



# Crisis Management and Communication

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# Clemson University Crisis Management Plan

University-related crises will occur  
and must be managed efficiently  
and effectively.



# Clemson University Crisis Management Plan

**Critical Incident Management**

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**... is the abnormal part  
of our normal jobs.**



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## **Examples of Critical Incidents:**

- Accident with minor injuries
- Death from natural causes off-campus
- Student arrest
- Employee arrest, not work-related
- EMS transport
- Disruptive behavior in a class or lab



# Clemson University Crisis Management Plan

**Crisis Management**

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... requires immediate University  
attention and action.



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## Examples of Crises:

- Deaths
- Serious accidents
- Major damage to university property
- Threats to the health, safety, or welfare of the University community
- Other incidents unique to the campus demanding special attention



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## Authority for Crisis Management

University President delegated authority through Vice President for Student Affairs to:

- Implement a swift, unified, and comprehensive response to a serious incident;
- Investigate and evaluate serious incidents for the purpose of preventing and minimizing the impact of a future incident;
- Handle public and internal communication related to the event.



# Clemson University Crisis Management Plan

## The Crisis Management Team (CMT)

- Vice President for Student Affairs
- Associate Vice President and Dean of Students (Chair)
- Associate Vice President and Executive Director of Housing (Vice Chair)
- Associate Vice President for Municipal Services (Vice Chair)
- Chief of Police
- Chief of Fire and EMS
- Senior Public Affairs Officer (University Spokesperson)
- Director of News Services
- Executive Director of Student Health Services
- Director of Counseling and Psychological Services



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## The Crisis Management Team (CMT, cont'd.)

- University Legal Counsel
- Chief Human Resources Officer
- Director of Risk Management
- Director of Safety and Environmental Health
- Dean of Graduate School
- Dean of Undergraduate Studies
- Athletic Director's Representative
- ... and Others as Appropriate



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## **At the CMT meeting:**

- Share all available information with the Team.
- Identify all affected parties and assign specific people to follow-up with each of those parties.
  - Counseling and Victim Support
  - Addressing Alleged Violator/Violation
  - Student Conduct and Law Enforcement Agencies
  - Parent/Family Contacts and Support
  - Local Agency Liaisons
  - Media Coordination
  - Goodwill Coordination



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## **At the CMT meeting (cont'd/):**

- Establish the University position statement and spokesperson
- Agree upon information to be conveyed to the campus and/or public by any other members of the Team.
- Agree upon the “next steps”



# Clemson University Crisis Management Plan

## **Implement the Crisis Plan:**

- Begin to take “next steps” with victims and perpetrators
- Implement the Crisis Communication Plan
- Inform all University personnel necessary of the incident and the plan
- Facilitate crisis debriefing sessions, goodwill coordination, and individual follow-up for the University community
- After the crisis, review and make improvements



# Crisis Communication Goals:

- Provide information that will help protect lives, safety or property.
- Protect the credibility of the institution and the people who run it.
- Accurate news coverage by having a consistent, accessible source of authorized information.



# Crisis Communication Goals:

- Shorten the duration of negative news coverage.
- Prevent or minimize long-term damage to the institution's reputation.



# When a Crisis Occurs:

Chief Public Affairs Officer and  
News Services Director meet with  
Crisis Management Team and alert  
crisis communication team members.



# Crisis Communication Team:

- Crisis Communication team assembles to assess and manage media situation.
- Staff member(s) go to emergency site.
- Crisis Communication team gathers relevant information, anticipates questions to prepare communication pieces and for press briefing. Gathers any documents that would be helpful to reporters. (student handbook, etc.).



# Crisis Communication Team:

- Deliver statement to media at scene and/or news briefing.
- Field questions.
- Tell media when additional information will be available.
- Follow-up news briefings as necessary.



## Continuous Flow of Accurate Information:

- Keep president, crisis management team, other key officials apprised.
- Monitor news clips. Correct any misinformation in news coverage.
- Monitor opinions, misperceptions and concerns of faculty, staff, students
- Follow-up communication as warranted.



# Crisis Communications:

- News Services staff assists faculty, students, family and friends.
- Maintain file of all news releases, statements, flyers and publications, along with video and photo records and relevant notes.
- Maintain a record of all media inquiries.



# Crisis Communications:

- The core crisis communication team includes the Chief Public Affairs Officer, the Director of News Services, the Online Newsroom Manager, the Internal Communication Editor and the News Services Data Coordinator.
- Staff Public Information Directors as appropriate.
- All Public Affairs staff members are on call during a crisis.



# Communication Mechanisms during a Crisis:

- Inside Alert
- News Releases
- Media Briefings and News Conferences
- World Wide Web
- Voice Mail
- Flyers
- Housing Residential Staff
- Cable Information Channel
- Phone Bank
- Hotline