Westfield State University

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EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to authorize and outline the University's emergency notification systems and procedures in place to respond to a critical incident affecting the health and safety of the campus community.

This policy complies with the Emergency Notification requirements of the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, as amended by the Higher Education Opportunity Amendments of 2008 and applicable Department of Education regulations.

DEFINITIONS

Critical Incident: Any situation that represents a significant emergency or dangerous situation affecting the health and/or safety of the University community. Typically, a critical incident will tax or overwhelm the normal operating systems of the University and cause a disruption to the continuity of the University's day to day operations.

Emergency Notification System: Multi-modal forms of communication that allow approved University personnel to communicate information to the rest of the University in the event of a critical incident. Emergency notifications shall be sent via e-mail, text messaging, sirens, telephone calls, and/or oral and written communications.

POLICY

    A. Description of Emergency Notification Systems Utilized by the University

        1   <u>RAVE Electronic Messages</u> – The RAVE system sends messages to faculty, staff and students who have signed up to receive them. Individuals may sign up for these notifications through the University's main website link entitled *"Emergency Notification System"*. An e-mail reminder shall be sent each semester to the campus community reminding them of this option. Messages are sent either via text, e-mail, and/or cell phone. Public Safety is authorized to send all

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messages that are sent through this system at the request of Public Safety command staff or the Emergency Response Team (ERT) when Public Safety command staff is not available.

2   Emergency Alarm/Voice Command System – This system provides external notification to the campus via the sounding of sirens followed by voice instructions. Speakers have been installed outside campus buildings for the system to serve outdoor areas. This system shall be upgraded as renovations occur to include connection to internal fire alarm systems in each building which will allow for internal sirens and voice commands. Public Safety is authorized to send all messages utilizing this system at the request of Public Safety command staff or the ERT when Public Safety command staff is unavailable.

3   Traditional Telephone and Staff Communications – The University will continue to rely on traditional office, building, and staff communications including telephone, verbal communication, and e-mail. Unless otherwise instructed for reasons of privacy, all University employees are authorized and expected to communicate emergencies to others around them upon notification of a critical incident.

4   Written Postings/University Website – Written postings and flyers as well as updates on the University website will be made consistent with instructions from the Office of Public Safety/ERT. Written posting or updates to the website may be done by members of the ERT and/or designees.

B. Authorized Staff Responsible for Notifications

1. Authorization for the content and release of emergency information utilizing any of the emergency response systems described in this policy lies with the Emergency Response Team and/or the command staff of Public Safety. Public Safety shall develop a wide range of template messages in order to modify and release messages efficiently. In those cases where there is no predetermined template message in the system, the individual issuing the alert will develop/send the most succinct message to convey the appropriate information to the University community.

2. ERT members/designees will update website and may post paper flyers and emergency notifications around campus as needed.

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C. Content and Delivery of Message

1. The first emergency message is intended to ALERT the community or appropriate segment of the campus community of the dangerous condition and the actions they should take to be safe. Messages distributed in this phase of the rapidly unfolding critical incident will generally be concise and direct. Example: "*The campus is experiencing a major power outage affecting the following buildings, Brown, Red, White and Yellow Halls. All occupants of these buildings should immediately evacuate and meet at the designated building rally point.*"

2. The second emergency message (sent as needed) is intended to inform the community or appropriate segment of the campus community about additional details regarding the critical situation. This message is generally distributed once first responders and the emergency operations center have additional information. Example: *"The power outage affecting Brown, Red, White, and Yellow Halls was caused by a cut power line. WG&E are responding along with facilities personnel to repair the damage. We expect the outage will last until 2PM. Refer to the University homepage for additional information or dial 413-572-5262."*

3. The third message (sent as needed) is generally distributed once the situation is nearly or completely resolved. The purpose of this message is to reassure the community that the University has restored or is working to restore normal operations.   It may also be used to provide additional resource information Example: *"The power in Brown, Red, White and Yellow Halls has been restored. If you are continuing to experience individual outages in your residence hall room, please contact your RD."*

D. Testing of University Emergency Notification Systems

Tests of each University emergency notification system will be done twice annually, generally once per semester. Tests will be coordinated through the Office of Public Safety and the Emergency Response Team. Tests of the system will be documented and maintained by the Office of Public Safety.

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REVIEW

The ultimate authority for this policy as well as any emergency preparedness and response lies with the President of the University.

Review of this policy and its supporting documents will be done annually by the Emergency Response Team Managers.