

Administrative Services: Emergency Communications Policy - DRAFT

1.0 Purpose and Summary

UAA employs several mass notification communications systems to provide the University community with notifications of emergency events that may present an immediate threat to the campus community. This policy:

- Outlines the integration and management of mass notification systems, including training and drills.
- Identifies campus event scheduling requirements to help streamline emergency response.
- Provides requirements for the creation of Emergency Operations Centers.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to the UAA Main Anchorage Campus and its employees, students and contractors.

3.0 Exclusions

This policy is concerned exclusively with the technology and use of technology related to emergency communications and does not constitute a “timely warning” policy. The following are excluded from this policy:

- The content and management of content for mass notifications.
- Clarifying the difference between “timely warnings” and “emergency notifications”, for instance in their respective definitions and requirements related to the Jeanne Clery Act.
- Clarifying circumstances when warnings will be issued or the manner in which they will be issued.
- Clarifying what messages will be issued and the timeframe in which emergency warnings must be issued for various types of events.
- Clarifying the process used to confirm that a significant emergency or dangerous situation is occurring or has occurred.
- Crime reporting
- How emergencies are coordinated with other agencies, such as the Anchorage Police Department and Anchorage Fire Department.

4.0 Intent

To improve emergency communications systems and communications for all members of the UAA community, including those with disabilities.

To streamline communication systems and technologies so that they are as effective as possible in the event of an emergency.

To train and identify the broadest group of emergency responders as possible who have access to emergency communication technologies in order to improve the effectiveness of emergency response.

To identify ongoing methods of identifying challenges to emergency communications.

5.0 Definitions and Acronyms

Blast E-mails: Emails sent via the emergency communications system to the UAA community at one time for rapid communication.

Campus Security Team: This entity has not been created at the time of the writing of this policy. However, the creation of a campus security team dedicated to the security and monitoring of facilities in the future may be useful to the University.

Emergency Communications Systems or Mass Notification Systems: Communications systems utilized by University officials to quickly disseminate emergency information across multiple communications channels. Channels include one-way and two-way notification systems with the primary function of communicating emergency information. These systems are often made up of both:

- Input devices and sensors, and
- Output and communication devices.

Emergency Notification: Dissemination of critical emergency information regarding a significant emergency or dangerous situation occurring on campus that may involve an immediate threat to the health or safety of visitors, students or staff.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC): a central command and control facility responsible for carrying out the duties of emergency preparedness, emergency management, disaster management, and emergency communications at a strategic level during an emergency, and for ensuring the continuity of the operation of an organization.

An EOC is responsible for strategic direction and operational decisions. The common functions of EOCs are to collect, gather and analyze data; make decisions that protect life and property; maintain continuity of the organization within the scope of applicable laws; and disseminate those decisions to all concerned agencies and individuals.

IT: UAA Information Technology Services

IMT: UAA Incident Management Team

Scheduling Office: department responsible for scheduling events and administering scheduling

software.

Timely Warning Notification: This policy does not define *Timely Warning Notifications* or how *Timely Warning Notifications* differs from *Emergency Notifications*, particularly in the context of the Clery Act. Such a distinction and any related policies and procedures should be defined separately by the UAA administration and Police Department.

UAA: University of Alaska Anchorage. UAA is the “university” in this document and refers to the Anchorage campus only. This document governs only the **Main Anchorage Campus:** the cluster of buildings generally along Providence Dr. and the west side of Elmore Rd., east of Lake Otis Pkwy and south of Northern Lights Blvd.

UPD: UAA University Police Department

6.0 Policy

6.1 Integration of Emergency Communications Systems

- I. Emergency communications systems shall be integrated at a technical level so that all communications can be issued across multiple platforms (media) at once.
 - a. Media to be integrated include the UAA VoIP phone system, text alerts on individual mobile devices, digital displays, visible and audible emergency alarms, red-screen alerts, strobes, and any other existing emergency communications technologies. (Note that this will require time, study, and dedicated funding.)
 - b. Any new technology procured by UAA shall be required to integrate with existing emergency communications systems so that it can be employed simultaneously with those existing technologies and thereby meet the intent of this policy.

6.2 Management and the Diversification of Access to Emergency Communications Systems

- I. Management of all emergency notification platforms shall be by University Police Department (UPD) or the Campus Security Team (not yet formed).
- II. Network and system maintenance for emergency communications technologies shall be the responsibility of IT.
- III. Training
 - a. Authorized University officials will receive training and periodic updates on the operation of all appropriate mass notification systems.
 - b. UPD and IMT shall develop a target for the number of trained personnel (accounting for the contingency that members are sometimes away from campus and unavailable) and shall expand the number of trained people who can issue emergency alerts to meet that target number.

- c. Training, and regular training updates shall be required at intervals identified by UPD and IMT but shall be conducted at no less than once per semester, including the summer semester.

IV. Drills

- a. Drills shall be conducted on a semesterly basis, including the summer semester, for emergency communications systems. Drills shall be managed by UPD with input from IMT and will review the following, at a minimum:
 - i. The viability and functionality of each mass notification system.
 - ii. Any necessary maintenance and the required timeframe for that maintenance.
 - iii. Areas and spaces on campus where communications are not detectable.
 - iv. At least once per year these drills shall involve members of Disability Support Services to help identify where emergency communications are not readily apparent for people with disabilities, such as the visually- or hearing-impaired and the blind.
- b. Reports
 - i. **Any critical malfunctions or short-comings shall be identified immediately and brought to the attention of UPD and the leadership of Administrative Services.**
 - ii. Reports detailing any maintenance, upgrades, or short-comings related to the mass notifications systems shall be issued within two weeks after each drill to UPD, IMT, Facilities, and the Administrative Services leadership.

6.3 Effective Scheduling for Emergency Preparedness

- I. All indoor, outdoor, and public events held on campus shall be scheduled by the event host with the Scheduling Office and added to scheduling software (at the time of the writing of this policy this is 25Live). This will allow emergency responders to understand where groups are on campus.

6.4 Designate a Dedicated “Standing” Emergency Operation Center (EOC)

- I. A designated “standing” EOC shall be created and maintained. An alternate site shall be identified that can rapidly be converted to an EOC.
 - a. A dedicated project shall be required to identify the scope and requirements for both the dedicated and alternate EOC’s. The following are preliminary requirements:
 - i. The dedicated EOC shall accommodate at least 20 people.
 - ii. The alternate EOC shall accommodate at least 10 people.

- iii. The dedicated and alternate EOC's shall be geographically separated on campus and shall not be within the same building or campus zone.
 - 1. The location of the alternate site shall be shared with all emergency personnel and included in trainings so that - should its use be needed - emergency personnel are knowledgeable of its location and resources.
- iv. Both EOC's shall have dedicated communication lines of the minimum number identified by UPD and IMT and required by Code, but no less than three.
- v. Communication lines and emergency power shall have Code-compliant back-up systems.
- vi. Access will be restricted to the EOC's and doors will have electronic access control.
- vii. Access to all forms of emergency communications shall be available within the EOC's.