

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED
EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM (*UCMAAlert*)

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I. REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- A. University of California, Merced Policy & Procedure Manual Section 751, Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery at:
<http://policies.ucmerced.edu>

II. PURPOSE

In accordance with UC Directives, this document defines mass notification (emergency alert) policy and procedures, roles and responsibilities of UC Merced campus officials to issue warnings, advisories and emergency notices; delegation and lines of authority for campus officials to support timely, campus-wide activation of *UCMAAlert* (mass notification); and the circumstances under which the systems may be activated.

It is important to note that no one system is capable of reaching everyone, everywhere, every time. Each method has its strengths, weaknesses and limitations. As such, it is important to consider an emergency notification and warning system that utilizes multiple delivery methods. This ensures a greater coverage of intended recipients, and redundancy in the event of failures to which many communication systems are prone. All emergency alert systems at UC Merced and their combined or individual capabilities will be referred to as *UCMAAlert*.

III. POLICY

- A. The university shall maintain emergency management programs and functions to protect lives (human and animal), property, and to continue necessary critical functions and essential services
- B. The university shall attempt to notify the campus community of an emergency or urgent situation as quickly as possible.
- C. The university shall provide timely information or instruction to members of the campus community on matters related to emergency

or urgent situations that could be of concern by raising questions of safety and security.

- D. The university shall maintain appropriate redundant backup systems to support emergency alert system resources.
- E. Internal emergency alert procedures shall be established to ensure that campus officials responsible for the oversight and operation of *UCMAIert* are advised of major incidents as they occur or as soon as possible.

IV. **DEFINITIONS**

- A. Emergency – an event, expected or unexpected, that threatens the life or safety of individuals and requires immediate action.
- B. Urgent situation – an incident or condition that does not pose an immediate threat to life or safety, but that is of a nature where timely receipt of information or instructions may directly affect the well-being of the recipient.
- C. Important information – information about an emergency or urgent situation that does not present a threat but where the campus community may be concerned about safety or security.

V. **COMPONENTS OF *UCMAIert***

- A. External Public Announcement System
 - 1. Wide Emergency Broadcast (WEBS) Blue Light Units
 - 2. Announcements can be delivered from the unit or remotely
- B. Internal Public Announcement System
 - Campus Public Safety Dispatch Center maintains a “Central Command Center” where internal public announcement messages can be delivered remotely
- C. From “Emergency” and/or “Police” e-mail
 - Designated staff can send campus-wide e-mails to all students, staff and faculty with a ucmerced.edu address
- D. Digital Signage
 - Designated staff can post pre-scripted messages on digital signage located throughout campus
- E. Wide Area Rapid Notification (W.A.R.N.)
 - Designated staff can send a notification to different messaging devices a student, staff or faculty member registers with idm.ucmerced.edu (*UCMAIert*)

- F. Toll free *Campus Information* phone number – 866-993-0969
Designated staff can remotely update this resource with information
- G. UC Merced Emergency Preparedness Web-site – *emergency.ucmerced.edu*
 - 1. The Emergency Preparedness site will be updated with information regarding campus emergencies, urgent situations and important information communications.
 - 2. Depending on the nature of the emergency, the campus Web site may be temporarily converted to the Emergency Preparedness site.

VI. PROCEDURES

- A. The emergency alert system (*UCMAIert*) shall be activated as needed for campus-wide emergencies, urgent situations and important information communications only, or as superseded by the Higher Education Act, state law, or University of California policy and procedure.
 - 1. Emergency
 - a. Possible emergency situations that would activate all or some elements of *UCMAIert* include, but are not limited to the following:
 - 1) Hostage or violent situations requiring shelter in place, evacuation, or closure of the campus
 - 2) Chemical spills, major explosions, or accidents on campus or immediately adjacent to the campus that require shelter in place, evacuation, or closure of the campus
 - 3) Civil unrest or other major (violent) public demonstration requiring police presence that may lead to evacuation, shelter in place, or closure of the campus
 - 4) Suspicious package/device requiring a bomb squad response on campus that may lead to evacuation, shelter in place, or closure of the campus
 - 5) Natural disasters (e.g., earthquake, fire, flood) that place the campus in immediate danger
 - c. UC Merced Department of Public Safety Police personnel are authorized to activate all or some elements of *UCMAIert* without further consultation
 - d. Designated staff may be instructed to post pre-scripted messages on digital signage located throughout campus
 - e. Follow-up messages should be sent periodically by designated staff for the duration of the emergency

- f. An "all-clear" notification will be sent when the emergency has ended as determined by the Incident Commander
2. Urgent Situations
- a. Possible urgent situations that would activate all or some elements of *UCMAIert* include, but are not limited to the following:
 - 1) Natural disasters that do not pose an immediate threat but do pose a potential future threat to the campus
 - 2) Local emergencies or events requiring police presence that could eventually lead to shelter in place, evacuation, significant disruption on or off campus that could affect normal operations, or campus closure
 - b. The Chief of Police/Emergency Director, or designee, and the Executive Director Communications, or designee, should consult as appropriate to determine the urgency, timing and nature of the communication to be distributed
 - c. The content of the urgent situation notification should be developed by Department of Public Safety Police and Office of Communications team as determined by the nature of the event
 - d. At the direction of the Chief of Police/Emergency Director or designee, designated staff will activate all or some elements of *UCMAIert* to send urgent situation notifications to the campus
 - e. Designated staff may be instructed to post pre-scripted messages on digital signage located through out campus
 - g. Follow-up messages should be sent periodically by designated staff for the duration of the urgent situation
 - h. An "all-clear" notification will be sent when the urgent situation has ended as determined by the Incident Commander.
3. Important Informational Communications
- a. Possible important informational communications that would activate all or some elements of *UCMAIert* include, but are not limited to the following:
 - 1) Local emergencies or events that have concluded and do not affect normal operations but will likely be visible to the campus, local community and neighboring areas via the news media
 - 2) Important information related to an ongoing or concluded event that does not pose a threat to safety or security
 - b. The Chief of Police/Emergency Director, or designee, the Executive Director of Communications, or designee,

appropriate members of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Team, and Executive Policy Group should consult to determine the urgency, timing and nature of the important informational communication to be distributed

- c. The content of the important informational communication should be developed by members of the EOC Executive Policy Group, Chief of Police/Emergency Director or designee, and Executive Director of Communications or designee as determined by the nature of the event
- d. At the direction of the Chief of Police/Emergency Director or designee, designated staff will activate all or some elements of *UCMAIert* to send important informational communication notifications to the campus
- e. Designated staff may be instructed to post pre-scripted messages on digital signage located through out campus
- f. Follow up messages should be sent only if necessary

B. Message Content

1. *UCMAIert* emergency and urgent communications shall at a minimum contain the following information:
 - a. A subject line with the first word indicating *UCMAIert* and the type of communication (i.e., "A BOMB THREAT" or "EARTHQUAKE")
 - b. Date, time and location of the emergency or urgent situation, as warranted
 - c. Immediate action required (shelter in place, evacuate, secure and deny entry, etc.), as warranted
 - d. Anticipated action required (only if different than above)
 - e. Additional details necessary to preserve safety and security
 - f. Include the 866-993-0969 information number and Emergency Preparedness Web site (emergency.ucmerced.edu) for additional information regarding the incident
2. Important informational notifications, including follow up communications, at a minimum contain the following information:
 - a. A subject line with the first word indicating *UCMAIert* and the type of communication (i.e., "Utility Failure")
 - b. Date and time of update
 - c. Current situation status
 - d. Continued action required, if any
 - e. Include the 866-993-0969 information number and Emergency Preparedness Web site (emergency.ucmerced.edu) for additional information regarding the incident

3. All-clear notifications should at minimum contain the following information:
 - a. A subject line with the first word indicating *UCMAIert* and "ALL CLEAR"
 - b. Date and time of all-clear notice
 - c. Actions required to resume normal campus operations, if any
 - d. Explanation of the resolution/conclusion of incident
 - e. Include the 866-993-0969 information number and Emergency Preparedness Web site (emergency.ucmerced.edu) for additional information regarding the incident

VII. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Department of Public Safety Police Chief/Emergency Director
 1. The Police Chief/Emergency Director or designee is authorized to activate *UCMAIert* for any emergency, urgent, or security/safety-based important informational communications without further consultation
 2. When possible, the Police Chief/Emergency Director shall consult with the Office of Communications regarding urgent or security-based important informational communications
 3. Apprise the Executive Policy Group of situations/instances when sending out an emergency, urgent, or security/safety-based important informational communication (as time permits)
 4. Lead the campus and affiliate sites in exercises to test the UCM Emergency Operations Plan and *UCMAIert*
- B. Office of Communications
 1. When authorized by the Police Chief/Emergency Director, designated individuals assigned to the Office of Communications may activate *UCMAIert* for urgent or security/safety-based important informational communications
 2. Assist with pre-scripted messages, related to specific emergency events that may occur on campus or an affiliate site (e.g. active shooter, chemical spill, utility emergency, etc.)
 3. Review the pre-scripted messages annually and assist with updates or make additions or revisions as necessary to reflect lessons learned or best practices developed
 4. Assist in coordinating the placement of *UCMAIert* messaging on pre-existing Web sites and periodically review and update information.
 5. In consultation with Chief of Police/Emergency Director, will use *UCMAIert* to broadcast emergency announcements and updates
 6. Participate in exercises to test the UCM Emergency Operations Plan and *UCMAIert*

- C. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Team is responsible for consulting with the Office of Communications to activate *UCMAIert* when they are aware of situations requiring urgent or security/safety-based important informational communications to the campus
 - 1. Participate in exercises to test the UCM Emergency Operations Plan and *UCMAIert*

- D. Information and Technology (IT)
 - 1. Responsible for maintaining a self-serve Web access system (idm.ucmerced.edu) site for end users (students, staff and faculty) to provide their personal cell phone and email address, update their contact information or to opt-out
 - 2. Responsible for ensuring that updated contact information is uploaded into Wide Area Rapid Notification (W.A.R.N.) in a timely manner, which includes but is not limited to the following:
 - a) Personal cell phone and e-mail information entered into idm.ucmerced.edu
 - b) Desk phone numbers assigned to campus and affiliate site staff members and faculty
 - c) Cellular telephone numbers issued to campus and affiliate site staff members and faculty
 - 3. Provide technical support and maintenance to *UCMAIert* systems as necessary
 - 4. Provide technical support to end users of the system
 - 5. Provide assistance with software updates
 - 6. Participate in exercises to test the UCM Emergency Operations Plan and *UCMAIert*

- E. Department of Public Safety Support Services Manager
 - 1. In collaboration with the Office of Communications, will publicize and encourage all UCM students, staff and faculty to login to idm.ucmerced.edu and provide their personal contact information (cell phone and e-mail address) to receive emergency notification messages
 - 2. Ensure the multi-layers of *UCMAIert* are tested and maintained in good working order
 - 3. Maintain the UCM Emergency Operations Plan and the *UCMAIert* Emergency Notification System Policy and Protocols
 - 4. Provide system training as appropriate
 - 5. Participate in exercises to test the UCM Emergency Operations Plan and *UCMAIert*

- F. Department heads
 - 1. Ensure employees are informed of idm.ucmerced.edu and their ability to log in and provide personal contact information (cell phone and e-mail address) to receive emergency notification messages

2. Ensure accuracy of contact information for all department employees
 3. Ensure that employees follow instructions provided in emergency notifications
 4. Ensure that employees without immediate access to a campus phone or e-mail are notified of emergency situations and appropriate action
- G. All campus affiliates
1. Ensure employees are informed of idm.ucmerced.edu and their ability to log in and provide personal contact information (cell phone and e-mail address) to receive emergency notification messages
 2. Maintain current emergency contact information
 3. Respond appropriately to emergency notifications