

Campus-wide - Emergency Notification (Alert) Procedure

If it becomes necessary to notify the entire campus of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of students, faculty, and staff, the university has developed a campus alert procedure. Alerts may include, but are not limited to, notifications for campus closings or delays due to inclement weather, tornado warnings, campus wide power or utility failure, the need for immediate building evacuation, fire/explosion, and potential or actual acts of campus violence.

Campus wide notifications will come from our “Mass Emergency Notification System.” All members of the campus community are required to sign up for this free service. This system calls office, home, and cell phone numbers and sends texts and emails.

Two different kinds of alerts may be issued to the campus community:

Timely Warnings – will primarily be issued to the campus for Clery Act crimes only. These events are narrower in scope and may affect a smaller segment of the campus, such as burglary with theft occurring in one particular building on campus. A timely warning may also focus on crimes that have occurred in the past but now constitute an ongoing threat, anywhere on University-owned property or in close proximity. Typically, these notices are issued as soon as pertinent information is available in a manner that is timely and that will aid in preventing similar occurrences, unless issuing a notification will compromise efforts to contain the emergency as determined by law enforcement, emergency management, and University officials.

In the case of a “timely warning,” the Campus Safety and Security director may issue the warning or delegate this responsibility to the Student Life deans, as it may involve resident facilities on campus. In less threatening situations, the campus email system may be used to inform a smaller group to take precautions, such as a reminder to secure their room doors in a situation where money or other items are being taken from student rooms located in a specific resident hall facility.

Emergency Notifications – will primarily be issued for emergencies that are much wider in scope, may be currently occurring, and involve situations that pose an imminent threat to the campus community. This could include tornado warnings or a violent threat such as a report of an active shooter. These notifications are issued upon confirmation of a dangerous actual or threatening situation by the local police, Campus Safety, Student Life, or other administrative department at the University. These notifications would be sent out to the entire student body and faculty/staff by utilizing our Mass Notification System. The primary person responsible for this task is the Director of Campus Safety and Security. The Director of Public Relations may be delegated to perform this task if so directed.

The Cedarville Police Department also maintains immediate communication with the campus in the event that they become aware of a situation in the local community that may warrant a notification to the campus. The following is an overview of how notifications are made to the campus.

An immediate alert (generally 1–15 minutes after the emergency situation is reported, if possible). This may include tactical instructions to building occupants.

- Campus wide mass notification system will be initiated that alerts students, faculty, and staff of the emergency situation.
- Patrol vehicles may be used to drive through the campus, sounding sirens and making appropriate PA announcements. In some law enforcement situations, this method may not be desirable.
- Direct contacts to the major facilities on campus may be conducted by Campus Safety and Security, the police, assigned Physical Plant personnel, or phone contacts made by the campus telephone operators.
- The campus computer network may also be used to send out an email to the entire campus community.

An Emergency Alert (generally 15-60 minutes after the emergency situation is reported if possible). This includes further emergency announcements or instructions). The same methods as outlined in the immediate alert may be utilized.

An Advisory Alert (generally 1-24 hours after the emergency situation is reported if possible). This includes updates, warnings or potential threats, announcements.

- The Campus Mass Notification system can be utilized or it may be appropriate to send out an email using the campus computer network.

In the event of situations where an immediate alert may not be necessary, notifications are generally initiated by using the campus computer email system. This may include, but is not limited to, situations regarding theft from vehicles in campus parking lots, reports of vandalism, or observed suspicious activity. These are generally situations that are less threatening and not considered Clery reportable incidents, but it may be prudent to alert members of the campus community to take precautions to prevent further incidents.

At Cedarville University, the emergency alert system is tested for effectiveness at a minimum of once annually during the academic school year. Additional tests may be performed as determined by the Campus Safety and Security director and/or University administration. Tests are typically announced in advance to members of the campus community, and the campus emergency response and evacuation procedures are included with the test. In addition to the test, the University schedules drills/training exercises that are designed to evaluate and review our ability to respond to certain emergency situations. For reporting year 2016, an exercise was held that focused on dealing with an active threat situation that was staged in one of our campus academic buildings using actors and law enforcement expert. All test/drills are recorded in a report with the description of the exercise, the date, time, details, and evaluation of the drill and whether it was announced or unannounced.

** Note: To sign up for the emergency notification (alert) system, please go to Cedar Info on the main campus webpage and log in. Once in Cedar Info, go to "Security and Privacy" and click under "Sign up for Emergency Notifications," Complete the online application.*