from a forced-entry rescue

- Be very careful if you enter an area where a forced entry took place. Make sure you use adequate lighting and foot protection. Watch your head.
- If you are a renter, contact the property owner as soon as possible.
- Contact someone who can help you secure your space or give you a place to stay temporarily. Consider reaching out to your family, friends, neighbors, congregation, or coworkers. In serious situations, you may need to contact the American Red Cross.
- If you have insurance, contact your insurance company. Ask what you should do to keep your space safe until it is repaired. Ask who you should talk to about cleaning up your home. If you are not insured, the acquaintances mentioned above may be your best resources. In some cases, other community groups may provide aid or assistance.
- If you leave your home, call the Police Department at the non-emergency number (757-385-5000) to let them know the site will be vacant.
- Begin saving receipts for any money you spend related to the forced entry. The receipts may be needed later by the insurance company and to prove any losses claimed on your income tax.

