Philosophical Overview

While the Big Island of Hawai‘i offers a culturally rich and geographically vibrant context within which to live, work and learn, it is also rife with the potential and reality of natural disasters, as well as other human-caused crises.

The Division of Student Affairs considers the safety of employees and of students as well as their families to be of primary importance. As such, we believe that:

- staff should be provided as much information as possible and at the earliest possible time in cases of emergency;
- staff should neither come to work nor remain at work when the campus is designated as “closed,” and persons choosing to remain do so at their own risk; and
- supervisors should be cognizant of both the implicit and explicit pressure they may convey to their staff about work expectations in times of emergency and therefore strive to manage communications in a way that empowers employees to make choices that are in the best interests of their wellbeing and that of their families.

However, the Division also recognizes that we are part of an educational institution and also responsible for the safety and wellbeing of our students, especially those residing on campus, in times of emergency. Therefore, depending upon the nature, scope and duration of the emergency:

- some staff may be designated essential staff and should make reasonable efforts without endangering their own safety to arrive on campus to ensure that there is leadership and responsible decision-making to ensure the safety and welfare of students;
- selected staff may be asked to report for service by Emergency Operations Plan officers; and
- still other staff may volunteer assistance to Student Affairs units (e.g., University Housing) which may have special human resource needs.
Communication Procedures

1. Unit managers/directors should maintain a current copy of the Campus Emergency Operations Plan in their offices in a readily accessible location and encourage staff to become familiar with its contents (http://www.uhh.hawaii.edu/uhh/vcadmin/documents/UHHandHAWCCEOP_001.pdf).

2. All staff should enroll in the UH System-wide emergency notification system which will provide automated information via cell phone, land line, and/or e-mail (http://www.hawaii.edu/alert).

3. In the case of an imminent or pending emergency, the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or designee will consult with the Chancellor, the Vice Chancellor for Administrative Affairs, the Director of Campus Security, and/or the Director of University Relations in a timely manner and receive as much accurate and complete information as possible regarding campus closures, operational needs, etc. S/he will in turn contact each of the four cluster coordinators or their designees, as well as other members of the central administration team. Cluster coordinators will be responsible for contacting unit managers/directors, who will be charged with informing their respective staff teams.
   a. Each unit manager/director will be responsible for maintaining the most current listing of staff telephone numbers; individual staff are also responsible for informing their unit manager/director when they change their number.
   b. Callers will leave a voicemail or message if a staff member does not answer phone. Re-attempts to reach a staff person who did not answer on the 1st call may be made at the discretion of the caller.

4. Staff should refrain from calling or contacting the University except in the case of emergency, as doing so will cause unnecessary congestion in the telecommunications system and prevent non-University entities from reaching University administrators as needed. In the absence of full information, staff should make the best decision possible balancing both our ethical responsibility to ensure student safety and welfare and the need to preserve the safety and wellbeing of ourselves and our families.

These guidelines will be reviewed annually in June to ensure that the procedures are still appropriate and information still relevant. The Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs & Dean of Students will be the individual responsible for ensuring that the review process is implemented.

Drafted June 23, 2008 by Larry Test on behalf of workgroup
Updated August 6, 2008 by Luoluo Hong
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