IRM-013 Issuance of an Emergency Notification

Effective Date Friday, November 16, 2007

Status Final

Last Revised Tuesday, June 23, 2026

Policy Type University

Contact Office Emergency Management (UVA)

Oversight Executive
Associate Vice President for Safety & Security and Chief of Police
Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Executive Vice President for Health Affairs

Applies To Academic Division and the Medical Center.

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Reason for Policy

The University has implemented a multi-layered emergency notification system for immediately notifying the University community upon confirmation of an emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of its students, faculty, staff, patients, and visitors occurring on University Grounds or surrounding areas. Additionally, this complies with the Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Act (20 U.S.C. § 1092(f) ("Clery Act").

Definition of Terms

Dangerous Situation

Description

A situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of students, faculty, staff, patients, and visitors occurring on University Grounds, at a separate campus, or surrounding areas.

Emergency

Description

Any incident, whether natural, technological, or human-caused, that requires responsive action to protect life or property.

Emergency Notification

Description

An announcement triggered by a significant emergency event or dangerous situation involving an *immediate* threat to the health or safety of the University's faculty, staff, employees, students, patients, or visitors on University Grounds or at a separate campus. This expands upon the definition of *Safety Advisory* to include both Clery Act crimes and other types of emergencies or events that pose an imminent threat to the campus community.

Emergency Event

Description

Any event, natural or man-made, with the potential to create unsafe conditions, cause significant injuries or deaths, shut down the University, disrupt operations, or cause physical or environmental damage. Examples include:

- Fire
- Hazardous Materials Incident
- Flood
- Severe Weather
    - Winter Weather
    - Hurricane
    - Tornado
- Earthquake
- Utility Failure (including Communication and Technology Systems)
- Radiological Accident
- Civil Disturbance
- Explosion
- Public Health Threat
- Acts of Violence
- Acts of Terrorism

Emergency Notification System

Description

A mechanism established for the purpose of and dedicated to enabling University officials to quickly contact or send messages to faculty, staff, employees, and students in the event of an emergency. Examples include but are not limited to, fire alarms, sirens, UVA alerts via email/text message, digital screens, etc.

University Grounds or Separate Campus (based on Clery Act definition)

Description

The areas where administrative functions, teaching, and research facilities of the University that are used by members of the University community are located as well as athletic and recreational facilities. This includes (i) any building or property owned or controlled by the University within the same reasonably contiguous geographic area and used by the institution in direct support of, or in a manner related to, the institution's educational purposes, including residence halls; and (ii) any building or property that is within or reasonably contiguous to the area described in clause (i) that is owned by the University but controlled by another person, is frequently used by students, and supports institutional purposes, such as a food or other retail vendor. This also includes Clery Act "separate campus" locations as identified by the assistant vice president for clery compliance.

Policy Statement

In the event an emergency or dangerous situation occurs on University Grounds or a separate campus which constitutes an immediate threat to or may directly affect the health or safety of the University community, the University will issue an emergency notification without delay, unless issuing a notification will compromise efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency.

1. **Confirming the Existence of an Emergency or Dangerous Situation on University Grounds or Surrounding Areas and Initiating the Emergency Notification System:**
   University Police (UPD) or other University first responders may become aware of an emergency or dangerous situation that potentially affects the health or safety of the University community. Generally, University first responders become aware of these situations through reports to the emergency communications center or during routine patrol or other assignments, including the Camera Control Center and the UVA Contact Center.

   Once first responders confirm that there is an emergency or dangerous situation that poses an immediate threat to the health or safety of some or all members of the University community, first responders will notify supervisors in UPD or other authorized University officials to issue an emergency notification.

   If, in the professional judgment of first responders, issuing a notification potentially compromises efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency, the University may elect to delay issuing an emergency notification. As soon as the condition that may compromise response or mitigation efforts is no longer present, the University will issue the emergency notification to the University community.

   Procedures for confirming an emergency or dangerous situation at a separate campus and initiating an emergency notification, along with the list of authorized senders for each separate campus location, are maintained within the emergency procedure for each site.

2. **Determining the Appropriate Segment(s) of the University Community to Receive an Emergency Notification:**
   Police or local first responders on the scene of an emergency or dangerous situation will assist those preparing the emergency notification with determining what segment(s) of the University community should receive the notification. Generally, University community members in the immediate area of the dangerous situation (i.e., the building, adjacent buildings, or surrounding area) will receive the emergency notification first. The University will continue to assess the situation and may issue subsequent notifications to a wider group of community members. In addition to the emergency notification that may be issued via the University emergency notification system, the University will post applicable messages

about the emergency or dangerous situation occurring on Grounds or the surrounding area on the Office of Emergency Management homepage, to alert the rest of the University community to the situation and relay the steps that should be taken to maintain personal and community safety. If the emergency affects a significant portion of the University Grounds, authorized University officials will distribute the notification to the University community.

3. **Determining the Contents of the Emergency Notification:**
   The office responsible for issuing the emergency notification (usually UPD) will determine the contents of the notification. This may be done in concert with University representatives of the Critical Incident Management Team and/or local first responders. The University has developed a wide range of template messages addressing several types of emergencies. The individual authorizing the alert will select the template message most appropriate to the ongoing situation and modify it to address the specifics of the incident. In those cases where there are no predetermined template messages in the system, the individual authorizing the alert will develop a succinct message to convey the appropriate information to the community. The goal is to notify individuals of the situation and the steps to take to safeguard personal and community safety. Messages are typically composed of predetermined text that requires minor modification (e.g., address).

   When circumstance requires a custom message, the following authorized University officials create message content: associate vice president for safety and security; executive vice president and chief operating officer; director and associate director of the Office of Emergency Management; director of Medical Center Emergency Management; command staff personnel of the University Police Division; the UPD shift commander; or a UPD services clerk when they receive a notice of natural forces emergency such as a tornado on the weather radio, computer, or other authoritative source.

4. **Compliance with Policy:**
   Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination and expulsion in accordance with relevant University policies.

   Direct questions about this policy to the Office of Emergency Management.

Procedures

1. **Procedures Used to Notify the Community:**
   In the event a situation poses an immediate threat to members of the University community, the University has va
   systems in place for communicating information quickly. University personnel may activate some or all of these m
   of communication in the event emergency notification for all or a segment of the University community is needed.

   The University delivers emergency notifications through intentional redundant messaging via:

System	Description	Services	How to Subscribe

UVA Alerts*	UVA Alerts is a service that notifies registered users via email and text message when the University community faces an immediate threat from an emergency or dangerous situation. It automatically sends an email to all members of the University community with a valid UVA email address. For separate campuses, it sends the notification to a list of individuals for that site.	Email and text messaging	Add additional mobile numbe email addresses at https://uvaemergency.virginia alerts. Students, faculty, and staff are The public can receive UVA A text by opt-in by texting "UVA 226787 or https://uvaemergency.virginia alerts-public.
Alertus Desktop*	Installed software which generates a pop-up alert when computers are turned on *and* connected to the UVA network except for separate campus alerts.	Computer screens	Pre-installed on certain Unive owned computers. Install at https://in.virginia.edu/emerge alerts
Webpage	Emergency information and official updates are posted at the UVA Emergency homepage and the University's homepage except for separate campus alerts.	https://uvaemergency.virginia.edu	N/A
RSS Feeds	Provide direct feed/interruption of digital signage across Grounds.	LED clocks, LCD displays	N/A
PA/Siren System	Outdoor public address/siren system activated for certain emergencies on Grounds (i.e., tornado, active attacker).	PA/Siren System	N/A

*Requires registration

2. **Procedures for Disseminating Emergency Information to the Larger Community:**
During critical incidents, emergencies, or dangerous situation, University Communications will work with the Crit Incident Management Team and each organizational unit, as necessary, to gather accurate and substantial informat regarding the situation and details of the University's response. The University's public information officer, worki city and county public information officers as appropriate, will provide information to the public on progress towa

resolution, utilizing one or several of the following methods: radio, television, newspaper, social media, and Web sites. The University, at its discretion and if allowed by the outside notifying agency, may release information concerning an emergency or dangerous situation occurring off University Grounds if it poses an immediate threat to the health or safety of faculty, staff, and/or students off of University Grounds.

3. **Test of the Emergency Notification System:**
   The University will test the emergency notification system on at least an annual basis; publicizing its emergency response and evacuation procedures in conjunction with at least one test per calendar year; and documenting for each test, a description of the exercise, the date, time and whether it was announced or unannounced.

Additional Procedures:
Critical Incident Management Plan
Report a University Student Living in University Housing Missing
UVa Alerts Sign-up

Related Information

HRM-032: Disruption of Normal University Operations Resulting from Weather or Emergency Events
IRM-018: Issuance of a Safety Advisory
SEC-035: Clery Act Compliance
STU-003: Missing Student Notifications for Students Residing in on-Grounds Housing
Alert Notification Methods at UVA-WISE

Major Category Information Resource Management

Next Scheduled Review Saturday, June 23, 2029

Revision History

Confirmed, updated title 6/23/26; Updated title of Clery Act 2/7/25; Community Alert changed to Safety Advisory 8/12/24; Added separate campuses 6/6/23; Revised 2/18/22, 9/10/18; Updated 10/12/17 (Contact Ofc & Oversight Exec); 5/15/14, 4/11/11.

Category Cross Reference
Safety, Security and Environmental Quality

Supercedes Policy Text
IRM-013: Mass Text Messaging for Emergency Alerts.

Approved By Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

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