




Department of Public Safety Policies and Procedures

<u>Title</u> Timely Warnings	<u>SOP Number</u> 16.3.200
Approval Signature 	
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Timely Warnings

I. PURPOSE

This procedure is intended to provide guidance on issuing Timely Warning (“Safety Alerts”) messages as required by the Clery Act. It should be considered in conjunction with the university’s policy statement on Clery Act compliance and with the overall Emergency Operations Plan.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Clery Act requires that UC notify the campus community of certain crimes and other emergencies.

III. PRECAUTIONS/ LIMITATIONS

This procedure is not all inclusive, and must be used in conjunction with the University Emergency Operations Plan (“EOP”), as well as the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Safety Policy.

IV. JURISDICTION AND ROLES

The responsibility for compliance with these requirements of the Clery Act lies with the Department of Public Safety for the University of Cincinnati. The Office of General Counsel is responsible for providing legal guidance and advice to Public Safety.

V. PROCEDURE

A. Timely Warning Notice – Safety Alert

The Clery Act requires that UC notify the campus community of certain crimes and other emergencies that occur within the core campus boundaries (which includes university owned or controlled property on campus and public property that is within or immediately adjacent to the campus) and in non-campus properties as defined by the Clery Act. These Timely Warnings at the University are referred to as “Safety Alerts.”

Although not required by Federal Law, additional notices may also be distributed for crimes that occur in areas outside of the Clery Act geographic areas, if the crime is deemed to pose an ongoing threat to the campus community. These distributed public safety advisories are referred to as a “UC Aware” at the university.

A Timely Warning/Safety Alert will be considered for distribution to the UC community for all Clery crimes that are 1) reported to a CSA, local police, or the UCPD; and 2) are determined by the university to represent a serious or continuing threat to the students and employees. The decision to issue a UC Aware notice for an off campus crime will be made on a case-by-case basis depending on an assessment of various factors, which include but are not limited to: the nature of the crime, the exact location, the time of the incident, the local police response and guidance to campus officials and the potential direct effect on the campus community.

Timely Warnings/Safety Alerts must be issued as soon as the pertinent information is available. Timely Warnings/Safety Alerts are not necessarily limited to violent crimes or crimes against persons. A series of property crimes may also present a continuing threat to the campus community. The intent of the Timely Warning/Safety

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Alert is to enable members of the campus community to protect themselves.

1. Crimes Requiring a Timely Warning/Safety Alert
 - a. A Safety Alert notice will be distributed when it is determined that the incident may pose an ongoing or serious threat to members of the university community. These warnings will be distributed if the incident is reported either to UCPD directly or indirectly through a campus security authority or a local police agency.
 - 1) The department **only** issues/posts Safety Alerts for incidents of:
 - a) Murder/Non-Negligent Manslaughter;
 - b) Aggravated assault (cases involving assaults among known parties, such as two roommates fighting which results in an aggravated injury, will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine if the individual is believed to be an on-going threat to the larger UC community);
 - c) Robbery involving force or violence (cases including pick pocketing and purse snatching will typically not result in the issuance of a Safety Alert, but will be assessed on a case-by-case basis);
 - d) Sexual Assault (considered on a case-by-case basis depending on the facts of the case, when and where the incident occurred, when it was reported, and the amount of information known by the UCPD);
 - e) Major incidents of arson; or
 - f) Any Clery crime occurring in the university Clery geography that is determined to pose a threat by the Director of Public Safety or designee.
2. Information Included in a Timely Warning/Safety Alert
 - a. A Timely Warning/Safety Alert notice will typically include the following, unless issuing any of this information would risk compromising law enforcement efforts:
 - 1) Date and time or timeframe of the incident;
 - 2) A brief description of the incident;
 - 3) Information that will promote safety and potentially aid in the prevention of similar crimes (crime prevention or safety tips);
 - 4) Suspect description(s) when deemed appropriate and if there is sufficient detail;
 - 5) Police/Department of Public Safety agency contact information; and
 - 6) Other information as deemed appropriate by the Public Safety Director or designee.
 - b. The description of subjects in a case will only be included in the alert **if there is a sufficient amount of detail to describe the individual. If the only known descriptors are sex and race, that will not be included in the alert.** The name and identifying information of the victim will never be distributed in a Timely Warning/Safety Alert.
3. Issuing a Timely Warning/Safety Alert
 - a. In addition to information reported to the UCPD, the following will occur to ensure that Timely Warnings/Safety Alerts are issued when appropriate:
 - 1) The Clery Compliance Coordinator or designee will review both UC crime reports as well as any reports shared by local law enforcement agencies

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- on a daily basis to ascertain if any offenses require a Safety Alert.
- 2) The Field Operations Bureau Commander along with the Clery Compliance Coordinator will determine if a UC Safety Alert is required using the [Safety Alert Assessment, Form 21](#) guidelines. If it is determined that a UC Safety Alert is not sent, the Clery Compliance Coordinator will document that information in ARMS under the Follow Up Comments section
 - 3) Every shift supervisor will monitor their shift, as well as external agency response, for offenses that may require a Timely Warning/Safety Alert. In the event that a response is made to an offense that may require a Timely Warning/Safety Alert, the shift supervisor will notify the Public Information Officer and Clery Compliance Coordinator.
- b. Upon determining that a Timely Warning issuance is necessary and with the approval of the Director of Public Safety, the Public Information Officer or designee, will prepare and issue the warning.
- 1) A Safety Alert will be issued by blast email to all members of the campus community, utilizing the email list managed by UCIT for this purpose.
 - 2) Updates to the community about any particular case resulting in a Safety Alert may also be distributed electronically via blast email or posted on the university's website.
 - 3) A Safety Alert may also be posted in campus buildings, when deemed necessary. When an alert is posted in campus buildings, it shall be printed on orange paper and be posted in the lobby/entrance area of the affected building(s) for seven (7) days.
- c. The department **does not** issue Safety Alerts for the above listed crimes (Section A1) **if**:
- 1) The department apprehends the subject(s) and the threat of imminent danger for members of the UC community has been mitigated by the apprehension.
 - 2) UCPD was not notified of the crime in a manner that would allow the department to post a "timely" warning for the community. This type of situation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
 - 3) The event is not determined to be an ongoing threat by the Public Safety Director or designee.
4. Public Safety Advisories
- a. Public Safety Advisories (also referred to as UC Aware) may be distributed for crimes (ex. a pattern of larcenies or vandalism cases) that do not rise to the level of causing a serious or continuing threat to the university community or for Clery crimes that occur outside of university's Clery geography. In addition, they may be distributed for other safety concerns.
 - b. A public safety advisory will be distributed for reported cases of a biased-based crime impacting the University community.
 - 1) A biased-based crime is a criminal offense that manifests evidence that the victim was intentionally selected because of the perpetrator's bias against the victim or their identity.
 - 2) Some factors to consider in determining bias are:

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- Oral comments, written statements, or gestures;
 - Drawing, markings, symbols, or graffiti;
 - Occurrence of several incidents in the same area;
 - Occurrence related to current national or local biased-based crime trends;
 - Incidents occurring on a holiday or date of particular significance;
 - Previous involvement in a similar crime; and
 - Community perception that incident was bias motivated.
- 3) The public safety advisory will be made as soon as possible after the crime is reported.
 - 4) No names or addresses of the victim will be included in the notification.

B. Emergency Preparedness Plan

In the event of a campus-wide emergency, the university's detailed emergency preparedness plan provides notification instructions and operating procedures at <https://www.uc.edu/about/publicsafety/emergencymanagement/emergency-plans.html>. This web page provides access links to emergency alerts and procedures, as well as university resources and policies relating to emergency preparedness.

1. Emergency Response

- a. Anyone who notices a forthcoming or ongoing emergency should contact the Department of Public Safety, emergency response line by calling 513-556-1111 or 911.
- b. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) can be directed open by the Director of Public Safety, the Director of Emergency Management/Business Continuity, or the Police Chief.
- c. Once such an emergency has been confirmed by the Department of Public Safety and/or another law enforcement agency, the EOC will convene and determine the scope of the incident. Necessary staff from Emergency Management/Business Continuity will be recalled. Upon the EOC's activation, the president of UC or appropriate designee will activate the Emergency Management and Continuity of Operations Plan. Once the emergency preparedness plan has been activated, the EOC will oversee the response team in conducting recovery and restoration operations. The EOC will fulfill many operational functions during an emergency and is the primary vehicle for implementing and managing the emergency response. The EOC works within the incident command system in the event it is necessary to work with additional city, county, state, or federal agencies. The on-duty public safety supervisor is responsible for confirming that there is a significant emergency or dangerous situation and may initiate the emergency notification systems upon such confirmation.
- d. Public Safety will notify the campus community as quickly as possible upon the confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of faculty, students, or staff occurring on the campus. In a campus-wide emergency response, the EOC will, without delay and taking into account the safety of the community,

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determine the content of the notification and initiate the notification system, unless the notification will, in the professional judgment of the EOC, compromise efforts to assist victims or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency. The EOC will provide a coordinated response to the incident.

2. Emergency Notifications (see UCPD policy 17.1.400 Emergency Notification Policy)
 - a. The Department of Public Safety utilizes Rave Alert to provide emergency notifications to the campus community. In the event of an emergency, Public Safety reaches the community via text message, email, Bearcat Guardian messages, Twitter, digital signage, college cable television and desktop notification. The Department of Public Safety will use these alerts to notify the campus community of the nature of the emergency and procedures to follow. Because we can send the alerts to any cell phone or email address regardless of physical location, parents find them an invaluable resource for keeping informed if an emergency occurs on campus. This works in conjunction with local alarm systems (such as fire alarms) and indoor/outdoor mass notification systems.
 - b. In the event of an emergency, any or all of UC's notification capabilities mentioned herein can be utilized simultaneously. All enrolled UC students are automatically enrolled in the Rave Alert system if they have entered their information into Catalyst. Faculty and staff are enrolled when they complete and/or update their directory listing by including their cell phone numbers and opting into emergency alerts. Visitors and other community members can sign up to receive the alerts online:
<https://www.uc.edu/about/publicsafety/emergencymanagement/advisories.html>.
 - c. Additional information regarding emergency alerts is available on the Department of Public Safety's website in the Emergency Management section. The UC Emergency Preparedness website, <https://www.uc.edu/about/publicsafety/emergencymanagement/emergency-procedures.html> also contains numerous resources for emergency planning (e.g., shelter-in-place and mass-care procedures).
3. Shelter-in-Place
 - a. In certain emergency situations, the campus community may be advised to "shelter-in-place" to avoid or minimize exposure to outside risks. Risks could include chemical releases, smoke, and some weather-related emergencies, or other threats in the outside environment.
 - b. If an incident occurs and the buildings or areas around you become unstable, or if the air outdoors becomes dangerous due to toxic or irritating substances, it is usually safer to stay indoors, because leaving the area may expose you to that danger. Thus, to "shelter-in-place" means to enter and remain in a nearby building, and with a few adjustments this location can be made even safer and more comfortable until it is safe to go outside. These adjustments may include closing doors and windows and turning off HVAC system to restrict airflow, or to barricading doors and turning off lights in the

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event of an active shooter.

- c. Once shelter-in-place instructions have been communicated, students, faculty, and staff should stay in the same building they were in when they first received the message. If they are outside, they should go to the nearest building and await further instructions. While it may be advisable to shelter in place in certain situations, no one can be forced to do so. Campus community members who choose not to shelter in place should vacate the premises immediately, so the building can be secured as soon as possible.

C. Notification for UC Students with Disabilities

1. Students with disabilities are oriented to all procedures related to their safety in all university buildings, including residence halls and academic buildings, during a required intake meeting with an academic counselor in the Accessibility Services in response to the student requesting accommodations. Information about the Disability Services Office can be found at <https://www.uc.edu/campus-life/accessibility-resources.html> or by calling 513-556-6823.
2. A member from the DSO meets with students during their intake process and discusses the general emergency procedures. DSO and the housing department will discuss emergency procedures in further details with students who have mobility or sensory disabilities.
3. The DSO, in coordination with Housing and Food Services, creates and updates an emergency evacuation list that includes the names of students with disabilities, their residence hall and room location, and type of disability.

D. Notification for UC Guests

1. Visitors to campus can prepare for emergency or dangerous situations on campus and the surrounding area before they happen, so they can access up-to-the-minute alerts and advisories, by taking the following proactive steps:
 - a. Follow the Department of Public Safety on Twitter @ucpublicsafety. (Anyone can create a free Twitter account at twitter.com or download the free Twitter mobile app.)
 - b. Register for text alerts and Twitter feeds from the following local and regional jurisdictions:
 - c. City of Cincinnati Police @CincyPD
 - d. Safer Ohio App - Ohio's multi-function, mobile public safety tool for reporting suspicious activity, requesting emergency or roadside help, and monitoring traffic conditions. Get it at the App Store or on Google Play.
 - e. Contact the Department of Public Safety directly at 513-556-4900 – For those UC guests who do not have access to a smartphone or are unable to join Twitter.
 - f. Visitors and other community members can sign up to receive safety and emergency notifications online. For additional information, please view the Safety Notifications webpage on the Public Safety website, which is located in the Emergency Management section.

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References

UCPD policy 17.1.400 Emergency Notification Policy