



E M E R G E N C Y R E S P O N S E P L A N

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I. PURPOSE

The Emergency Response Plan (ERP) for Mercy College of Ohio outlines procedures for specific emergency scenarios. Timely and accurate responses must be implemented to maintain a safe and secure campus community. Various threats and hazards that pose a risk to this community require planning of critical resources both within and outside the College. Although each scenario will require a unique public information response, this plan also provides policies and procedures for the coordination of internal and external communications for the College in the event of an emergency. Upon determination by Mercy College's Emergency Response Team and/or the President of the College that an emergency exists, which necessitates a communication response, the communication plan will be immediately implemented by the Chief Financial Officer (or designee) in collaboration with the Director of Communication (or designee) and Director of Information Technology. The Chief Financial Officer (CFO) will serve as the Incident Commander and Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) will serve as the Deputy Safety Officer during an emergency. (NOTE: *See Appendix D, Emergency Response Team/Contact Information.*)

II. COMMUNICATION PLAN

To ensure the College's public response to an emergency is quick, accurate, sensitive, and responsible, the Director of Communication, or designee, will coordinate all emergency communication with off-campus constituencies and media outlets. All communication with on-campus constituencies will be coordinated by the CFO, or designee, and VPAA, in collaboration with the Director of Information Technology, using Mercy College's Emergency Response Plan and Emergency Response Team resources. (NOTE: *See Appendix E, List of Mercy College Constituencies.*)

During an emergency, the President (or designee) or Director of Communication (or designee) will serve as the College's spokesperson. (NOTE: *See Appendix F, Spokesperson Guidelines.*)

A. Immediate Response (NOTE: *See Appendix G, Immediate Response Checklist*)

- The President, or designee, the Emergency Response Team and the Director of Communications, or designee, will determine if an official statement should be prepared and released.
- The Director of Communication, or designee, along with the Emergency Response Team will formulate the message. (NOTE: *See Appendix H, Key Message Worksheet and Appendix I, What the Media Will Ask.*)
- The Director of Communication, or designee, will brief all personnel who are assigned to answer phones. (NOTE: *See Appendix J, Emergency Meeting Agenda.*)
- The Director of Communication, or designee, will determine the most effective and efficient method of dissemination of information to on-campus and off-campus constituencies. (NOTE: *See Appendix K, Communication Method Worksheet.*)
- **Initial on-campus distribution will be to the President's Executive Staff. Those administrators will be charged with forwarding this statement to division staff, departmental faculty, commuter students, online students and other constituencies.**

- *(NOTE: In cases involving employee or student injuries or deaths, appropriate personnel will notify families before the information is released to the public.)*
- The Director of Communication, or designee, will coordinate off-campus distribution of information through the media, the College website, social media channels, College publications and direct mail.
- The Director of Communication, or designee, Mercy Public Safety Department, and the Emergency Response Team will coordinate information gathering from outside authorities.
- The CFO and VPAA, or designees, along with the Director of Information Technology will work with Mercy Public Safety to send out a message from the RAVE Notification System, if necessary, to on-campus constituencies.

B. On-Going Response

- The CFO, or designee, and Director of Information Technology will update College constituencies about changes to or additional details of the situation via available methods of communication, i.e. phone, e-mail, text messaging, and RAVE. The Director of Communications, or designee, will update off-campus constituencies using faxes, press conferences, media contacts, website, social media, text alerts, phone contact, assemblies, letters, newsletters, or other publications.
- The CFO, or designee, and Director of Communication, or designee, will determine the frequency of updates based upon availability of facts and other immediate and long-term factors. The CFO, or designee, and Director of Communication, or designee, will continue to collect and disseminate information until the College has recovered to pre-emergency status.
- The CFO, or designee, and Director of Communication, or designee, will monitor coverage of the situation among constituencies and correct misinformation as quickly as possible.
- The Campus Violence Prevention Committee will evaluate the effectiveness of plan and revise as necessary.

III. MEDIA RELATIONS

Often the only information some constituencies receive during an emergency is through the media; therefore, media relations is an essential element during emergency communications. Mercy College of Ohio strives to always be honest and courteous when working with the media. *(NOTE: See Appendix L, Working with Media during a Crisis.)*

Members of the Emergency Response Team will be available for interviews related to their specific areas as deemed appropriate by the Director of Communications, or designee. If team members are contacted directly by the media, they will immediately inform the Director of Communication, or designee. Mercy College of Ohio employees are asked to refer media inquiries during a crisis to the Director of Communication, or designee.

IV. Emergency Situations

In accordance with Mercy College's Clery Act Compliance Policy (#520), please note the following general emergency notification and evacuation procedures:

Emergency Notification Policy: The College will, without delay, and considering the safety of the community, determine the content of the notification and initiate the notification system, unless issuing a notification will, in the professional judgment of responsible authorities, compromise efforts to assist the victim or to contain, respond to or otherwise mitigate the emergency.

Confirmation. Determination of an emergency or dangerous situation will be made by any or all the following:

1. Mercy Public Safety
2. National Incident Management System (NIMS) campus incident management team (Mercy Healthcare Campus and Mercy St. Vincent Medical Center)
3. President or his/her designees

Notification. The President, his/her designee and Vice Presidents will determine if the situation affects the entire campus or a segment of campus, and whether the entire campus or only a segment should be notified. This will be based on geography, impact on operations, and safety. The situation will be assessed continually.

Content/initiation of notification. The content of the notification will be developed with input from campus security/police/NIMS team, the President (or designee), as well as the Vice Presidents. Notification will be made through multiple means, if necessary, including email, text message, TV/radio message, phone message, alarms, PA announcements, signage, and RAVE alerts.

Persons responsible for carrying out the actions described above include: Mercy Public Safety/NIMS team President or designee, Vice-Presidents, Director of Communication, or designee, and Director of Information Technology.

A. ACTIVE ASSAILANT or PERSON WITH WEAPON/HOSTAGE SITUATION (Code Silver)

Typical Problem

Person threatens to do harm in such a way that a class or group of people are threatened with bodily harm.

Emergency Management Team

Mercy Public Safety

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA)

Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPA)

Director of Information Technology (IT)

Coordinator of Operations

Director of Governance & Compliance

Procedure

Anytime there is a threat or actual situation where a person is able to do harm to others at the College, the local authorities and Mercy Public Safety should be notified immediately. Exact details as to location and situation are essential.

The CFO will alert the, Director of IT, the VPA, VPSA, and Coordinator of Operations as well as, the Director of Governance & Compliance. The CFO will work with the Director of IT to send out a message through RAVE (Emergency Notification System) and notify the campus community of the threat. Mercy Public Safety and facilities personnel will assist in closing entrances to the building to ensure that no additional persons enter the facility. Local police will coordinate with Mercy Public Safety, and the officers on duty as to the method and manner of response in neutralizing the threat. Medical personnel will be summoned to be on hand in the event they are needed.

The Coordinator of Operations will assist in locking exterior doors as directed by Mercy Public Safety.

The Coordinator of Operations will direct traffic for emergency vehicle parking.

All students, faculty and staff in the immediate vicinity should exit the building only if no threat exists. Otherwise, Shelter-in-Place or Lockdown should be followed –take cover in the nearest safe location that will afford cover from the perpetrator – close and lock door, close window coverings, and turn off lights. Barricade in room using NightLock barricade devices or any large furniture, such as tables and chairs. Locate away from the door, quiet cell phones and do not talk. Do not leave location until “ALL CLEAR” is provided by Emergency Management Team.

All other campus buildings will be locked down. The following staff will be responsible for their areas as determined by the location of the threat and to keep people from entering/exiting building until local authorities arrive to take over situation: Jefferson side of campus-appropriate staff and VPA, Madison side of campus-appropriate staff and VPSA.

Once the threat is eliminated, all injured parties are attended to by medical staff. All buildings remain locked down until local police and Mercy Public Safety conduct extensive search of all buildings to ensure the threat of further violence no longer exists.

The Emergency Management Team convenes to determine action points for follow-up. The Director of Communication issues release to the press and handles follow-up questions. A summary report is given to the President/VPAA. Determination is made as to canceling classes and suspending College activities.

Notification is made to the family of any injured persons. Campus Ministry and Counseling Services are established for anyone in need.

A post-incident meeting or call is coordinated by the CFO to evaluate the College's response.

In the event of a hostage situation or a potential hostage situation, Mercy Public Safety should be called immediately or call 911. Identify the location, how many people are being held and the type of weapon. Mercy Public Safety will contact the local police.

As soon as possible, Mercy Public Safety notifies the CFO, who notifies the President and VPAA, who notifies and the Director of Communication and the VPSA.

The CFO and Mercy Public Safety arrive on site, consult with the local police officers, and assess immediate needs. It may be necessary to evacuate the building or lock down based on circumstances. If so, the CFO and Coordinator of Operations will assist the local police and Mercy Public Safety in any way possible.

Depending on the circumstances, the VPSA may call on Campus Ministry and Counseling Services to report at a designated location and assist with the affected parties.

The Director of Communication and the President will coordinate all information about the incident released externally to off-campus constituents.

The CFO and Director of Communication identify the place for parents and families of students, faculty, and staff to go or provide contact information for questions.

Use of two-way radios will be suspended until the threat is resolved.

Mercy College Campus Violence Prevention Policy (#511), response may be activated in Code Silver situations:

https://assets.mercycollege.edu/uploads/documents/policy_511_campus_violence_prevention_board_approved_march_2020.pdf?mtime=20200520142410&focal=none

B. BLOODBORNE PATHOGEN CLEAN-UP/DECONTAMINATION (Code Orange – Decon)

Typical Problem

Blood or other body fluids are spilled in a campus facility as a result of an illness or accident.

Emergency Management Team

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Coordinator of Operations

Mercy Facilities

Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPA)

Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA)

Procedure

Primary responsibility for cleaning up minor bloodborne pathogen problems on-campus lies with staff in Facilities (Operations) who have the appropriate training.

When cleaning up minor or major bloodborne pathogen problems, it is important that students, visitors, and staff stay away from the contaminated area until the clean-up procedure is completed.

The VPSA, VPA, and CFO will collaborate in appropriately communicating to students, faculty, and staff, depending on the circumstances.

C. BOMB/BOMB THREAT (Code Black)

Typical Problem

A bomb threat is received via telephone or in writing.

Emergency Management Team

Mercy Public Safety

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPA)

Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA)

Coordinator of Operations

Director of Communication (or designee)

Director of Governance & Compliance

Director of Information Technology (Director of IT)

Procedure

Any bomb threat should be taken seriously and reported to Mercy Public Safety who in turn contacts the local police department. The local police department is in charge at the scene until all appropriate actions have been taken.

1. If a written bomb threat is received, place it in an envelope to preserve possible fingerprints. Contact Mercy Public Safety and local police immediately by phone.
2. If a suspicious package is received or found, do not handle it. Contact Mercy Public Safety and local police immediately.
3. If a telephone threat is received, note the exact time of the call, and attempt to write down the exact words of the caller. Ask him/her to repeat information. Get as much information as possible by asking when the bomb is set to explode, what kind of bomb it is, where it is located, and what it looks like. Give all the information to the local police.

Mercy Public Safety will evacuate the affected area. No one will be permitted in the area until given “ALL CLEAR” by local police or Mercy Public Safety.

Mercy Public Safety will notify the CFO, Coordinator of Operations and the VPAA who will notify the President. The CFO will notify the Director of Communication and VPSA.

Mercy Public Safety arrives on site with the appropriate college officials to work with local police. If the area must be evacuated the Coordinator of Operations, CFO, VPAA and VPSA implement a plan to provide temporary shelter for students, faculty, and staff, as needed.

Depending on the situation, Mercy Public Safety may request that a RAVE alert be issued. The CFO would collaborate with the Director of IT to send the RAVE alert.

The Coordinator of Operations, CFO, Mercy Public Safety, Director of Governance & Compliance, and the VPAA may be asked to participate in a follow-up meeting with local law enforcement to evaluate the handling of the situation. Other college officials may be included depending on circumstances.

D. CIVIL DISTURBANCE, DEMONSTRATIONS, MASS GATHERING

Typical Problem

Students plan (or spontaneously gather) and stage a protest, rally, demonstration, or sit-in.

Emergency Management Team

Mercy Public Safety

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA)

Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA)

Coordinator of Operations

Director of Communication (or designee)

Director of Governance & Compliance

Procedure

In the event of a crowd gathering or demonstration on campus either spontaneously or at times other than for a scheduled event, Mercy Public Safety should be notified immediately.

Mercy Public Safety will determine whether the gathering is disrupting normal college activities, if so, the CFO, VPAA, VPSA, Director of Communication, Director of Governance & Compliance and Coordinator of Operations will be notified. The CFO will determine if the gathering should be dispersed.

At the scheduled or unscheduled gathering, a designated representative from Student Affairs will announce to the group that the college encourages and values the free exchange of ideas, but that the college will not tolerate any attempt by any individual, group, or organization to disrupt the regularly scheduled activities of the college.

Mercy Public Safety should remain in the area, along with the CFO. Individuals who disrupt the regularly scheduled activities of the college may be asked to leave. Local police will be notified by Mercy Public Safety if determined necessary by the CFO.

E. DEATH OF A STUDENT (INCLUDES SUICIDE)

REFER TO Appendix C - CAMPUS RESPONSE PROTOCOL FOR STUDENT DEATH (POSTVENTION PLAN)

F. DISRUPTION OF ESSENTIAL UTILITIES

Typical Problem

There is a failure of a key utility such as electricity, gas, sewer or ventilation.

Emergency Management Team

Coordinator of Operations

Mercy Public Safety

Mercy Facilities

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Director of Information Technology (IT)

Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA)

Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA)

Procedure

If there is failure of key utilities such as electricity, water, gas, sewer, Mercy Public Safety and Mercy Facilities, will advise the Coordinator of Operations.

The Coordinator of Operations, Mercy Public Safety, and Mercy Facilities will assess the situation and contact the appropriate utility. The CFO, VPAA, and Coordinator of Operations will coordinate campus response with Mercy Public Safety and other college officials as needed.

The fire department may advise the evacuation of the building. If so, Mercy Public Safety, Coordinator of Operations, and CFO will lead the effort to coordinate evacuation.

If the problem affects classes in any way, the VPAA will be notified to determine how class schedules will be affected. The VPAA and CFO will collaborate with the Director of IT in providing communication to the on-campus constituencies regarding the plan to continue operations.

G. FIRE (Code Red)

Typical Problem

A fire breaks out in a building on campus.

Emergency Management Team

Mercy Public Safety

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA)

Director of Communication (or designee)

Coordinator of Operations

Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA)

Director of Information Technology (Director of IT)

Procedure

When a fire occurs, activate the fire alarm immediately and call Mercy Public Safety to tell them the exact location of the fire and what is burning. Mercy Public Safety will coordinate with the local fire department. An announcement will be made by Mercy Public Safety, via the public address system, issuing a “Code Red,” and ordering all parties to evacuate the building. The CFO will collaborate with the Director of IT to send out a RAVE alert.

The priority is evacuating the building, and if possible, assisting students or other persons in immediate danger. If this means persons using a wheelchair, contact emergency personnel for assistance. **DO NOT USE THE ELEVATOR!** Locate the closest safe stairwell and proceed to the exit. Students and/or staff are to congregate at least 500 ft. from the building and follow instructions provided by emergency personnel. Students and/or staff who are injured or need medical attention are transported to St. Vincent’s Hospital by ambulance.

If fire occurs in classrooms during classes, the VPAA should be contacted to assist with moving classes to a proper location. Mercy Public Safety notifies the CFO and the Coordinator of Operations.

Depending on the nature of the emergency other staff members may be asked to arrive on site and assist with evacuation procedures.

The CFO will notify the Director of Communication and the President. If appropriate, the Director of Communication will prepare an announcement and/or press release.

Depending on the circumstances, the VPAA will be contacted to coordinate a plan for classes to occur. The Director of Communication will coordinate a plan to convey information to the on and off community. If appropriate, the Director of Communication may also consult with the President to prepare a press release.

H. DISASTER/EARTHQUAKE (Code Yellow)

Typical Problem

Damage occurs due to an earthquake. See also *Disruption of Essential Utilities*

Emergency Management Team

Mercy Public Safety

Coordinator of Operations

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA)

Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPA)

Director of Communication (or designee)

Procedure:

In the event that an earthquake is experienced on campus, the following guidelines are provided:

- a. When the shaking begins, immediately take cover under something sturdy. If you cannot reach cover, brace yourself in an interior doorway or crouch in an interior corner away from windows, tall shelves, or cabinets. Stairwells and corridors do not offer adequate protection from falling ceiling fixtures.
- b. If you are outdoors, move away from the sides of buildings, overhead wires, and other hazards.
- c. Expect the intensity of the shaking to fluctuate. It may increase and decrease several times before dying out.
- d. When the shaking stops, check yourself and others for injuries. Report serious casualties to Mercy Public Safety, who will notify the local police department. Expect after-shocks.
- e. If you are sure there is a safe path out of the building, leave the building. If you evacuate the building, remain with other staff and/or students. Mercy Public Safety will be in contact with you for the latest information on campus damage, road conditions, etc.

The Coordinator of Operations will coordinate with Mercy Public Safety, CFO, VPSA, and VPA to initiate a campus plan.

I. EVACUATION (Code Green)

Typical Problem

Ordered to evacuate the building due to emergency situation.

Emergency Management Team

Mercy Public Safety

Procedure

If you are ordered to evacuate the building:

- IMMEDIATELY EVACUATE the building notifying building occupants as you exit. Leave all belongings behind.
- Close all windows and doors behind you as you exit your office or classroom.
- DO NOT USE ELEVATORS DURING AN EVACUATION EMERGENCY
- If you are able, help those who may need special assistance in evacuating the building. If you are not able to do so exit immediately and advise emergency responders of the person's location.
- Once you are safe call 911 or 419-251-4444 to report.
- If known, give the operator/officer a description of what is going on in the building.
- Get at least 500 feet away from the building and wait for instructions from emergency personnel.

DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING UNTIL IT HAS BEEN DECLARED SAFE (ALL CLEAR) BY MERCY PUBLIC SAFETY!

Although fire is the likely cause for evacuation, malicious or terrorist attacks may necessitate an evacuation. Authorities cannot estimate the likelihood of a terrorist attack in any community, and campuses are vulnerable to attacks without warning as are areas within their communities.

We know those who perpetrate attacks use various weapons, including but not limited to explosions, bomb threats or suspicious packages, and chemical or biological agents.

If the response to an emergency on campus requires an emergency evacuation of your building, you will be notified via RAVE Notification System, which includes the fire alarm system, whether the evacuation is due to a fire or some other circumstance.

Evacuation of Persons with Disabilities:

Visual Impairments: Inform person of the emergency and offer to guide to the nearest exit.

Hearing Impairments: Alert person there is an emergency using hand gestures or turning the light switch on and off. Verbalize instructions or provide note containing brief instructions.

Mobility Impairments: Since elevators should not be used, individuals who can walk may be able to evacuate with some assistance. For individuals unable to walk: if there is no immediate danger, escort the individual to a safe place to await rescue personnel. Whenever possible, someone should remain with the person while another individual exits the building and notifies rescue personnel of the person's exact location. Only in extreme situations should you try to evacuate a person in a wheelchair yourself. The mobility-impaired person is the best authority on how he/she should be moved. Ask before you move someone. While it is best to let rescue personnel conduct the evacuation, the person can be carried by two people who have interlocked their arms to form a "chair," or the person can be carried in a sturdy office chair.

J. HAZARDOUS MATERIAL SPILL/RELEASE (Code Orange)

Typical Problem

Hazardous chemical is released into air

Emergency Management Team

Mercy Public Safety

Coordinator of Operations

Mercy Facilities

Director of Communication (or designee)

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Procedure

Evacuate the area immediately. Attend to personal situations of contact with the chemical.

Remove affected clothing immediately.

Contact Mercy Public Safety with the building, floor, room number, type of incident and names of anyone involved.

Mercy Public Safety will assist in evacuation of area and contact emergency personnel. Mercy Public Safety contacts Mercy Facilities and the Coordinator of Operations to determine cleanup/safety efforts.

Coordinator of Operations contacts the CFO. The CFO will collaborate with the Director of IT to send out an appropriate College response, which may include a RAVE alert.

Mercy Public Safety follows up with any affected students.

Related Procedures:

Hazardous materials released with criminal intent.

1. All procedures above will be followed.
2. Any hazardous material believed to be a result of an intentional act will be treated with the utmost care and concern for the protection of the entire Mercy College community.
3. The Coordinator of Operations, in addition to taking steps outlined above, will notify local police and health agencies to alert them of the situation and obtain direction as to the response.
4. The CFO will notify the President, VPAA, & VPSA and follow-up reports will be generated.
6. All affected members of the Mercy College Community will be notified and tested as prescribed by trained on-site medical personnel.

K. MEDICAL EMERGENCY - Adult (Code Blue)

Typical Problem

A person becomes ill or is involved in an accident (includes auto and recreational)

Emergency Management Team

Mercy Public Safety

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPA)

Coordinator of Operations

Procedure

If a faculty/staff member or student appears to be in a life-threatening situation the first person to the scene should immediately call 911, then contact Mercy Public Safety. Mercy Public Safety will direct the college's response to the situation. Mercy Public Safety notifies the CFO who will notify other staff as needed. The decision to communicate with the faculty/staff member/student's emergency contact(s) or other college personnel will also be made.

Students who are too ill to attend class or to take an examination should go to their family physician for evaluation, treatment, and documentation of the problem. The VPA can assist with notifying faculty if class is missed for a long period of time.

Students who are withdrawing from or taking incompletes for medical reasons must go through the Registrar's Office and the VPA office.

The Coordinator of Operations will be contacted if cleaning/sanitizing areas is necessary.

Related Procedures: CODE PINK

Medical Emergency – Pediatric

1. If a child appears to be in a life-threatening situation the first person to the scene should immediately call 911, then contact Mercy Public Safety. Mercy Public Safety will direct the college's response to the situation. Mercy Public Safety notifies the CFO who will notify other staff as needed.

L. MISSING STUDENT/ADULT PATIENT (Code Brown)

Typical Problem

A student is reported missing.

Emergency Management Team

Mercy Public Safety

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA)

Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPA)

Director of Communication (or designee)

Registrar

Procedure

Any student, employee, or other individual can file a missing student report. If a student, employee, or other individual is reported missing for more than 24 hours, report the incident to the CFO.

All official missing reports of students are referred to Mercy Public Safety and local law enforcement within 24 hours. Students also have the option of identifying a contact person who will be notified within 24 hours if the student is determined to be missing. If a student is under 18 and not emancipated, their parents and contact person will be contacted within the 24-hour timeframe. This contact information is maintained by the Registrar and is confidential.

If a student is reported missing, Mercy Public Safety and VPSA will take the following actions:

- a. Speak with the missing student's classmates and friends, to find out if anyone has seen the student or knows of his/her whereabouts.
- b. Check with Food Services to determine if the student has been eating his/her meals.
- c. Check with Information Technology to find out if the student recently accessed e-mail.
- d. The VPAA will contact student's instructors to see if he/she has been attending class.
- e. Check with his/her employer to see if he/she has been attending work.
- f. If the student has a car, notify Mercy Public Safety and ask them to look for the car.
- g. Contact local hospitals to see if the student has been hospitalized.
- h. If the initial information regarding the student's whereabouts came from a source other than the student's parents, the VPSA will call the student's parents to determine if the student is at home.

If, after taking the above steps, uncertainty still exists about the student's whereabouts, the CFO and Mercy Public Safety determines whether to call local police.

If, in the worst-case scenario, the student cannot be located or is located and is injured or even deceased, the CFO will contact the President, as well as the family of the student.

The Director of Communication, or designee will coordinate all communication with external parties, while the CFO will coordinate all communication with internal parties.

M.MENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE NEEDED (Code Bert)

Typical Problem

A student has threatened or attempted suicide on campus or student is experiencing a disruption to such a degree she/he is posing a clear and imminent threat to self or others.

Emergency Management Team

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA)

Mercy Public Safety
Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA)
Director of Campus Ministry and Service Learning
Director of Counseling & Wellness (or designee)

Procedure

For Attempt or Threat:

Immediately notify Mercy Public Safety. They may refer to the College Helping Students In Distress: Faculty and Staff Response Guide:

https://assets.mercycollege.edu/uploads/documents/helping_students_in_distress_facultystaff_response_guide_updated.pdf?mtime=20190802155143&focal=none

Assess the situation at-hand and contact appropriate agencies. If the health of the student is in jeopardy, immediately contact 911, notify Mercy Public Safety and the CFO.

The CFO will notify the VPSA and Director of Counseling & Wellness. These staff members will arrive on scene to provide counseling, support, and make emergency contacts for student.

The student will be evaluated for health and safety concerns by EMS or Mercy Public Safety.

The VPSA in conjunction with the counselor will decide appropriate course of action, including hospitalization and release of information to parent/guardian. Efforts will be made to determine if a FERPA release has been completed. However, if a student poses clear harm to self or others, contacting the parent/legal guardian is an appropriate and acceptable action.

Police are notified to complete an official report if applicable. The VPSA will notify the President of the circumstances if a suicide attempt has been made. The Director of Counseling & Wellness follows up with the student and provides any counseling or assessment needed.

If the student at any time throughout the process may miss class, the VPSA will notify the VPAA, who will notify all professors. The student will be permitted to continue in classes as best as possible but may need to work through in-person versus from-a-distance depending on circumstances. Files will be maintained in Academic Affairs.

N. MISSING INFANT/CHILD OR ABDUCTION (Code Adam)

Typical Problem

Person under the age of 17 years old goes missing or is possibly abducted.

Emergency Management Team
Mercy Public Safety
Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA)
Vice President of Student Affairs (VPSA)
Director of Communication (or designee)

Procedure

In the event of a missing person under the age of 18 or a possible abduction, Mercy Public Safety should be notified immediately at 419-251-4444 and provided with the caller's location and known facts.

Upon notification of a possible abduction, Mercy Public Safety shall implement a facility lockdown according to the building procedures and contact public law enforcement to assist with the search.

Mercy Public Safety will notify the CFO of a missing person or a possible abduction. The CFO will notify the President, VPAA, VPSA, and Director of Communication.

Communication on the progress of the search will be provided by Mercy Public Safety directly to the CFO. The CFO will update the President, VPAA, VPSA, and Director of Communication.

Once the search is concluded, Mercy Public Safety will issue an "ALL CLEAR." The CFO will coordinate all communication with campus parties, while the Director of Communication will coordinate all communication with off-campus parties.

The CFO, President, VPAA, VPSA, and Director of Communication will meet with Mercy Public Safety to review the situation.

O. SEXUAL ASSAULT/VIOLENCE/MISCONDUCT

Typical Problem

Suspected sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual violence, and sexual exploitation/misconduct (as defined in the Mercy College Title IX policy) in either the educational or employment settings, involving administration, faculty, staff, and students regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, including third parties.

Emergency Management Team

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Director of Governance & Compliance

Mercy Public Safety

Director of Communication (or designee)

Call 911 during any kind of emergency, immediate harm, or threat of harm.

Mercy Public Safety - (419) 251-1444 is also a resource which can be contacted with an emergency. The victim is encouraged to ***seek immediate assistance from police and healthcare providers*** for physical safety, emotional support, and medical care. Victims can also go to the Counseling and Wellness Center for additional support.

A student, faculty member or staff member who has a complaint against a student, faculty, staff member or other individual involving suspected sexual discrimination, harassment, assault, violence or misconduct should contact the Director of Governance & Compliance. Faculty and staff, except those statutorily barred from doing so, are required to report any suspected violations of the Sexual Harassment policy, found here:

https://assets.mercycollege.edu/uploads/documents/policy_522_sexual_harassment_policy_board_approved_august_2020.procedure_reviewed_november_2021.pdf?mtime=20211105181710&local=none

Ohio law requires all employees with knowledge of a felony to report it to law enforcement. This should occur within twenty-four hours.

The College's Director of Governance & Compliance is available to assist the victim in notifying Public Safety if so desired. Mercy Public Safety will escort the victim to a safe place and transport to one of the System's hospitals or a sexual assault response center for a medical examination, if needed. Public Safety can also provide access to a confidential sexual assault advocate. If the victim would prefer not to notify Public Safety or the local police, the individual is strongly encouraged to seek assistance from the College's Director of Governance & Compliance who can provide the victim with information on options, rights, and remedies.

Information for victim's seeking medical care: For the preservation of evidence in the event of a sexual assault, the following guidelines are recommended: (a). Do not destroy the physical evidence that may be found in the vicinity of the crime. If the crime occurred in the victim's home, the victim should not clean until the police have had an opportunity to collect evidence. (b). Tell someone all details remembered about the assault. Write down all details remembered as soon as possible. (c). Do not bathe or douche. Do not urinate if possible. (d). Do not eat, drink liquids, smoke, or brush teeth if oral contact took place. (e). Keep the clothes worn during the offense. If clothes are changed, place clothes in a paper bag (evidence deteriorates in plastic). (f). Get prompt medical attention at a local hospital.

P. SEVERE WEATHER/TORNADO (Code Gray)

Typical Problem

A tornado touches down on campus or severe weather occurs.

Definitions

Tornado Watch – Conditions are favorable for severe thunderstorms to develop with the possibility of tornadic activity in the area.

Tornado Warning – Radar or satellite indications, and/or a reliable “spotter,” report of tornadic activity in the area.

Emergency Management Team

Mercy Public Safety

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Coordinator of Operations

Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPA)

Director of Information Technology (IT)

Procedure

In the event of a tornado or severe weather, the sirens will sound throughout the area. An announcement by Mercy Public Safety will be made, via the public address system, issuing a

“Code Gray Tornado Warning.” A RAVE alert will be issued by the CFO and the Director of IT. The following guidelines are provided:

- a. All window coverings need to be closed, and the door closed on your way out.
- b. Find the closest stairwell and proceed to an area of the building without windows such as an interior hallway on a lower floor (basement). It is recommended you do not use an elevator due to the possibility of a power outage. If you have mobility issues and require assistance, ask classmates, faculty or staff, or Mercy Public Safety. If you are using a wheelchair, please locate the nearest interior hallway, away from windows, and take shelter. Individuals who are outside should seek shelter in a building constructed of concrete and steel reinforced.
- c. It is important not to leave a sheltered area until the threat of the tornado has passed and an “ALL CLEAR” is announced by Mercy Public Safety.
- d. In the event of casualties, notify Mercy Public Safety. As soon as possible, Mercy Public Safety notifies the CFO and the Coordinator of Operations to access immediate needs. The CFO contacts the VPAA if necessary.

Depending on the nature of the damage, the CFO may call staff from other areas and ask them to report on-site.

It may be necessary to evacuate the building. If this is the case, college and/or emergency personnel will provide instructions.

Q. VIOLENT/COMBATIVE PERSON (Code Violet)

Typical Problem

A person, or group of people, on campus is involved in a robbery, an assault, or a fight.

Emergency Management Team

Mercy Public Safety

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Director of Governance & Compliance

Director of Communication (or designee)

Director of Information Technology (IT)

Procedure

Mercy Public Safety should be called immediately and will oversee the scene of the incident until all appropriate actions have been taken.

Mercy Public Safety arranges for ambulance or police vehicle to transport injured individuals in need of medical attention to St. Vincent’s Hospital.

As soon as reasonable time permits (immediately for instances of bodily harm), Mercy Public Safety notifies the CFO. Depending on the situation (e.g., individual is seriously injured) the CFO arrives on-site.

The victimized person is informed of his/her options for assistance within the college and the criminal justice system. Students who are victims of a crime may also access support and counseling through campus counselor, or social services.

Depending on the situation, Mercy Public Safety may request that a RAVE alert be sent. Prior to a RAVE alert being sent, the CFO notifies the Director of Communication and the President to inform them of the circumstances. The CFO will collaborate with the Director of IT to send the alert, if necessary.

If perpetrator is a student, the VPSA determines if further disciplinary action should be initiated.

Mercy Public Safety, the CFO, and the Director of Governance & Compliance will schedule a follow-up meeting with victim to ensure all appropriate action/services have been taken.

V. RAVE Notification System

Please update your contact information regularly in RAVE to ensure you will continue to receive the RAVE notifications if there would be an emergency on campus.

To access RAVE, you will be sent an e-mail to your Mercy College e-mail address. This e-mail will contain a link that you will access. Once accessed, you can indicate how you would like to receive your RAVE notifications (i.e., e-mail and/or phone call and/or text message). If you choose not to receive the RAVE notifications, you can opt-out of receiving any RAVE notifications. If you have any questions regarding the RAVE Notification System contact the Director of Information Technology at 419-251-6122.

The College will disseminate updated event information and actions to take to remain safe, to include the “ALL CLEAR” message, when it is safe to exit buildings, through the RAVE System.

VI. Shelter-in-Place and Lockdown

Call 911 from an on-campus phone or your cell phone to report an emergency that needs immediate assistance from police and rescue personnel.

Shelter-In-Place

In emergency situations where the risk is outside (e.g., severe weather or airborne toxin), it will be important to minimize exposure to the risk and to deliver information to the Mercy College Community quickly and efficiently. In these circumstances, a Shelter-in-Place order may be given.

Shelter-In-Place orders will be given by the RAVE Notification System. However, you may seek shelter and safety should you feel a situation warrants such action, then call Mercy Public Safety at 419-251-4444 to report the incident and your location.

- Upon the Shelter-in-Place alert, students, faculty and staff who are not already indoors should immediately enter the nearest building.
- If already indoors, **remain in place** and await further instructions by emergency officials.

- Faculty members who are conducting class should remain in their classroom, and may continue teaching, but monitor information from emergency officials.

Lockdown

A lockdown may be preferable during situations such as the presence of a hostile or armed intruder inside a building. A lockdown requires locking doors (if possible), windows, and barricade in room using NightLock barricade devices or any large furniture, such as tables and chairs.

The following are general lockdown procedures:

- If you are in outdoor areas, you should immediately take cover!
- If you are in hallways during the emergency, seek shelter immediately in the nearest classroom or office compound.
- Lock or barricade classroom doors. (Activate NightLock devices)
- Close windows and window treatments.
- Turn off the lights.
- Instruct everyone to remain silent and not to go into hallways.
- Crouch down in areas out of sight from doors and windows to conceal yourself as much as possible.

If the fire alarm sounds unexpectedly, during a lockdown, do not evacuate the building unless:

- you have firsthand knowledge that there is a fire in the building.
- you are in imminent danger.
- you have been advised by emergency personnel to evacuate the building.

VII. Timely Warnings & Security Alerts

The College, in collaboration with Mercy Public Safety, can issue two types of notification messages: Timely Warnings and Security Alerts. Whether to issue a timely warning or a security alert (and the content of the messages) is decided on a case-by-case basis, considering all the facts, including the nature of the incident, the continuing danger to the campus community, the promotion of safety, and the possible risk of compromising law enforcement efforts.

Timely Warnings

When crimes covered by the Clery Act are discovered, it will be determined whether to issue a campus-wide “**timely warning**” about the threat. A “timely warning” may be issued if, in the judgment of Mercy Public Safety and the President of the College or designee, a crime or potential crime constitutes a serious or continuing threat to the campus community.

All Clery Act crimes which represent a serious or continuing threat to the person and well-being of students and employees may include but are not limited to the following:

- Criminal Homicide
- Sex Offenses

- Robbery
- Aggravated Assault
- Burglaries (occupied rooms/offices/structures)
- Hate Crimes
- Persons with weapons with intent to use
- Threat of violent crime
- Situations where suspect is not known
- Assault (physical or sexual)

Timely warnings may be issued in a variety of methods, depending on the circumstances of the crime. These can include:

- **Campus-wide E-Mail** – disseminated by the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) in consultation with the Director of Mercy Public Safety.
- **Website Posting** – public safety issues of on-going concern to the campus community are posted on the College website, Campus Safety and Security page by the Director of Communication, or designee.
- **Local Media** – may also be provided information, by the Director Communication, when the risk of harm in a particular incident can reasonably be expected to extend to off-campus areas.
- **Notices posted around campus** - depending on the circumstances of the crime, coordinated by the Coordinator of Operations, especially in situations that could pose an immediate threat to the community and individuals.
- **RAVE Notification System** – College President, Executive Staff, and Director of IT. If you have any questions regarding the RAVE Notification System contact the Director of Information Technology at 419-251- 6122.

The Clery Act does not define what is timely. However, the warning should be issued as soon as pertinent information is available, because the intent of a timely warning is to alert the campus community of continuing threats, especially concerning safety, thereby enabling community members to protect themselves.

Clery Act regulations do not specify what information should be included in a timely warning. However, the warning should include all information that would promote safety, because the intent of the warning is to enable members of the campus community to protect themselves.

The issuing of a timely warning should be decided on a case-by-case basis in light of all of the facts surrounding a crime, including factors such as the nature of the crime, the continuing danger to the campus community and the possible risk of compromising law enforcement efforts.

Generally, the warning will specify the type of reported crime, the time and location at which the reported crime occurred, and specific advice to the campus community regarding steps to take to avoid becoming a victim.

Security Alert

If a significant emergency or dangerous situation occurs on campus that, in the judgment of Mercy Public Safety and the President of the College or designee, creates an immediate threat to the health or safety of students or employees, or otherwise warrants a notification, a security alert can be issued. For example, security alerts may include notices of campus closure or delayed opening, a fire, gas leak, or an outbreak of a communicable disease, as well as a notice of a Clery reportable crime.

Situations where a series of crimes have occurred. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Burglaries (unoccupied rooms/buildings/structures)
- Minor thefts
- General criminal activity (fraudulent use of credit cards/forgeries)
- Vehicle incidents (accidents/minor damage)

Situations that cause major disruption to campus operations. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Chemical spills
- Weather-related emergencies
- Power outages/loss of utilities
- Water emergencies

Security Alerts may be issued in a variety of methods, depending on the incident. These can include:

- **Campus Email**
- **College Website** (www.mercycollege.edu)
- **Mercy Public Safety Call-in line** (419-251-4444)
- **RAVE Notification System** – all new students, faculty, and staff are enrolled in the system and select notification preferences, which may include email, text messages, phone calls and/or voice mails, etc.

Procedures:

College administration (President or his/her designees) and/or Mercy Public Safety become aware of a serious crime or emergency situation.

These parties will meet and/or discuss whether to issue a timely warning or security alert based on the following:

- the nature of the incident
- the continuing danger to the campus community
- the promotion of safety
- the possible risk of compromising law enforcement efforts

Timely Warning

If the parties determine a timely warning should be issued, the message will be developed using the following considerations:

- the type of reported crime
- the time and location at which the reported crime occurred
- specific advice to the campus community

Example: There is a report of a gunman on campus, 2nd floor Madison. Please shelter in place and use RUN, HIDE, FIGHT. Do not call 911- local authorities have been alerted.

Methods of communication will be identified, and the responsible parties will disseminate the message as follows:

- **Campus-wide E-Mail** - Chief Financial Officer (CFO) or presidential designee
- **Website Posting** – Director of Communication (or designee)
- **Local Media** – Director of Communication, or designee
- **Notices posted around campus** – Coordinator of Operations
- **RAVE Notification System** – College President, Executive Staff, and Director of Information Technology

Security Alert

If the parties determine a security alert should be issued, the message will be developed considering the following:

- the nature of the incident
- the promotion of safety
- specific advice to the campus community

Example: There have been several reports of attempted vehicle break-ins on campus. Make sure you are locking your vehicles. Unlocked vehicles are subject to easy thefts. If you notice anyone suspicious, please contact Mercy Public Safety immediately at 419-251-4444.

Methods of communication will be identified, and the responsible parties will disseminate the message as follows:

- **Campus-wide E-Mail** – Chief Financial Officer (CFO) or presidential designee
- **Website Posting** – Director of Communication (or designee)
- **Notices posted around campus** – Coordinator of Operations

RAVE Notification System – College President, Executive Staff, or Director of Information Technology

VII. Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is an extreme and criminal form of inappropriate sex-related behavior. It includes any sex-related physical violence or sexual intimacy where one party is not a consenting participant. Sexual Assault includes both forcible and non-forcible sexual behavior. Consent is clear, knowing and voluntary. Consent is active, not passive. Silence, in and of itself, cannot be interpreted as consent. Consent can be given by words or actions, as long as those words or actions create mutually understandable clear permission regarding willingness to engage in (and the conditions of) sexual behavior. Consent to any one form of sexual behavior cannot automatically imply consent to any other forms of sexual behavior. Previous relationships or prior consent cannot imply consent to future sexual behavior. Consent cannot be given by someone under the age of 16. Consent cannot be given by someone who is incapacitated.

- A complainant of sexual assault or inappropriate sexual advances should do the following:
 - Get medical attention immediately to check for physical injury, the presence of sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy. This information may also be required in a subsequent investigation.
 - Preserve all evidence of the incident. Don't bathe or douche, save your clothing.
 - Report the incident to campus authorities and/or the police. Call the Department of Safety and Security at (419) 251-4444 or the local police at 911.

Appendix A. CAMPUS EMERGENCY RESPONSE QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE
FOR ANY EMERGENCY: CALL 911
AND MERCY PUBLIC SAFETY (419) 251-4444

FIRE

Rescue – Get people out
Activate – Pull the alarm
Contain – Shut windows and doors
Extinguish – Evacuate: **GET OUT!!**

P – Pull
A - Aim
S – Squeeze
S - Sweep

BOMB/BOMB THREAT

- Don't hang up!
- Gather as much info. as possible
- Contact 911 or Mercy Public Safety

ACTIVE ASSAILANT/PERSON WITH WEAPON

RUN – aware of exit locations, call 911 when safe!
HIDE – Shelter-in-Place, don't come out until ALL CLEAR!
FIGHT – No other options, aggressive with force!

You may be notified through one of the following:

RAVE Notification System
E-mail – mercycollege.edu
Webpage – www.mercycollege.edu
Local Media – news media, radio, TV, newspaper, and Internet

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SPILL/RELEASE

- Restrict access to area.
- Close and lock all windows, exterior doors, and- any opening to the outside, seal bottom of doors with towels or clothes (and windows if possible) (wet if possible).
- If possible, move to an interior room above ground floor with fewest windows, close vents or turn off A/C, restrict access to area.
- Do not leave the building until authorized by Mercy Public Safety or Toledo/Lucas County Public Safety officials.

TORNADO WARNING

- If the siren is activated or you are notified of a warning, (announcement via PA system and RAVE alert)
- Immediately seek shelter in nearest facility (or if no shelter is available lie flat in a ditch facedown covering your face)
- Proceed to the lowest level. If a basement is not available,
- Seek an interior hallway or small interior room on lowest level, away from windows and doors.
- Updates will be provided through the RAVE alerts.
DO NOT LEAVE UNTIL THE ALL CLEAR IS GIVEN!

Appendix B.**MERCY COLLEGE
EMERGENCY CODES**

Code Adam	Missing Infant/Child or Abduction (0-17 years old)
Code Bert	Mental Health Assistance
Code Black	Bomb/Bomb Threat
Code Blue	Medical Emergency - Adult
Code Brown	Missing Student/Adult Patient
Code Gray	Severe Weather/Tornado
Code Green	Evacuation (full or partial)
Code Orange	Hazardous Materials Spill/Release
Code Orange - Decon	Decontamination
Code Pink	Medical Emergency - Pediatric
Code Red	Fire
Code Silver	Active Assailant/Hostage Situation
Code Violet	Violent/Combative Person
Code Yellow	Disaster/Earthquake

Incident Command

Incident Command is a process used during emergencies to enable all decision-making personnel to assemble in one location – the COMMAND CENTER – to gather information and make quick effective decisions related to operations during an emergency and during the recovery process. The Command Center will have college leaders and may include outside agency officials.

Appendix C:

Response Protocol for a Student Death (Postvention Plan)

The death of a Mercy College student can trigger considerably increased stress and emotions for students, faculty, and staff, as well as for the family of the deceased. Whether a death is natural, accidental, by suicide, or homicide it is a crisis and can have a significant impact on a campus community. Such a crisis, especially a student death by suicide, has the potential for contagion which is the spread of an idea or emotion from person to person. It is the College's goal to respond compassionately and appropriately in the event of the death of a student while working to restore the campus community to a pre-crisis level of functioning.

The intention of this response protocol is to implement interventions that aim to:

- Facilitate the grieving or adjustment process for the campus community
- Stabilize the campus environment
- Reduce the risk of negative behaviors
- Limit the risk of further suicides through contagion, should the death of a student be by suicide.

I. Initial Actions

1. Should a student death occur **on campus**, the first responder shall notify Mercy Public Safety (Toledo, 419-251-4444).

Any person, (including Mercy Public Safety) receiving information on the death of a student off campus, should notify the VPSA/ (419-251-1512) immediately.

2. The VPSA will immediately notify the President, the Mercy College Campus Assessment Response and Evaluation (CARE) team, and other executive team members as needed.
3. The VPSA will verify the death of the student and make initial contact with the family to extend condolences, determine if the family has any immediate needs from the College (i.e. gathering items from residence, notifying other students, etc.), and gather information about memorial arrangements. **The VPSA will conduct all communication with the family of a deceased student. In no cases will the campus community or the media be informed of a student death until the death has been verified and contact has been made with the family.**
4. The VPSA will collaborate with the President and the CARE Team to compose the announcement that will be shared with the campus community regarding the student death. **Information on the cause of death will only be shared if the family approves** and if the CARE team agrees that leaving this information out would be disingenuous, given the college community's awareness of the events surrounding the student's death.
5. The Counseling and Wellness Center and Director of Mission will also provide support to any students adversely affected by the loss.

6. The Director of Communication, or designee, will coordinate with the President and VPSA to respond to any media inquiries and/or media releases.
7. The VPSA and/or other designees from the executive team will notify the applicable College personnel from the following offices:
 - Academic Advisor
 - Accessibility Services
 - Business Office
 - Faculty
 - Financial Aid
 - Information Technology
 - Registrar
 - Student Life

II. Postvention

The College's postvention response is a provision of psychological support, crisis intervention, and other forms of assistance to those affected by a campus death. The goal of the postvention response is to work to restore the campus community to equilibrium while identifying those community members most likely in need of support, promoting healthy grieving, and providing comfort to those impacted.

A. Postvention Team

The CARE Team will be primarily responsible for the postvention response upon the death of a student. Additional faculty and/or staff will be added as needed to the CARE team to assist in the coordination and implementation of a response that meets the needs of the Mercy College community. Objectives of the CARE team will be to:

- Quickly mobilize and organize resources
- Secure campus safety
- Set up communication channels and coordination on campus with relevant off campus offices and agencies
- Provide communication within the Mercy College community
- Facilitate the grieving or adjustment process (process what has happened, encourage the expression of difficult emotions, help individuals understand the impact of the event, avoid institutionalizing grief)
- Assist with post-crisis support and resolution
- Allow for learning from current postvention efforts to improve future prevention, postvention, and response efforts.

1. Vice President Student Affairs (VPSA)

- a. Responsible for disseminating information and communication with the family of the deceased
- b. Notifies the CARE Team

- c. Verifies the student death through the county coroner, local law enforcement agency, funeral home, newspaper obituary, or family member. Provide the Director of Financial Aid, the Business Office, and the Registrar verification of death, if needed.
- d. Deactivate student's ID card
- e. Notify Business Office to remove charges
- f. Notify student organizations of which student was a member and provide information on supportive resources
- g. Collect and maintain all documentation addressing a departmental action during the response phase.

2. Counseling and Wellness Center

- a. Offer support to grieving family
- b. Coordinate with the Director of Community & Spiritual Engagement to provide avenues of campus support for grieving members of the College community.
- c. Coordinate grief counseling and emotional support for those affected by the death.
- d. Debrief front line staff, CARE team, and mental health and religious supports after the crisis.
- e. Take appropriate action to close the client record if student was involved in counseling.
- f. If the student was receiving counseling, contact legal counsel for the College to prepare for any potential conflicts by the family.

3. Mercy Public Safety

- a. Coordinate with local law enforcement and medical examiner
- b. Manage unsafe areas on campus

4. Assistant Dean of Student Life

- a. Encourage other student residents to limit social media communication until official death notifications are made to the surviving family and community.

5. Director of Mission

- a. Coordinate with the Counseling and Wellness Center to provide avenues of campus support for grieving members of the College community.
- b. Offer support to the grieving family, if needed.
- c. Assist with coordinating appropriate messaging to the College community.
- d. Contact and organize any necessary external spiritual resources.

6. Director of Communication (or designee)

- a. Aid with internal and external communications
- b. Respond to media requests for interviews/information
- c. Collaborate with President and CARE team to identify a spokesperson.
- d. Crisis communication should address both information that comes into the College and also the dissemination of information that goes from the College to the community/public.

*All members of the campus community should contact the Director of Communication or designee, if they receive outside media requests after a suicide.

*Postvention/CARE team should meet regularly to keep each other informed.

*Depending on the event additional offices may be included.

III. Notification and Identification

A. Notification of the Family of the Victim/Deceased

Offices Involved: *VPSA, Counseling and Wellness Center, and President's office*

All communication with the family should be coordinated through the VPSA.

Key Activities:

1. The VPSA makes the first contact with the family
 - a. Gathers information regarding the death of the student or informs the family of what has happened to the student.
 - b. Answer any questions from the family
 - c. Communicate with the family as to what they prefer is or is not disclosed to the campus community.
 - d. Determine family's wishes for condolences from faculty, staff, and students.
 - e. Offer follow up contact from the Counseling and Wellness Center for additional support and information on resources.
 - f. Coordinate any meetings requested by the family with other members of the campus community.

B. Notification of Students

Offices Involved: *VPSA and Counseling and Wellness Center*

- **It is imperative that the Postvention Committee be ready to communicate quickly to affected students and the campus community due to the speed at which information spreads via social media.**
- **The campus community will not be notified until the death of the student has been verified and family members have been notified.**

Key Activities:

1. The Postvention team will determine content of the email message to be sent to students. Whenever possible, classmates, friends, and student organizations of which the student might be a member should be notified first.

- a. A death is only referred to as a suicide if the family has agreed to make this public and the CARE team decides that it would be disingenuous to leave out this information given the community's level of awareness of the manner of death.
 - b. Message should include expression of condolences to family and friends, factual information on death, plans to provide support to those impacted, and any changes in schedules.
 - c. Every communication should promote help-seeking and offer resources such as the student counseling center, as well as local and national organizations.
 - d. The CARE team will determine if communication will be shared with families of Mercy College students and determine best way to disseminate (email, letter to home, social media, etc.)
 - e. Consult sample notices attached to this document.
2. Coordinate a timetable for any meetings related to managing crisis and announcements to the campus community.
3. Postvention leaders may also encourage surviving roommates and friends to limit their social media communication until official death notifications are made to the surviving family and community.
4. Ensure all staff members have information on campus resources to provide to students.

C. Campus-Wide Notification

The President, or designee, will release a written statement via campus wide email. This statement will be released within 24 hours and include:

1. Condolences to family and friends
2. Support resources for those impacted
3. Information about funeral arrangements if any.
4. Any changes in school or work schedules during the upcoming days.

Note:

- Communication should balance students' desire for information about funeral arrangements with the family's wishes around privacy.
- Again, a death is only referred to as a suicide if the family has agreed to make this public and the CARE team decides that it would be disingenuous to leave out this information given the community's level of awareness of the manner of death.
- First messages to the community may express that official information cannot be conveyed until the family is notified. If the family refuses to permit disclosure of cause

of death, campus communication might state: “The family has requested that information about the circumstances of death not be shared at this time.”

- Critical to communicating about suicide, in general, is the use of safe messaging and understanding how communicating about suicide can influence contagion.
- Consult sample communication attached to this document.

D. Notification of Faculty and Staff

Offices Involved: *VPAA, VPSA, and Counseling and Wellness Center*

In the aftermath of a catastrophic event, it is important for the College to return to its routine operations as soon as possible. This means that the College will recognize the death of a student as a catastrophic event, while working to return to a pre-crisis level of functioning. Students affected by a catastrophic event should be excused from academics or other responsibilities on a case-by-case basis.

Key Activities:

1. Academic Deans will be notified and instructed by the VPAA on how to respond to scheduling requests and student absences for grieving and memorial services.
2. Deans should then communicate with faculty about how to respond to students' requests and referrals to resources.
 - a. Each student request will be handled on a case-by-case basis
 - b. Do not routinely cancel class or assignments. Everyone is affected differently and it is important to convey the message that even though the event is tragic, life does go on.
 - c. If the funeral services are scheduled at the same time as a class, students can decide individually if they are going to miss class or go to the service. If a faculty member intends to go to the service, routine procedures for cancelling a class should be followed.
 - d. Should a student require extended absence from class or accommodations for completing their class assignments they should be referred to the Counseling and Wellness Center.
3. Faculty may contact the VPSA (or designee) to discuss services that are available to them or students in the class.
4. The VPSA (or designee) from executive leadership will notify the necessary staff members from the following offices:
 - a. Accessibility Services

- Assist students with accommodations who are struggling with or concerns about academic accommodations as it relates to absences for grieving.
- b. Business office
 - Calculate any refunds due
 - If student was a student worker, make arrangements to initiate appropriate payroll actions, including distributing any paychecks to the family, through coordinating with the VPSA/Dean of Students.
- c. Admissions
 - Remove deceased students from any mailing lists and scheduled communications.
 - Be prepared to respond to any inquiries about deceased student by incoming students.
- d. Financial Aid
 - Coordinate the suspension of future financial aid disbursement and the return of any financial aid funds to their appropriate sources
 - Coordinate with the CARE team to determine the appropriate time to inform the family of the type and amount of loans, name, and contact information of the lender to determine procedure for debt forgiveness.
- e. Information Technology
- f. Library
 - Update library records and determine if student has any outstanding library obligations or items checked out and report this to VPSA/Dean of Students.
- g. Registrar
 - Coordinate and communicate with family as needed
 - Prevent further communication regarding enrollment and/or tuition payment
 - Update the student's record in the student information system and initiate procedures that close the student's academic records
 - Withdraw the student from all courses enrolled in the current and future terms.
- All offices should remove the deceased's name from any mailing lists (paper or electronic) that it maintains and withhold any future correspondences addressed to the student. **No contact will be made to the family without first connecting with the CARE team to ensure consistency and appropriateness.**

IV. Identifying Students/Groups at Risk

Offices involved: VPAA, VPSA, and Counseling and Wellness Center

Faculty and staff members who personally know the deceased student and/or the student's close friends and are asked to communicate with the CARE team to help identify those at risk.

Examples of high-risk groups and individuals:

- Siblings and friends
- Accidental or intentional first responders or individuals who may have discovered the deceased student.
- Student Affairs staff who knew the deceased student.
- Academic support staff/faculty who knew the deceased student.
- Students who have a history of previous suicide attempts, and death of student was by suicide.
- Students in the same academic program
- Students in the same student organization
- Student who went to the same high school or from the same home town as deceased.

Key Activities:

1. Review the deceased student's record to identify the advisor, faculty for current courses, and faculty who had the student for more than one course and may know them well.
2. From discussions with friends, determine the activities the person was in, and identify the staff, faculty, administrator, advisor, etc. who may have known the student well.
3. Follow up with identified individuals to:
 - a. provide support
 - b. address rumors of information they may have heard and correct misinformation
 - c. Ask them to assist in identifying people at risk
 - d. Recommend that faculty and staff refer any at risk individuals to the Counseling and Wellness Center or other campus resources that seem appropriate.

V. Memorial Services

Offices Involved: *President, VPAA, VPSA, Mission, and Counseling and Wellness Center*

In the aftermath of a death of student, it is natural response for people to want to memorialize the deceased in various ways, not only to honor the life of the deceased, but to assist in their grieving process. Increased focus on a death can, in some cases inadvertently contribute to suicide contagion. Even if a student death was not a suicide, witnessing the outpouring of emotion and the attention that the death receives can be harmful for a person already at risk for suicide. These events can also impact someone who is coping with personal trauma or tragedy in their own lives that are unrelated to the death of a student. These factors have been kept in mind in all elements of the postvention response.

The College will typically not hold a campus wide memorial service for deceased students. If the family is requesting a memorial service, the CARE team will consider the request and make a decision.

A. Off campus memorial/funeral services

1. The College will communicate with the family and local clergy about the funeral arrangements and college student attendance.
2. If a memorial service or funeral is going to happen locally in the community, and is likely to be attended by students, efforts should be made to allow the Director of Community and Spiritual Engagement and/or the Counseling and Wellness Center to review issues related to post-traumatic responses and remind participants about the availability of support. At least one member from the Postvention team will also be present during the service and vigilant of students in distress to provide additional support as needed.
3. Students wishing to attend off campus funeral services or memorials should make their professors aware of their absence from class.

B. Memorial Activities

1. Offering prayers for deceased student and family during the first College mass that follows the death of a student.
2. Recognizing the deceased student in the Remembrance book located in the College Chapel during the month of November.
3. Personal expressions (i.e. letter, poems, recollections) by people who knew the deceased can be collected by the VPSA/Dean of Students, Director of Mission, or Counseling and Wellness Center and given to the family.
4. Activity-focused memorials which might include organizing a day of community service, participating in an event that raises suicide awareness or suicide prevention, collaborating with community agencies that promote good mental health, and activities that promote resilience.
5. Smaller groups of students who were close to the student may benefit from having a service as a way to remember their friend or colleague. This will be discussed and decided on by the CARE team and the campus minister. Any service of this type will include information related to post-traumatic responses and remind participants about the availability of support.

VI. Sources of Help

A. On Campus

1. Counseling and Wellness Center
2. Mission
3. Student leaders/Peer advocates

B. Off Campus

1. Rescue Crisis (Toledo) 419-255-9585
2. United Way 2-1-1
3. National Suicide Prevention Hotline 800-273-8255
4. Ulifeline: www.ulifeline.org
5. American Foundation of Suicide Prevention: www.afsp.org

VII. Debriefing

Postvention efforts and responses will be reviewed within 1-2 weeks of the crisis and again a month or more after to examine the effectiveness of the response and explore issues that could have been handled better.

Appendix

A. Example of statement for campus-wide notification

I am deeply saddened to report the death of (name of deceased) on (date). We offer our deepest condolences to student name's family, friends, and loved ones.

During this time of great loss we are reminded of the importance of community. Losing a fellow student and member of the Mercy College community can be very difficult. I encourage those who feel they may need additional support to contact the Counseling and Wellness Center and/or Campus Ministry for any emotional or academic assistance you may need.

- Counseling and Wellness Center: (419) 251-1454
- Mission: (419) 251-

Information concerning funeral arrangements will be announced when it is available.

Sincerely,

President or VPSA/Dean of Students

B. Example of notice for funeral services

Please remember in your prayers *name of deceased* and *her/his* family. *Name of deceased* died on *date*. She/he is the daughter/son of *name of parents* and sister/brother of *names of siblings*.

Visitation hours:

Hours and date
Name of funeral home
Address

Memorial Service/funeral:

Hours and date
Name of Site of Memorial Service/funeral
Address

C. Examples of notification of faculty

1. In the aftermath of a catastrophic event it is important for the college to return to its standard operating procedure as quickly as possible. This does not mean that the situation shall be ignored, but rather the college business returns to its pre-crisis level of functioning while also acknowledging the crisis during operation.

Students affected by a catastrophic event are excused from responsibilities on a case-by-case basis. The goal is to stabilize the environment, not to exacerbate the emotional imbalance that is so often a part of a catastrophic event. Students who need to be excused from class should get temporary accommodations from the Counseling and Wellness Center and the Office of Accessibility Services.

For faculty and staff members who wish to seek assistance or counseling, the Life Matters (Employee Assistance) Program is a valuable resource. To find out what other services may be available to you, please contact Human Resources.

2. RE: Academic accommodations for students wishing to attend funeral services for *name of deceased*.

You may be approached by individual students in your courses who request to miss class or postpone academic responsibilities in order to attend funeral services on *date*. Such requests must be considered on a case-by-case basis and approved by you. Scheduled classes will be held on that day.

In addition, some students may encounter significant personal distress in

response to this tragedy that interferes with their ability to function. Such students may be temporarily excused by you or the VPSA/Dean of Students from their responsibilities, but should also be referred for further assistance to one of the campus resources (Counseling and Wellness and/or Campus Ministry).

- Counseling and Wellness Center: (419) 251-1454
- Mission: (419) 251-

3. Identifying Students/Groups at Risk Letter

Many of our students have been deeply affected by the recent tragedy at Mercy College. As a member of the faculty/administration, you may have frequent contacts with students that allow you to identify those who are at risk of encountering personal difficulties in response to this trauma. We ask you to assist us by referring those students to the appropriate support services.

Students who are having difficulty may demonstrate one or a combination of the following:

1. Change in academic performance (absence, failure to complete assignments on time).
2. Drug or alcohol abuse
3. Anxiety or depression (reports of fear, apprehension, sadness, unhappiness)
4. Complaints of illness
5. Poor concentration
6. Change in sleeping/eating habits
7. Verbal references to loss of hope, pessimism, or suicide.

D. Invitation to Postvention Support Groups

The Counseling and Wellness Center will hold a meeting on date to discuss the recent tragedy on campus. The meeting will be at time in the location/room and will be facilitated by name of facilitator. You and friends you may know who have been affected by this tragedy are invited to attend. For more information, contact the Counseling and Wellness Center (419) 251-1454

E. Recommendations for Reporting on Suicide <https://suicidology.org/resources/crisis-resources/>

Appendix D: Mercy College of Ohio Emergency Contact Information

*Chief Financial Officer Phone: 419-251-2182

*Director of Communication Phone: 419-251-1324

*Vice President of Enrollment Management Phone: 419-251-1614

**Emergency Response Team*

Appendix E:

Mercy College of Ohio Constituencies

INTERNAL

Students

- ◆ Commuter
- ◆ Online

Employees

- ◆ Faculty
- ◆ Staff
- ◆ Administration

Visitors

- ◆ Groups using facilities

EXTERNAL

Media

- ◆ Print
- ◆ Electronic
- ◆ Social Media Channels

Families

- ◆ Families of Students
- ◆ Families of Employees
- ◆ Families of Visitors and/or Groups

Trustees

Foundation Board

Alumni

Donors

Community-At-Large

Prospective Students and families

Appendix F:

Spokesperson Guidelines for Communicating with the Media during an Emergency

- ◆ Demonstrate organizational concern about people.
- ◆ Explain what is being done to remedy the situation.
- ◆ Keep the message consistent with all constituencies. Never tell one constituency anything that is not being told to the media.
- ◆ Be open, honest, and tell the full story. If you do not, someone else will, thus increasing the possibility that the crisis team loses control of the situation.
- ◆ Never respond with “no comment,” instead explain why you cannot answer the question. (i.e., we do not have those details confirmed at this time, we will provide you with an update when we do have an answer to that question.)
- ◆ Do not guess or speculate. If you do not know the answer, say so and offer to track down the answer.
- ◆ Respect reporter deadlines. If you promise to get information, do so promptly.
- ◆ Never speak off the record. The media can use any information released.
- ◆ Never give exclusive interviews during a crisis. All members of the media should have the chance for gathering information.
- ◆ If an injury or death has occurred, do not release the name(s) of the injured/deceased until all next of kin (immediate family) have been notified.
- ◆ Do not provide damage estimate, discuss responsibility for the incident, or discuss legal liability in any way.
- ◆ Be available 24 hours a day.
- ◆ Notify all college employees to direct all media inquiries to the Director of Communication without speculating on the situation.
- ◆ Do not discuss illegal activity at any time. If it is assumed, say “Police are investigating. We are cooperating.” Refer all questions to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
- ◆ In cases when media request interviews with family members, provide a liaison to family members for the media so that the family can protect their privacy if they choose.
- ◆ Avoid “side comments” meant to be humorous. Do NOT accept hypothetical questions. Do NOT repeat negatives in a question. Taken out of context, these remarks can be very damaging.
- ◆ Use everyday language, not jargon, when talking to reporters.

Appendix G:

Immediate Response Checklist

Step One—First Alert

- Alert Director of Communication, or designee.
- Inform President's secretary (x11314) to direct all media calls to the Director of Communication, or designee.
- Assess situation and level of impact.
- Decide to issue a written statement or to hold a press briefing.
- If necessary, decide location for press briefing.
- Alert President's secretary (x11314) and media to time and location of press briefing.

Step Two—Get the Facts

- Gather known facts.
- Verify nature and scope of incident with the Office of Public Safety and/or responding emergency agencies.
- Determine if injuries and/or fatalities (do not release names).
- Assess public health risk (if any).
- Determine what authorities must/should be consulted.
- Consult immediately with responding agencies to coordinate release of information.
- Begin to craft message for release to media, use key messages worksheet.
- Begin to plan to inform internal, stakeholder audiences.

Step Three—Verify and Keep the Information Moving

- Time code all information as it arrives.
 - Verify all facts before releasing.
 - Keep appropriate senior officials up-to-date.
 - Keep in consultation with appropriate government and legal authorities.
- Begin plan to inform internal, stakeholder audiences.

Step Four—Prepare for Media (Calls and Visits)

- Start media contact record.
- Brief and rehearse designated media spokesperson. Go through “What information media will want” list and rehearse what verified information will be made available.
- Discuss media inquiry strategy.
- Activate pre-arranged media room/area (on or off site).
- Get approval for media statement (as handout or release).
- Designate officials who will read statements or speak during press briefing.
- Review guidelines for dealing with the media with each person.

Step Five—When Reporters Arrive

- Ask media for identification and to sign in.
- Inform reporters of restrictions on movement/photography/filming.
- Proceed with briefing.
- Advise media of time and place of next and future updates.
- Follow-up on additional media inquiries.

Step Six—Media Follow-up & On-going Media Relations

- Monitor media coverage.
- Assess and correct factual errors.
- Advise media of any significant new developments.
- Log all media contact.
- Evaluate effectiveness of plan and revise as necessary.

Appendix H:

Key Messages Worksheet

Three **Key Messages** to be communicated during this crisis

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Appendix I:

What the Media Will Ask

Casualties

1. Number killed or injured or who escaped (use caution with initial numbers).
2. Nature of injuries received.
3. Care given to the injured.
4. Disposition of the dead.
5. Prominence of anyone who was killed, injured or escaped.
6. How escape was handicapped or cut off.

Property Damage

1. Estimated value of loss.
2. Description of property.
3. Importance of the property.
4. Other property threatened.
5. Insurance protection.
6. Previous emergencies in the area.

Causes

1. Testimony of participants.
2. Testimony of witnesses.
3. Testimony of key responders—the crisis management team, police, fire, etc.
4. How emergency was discovered.
5. Who sounded the alarm.
6. Who summoned aid.
7. Previous indications of danger.

Rescue and Relief

1. The number of people engaged in rescue and relief operations.
2. Any prominent person in relief crew.
3. Equipment used.
4. Physically disabled persons rescued.
5. Care of destitute and homeless.
6. How the emergency was prevented from spreading.
7. How property was saved.
8. Acts of heroism.

Description of the emergency

1. Extent of emergency.
2. Blasts and explosions.
3. Crimes of violence.
4. Attempts at escape or rescue.
5. Duration.
6. Collapse of structures.

7. Color of flames.
8. Extent of spill.

Accompanying incidents

1. Number of spectators, spectator attitudes and crowd control.
2. Unusual happenings.
3. Anxiety, stress of families, survivors, etc.

Legal actions

1. Inquests, coroner's reports.
2. Police follow-up.
3. Insurance company actions.
4. Professional negligence or inaction.
5. Suits stemming from the incident.

Appendix J:

Emergency Meeting Agenda

During an initial briefing about the crisis, the following specific agenda items will be reviewed:

1. Situation report:
What appears to have happened?
Confirmed facts (when, immediate known consequences, likely consequences).
Scope of proposed situation.
2. Initial response status:
What is being done, why, by whom?
Likely implementation time and hoped-for results.
3. Initial communications status:
Who knows, who needs to know immediately and later on?
Alert President's secretary (x11314).
4. Short-term response requirements:
Delegate crisis communications responsibility.
What must be done in the next several hours and how?
What human and material resources are available or needed?
6. Short-term communication process:
Staff, faculty, students, families, etc.
7. Next meeting time.

Appendix K:

Communication Methods Worksheet

Audience	Method of Communication
Commuter Students	
Online Students	
Faculty	
Staff	
Campus Visitors	
Media (Print/Electronic)	
Families of Students	
Families of Employees	
Families of Campus Visitors	
Trustees	
Foundation Board	
Alumni	
Donors	
Community-at-large	
Prospective Students and Families	

Appendix L:

Working with the Media during an Emergency

A. Do's and Don'ts

During an emergency DO:

1. Release only verified information.
2. Escort the news media everywhere on the emergency site.
3. Have a designated spokesperson.
4. Keep accurate records and logs of all inquiries and news coverage.
5. Learn media deadlines and try to meet them.
6. Provide equal opportunities and facilities for print and electronic media.
7. Have a clear idea of what can and cannot be released.
8. Carefully coordinate planning and implementation of public relations activities with other aspects of the comprehensive emergency plan.

During an emergency DO NOT:

1. Idly speculate on the causes of the emergency.
2. Speculate on the resumption of normal operations.
3. Speculate on the outside effects of the emergency.
4. Speculate on the dollar value of losses.
5. Interfere with the legitimate duties of news people.
6. Permit unauthorized spokesperson to comment to the media.
7. Attempt to cover up, or purposely mislead the news media.
8. Place blame for the emergency.

B. General Guidelines for Dealing with the Media during an Emergency

- ◆ The Director of Communication, or designee, will respond in the most expedient manner possible with information for media during an emergency. If the College does not release information for media, it will come from another source.
- ◆ If media initiates contact prior to an emergency decision being made, the Director of Communication, or designee, will neither confirm nor deny the incident/issue; but will investigate and return the call.
- ◆ The Director of Communication, or designee, will always attempt to coordinate release of information with responding emergency agencies—so both parties release the same information.

- ◆ The designated spokesperson should always be thoroughly briefed and constantly updated on status of the incident.
- ◆ If the incident appears to be of short duration, an approved follow-up statement will be issued, including a summary of the incident.
- ◆ If it appears to be a major, prolonged incident, the Director of Communication, or designee, will arrange for regularly scheduled media update briefings. At each briefing there will be a recap of the incident and any new information provided.
- ◆ If there is important new information, it will be shared with the media as quickly as possible by phone, fax and/or special media briefing.
- ◆ If possible, coordinate with television/radio stations to come up with a mutually acceptable plan for interviews that will allow live coverage to be carried without giving preferential treatment.
- ◆ Clearly state at the beginning of initial briefing that all verified information, which the response team has will be passed on and there will be no information given off the record. All information will be provided at the press gathering.
- ◆ The College will prohibit release of an individual's name who has been involved in an injury or fatality until his/her family has been notified.
- ◆ The College will not give the media access to the families of anyone injured or killed, unless the families expressly grant permission.
- ◆ The College will release location(s) for treating injured persons, i.e. St. Vincent's Hospital. Hospital media professionals are trained to answer media questions regarding treatment and status of patients.
- ◆ The College will work in contact with hospital spokesperson when releasing any information regarding an injured person's current condition.
- ◆ Refer to Spokesperson guidelines for further information.

Appendix M:

Media Log Sheet

Message for _____

Date/time of call _____

Caller _____

Phone number _____

Return call by _____

Summary of inquiry _____

Who responded to inquiry? _____

Date/time _____

Summary of response _____

Further action needed? _____

Appendix N:

Emergency Management Contact List

Office

Cell

Home

Appendix O:

Evaluation

What was successful?

What process should be improved?

What did you learn?

Advice for future:
