

### **Regulation on Campus Emergency Communication and Alert Systems**

I. Introduction. It is the goal of the University of North Carolina to ensure that its constituent institutions have established policies and protocols in place that facilitate timely warnings and emergency notifications to their campus communities in the event of significant criminal incidents, severe weather, major loss of utilities, environmental impacts, or other circumstances that may substantially impact the health and safety of campus constituents.

II. Designation of campus emergency alert authority. Each chancellor shall designate a campus law enforcement or other campus public safety official with principal responsibility for coordinating a campus emergency alert system. This designee shall also be responsible for establishing standardized emergency messaging template and executing regular training to authorized users of the system consistent with this regulation. This campus official shall designate no less than two (2) additional individuals who shall serve as their principal backups and are able to fully carry out these responsibilities in his/her absence. The principal designated official, and any backup persons, shall have direct and timely access to the chancellor and the chancellor's senior cabinet in the event of any significant campus incident that impacts health or safety in order to consult when time allows on emergency messages to the campus community. In confirmed emergency situations when time does not allow for consultation, authorized users shall also be empowered to issue immediate messages that direct safety actions with minimal adjustments to an emergency messaging template. In such cases, at minimum, a two-person confirmation should be used before issuance.

III. Emergency alert system. Each constituent institution shall implement and maintain a multimodal emergency alert system that is designed to disseminate emergency informational alerts utilizing a designated emergency alert web page, a recorded phone line, and the capability to send alerts via mass text messaging, emails, and by posts to all major social media channels routinely used by the institution. All emergency alert communications shall be centralized through the institution's emergency alert system. Each institution shall also maintain a system of audible warning sirens for the purpose of signaling the presence of an emergency event that has immediate life safety implications throughout its contiguous campus property.<sup>1</sup>

A. Each institution must ensure that once an alert has been sent through its emergency alert system, there is a process in place for approving and disseminating update messages among identified campus stakeholders. No update message may be disseminated outside of the process established by the institution consistent

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<sup>1</sup> It is acknowledged that institutions may have noncontiguous or remote facilities that are not feasible to be covered by the emergency siren system, and that therefore must rely on other modes of alerting, including text messaging, email, and social media announcements.

with this regulation.

B. The emergency alert system implemented at each constituent institution of higher education shall be utilized to disseminate emergency notifications and timely warnings in accordance with the [Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Act](#) (the “Clery Act”). Each constituent institution of higher education shall adopt separate written institutional policies governing emergency notifications and timely warnings, in compliance with the Clery Act as further described in Section VI of this regulation.

IV. Text messaging capabilities. Each constituent institution’s emergency response plan shall require each enrolled student and active permanent employee to provide a current mobile phone number to be included in a database for purposes of facilitating emergency text notifications from the emergency alert system described in Section III of this regulation. These mobile phone numbers shall be stored in a confidential database maintained by the institution solely for the purpose of emergency notification and shall not be utilized or disclosed by the institution for any other activity or function. Each institution shall implement a process that permits individuals to opt out of this requirement in the event they certify that they do not possess a mobile telephone device capable of receiving text messages, or for other individual circumstances that may be approved by the institution’s campus police authority.

V. System redundancy. Each institution's emergency alert system must include appropriate and reasonable redundancy measures designed to anticipate and mitigate potential system failures and loss of critical utilities such as communications or electrical power. Redundancy planning should include identifying other entities, such as a backup through the vendor itself, nonregional sister institution or the UNC System Office, to push out messaging on behalf of an impacted campus in the event of a system failure. Such redundancies shall be confirmed as part of the institution's testing regime as set forth in Section IX of this regulation.

VI. Clery compliance. As provided for in Section III.B of this regulation, each institution of higher education shall ensure full compliance with requirements of the Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Act.<sup>2</sup> as further described below.

A. Timely warnings and Clery compliance. Each constituent institution of higher education shall adopt a written institutional policy and associated procedures to ensure that all timely warnings regarding criminal incidents are executed in a manner that is timely and will aid in the prevention of similar crimes in accordance with the Clery Act. In addition, institutions shall issue alerts regarding severe weather events as may be declared for their principal area of operation (e.g., contiguous campus) by the National Weather Service.

B. Emergency notifications and Clery compliance. Each constituent institution of higher education shall adopt a written institutional policy and associated

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<sup>2</sup> See The Clery Act and its provisions as referenced in 20 U.S.C. § 1092(f) with implementing regulations in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations at 34 CFR 668.46 to this regulation for further guidance.

procedures to ensure that all emergency notifications are executed in accordance with the Clery Act. Such policies and procedures shall provide that upon confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation, each constituent institution of higher education will, without delay, and taking into account the safety of the community, determine the content of an emergency notification and initiate the alert system, unless issuing an emergency notification will, in the professional judgment of responsible authorities, compromise efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to or otherwise mitigate the emergency. Emergency notifications should not be limited to strictly criminal acts, but also acts of terrorism or bomb threats, chemical or other hazardous material spills, fires, and other significant environmental incidents, significant loss of campus utilities, and other events that substantially impact the health and safety of campus constituents.<sup>3</sup>

VII. Annual training. All designated campus emergency alert authorities as set forth in Section II of this regulation shall be required to participate in annual training on the timely warning and emergency notification requirements of the Clery Act and any other emergency communications-related topics as may be required by the UNC System vice president for campus safety and risk management.<sup>4</sup>

VIII. Emergency Communications Council ("Council"). The UNC System Office shall establish a council that is composed of officials from each constituent institution. The council will be tasked with developing recommended Systemwide practices for maintaining a compliant emergency alert system and perform other tasks as may be assigned by the UNC System vice president for campus safety and enterprise risk management with respect to emergency communications matters. The council shall meet no less than on a quarterly basis and shall be led by a chair and vice chair that are duly elected by the council's membership for two-year terms. The chair and vice chair shall convene the meetings of the council with the assistance and logistical support of the UNC System Office of Campus Safety and Enterprise Risk Management.

IX. Emergency alert system testing. Each constituent institution shall establish and execute procedures that result in ongoing testing of all components of its emergency alert system, including emergency sirens, recorded telephone lines, social media posting, mass email, text messaging capabilities, and redundancies. Such testing shall be accomplished on no less than a quarterly basis or on a more frequent basis as may be considered prudent by the institution or as communicated to designated emergency warning officials by the UNC System vice president for campus safety and enterprise risk management. Each institution shall be required to maintain an ongoing record of all test exercises and to report this information to the UNC System vice president's office using designated reporting procedures.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Ibid

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

X. Emergency alert message recordkeeping. Each constituent institution shall maintain a repository of emergency alert system messages from the most recent seven<sup>6</sup> calendar years or as otherwise required by federal law and shall provide this information to the UNC System vice president for campus safety and enterprise risk management in any requested format or system designated for this purpose.

XI. Audit oversight. Each institution's chief audit officer shall at least annually evaluate its institution's compliance with this regulation. The chief audit officer, or his or her designee, shall report the findings of their campus emergency communication and alert system's compliance to the institution's board of trustees audit committee on at least an annual basis.

XII. Effective date. The requirements of this regulation shall be effective on the date of adoption of this regulation by the president.

XIII. Relation to state and federal laws. The foregoing regulation as adopted by the president is meant to supplement, and does not purport to supplant or modify, those statutory enactments that may govern or relate to the subject matter of this regulation.

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<sup>6</sup> The Department of Education requires campuses to keep Clery records for seven years. See the 2016 Clery Handbook p. 9-11.