



UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH DAKOTA

**EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN**

**June 2026**

## Approval and Endorsement

The University Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is a multidisciplinary, all-hazards plan that establishes a single, comprehensive framework for the management of emergencies, disasters and other incidents impacting the University.

This plan establishes the emergency organization, assigns tasks, specifies policies and general procedures, and provides for coordination of efforts of the various emergency employees and service elements utilizing the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Incident Management System (NIMS). In accordance with Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 5, all University agencies or departments that have responsibilities delineated in this EOP will use NIMS. NIMS allows for and ensures proper coordination between local, state and federal organizations in emergency response. Furthermore, the Incident Command System (ICS) will be utilized in all on-scene management of emergency events.

The University's administration gives its full support to this plan and requires all University personnel assigned emergency management responsibilities to read and understand all components within this plan. In addition, the University's administration urges all officials, employees, faculty and students – individually and collectively – to be familiar with the plan and take a role in their own efforts of personal emergency preparedness.

## Executive Summary

The University Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is an all-hazards plan that provides the framework for operations required to prepare for, respond to, recover from and mitigate the impacts of emergencies or disasters. This EOP assigns roles and responsibilities to University departments and personnel, provides the framework for responding to disasters and emergencies impacting the campus community, and establishes the authorities for direction and management of emergency operations. This EOP complies with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), National Response Framework (NRF), and Incident Command System (ICS).

Among other things, this EOP accomplishes the following:

- Defines who can issue a Campus State of Emergency and who can activate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
- Provides an overview of the campus response structure.
- Details the roles and responsibilities of university departments in emergency preparedness and response.
- Defines the phases of emergency management and provides examples of key activities at each phase.
- Provides an overview of the communications tools available to the University and the processes for notifying the campus community of an incident.

This EOP includes three elements: the Base Plan, Incident-Specific Documents, and Supplemental Materials. Pieces of these elements are still in development; as with all planning documents, the EOP is a living document and is continuously being updated based on lessons learned from exercises and real-world events.

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# 1. Introduction

The University of South Dakota (University) Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) provides guidelines for the management of the immediate actions and operations required to respond to emergencies or disasters. The priorities of the University during a disaster are to:

- Save and protect lives.
- Stabilize the incident.
- Provide essential services to and operations for the University, including academic continuity.
- Protect University property and safeguard the environment.
- Manage University resources effectively within the emergency response.

This plan has been developed to reduce the potential impacts of an emergency or disaster on the University and to restore its academic programs and public services as safely and efficiently as possible.

This EOP assigns roles and responsibilities to university departments and personnel, provides the framework for responding to disasters and emergencies impacting the community, and establishes the authorities for direction and management of emergency operations.

## 1.1 Purpose

This EOP provides the framework that enables the University to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from the effects of emergencies. In accordance with university policy, this plan is in effect at all times.

This plan incorporates and follows the principles, guidelines and requirements found in local, state and federal law. This EOP complies with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), National Response Framework (NRF), and the Incident Command System (ICS).

This plan is consistent with the state and federal emergency planning concepts such as the National Preparedness System (NPS) and the Catastrophic Concept of Operations (ConOps). This EOP integrates lessons learned from previous events and best practices as well as input from the University's preparedness and response personnel and partners.

## 1.2 Scope

The EOP applies to all University community members, including students, staff, faculty and visitors on property owned, leased or managed by the university. It is the official Emergency Operations Plan for the University of South Dakota and supersedes previous plans. The plan shall be subordinate to state or federal plans during a disaster declared by these authorities.

The EOP is a management tool, in that it provides overall organization and general procedures for the management of information, activities and operations during an emergency. It is an all-hazards plan that addresses the entire spectrum of emergencies ranging from minor incidents to large-scale disasters. Nothing in the plan shall be construed in a manner that limits the use of good judgment and common sense in matters not foreseen or covered by the plan.

The EOP applies to all University departments, personnel, faculty, employees and students. It includes all University campuses, satellite sites, field research sites, and University-sponsored events and travel. All individuals associated with the University are expected to follow the principles outlined in this EOP and be familiar with emergency management principles and procedures.

Each member of the community has a personal responsibility to familiarize themselves with basic emergency procedures and to act in a manner so as not to endanger his/her life or the lives of other members of the university. Faculty and staff may have specific roles that require them to act outside of their normal responsibilities. Due to the nature of an emergency, faculty and staff should be willing to assist the university community in varied roles as necessary.

## 1.3 Plan Elements

This plan has three elements: the Base Plan, Hazard and Functional Annexes, and Supplemental Materials.

**Base Plan:** The Base Plan describes the fundamental systems, strategies, policies, assumptions, responsibilities, and operational priorities the University of South Dakota will use to guide and support inclusive emergency management efforts. Essential elements of the Base Plan include:

- A description of the emergency services provided by the University of South Dakota and how resources are mobilized.
- An overview of how the University of South Dakota will carry out emergency operations.
- An overview of how the University of South Dakota will provide information.

**Hazard and Functional Annexes:** Hazard-specific Annexes include documents that describe policies, situations, concept of operations, and departmental responsibilities for a specific hazard - such as an tornado. Functional Annexes outline how the university manages key emergency functions like communication, evacuation, sheltering, and recovery. Each annex details roles and responsibilities, procedures, resources, and coordination mechanisms.

**Supplemental Materials:** Subsequent plans and procedures (mutual aid agreements, crisis communications plans, continuity plans, logistics plans, specific campus or department plans etc.) developed in support of this EOP are incorporated by reference and maintained separately from the base plan.

## 2. Situation and Assumptions

### 2.1 Geography and Population

The University of South Dakota (USD) is a public research university, established by the Dakota Territory legislature in 1862. The primary campus is located in Vermillion, SD with an additional campus located in Sioux Falls, SD. USD serves a diverse student population and operates in distinct geographic regions, each with unique emergency management considerations.

#### **Main Campus – Vermillion, SD.**

USD's main campus is situated in the center of Vermillion, SD. The 274-acre urban campus sits along the bluffs above the Missouri River in Southeast South Dakota. Bordered by residential and commercial zones, USD is accessible via Interstate I-29 and State Route 50.

The main campus includes academic buildings, residential housing, research centers, administrative offices, athletic facilities, and open spaces.

The Vermillion main campus serves approximately:

- 11,000 students
- 3,200 faculty and staff

The population fluctuates throughout the day and academic year, with peak occupancy during the fall and spring semesters.

#### **University of South Dakota, Sioux Falls Campus.**

The USD Sioux Falls campus is located in the city of Sioux Falls. The Sioux Falls site serves as the main location and houses administrative offices, classrooms, and faculty offices. The Sioux Falls site supports specialized academic programs including health sciences, education, business and more.

The Sioux Falls campus serves approximately:

- 1,000 students
- 100 faculty and staff

#### **Summary**

Together, the University of South Dakota's campuses span diverse geographic, demographic, and operational contexts. The main USD campus in Vermillion serves as a traditional university setting with a concentrated student population and established infrastructure in a smaller, rural community. In contrast, the USD Sioux Falls campus operates in a more urban environment, integrated into the city's broader healthcare, business, and transportation networks. Emergency planning at USD must account for these geographic distinctions, population distributions, and the unique risks and resources associated with each location

## **2.2 University History**

### **2.2.1 USD Main Campus**

The University of South Dakota was founded in 1862 and is the oldest public university in the state. Located in Vermillion, USD began as a small institution dedicated to higher learning on the South Dakota frontier and has since grown into the state's flagship public university. Over the years, it has expanded its academic offerings to include a comprehensive range of undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. In addition to its historic main campus, USD operates locations across the state, including a growing presence in Sioux Falls that supports nontraditional students and professional programs. Rooted in public service and community engagement, USD continues to evolve as a modern academic institution while honoring its deep historical legacy.

### **2.2.2 USD Sioux Falls Campus**

The University of South Dakota Sioux Falls campus was established to expand access to higher education in South Dakota's largest and fastest-growing city. Located in the heart of Sioux Falls, this campus was developed in collaboration with community leaders and regional partners to meet the needs of working adults, non-traditional students, and professionals seeking flexible learning options. USD – Sioux Falls has historically focused on healthcare, business, education, and professional studies, and continues to grow its offerings in response to workforce demands. With a strong emphasis on accessibility, community engagement, and lifelong learning, the Sioux Falls campus plays a vital role in supporting educational and economic development in the region.

## **2.3 Hazard Analysis**

The University of South Dakota is exposed to a range of natural, human-caused, and technological hazards, each presenting distinct challenges for emergency preparedness and response. These hazards include events or conditions that could result in fatalities, injuries, property and infrastructure damage, environmental degradation, or disruptions to university operations.

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The severity of emergencies affecting the University is influenced not only by the occurrence of such events, but also by the level of exposure and vulnerability within the campus communities, including social, economic, and physical factors.

USD employs a comprehensive, data-informed approach to assess and prepare for these threats. This includes the use of campus-specific risk assessments and preparedness planning processes to identify the most likely and impactful hazards. Threats are evaluated based on both their historical frequency and potential consequences. Priority is given to those incidents that could most significantly challenge the University's existing response capabilities, particularly those that are both likely to occur and have the potential for a high impact on life, property, and critical infrastructure.

The hazards and risks identified as posing the greatest threat or requiring the most significant preparedness efforts at USD include:

<b>Hazard/Threat</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Risk Level</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Severe Weather (blizzards, tornadoes, flooding)</b>	Natural	High	High	High	Disruption to campus operations, transportation, infrastructure
<b>Cybersecurity Incidents</b>	Technological	High	High	High	Data loss, operational disruption, privacy concerns
<b>Active Shooter/Targeted Violence</b>	Human-caused	Moderate	High	High	Threat to life, rapid law enforcement response, mass notification needs
<b>Infectious Disease Outbreak</b>	Biological	Moderate	High	High	Health services strain, shift to remote operations, continuity planning
<b>Hazardous Materials Release</b>	Technological	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Lab safety, emergency response coordination, environmental exposure
<b>Utility Failure (power, water, internet)</b>	Technological	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Service disruption, building closures, impact on academic continuity
<b>Civil Unrest or Protests</b>	Human-caused	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Crowd control, safety management, communication protocols
<b>Fire (structure or wildland)</b>	Natural/Human-caused	Low	High	Moderate	Evacuation, smoke exposure, property damage

## 2.4 Planning Assumptions

Assumptions consist of information accepted by planners as true in the absence of facts. Planning assumptions identify what the planning team assumes to be facts for planning purposes to make it possible to execute the EOP. During operations, the assumptions indicate areas to adjust in the plan as the facts of the incident become known. The assumptions listed below reflect the situations that must be considered to achieve effective emergency services at the University:

- Incidents may occur with little to no warning and impact one or more University sites.
- The effects of the emergency may extend beyond University, City, County, or State boundaries and may exceed the response capabilities and resources of the University.
- Emergencies may result in casualties, death, or displacement of students or employees.
- An emergency can result in property loss, interruption of essential services, damage to basic and critical infrastructure, and significant harm to the environment.
- University students, faculty, employees, and visitors may not be able to leave or access campus for several days due to damaged infrastructure and roads surrounding the University.
- Transportation routes may be impacted by making it difficult to bring in additional supplies and resources to the University.
- Incidents may require prolonged incident management and support operations that will transition into long-term continuity and recovery activities.
- Widespread power and communications outages may require the use of alternate methods of providing information and delivering essential services.
- Individuals with access and functional needs may require resources or assets such as durable medical equipment, assistive technology, and/or accessible transportation that are limited in number and difficult to procure without integrated planning.
- Integrated planning is critical to ensure the needs of underserved and vulnerable populations are considered in aligning resources or assets.
- Response and recovery activities will be managed by incident objectives.
- A whole-community approach to emergency management will be implemented. This includes active participation by university partners to ensure the needs of all facets of the population are met.

## 2.5. Preparedness Assumptions

In preparing for effective management of campus resources during an emergency, USD considers the following assumptions:

- Emergencies may occur at any time with little or no warning and may exceed the capabilities of USD, local agencies, and private sector resources.
- Emergencies may lead to casualties or fatalities, and may displace individuals from offices, residence halls, or personal homes.
- Property damage, interruption of services, and environmental harm may result from an emergency.
- Complex emergencies will require multi-agency coordination, especially those that span larger regions.
- Mutual aid agreements and assistance from surrounding states and federal agencies may be activated when necessary.
- The South Dakota State Emergency Operations Plan will guide response efforts, with federal agencies stepping in as needed to support state and local response.

## 2.6 Campus Emergency Equipment and Supplies

The University of South Dakota shall maintain equipment and supplies as appropriate to staff the USD EOC in event of an activation.

## 2.7 Campus Emergency Preparedness Training, Drills, and Exercises

### 2.1 Objective

Campus emergency response teams, first responders, and the EOC staff are prepared for an effective and timely response during emergencies. Training is a vital part of this preparedness.

- Training for campus staff and response teams is conducted annually and involves a combination of tabletop, functional, and full-scale exercises. The training goals include:
  - Testing and evaluating emergency plans
  - Identifying gaps and weaknesses in resources and capabilities
  - Clarifying roles and responsibilities during emergencies
  - Establishing campus-wide coordination with other agencies

### 2.2 Schedule of Training, Drills, and Exercises

Drills and exercises are held on USD campuses annually, simulating emergency situations to familiarize first responders, faculty, staff, and students with evacuation procedures and campus facilities.

Drills and exercises include:

- Orientation: For new employees and first responders, including an introduction to the campus emergency management program.
- Drills: To test specific operations, functions, or equipment.
- Exercises: To practice real-life tasks for first responders and campus personnel in actual emergency scenarios.

Results from drills and exercises are documented and corrective actions are implemented based on After Action Reports (AAR).

## **3. Emergency Management Structure**

In accordance with state and federal guidelines, the University of South Dakota integrates the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS) into its emergency preparedness and response operations. These standardized frameworks ensure that all incidents are managed in a coordinated, scalable, and consistent manner—from on-campus field operations to interactions with local, state, and federal agencies

### **3.1 National Incident Management System (NIMS)**

The NIMS is a nationwide standardized approach to incident management and response. It provides a comprehensive, whole-community approach to incident management for all hazards and integrates existing best practices into a consistent nationwide approach to incident management applicable to all jurisdictional levels. The NIMS is focused on the following principles: flexibility, standardization, and unity of effort. The National Incident Management System NIMS is structured around three main components: Resource Management, Command and Coordination, and Communications and Information Management. These components work together to ensure a consistent, nationwide approach to incident management.

#### **3.1.1 Resource Management**

This component focuses on standardized mechanisms for managing resources, including personnel, equipment, facilities, and supplies, both before and during an incident. It ensures resources can be effectively shared and mobilized when needed.

#### **3.1.2 Command and Coordination**

This component provides a framework for effective and efficient incident management and coordination. It includes the Incident Command System (ICS) and Multiagency Coordination Systems, as well as a Public Information structure.

### 3.1.3 Communications and Information Management.

This component ensures effective and interoperable communications and information sharing among all agencies involved. It emphasizes using common terminology and plain English to facilitate clear communication.

## 3.2 Incident Command System (ICS)

A primary component of NIMS is the ICS - a standardized on-scene emergency management system designed to allow for an integrated organizational structure equal to the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. Key components of the ICS include:

- Providing an organizational structure of responding to all hazards, regardless of complexity.
- Providing the flexibility needed to respond to an incident as it escalates in severity. The system allows for the activation of only those positions needed to manage a particular incident.
- Promoting proper span of control and unity of command.
- Providing management with the necessary control to direct and coordinate all operations and all agencies responding to emergency incidents.
- Assigning employees with reasonable expertise and training to critical functions without a loss of precious time.

## 3.3 Phases of Emergency Management

Emergency management activities are often categorized into four phases: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. This section includes a brief description of each phase and example activities that may occur in that phase. While conceptually useful for targeting efforts and resources, the phases of emergency management are not distinct and activities in each phase often overlap.

### 3.3.1 Mitigation

Mitigation aims to reduce the loss of life and property by lessening the impact of future disasters. Examples of activities that may occur at the University of South Dakota include:

- Conducting inspections of university buildings to assess earthquake risk.
- Investing in tools and technologies that will lessen incident impact (such as backup generators).

### 3.3.2 Preparedness

Preparedness encompasses the full range of deliberate, critical tasks and activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the operational capability to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters. Preparedness activities involve a continuous cycle of planning, training, exercising, evaluating, and improving. These activities focus on anticipating what can go wrong, determining effective responses, and developing plans of action to manage and counter risks. Examples of preparedness activities that may occur include:

- Reviewing and updating emergency plans, guides, playbooks, standard operating procedures (SOPs), resources lists, and other emergency service documents.
- Reviewing and updating emergency purchasing agreements and contractor/vendor lists.
- Reviewing and updating campus emergency supplies, as needed.
- Reviewing and updating disaster cost accounting and other emergency financial procedures.
- Preservation of Vital Records.
- Training of University of South Dakota employees.
- Managing emergency services resources.
- Testing alert and notification systems.

### 3.3.3 Response

Emergency response is quick with the focus on saving lives, protecting property, and protecting the environment. Response includes meeting basic human needs in the aftermath of a catastrophic incident. Examples of response activities that may occur include:

- Activating the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and emergency response personnel.
- Conducting evacuations or issuing shelter-in-place orders.
- Issuing emergency alerts, emergency notifications, and providing continuous updates to the University of South Dakota community on the status of the incident.

The majority of this EOP focuses on response operations - actions taken and the roles and responsibilities of partners during a response.

### 3.3.4 Recovery

Recovery is enabled through a focus on the timely restoration, strengthening, and revitalization of infrastructure, housing, and a sustainable economy while considering the

health, social, cultural, historic, and environmental fabric of communities affected by a catastrophic incident. Examples of recovery activities that may occur at the University of South Dakota include:

- Recovery of costs associated with response and recovery efforts.
- Rebuilding damaged structures, facilities, or infrastructure on campus.
- Restoring campus operations, academic programs, public health, and social services.
- Investing in mitigation projects.

Recovery planning begins at the onset of an emergency with the university planning for the short- and long-term effects of the current incident. Early recovery planning allows for more effective recovery operations. Response and recovery operations can sometimes overlap as there is often no clear end to response operations and beginning of recovery operations. The university's recovery efforts will begin with the EOC staff responding to the incident and may transition into a long-term recovery team as the incident stabilizes.

Depending on the size and scope of the event, the university also plans for situations in which normal operations must be temporarily paused or altered.

## 4. Concept of Operations

This Concept of Operations outlines how the emergency plan is implemented and how all partners collaborate to coordinate response efforts. It is designed as a flexible system based on the Incident Command System (ICS), in alignment with federal guidance from the Department of Homeland Security and the National Incident Management System (NIMS). This approach integrates all phases of emergency management, ensuring a seamless transition from response to recovery, including the restoration of normal operations and the implementation of recovery programs.

### 4.1 Response Operations

Response operations focus on mobilizing the University employees, deploying resources, and managing operations to save lives and protect property. Response operations may last several hours or span over the course of several weeks. Response objectives change as the incident involves with the initial focus being to save lives.

### 4.2 Response Priorities

The emergency response priorities for the University are shown in **Table 4-1**.

Table 4-1: Response Priorities

<b>Save and protect lives.</b>
<b>Stabilize the incident.</b>
<b>Emergency communications and information sharing.</b>
<b>Provide essential services to and operations for the University, including academic continuity.</b>
<b>Protect University property and safeguard the environment.</b>
<b>Manage resources effectively in the emergency response.</b>

### 4.3 Campus Response Structure

In accordance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the University of South Dakota utilizes the Incident Command System (ICS) when responding to emergencies. Initial response activities are primarily conducted at the field level, where responders apply ICS principles to organize and manage their response effectively.

#### 4.3.1 Incident Command System

The ICS is scalable and flexible depending on the needs of the incident. Responsibility for the establishment and expansion of the ICS organizations falls to the Incident Commander who bases the organization on the requirements of the situation. Generally, the first responder to arrive on scene assumes command and becomes Incident Commander. This Incident Commander remains in control of the scene until somebody of equal or greater capability arrives and command is transferred. As the incident size, scope and complexity increases, the ICS organization expands.

The type of incident (fire, power outages, security threat, etc.) often dictates who responds first to the incident. The Vermillion Fire Department also has command authority for incidents involving fire, hazardous materials, emergency medical services, or rescue. As such, the University will transition to Unified Command to include outside agencies under the provisions set forth in NIMS.

#### 4.3.2 Unified Command

Unified Command (UC) exists when two organizations/agencies have command authority for an incident, and they work together under a single unified command to manage incident response. UC is an application of ICS and may be established at the field response level when more than one agency has jurisdictional responsibilities. Agencies work together through the designated members of the UC to establish their designated IC at the single Incident Command Post (ICP). Under UC, organizations/agencies develop a common set of objectives and strategies which provides the basis for a single Incident Action Plan (IAP).

#### 4.3.3 Field Response

University field responders are those personnel and resources who operate under the command of the Incident Commander or Unified Command and carry out tactical missions and response operations directly associated with the incident or threat.

#### 4.3.4 Emergency Operations Center

An incident may impact the University for a prolonged period of time and require a centralized coordination structure to help manage the incident. If this enhanced coordination structure is needed, the EOC will be activated to provide a centralized location for University-wide strategic decisions, action planning and resource allocation to support the overall emergency response effort. The University EOC is staffed by designated members of the campus community.

### **Levels of Activation**

The EOC may be activated at a response level that is consistent with the extent of the emergency described in the table below. The levels of emergency and the levels of EOC activation are described based upon the complexity of the incident. Although these levels are described progressively, conditions may require escalating or de-escalating or skipping from one level directly to another in accordance with response needs. See **Table 4-2** for additional information on levels of activation.

Table 4-2: University Levels of Emergency

Activation Level	Level of Emergency	Description	Examples
Standby/Alert/ Monitoring/ Duty Officer Status	State of Readiness	Actions may be taken to prepare the EOC and the University for future activations.  <i>EOC is not activated.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Subsequent to a planned power outage</li> <li>· Severe weather warning</li> <li>· Planned event</li> </ul>
Level 3: Lowest Level Limited Activation	Minor Incident and/or Extended Incident Management	A minor incident for which University resources are both adequate and available to respond.  <i>EOC may/may not be activated and staffed at minimal level.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Limited utility outage</li> <li>· Localized small fire (limited to office/room)</li> <li>· Extended protest on site</li> </ul>
Level 2: Middle Level Partial Activation	Moderate Incident/Emergency	A moderate incident/emergency for which University resources are both adequate and available to respond.  <i>EOC is activated and partially staffed.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Partial campus utility outage</li> <li>· Severe weather with a campus impact</li> <li>· Individual building fire (multiple rooms/floors)</li> </ul>

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<p>Level 1: Highest Level Full Activation</p>	<p>Major Incident/Emergency</p>	<p>A moderate to major incident/emergency for which University resources are not adequate. Requires major coordination activities with Clay County OEM / SD OEM and other extensive resource requirements and/or mutual aid.</p> <p><i>EOC fully activated, and all positions staffed. Requires multiple EOC shifts with all positions filled.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Extended campus-wide utility outage</li> <li>· Active Shooter / Assailant incident</li> <li>· Multiple building fire</li> </ul>
<p>Virtual/Hybrid Activation</p>	<p>All Levels</p>	<p>The EOC may activate all or part of its members virtually instead of the traditional method which requires employees to report to the EOC. This may include a combination of internet-based collaboration tools and/or phone conference bridge calls.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Physical activation not possible for environmental, public health or safety concerns.</li> <li>· The EOC is inaccessible.</li> <li>· Timing or level of crisis may require or allow for virtual activation.</li> </ul>

### 4.3.5 Policy Group Activation

The Policy Group – comprised of the president and Cabinet – functions as a strategic leadership team, setting general policy regarding overall University emergency operations, and recovery plans.

Once it is determined that the EOC will be activated, the president or designee will determine when/if it is necessary to convene the Policy Group. The EOC Director or designee may recommend or request that the Policy Group convenes depending on the incident.

## 4.4 Issuance of a State of Emergency

### 4.4.1 Campus State of Emergency

The University president or their designee will declare a Campus State of Emergency when an unusual event requires modification or curtailment of normal operating schedules. The president holds the authority to issue this declaration based on their responsibility to regulate campus facilities and maintain order.

A Campus State of Emergency will be declared when, in the president's judgment, an actual or threatened disaster or serious threat to persons or property exists that cannot be managed through standard campus administrative procedures—making activation of the emergency plan necessary.

Declaring a Campus State of Emergency activates the University's role in coordinating disaster response with local and state jurisdictions and facilitates the provision or receipt of mutual aid as needed. The University Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will notify relevant state and system-level offices following the president's declaration.

### 4.4.2 Local and State Proclamations of Emergency

#### A. University

The University president or their designee has the authority to declare a Campus State of Emergency when circumstances require changes to normal operations to protect life and property.

#### B. County

County officials have the authority to declare a local state of emergency when conditions within the county pose significant threats that exceed local response capabilities.

**C. State**

The Governor of South Dakota may proclaim a State of Emergency when:

1. Conditions of disaster or extreme peril exist that threaten the safety of persons and property within the state, caused by natural or man-made incidents.
2. The Governor receives requests from local authorities for state assistance.
3. Local authorities are overwhelmed or inadequate to manage the emergency effectively.

**D. Federal**

The Governor may request a Presidential Declaration of Emergency or Major Disaster to access federal disaster assistance programs, which support response and recovery efforts. Such a declaration enables federal resources and funding to supplement state and local efforts.

## 4.5 Demobilization

The EOC Director or IC/UC will determine when response operations can be demobilized. Demobilization requires the deactivation of the EOC (if applicable) and the compilation of incident documentation. The Planning Section, if activated and in conjunction with the IC/UC/EOC Director, will develop a written or verbal demobilization plan as early in the incident as possible. Section Chiefs/Coordinators will be responsible for the demobilization of their respective sections.

## 4.6 Campus Recovery

Aligning with the University's incident response priorities, the first recovery step for any incident is to establish a safe and secure campus. The University will then focus on restoration of critical infrastructure and facilities and the resumption of the instructional and research environment. The Policy Group will provide strategic guidance to the EOC and/or Emergency Management and other University departments and offices.

# 5. Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

Within the comprehensive framework of the University of South Dakota Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), this section outlines the essential responsibilities and functions that members of the campus community hold during an emergency. Effective emergency response requires a coordinated, institution-wide effort that spans across departments, campuses, and operational areas.

All University departments, offices, and units share responsibility for preparing for emergencies and supporting the efforts of the University of South Dakota's emergency management leadership. Whenever feasible, emergency operations will reflect existing day-to-day structures, leveraging the relationships and coordination that naturally occur among campus departments and personnel. While many departments have specific responsibilities in emergency response, they may also be expected to maintain their essential functions during emergencies. Departments and offices identified in this EOP have defined roles in both preparedness and response. By carrying out the responsibilities outlined in this plan, the University of South Dakota ensures a structured and collaborative approach to emergency response that prioritizes the safety and continuity of the campus community. All USD departments and offices are responsible for developing internal procedures that align with this EOP and preparing their staff, facilities, and operations accordingly. Participation in university-led emergency training, drills, and exercises is strongly encouraged as part of maintaining readiness.

### 5.1 Faculty and Staff

University faculty and staff are seen as leaders by students and should be prepared to provide leadership during an incident. Faculty and staff should understand departmental emergency plans and procedures and building evacuation procedures in areas where they work and teach. Faculty and staff may likely be the first person to arrive at an incident. They should familiarize themselves with the basic concepts for personal and departmental incident response.

### 5.2 Students

Students should remain aware of their surroundings and be familiar with building evacuation routes, emergency exits, emergency procedures, and designated campus assembly points. Students are encouraged to download and use the Everbridge App and to educate themselves on personal preparedness, including creating a personal emergency kit and an emergency communication plan.

Additional information on emergency procedures is posted throughout campus facilities, including residence halls, classrooms, and laboratories. Incident-specific updates and resources can be found at [Emergency Preparedness | University of South Dakota](#)

#### Role During an Incident

Students involved in an incident should assess the situation quickly and thoroughly and employ common sense when determining how to respond. If directly involved in an incident, students should call 9-1-1 as soon as possible, direct responders to where the incident occurred if possible, and cooperate with first responders.

## 6. Direction, Control, and Coordination

The authority to modify or suspend campus operations in response to an incident, emergency, or disaster rests with the University President or the President's designated alternate. The following individuals comprise the designated line of succession to the President, in order:

1. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
2. Vice President for Finance and Administration
3. Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services
4. Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs

These designated individuals have the authority to assume the responsibilities of the President in the event the incumbent is unavailable. Each successor has the same responsibilities and authority as the incumbent. The line of succession ensures continuity of leadership and decision-making during emergencies.

### 6.1 Emergency Response Authority

During a declared emergency or when the EOC is activated in response to an incident, the University president or designee delegates authority to the EOC Director or designee for the management of emergency response activities. Reporting to the president or designee, the EOC Director or designee has the responsibility for activation, oversight, and demobilization of the EOC and University emergency responders.

The EOC Director is responsible for providing executive leadership and directing all EOC operations during a university emergency proclamation and EOC activation. The EOC Director has overall responsibility for the management of all emergency activities – including development, implementation and review of strategic decisions, and post-event (after-action) assessments and corrective action plans.

During university emergency and EOC activation, the ICS organizational structure supersedes routine reporting lines for university personnel assigned to the Incident Management Team or Emergency Response Teams.

### 6.2 Mutual Aid

#### Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Process

1. Campus – The University Chief of Police or designee determines that an incident exceeds the capabilities of the USD Police Department and requests mutual aid support from neighboring local law enforcement agencies (e.g., Vermillion Police Department or Clay County Sheriff's Office).

2. Local – The local law enforcement agency (e.g., Vermillion Police Department) may determine that the incident exceeds its available resources and request mutual aid from the County Sheriff's Office.
3. County – If the incident surpasses the response capabilities of the County Sheriff's Office and other in-county resources, the Sheriff may request additional assistance from nearby counties under existing mutual aid agreements.
4. Regional – If local and county mutual aid resources are insufficient; the University Chief of Police, the county emergency manager or sheriff may request support from law enforcement agencies in surrounding counties through the South Dakota Department of Public Safety – Office of Emergency Management (OEM) or the South Dakota Highway Patrol.
5. State – If the situation exceeds the capabilities of regional resources, the South Dakota OEM or State Mutual Aid Coordinator may coordinate the deployment of additional state law enforcement assets or request assistance through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) or from federal agencies.

## 6.3 Coordination with External Partners

In response to an incident on campus, the University may coordinate with a variety of external partners. To further enhance coordination with the City and County, the University EOC Liaison Officer or EOC Director (if the Liaison Officer role is not activated) may coordinate with other activated EOCs to communicate University requests for assistance. The University may also send a representative of the EOC Public Information and Media unit to the county's Joint Information Center (JIC).

## 7. Communication and Notification

The University of South Dakota Police Department (USDPD) is responsible for issuing notifications, alerts, and warnings related to incidents or emergencies that may impact USD campuses. The USDPD Dispatch Center operates 24/7 and, upon receiving information about a potential incident, is responsible for notifying Command Staff, on-duty officers, and coordinating with supporting agencies as needed.

The University of South Dakota has designated the University Police Department (USDPD) and University Marketing and Communications as the primary entities responsible for the initial activation of the emergency mass notification system. Trained members of USDPD and designated Emergency Operations Center (EOC) staff have been authorized to access and deploy the system as needed. The Everbridge emergency notification tools are reserved for use only in situations that pose a direct threat to the health and safety of the campus community.

University Marketing and Communications also uses social media platforms to disseminate emergency messages approved by the EOC. These may include updates posted on the USD

homepage, Twitter, Facebook, and may extend to local radio and television media, depending on the nature and severity of the incident.

Emergency communications should be coordinated through the established Incident Command System (ICS) structure. Some incidents may disrupt normal communication channels, making it essential to use multiple platforms and share redundant messages across systems to ensure they reach the campus community.

Current communication resources available to USD include:

- Everbridge
- Zoom
- Cellular phones
- Landlines
- University email
- USDPD Dispatch
- USD website
- Social media platforms
- LISTSERVs and departmental mailing lists
- Conference calls

## 7.1 Emergency Alerts and Notifications

In accordance with the Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Act, every effort will be made to ensure that timely emergency alerts and/or notifications are provided to all relevant University stakeholders when a significant emergency or dangerous situation poses an immediate threat to the health or safety of students or employees on campus. Stakeholders include:

- Faculty, staff, and students on impacted campus(es)
- University-affiliated student organizations
- Auxiliary organizations (e.g., food service, bookstores)
- USD-affiliated research or service entities
- Contracted service providers operating on campus
- Occupants of other facilities owned or leased by the University

### 7.1.1 Notification to the Campus Community

Students, employees, faculty, and other University personnel may not be notified every time the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated. However, notifications will typically be sent when events result in modified campus operations, campus evacuation, or a declared State of Emergency at the local, county, or state level that impacts the campus community. If the EOC is activated in a limited capacity to monitor an incident or support external partners, EOC leadership will determine whether campus-wide notification is necessary.

The campus community will receive emergency notifications via email, phone, and/or text through Everbridge and other designated communication platforms. These notifications are issued upon confirmation of an emergency or dangerous situation that poses an immediate threat to the health or safety of the campus community.

#### 7.1.2 Notification to External Partners

The USD Public Information Officer (PIO) in the EOC is responsible for coordinating the release of any information pertaining to the status of campus operations to the campus community, the news media, and public, e.g.:

- Restricting access to or requesting people to leave the campus.
- Canceling or modifying the delivery of classes or events.
- Evacuating and closing buildings.

The EOC Liaison Officer, or the EOC Director in the absence of a Liaison Officer, is responsible for identifying all external or partner agencies involved in or potentially involved in the University's emergency response. The Liaison Officer will inform these agencies of the status of EOC activation and coordinate communications as needed. Agencies and partners may include:

- Vermillion Police Department
- Clay County Sheriff's Office
- Vermillion Fire/EMS
- Clay County Office of Emergency Management
- South Dakota Department of Health
- South Dakota Office of Emergency Management
- South Dakota Board of Regents
- South Dakota Department of Public Safety
- Utility providers (MidAmerican, municipal services)
- On-campus partners such as SODEXO and contracted vendors.

As requested by the EOC Director, the EOC Liaison Officer will communicate with these outside agencies. The EOC Liaison Officer will notify all outside agencies involved in the response when the USD's EOC is deactivated.

#### 7.2 Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Act Compliance

In accordance with the Jeanne Clery Campus Safety Act (Clery Act), the University of South Dakota is required to issue Timely Warnings to alert the campus community about certain crimes that represent a serious or continuing threat to students, faculty, and staff. Timely Warnings are typically distributed via Everbridge to ensure wide accessibility and to support individuals in taking appropriate precautions to protect themselves.

For more information, consult the U.S. Department of Education's Clery Act guidelines or the University's annual security report.

### 7.3 Crisis Communication Plan

The University of South Dakota is committed to protecting the safety and well-being of students, employees and visitors, and to maintaining public trust. Clear, timely communication during a crisis is essential to meeting that responsibility.

The Crisis Communications Plan provides a structured framework for delivering timely, accurate and coordinated information during emergencies, operational disruptions or incidents with potential reputational impact. The plan focuses exclusively on the communication component of crisis response and is designed to function in coordination with the university's emergency operations procedures and the authorities granted to the University of South Dakota and the University Police Department.

The plan promotes coordination among university leadership, Marketing and University Relations, the University Police Department and other operational units with defined responsibilities during a crisis. It establishes expectations for when and how information should be released, identifies the communication channels the university may use and defines standards for accuracy, timeliness and consistency. It applies to all university locations, including operations in Vermillion, Sioux Falls and affiliated sites, and outlines the roles of university officials responsible for communicating with internal and external audiences.

#### **Guiding Principles**

The University of South Dakota adheres to core communication principles that guide all crisis response efforts. These principles ensure that information conveyed during emergencies is accurate, clear and delivered in a manner that supports safety, trust and institutional integrity.

**Accessibility:** Crisis information should be delivered through multiple channels to reach diverse audiences, including individuals who require accommodations.

**Accuracy:** All information released must be verified to the greatest extent possible before dissemination. In fast-moving situations, updates should reflect what is known, what is not yet known and when additional information will be provided.

**Compassion:** Communication during crises must acknowledge the human impact of the situation. Tone and language should be respectful, supportive and mindful of those affected.

**Consistency:** Messages shared across platforms including email, text alerts, website updates, social media and media briefings must align to prevent confusion. All communication should originate from or be coordinated through the office of Marketing & University Relations.

**Timeliness:** Communication must occur promptly to support safety, reduce uncertainty, and limit the spread of rumors. The university will issue initial notifications as soon as essential facts are confirmed and follow with regular updates when needed.

**Transparency:** The university will communicate openly about crises while respecting privacy laws, ongoing investigations and operational security. The goal is to provide clear, factual information without speculation.

### **Definitions of Crisis Types**

The University of South Dakota recognizes that crises vary in scale, urgency and impact. For communication purposes, crises are categorized to support timely decision-making and appropriate messaging. These categories guide the activation level of the Crisis Communications Team and determine which notification protocols apply.

**Imminent Danger or Major Disruption:** Situations that pose an immediate threat to life, safety or major university operations. Examples include an active shooter, fire, tornado, hazardous spill, major utility failure or any condition requiring urgent protective action by the campus community. These situations typically require immediate emergency notification and coordination with the University Police Department.

**Public Relations or Reputational Crisis:** Incidents that may significantly affect public trust or raise concerns about institutional integrity, even if there is no direct threat to safety. Examples include allegations of misconduct, academic integrity concerns, employee behavior requiring investigation or events likely to draw regional or national media attention.

**Health and Safety Incident:** Public health threats such as infectious disease outbreaks, environmental hazards or food-related illnesses that require coordinated communication with campus health officials, state agencies and affected populations.

**Operational or Technology Disruption:** Events that impair critical university systems, such as extended network outages, cyberattacks, data breaches or failures affecting essential services. These incidents may require collaboration with ITS, state partners and regulatory agencies.

**Off-Campus Incidents with On-Campus Impact:** Events occurring off university property that nevertheless affect members of the USD community, such as a student-athlete car crash, incidents involving study-abroad participants or emergencies affecting partner organizations.

**Death or Serious Injury:** Incidents involving the death or severe injury of a student, employee or visitor. Communication must be coordinated closely with law enforcement, Student Services, Human Resources and, when appropriate, family members.

### **Crisis Governance Structure**

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The University of South Dakota maintains a defined governance structure to ensure that crisis communication is coordinated, efficient and aligned with institutional leadership. The structure clarifies decision-making authority, communication roles and required collaboration among university offices.

**President:** Provides institutional leadership and authorizes high-level communications when appropriate. The President may serve as spokesperson when the gravity of the incident requires direct executive messaging. The President also manages communication with the SDBOR.

**Assistant Vice President for Marketing and University Relations:** Serves as the university's communications lead during all crises. This role oversees message development, approves outgoing information, coordinates media relations, and ensures communications are consistent, accurate and aligned with university priorities.

**University Police Department:** Has primary authority for emergency notifications as required under the Clery Act. UPD provides critical safety information, verifies facts in real time, and collaborates with the communications lead on public messaging, coordinating with city, state, and federal agencies as appropriate.

**General Counsel:** Advises on legal considerations, compliance requirements, privacy protections and risk exposure in communication. Coordinates messaging in matters involving investigations, confidentiality or potential liability.

**Provost:** Provides academic leadership and ensures communication is conveyed appropriately to faculty and academic units. Supports decision-making on academic continuity during crises.

**Dean of Students:** Provides guidance on student safety, welfare and support needs during crises and coordinates student-focused services such as counseling, housing and case management. Advises the communications lead on student-appropriate messaging and assists with outreach to affected students and families when appropriate.

**Vice Presidents and Operational Leaders:** Engage as needed to provide subject expertise, operational status updates and situational awareness. Assist with internal distribution of information within their respective divisions.

**Crisis Communications Team:** Led by the AVP for Marketing & University Relations and includes a combination of the aforementioned campus leaders based on the nature and scope of the incident. The team is activated when a crisis meets defined thresholds for safety risk, operational disruption or reputational impact. The team collaborates to verify information, determine communication strategy, and coordinate dissemination across university channels.

### **Crisis Communication Activation Levels**

The University of South Dakota uses a tiered activation structure to guide communication decisions during emergencies. This structure ensures that response efforts scale appropriately based on the severity, urgency and potential impact of the situation.

Level 1 - Disruption: These incidents cause minimal or localized operational impact and do not pose immediate safety risks. Examples include short-term power interruptions, isolated technology outages or minor facility issues. Communication is typically limited to affected units.

Level 2 - Significant Impact: These events affect broader campus operations, require coordinated communication across multiple units or may generate heightened public interest. Examples include extended outages, data breaches, reputational incidents or situations requiring coordinated messaging with external partners. Activation of the Crisis Communications Team may be necessary.

Level 3 - Critical or Immediate Danger: Level 3 incidents pose an imminent threat to life, safety or major university operations. Examples include an active shooter, major fire, hazardous materials incident or severe weather emergency. These incidents require immediate emergency notification under federal law and close coordination between the University Police Department and the communications lead. The Crisis Communications Team is fully activated.

Level 3 crisis communications may also include notification to and coordination with the South Dakota Board of Regents, as well as the use of social media, university web alerts and other communication methods, depending on the severity of the incident.

#### **Activation Decision Process:**

The AVP for Marketing and University Relations, in consultation with the University Police Department, General Counsel and university leadership, determines the appropriate activation level based on available information. Decisions may be updated as conditions evolve.

#### **Decision-Making Considerations:**

Severity and immediacy of risk to life or safety

Scope of operational disruption

Potential impact on reputation or public confidence

Legal and regulatory requirements, including Clery Act notifications

Need for coordination with external agencies or partner organizations

### **Communication Protocols**

The University of South Dakota follows structured communication protocols to ensure clear, accurate and timely distribution of information during crises. These protocols outline how information is gathered, verified, approved and disseminated across internal and external channels.

### **Information Verification and Approval**

All information shared publicly or internally during a crisis must be verified through appropriate authorities. Safety-related information is confirmed by the University Police Department, while operational details are confirmed by the relevant administrative units. All crisis-related communications are drafted or reviewed by the designated communications lead. Final approval may be escalated to the President or General Counsel, depending on the nature of the incident.

### **Internal Communication Procedures**

Internal audiences include students, faculty and staff. Communication with these groups is delivered through university-managed platforms including email, text alerts and the university website. Messaging must reflect clear instructions, operational status updates and any actions required of the community.

### **External Communication Procedures**

External stakeholders include media, partner organizations, government agencies, alumni, parents and the broader public. The AVP for Marketing and University Relations serves as the official point of contact for all external messaging and media inquiries. When necessary, communication is coordinated with partner institutions and impacted organizations to ensure aligned messaging.

### **Clery Act and UPD Coordination**

Emergency notifications and timely warnings required under the Clery Act are issued by the University Police Department in coordination with the communications lead. These notifications follow federally mandated content and timing standards to ensure immediate and effective reach to the campus community.

### **Media Relations**

The university maintains a controlled and proactive media posture during crises. Only designated spokespeople may speak publicly on behalf of the institution. Media statements are concise, factual and updated as information evolves. Press briefings may be held for significant incidents.

### **Social Media Protocols**

Social media communication must be aligned with verified facts and official messaging. During a crisis, content scheduling is paused on institutional accounts. Social media managers direct audiences to official communication channels and avoid responding to unverified comments or speculation.

### **Coordination with Partner Organizations**

When a crisis involves external partners such as health systems, SDBOR and other state agencies or law enforcement, communication is coordinated to ensure accuracy and prevent conflicting messages. Partner organizations may issue their own statements, but alignment is maintained through consistent talking points.

### **Stakeholder Messaging Tracks**

Whenever possible, the University of South Dakota tailors crisis communications to the needs of specific stakeholder groups to promote clarity, relevance and trust.

Students: Clear, direct instructions emphasizing safety and operational changes.

Faculty & Staff: Academic continuity guidance, classroom impacts and support resources, operational instructions, and workplace expectations and HR-related impacts.

Parents/Families: Contextual updates focused on student safety and available support.

Board of Regents: High-level situational updates and institutional impacts.

Media: Factual, timely briefings coordinated through the communications lead.

Donors/Alumni: Assurance-focused updates about institutional stability and response.

Community Partners: Information relevant to local agencies, neighbors and the broader region.

### **Messaging Channels & Tools**

Effective crisis communication requires the use of multiple, complementary tools to ensure information reaches all intended audiences in a timely and accessible manner. The University of South Dakota maintains several official communication channels for emergency use.

### **Everbridge and Mass Notifications**

Everbridge is the university's emergency alert system, used to send text messages, emails and push notifications to students and employees. The University Police Department initiates alerts, including those required under the Clery Act, while the communications lead may assist with follow-up notifications and clarifications.

### **Website Alerts**

The university's public website (usd.edu) serves as a primary communication platform during crises. Emergency banners or full-page alerts may be activated for urgent or high-impact situations. Alerts provide brief, actionable information and direct users to additional details as

needed. Web updates are managed through Marketing and University Relations and executed with support of ITS.

### **Email**

The university relations email (urelations@usd.edu) account is used for campuswide communications during Level 1 and Level 2 crisis scenarios. This account allows for both targeted and global distribution to students, faculty, staff and campus-specific segments. Email communications are used to share detailed instructions, operational updates and follow-up messages.

The university emergency email (emergency@usd.edu) account is used for campuswide communications during Level 3 crisis scenarios. This account is reserved for time-sensitive, high-priority messaging and serves as the primary channel for issuing urgent updates and instructions. It also provides a dedicated space for two-way communication, allowing the university to receive and assess feedback as situations evolve.

### **Social Media**

Social media may be utilized as a supplemental communications tool during Level 3 crisis scenarios. Official university social media channels are used to provide real-time updates and direct audiences to authoritative information sources. During crisis situations, all scheduled posts are suspended, and only verified, approved content is shared. The communications lead oversees all social media activity to ensure accuracy, consistency and alignment with institutional messaging.

### **Phone**

During a Level 3 crisis scenario, a dedicated phone line may be established to support streamlined, two-way communication. Public-facing phone lines may be automatically routed to this emergency line, which will be monitored by designated personnel to ensure timely response and consistent information sharing.

### **Media Advisories and Press Releases**

External media play a significant role in disseminating information during large-scale or high-visibility incidents. Media advisories, statements and press releases are issued through Marketing and University Relations. Only designated spokespeople may provide interviews or comments.

### **Press Conferences**

In situations of high public interest, the university may hold press briefings. The communications lead coordinates logistics, spokesperson preparation and message alignment. Locations are selected to ensure safety and minimize disruption to campus operations. See Appendix H for more information.

### **Internal Communication Platforms**

Internal communication systems such as Coyote One Stop, Campus Groups, D2L and webinars may be used for targeted or follow-up communications. These platforms support detailed operational messages that may not be appropriate for mass alerts.

### **Partner Communication Channels**

When crises involve external organizations such as Avera, Sanford Health, SDBOR, Governor's Office or state agencies, coordinated communication efforts are required. Messaging is aligned through shared talking points and mutual approval of joint statements when appropriate.

## **8. Plan Development and Maintenance**

As assigned by the USD President, the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is developed and maintained by the University Police Department. Serving as an addendum to standard University administrative procedures, the EOP grants the president or designee the emergency authority to take necessary actions and authorize emergency expenditures of university funds in response to emergency conditions.

The EOP is reviewed and updated through the following general process:

- An internal review and update conducted by the Chief of Police.
- The Policy Group is requested to review the current version and offer comments or updates.
- Proposed revisions are collected and summarized by the Chief of Police

This plan may be updated following each emergency or EOC activation, based on findings from After-Action Reports (AARs) and Improvement Plans (IPs), or as part of the annual review process.

Any substantive amendments require approval from the USD President.

### **8.1 After-Action Reporting**

Following an event that requires activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), the University of South Dakota will develop an After-Action Report (AAR). The AAR provides a structured process to review the actions taken during the response, identify shortcomings in resources or equipment, improve operational readiness, and highlight strengths. This report facilitates dedicated time and processes to evaluate areas for improvement and best practices in emergency response. In addition to post-EOC activations, an AAR may also be conducted following University exercises.

Within 7 days of EOC demobilization, the EOC Director or designee will convene an After-Action Debriefing with key campus stakeholders, including members of the campus emergency

management team. The findings of this meeting will be compiled into the AAR, which will then be shared with the Policy Group for review and feedback.

As part of the AAR process, USD will also develop an Improvement Plan (IP) as necessary. The IP identifies areas for improvement drawn from the AAR, outlines corrective actions, assigns responsible parties, and suggests timelines for completion. The Chief of Police is responsible for overseeing the AAR and IP processes and for following up with university employees, departments, and offices to monitor progress on assigned corrective actions.

## 9. Authorities

The EOP addresses USD's emergency responsibilities. The following sources provided supportive material.

### 9.1 Federal

- Federal Civil Defense Act of 1950, Public Law (PL) 81-950, as amended
- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, PL 93- 288, as amended
- Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 44, Emergency Management Assistance
- Critical Infrastructure Information Act of 2002
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5, February 28, 2003
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive 7, December 17, 2003
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8, March 30, 2011
- The National Incident Management System (NIMS), as prescribed by Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 – Management of Domestic Incidents
- National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP)
- Presidential Decision Directive/NSC-63
- Protected Critical Infrastructure Information (PCII) Program

### 9.2 South Dakota

- South Dakota Codified Laws (SDCL) Chapter 33-15: Emergency Management
- South Dakota Codified Laws (SDCL) Chapter 34-48A: Emergency Management
- South Dakota Department of Public Safety – Emergency Management Administrative Rules
- South Dakota Administrative Rules related to emergency management.

## 10. Acronyms and Glossary

### 10.1 Acronyms

Acronym	Definition
AAR	After-Action Report
AS	Associated Students
CEMMA	Campus Emergency Management Mutual Assistance Agreement
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
ConOps	Concept of Operations
DSW	Disaster Service Workers
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
HVRA	Hazard Vulnerability and Risk Assessment
IAP	Incident Action Plan
IC	Incident Command

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Acronym	Definition
ICP	Incident Command Post
ICS	Incident Command System
IP	Improvement Plan
IPP	Integrated Preparedness Plan
JIC	Joint Information Center
JIS	Joint Information System
MA	Mutual Aid
MMAA	Master Mutual Aid Agreement
NIMS	National Incident Management System
NIPP	National Infrastructure Protection Plan
NPS	National Preparedness System
NRF	National Response Framework
OEM	Office of Emergency Management
PCII	Protected Critical Infrastructure Information

Acronym	Definition
PIO	Public Information Officer
PL	Public Law
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
UPD	University Police Department

## 10.2 Glossary

**After-Action Report (AAR)** – A document intended to capture observations of an exercise or real-world emergency response operations and make recommendations for post-exercise or post-emergency improvements.

**Emergency Operations Center (EOC)** – The location at which the coordination of information and resources to support an emergency response takes place. Also used to refer to the group of individuals staffing the EOC. An EOC may be a temporary facility, located in a more central or permanently established facility, or may operate virtually.

**EOC Director** – The organizational element responsible for managing the EOC. This individual will be designated by the President or their appointee. Depending on the specific nature of the incident, this person may be the USD Chief of Staff, USD Chief of Police, or another qualified individual.

**Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)** – Describes the structure and process for a coordinated approach to an all-hazards response. It details who is responsible for carrying out specific actions and outlines how actions will be coordinated.

**Incident Action Plan (IAP)** – A document developed prior to a planned event or during an emergency response to prepare for future operational periods and upcoming response actions. The IAP is central to managing an incident using ICS principles and communicates incident objectives and tactics that will be used to manage the incident.

**Incident Commander (IC)** – The Incident Command System organizational element responsible for overall management of the incident and consisting of the Incident Commander (either single or Unified Command structure) and any assigned supporting staff.

**Incident Command System (ICS)** – A formal structure for emergency management used by local, state, and federal response agencies during an emergency response.

**Joint Information Center (JIC)** – A facility in which personnel coordinate incident related public information activities. The JIC serves as the central point of contact for all news media. Public information officials from all participating agencies co-locate at, or virtually coordinate through, the JIC.

**Joint Information System (JIS)** – A structure that integrates incident information and public affairs into a cohesive organization designed to provide consistent, coordinated, accurate, accessible, timely and complete information during crisis or incident operations.

**Mutual Aid Agreement** – Written agreement between agencies and/or jurisdictions in which they agree to assist one another upon request, by furnishing personnel and equipment.

**Policy Group** – A group composed of the president and Cabinet, which functions as a strategic leadership team, setting general policy regarding overall USD emergency operations and recovery plans.

**Unified Command (UC)** – Unified Command exists when more than one organization/agency has command authority for an incident, and they work together under a single unified command to manage incident response. UC is an application of ICS and may be established at the field response level when more than one agency has jurisdictional responsibilities.

# 11. Campus Hazard Assessment and Assumptions

The University of South Dakota (USD) acknowledges and adopts as foundational guidance the [South Dakota Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plan](#), developed and maintained by the South Dakota Office of Emergency Management (OEM). This statewide plan identifies potential risks and strategies to reduce or eliminate damage from both natural and human-caused disasters across South Dakota, including Vermillion and Sioux Falls. The Clay County and Minnehaha County pre-disaster mitigation plans may be found [here](#).

USD recognizes that specific threats to its main campus, the Sioux Falls location, or to students, faculty, and staff while traveling or participating in University-related activities may arise from a range of hazards. These hazards—whether natural or man-made—represent events or conditions that could cause fatalities, injuries, illness, property damage, infrastructure disruptions, environmental harm, or significant interruptions to academic instruction, research, or business operations.

A natural hazard becomes a threat when it results in damage or endangers life. Examples include:

- Floods
- Severe storms and tornados
- Extreme winter weather
- Wildfires
- Drought
- Earthquakes (low probability but possible)

A human-caused hazard arises from intentional or accidental human activity and includes:

- Hazardous material spills or releases
- Utility failure or infrastructure breakdown
- Acts of violence, including active shooter events
- Cybersecurity incidents
- Pandemics or widespread infectious disease outbreaks
- Terrorism

USD's emergency preparedness and hazard mitigation efforts are aligned with these identified risks. The University uses local hazard assessments in conjunction with the South Dakota Hazard Mitigation Plan to inform emergency planning, strengthen resilience, and guide continuity of operations across its campuses.

## 11.1 Shelter In Place

A shelter-in-place directive is issued when it is safer to remain indoors than to evacuate due to hazardous environmental conditions. This may include severe weather, chemical spills, or airborne contaminants. The goal is to limit exposure to outside threats while keeping occupants secure indoors.

This protocol is different from lockdown procedures. A shelter-in-place does not involve an active threat of violence but instead addresses non-violent external hazards.

### A. When to Shelter in Place

- Situations that may warrant a shelter-in-place order include:
  - Tornado warnings or extreme weather
  - Hazardous materials incidents (chemical, biological, or radiological)
  - Smoke or air quality alerts
  - Nearby industrial accidents
  - Shelter-in-place instructions will be communicated via the Everbridge system, email, or official USD communication channels.

### B. Procedures: What to Do

- Remain calm and act quickly.
- Stay indoors. Do not leave the building unless you are in immediate danger (e.g., fire, structural collapse).
- If you are outside, enter the nearest building immediately.
- Seek an interior room, preferably one with few or no windows.
- Allow others to enter if they are seeking shelter.
- Close all doors and windows to the outside. Shut off fans, heating, or ventilation systems if directed.
- Move away from windows, glass, and exterior doors.
- Use multiple rooms if necessary to prevent overcrowding.
- Monitor official university alerts via:
  - Everbridge
  - USD email
  - USD website and social media

Report emergencies or unusual conditions to University Police Department:

- Call 911 or
- (605) 658-6199

Remain sheltered until you receive an official “All Clear” from:

- University Police
- USD Everbridge
- University administration via email or website

C. Key Reminders:

- Do not evacuate unless explicitly instructed.
- Do not use elevators during shelter-in-place unless authorized.
- Stay informed and follow all instructions from emergency personnel or official communications.

## 11.2 Tornadoes

South Dakota, including both Vermillion and Sioux Falls, is vulnerable to tornadoes and severe convective storms, particularly during the spring and summer months. South Dakota lies within a region of the central United States commonly referred to as "Tornado Alley," where warm, moist air masses from the Gulf of America collide with cold, dry air from Canada, creating ideal conditions for severe weather.

Tornadoes in South Dakota can vary in intensity but have the potential to cause catastrophic damage, injury, or death. Tornadoes are often accompanied by high winds, hail, lightning, and torrential rain, which may contribute to secondary hazards such as flooding, downed power lines, or structural fires.

### A. Local Impact

The University of South Dakota and USD–Sioux Falls may be directly impacted by tornadoes or related severe weather events. A direct strike or near-miss tornado could result in:

- Injury or loss of life
- Damage to campus infrastructure (buildings, utilities, equipment)
- Debris hazards or blocked access roads
- Loss of power, communication, or water service
- Temporary or long-term disruption to campus operations, instruction, or housing

Tornadoes can develop quickly with little warning. The time of day and whether classes or events are in session will affect how many individuals are at risk. A widespread outbreak or regional tornado event could delay or limit outside assistance due to overloaded emergency services.

### B. Campus Response

Campus initial response departments include:

- University Police Department (UPD)
- Facilities Management
- Environmental Health & Safety
- Emergency Management

If a tornado impacts the main campus or Sioux Falls location, full or partial activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) may be necessary, depending on the severity and scope of the incident. The following response activities may be required:

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- Activation of tornado sirens and shelter-in-place alerts
- Opening designated storm shelters on campus
- Coordination of building inspections and damage assessments
- Triage and medical assistance for injured individuals
- Coordination with local emergency services and South Dakota Department of Public Safety
- Communication with the campus community through emergency notification systems (e.g., Everbridge, email, social media)
- Establishment of temporary shelter, relocation, or recovery operations
- Documentation for FEMA/state aid and insurance claims

### Inside of Buildings

- **Seek Shelter Immediately:** Go to a pre-designated tornado shelter area, such as a basement or an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor of the building. Avoid windows, doors, and outside walls.
- **Protect Yourself:** Get under a sturdy piece of furniture or cover yourself with a mattress, blanket, or heavy coat. Use your arms to protect your head and neck.
- **Stay Away from Hazards:** Avoid areas with large glass windows, high ceilings, or free-standing shelves and bookcases that could fall.
- **Remain in Shelter:** Stay in your shelter location until you receive official notification from emergency personnel or an “All Clear” message is issued by the USD emergency alert system.
- **Do Not Use Elevators** during severe weather or power outages.

### Outside of Buildings

- Do not try to outrun a tornado in a vehicle or on foot. If you are caught outside with no shelter:
  - Lie flat in a nearby low-lying area such as a ditch and cover your head with your hands.
  - Avoid taking shelter under bridges or overpasses.
  - Watch for flying debris, which is the leading cause of tornado-related injuries and deaths.

### After the Tornado Passes

- **Wait for Official Instructions** before leaving your shelter.
- **Avoid Damaged Areas:** Do not enter buildings that appear unsafe. Be cautious of fallen power lines, gas leaks, and debris.
- **Report Injuries or Hazards:** Contact USD Police or emergency personnel to report injuries, damage, or any hazardous conditions.

### Preparedness Guidance

- Students, faculty, and staff should:
  - Familiarize themselves with the nearest tornado shelter locations in all campus buildings.

- Sign up for USD's emergency alert system to receive tornado watches and warnings.
- Keep individual emergency kits with essential supplies, such as flashlights, water, and first-aid materials.

For more preparedness information and shelter maps, visit USD's Emergency Preparedness site: <https://www.usd.edu/Student-Life/Security-and-Safety>.

## 11.3 Fire

### A. Local Impact

The University of South Dakota (USD) is susceptible to both building fires and regional wildfires. The campus comprises numerous buildings, including specialized facilities for various academic disciplines. Given the region's climate and vegetation, wildfires pose a significant threat to the campus and surrounding areas.

**Building Fires:** These can result in injuries, loss of life, and damage to property. USD's facilities are equipped with fire alarm systems to alert occupants in case of a fire.

**Wildfires:** While less likely to directly impact the campus, wildfires in the region can affect USD through smoke inhalation, reduced air quality, and potential disruptions to transportation and utilities.

### B. Campus Response

USD's initial response to fire emergencies involves coordination among various departments:

- University Police or Sioux Falls Police
- Vermillion Fire/EMS or Sioux Falls Fire Rescue
- Facilities Management
- Environmental Health & Safety

#### Building Fires:

- **Activation of Fire Alarm Systems:** Upon detection of a fire, the building's fire alarm system will be activated to alert occupants.
- **Evacuation Procedures:** Occupants should evacuate the building immediately using the nearest safe exit. Elevators should not be used during a fire evacuation.
- **Assembly Points:** After evacuating, individuals should proceed to designated assembly points away from the building.
- **Communication:** USD's Mass Notification System (Everbridge) may be activated to provide information and instructions to the campus community.

#### Wildfires:

- **Monitoring:** USD will monitor local wildfire conditions through local authorities and emergency services.

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- Communication: The campus community will be informed of potential wildfire threats via the Mass Notification System (Everbridge) and other communication channels.
- Evacuation: If necessary, the campus may be evacuated based on guidance from local authorities.

### C. Individual Response

#### Building Fire:

1. Activate the Fire Alarm: Use a manual pull station to activate the building's fire alarm system.
2. Evacuate the Building: Leave the building immediately using the nearest safe exit. Do not use elevators.
3. Call 911: Once safely outside, call 911 to report the fire.
4. Assemble at Designated Points: Proceed to the designated assembly point and await further instructions.

#### Wildfire in the Region:

1. Stay Informed: Listen to instructions from local emergency personnel and monitor local news for updates.
2. Protect Yourself from Smoke: If advised, stay indoors to avoid exposure to smoke. Close windows and doors and use air purifiers if available.
3. Evacuate if Necessary: If instructed by authorities, evacuate the area using designated routes.
4. Follow Official Instructions: Adhere to all instructions from local authorities regarding evacuation and safety measures.

### D. Additional Resources

- USD Emergency Management: <https://www.usd.edu/emergency>
- Ready South Dakota: <https://www.ready.gov/sd>
- South Dakota Wildfire Information: <https://gfp.sd.gov/wildfire>

## 11.4 Hazardous Materials and Spills

The University of South Dakota (USD) is located in Vermillion, a region that includes educational, residential, and light industrial areas. USD – Sioux Falls is location in a region that includes educational, residential, and light industrial areas. As part of a community intersected by local highways and utility infrastructure, the campus faces potential risks related to hazardous material releases. These may include spills of chemicals used in laboratories, fuel pipeline incidents, transportation accidents, or exposure to agricultural or industrial materials in the broader region.

Hazardous materials (HazMat) incidents may result from natural disasters, human error, equipment failure, or intentional acts. Common HazMat types include chemical, biological,

radiological, and flammable materials. While USD maintains strict safety protocols, the university recognizes the potential impact of both on-campus and off-campus hazardous materials emergencies.

A. Local Impact

- Hazardous materials incidents can result in:
- Serious health effects including injury or illness
- Evacuation or shelter-in-place orders
- Disruption to campus operations, instruction, and research
- Environmental contamination or property damage
- Depending on the substance, weather conditions, and the location of the release, impacts could range from a contained building-level incident to a broader campus or regional emergency. Transportation routes, such as U.S. Highway 50 and local rail lines, as well as underground fuel or utility pipelines, pose external risks.

B. Campus Response

Initial response units:

- USD University Police Department (UPD) or the Sioux Falls Police Department / Sioux Falls Fire Department
- Environmental Health & Safety (EH&S) as applicable
- Facilities Management

If a hazardous materials release is identified, the campus EOC may be partially or fully activated depending on the scale of the event. Key response actions may include:

- Emergency notifications and shelter-in-place or evacuation orders
- Rescue or medical response coordination
- Hazard containment and coordination with local HazMat teams
- Protective actions for students, faculty, staff, and visitors, with special consideration for those with disabilities or access and functional needs (AFN)
- Communication with local responders (e.g., Vermillion Fire EMS, Clay County Office of Emergency Management, and South Dakota Department of Public Safety or Sioux Falls Police Dept, Sioux Falls Fire Department, Minnehaha County Office of Emergency Management, etc.)
- Continuity planning to maintain essential services and instruction
- Evacuation planning should ensure:
- Use of evacuation chairs or other assistive devices
- Clear signage and communication tools (large font, pictograms, alternative languages, ASL interpreters as needed)
- Shelter locations with accommodation for AFN individuals, including those with mobility, sensory, or cognitive needs.

### C. Individual Response

For all individuals on campus:

- Immediately report any suspected hazardous materials incident to 911 and UPD/local law enforcement
- Move away from the affected area; alert others to evacuate or shelter in place
- If instructed to shelter in place:
  - Go indoors
  - Close windows and doors
  - Turn off ventilation systems if safe to do so
  - Follow all instructions from emergency personnel
  - If exposed or contaminated, report symptoms to emergency responders

Additional resources:

- USD Emergency Preparedness website
- USD EH&S Safety Data Sheet (SDS) library
- South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources (DANR)
- U.S. Department of Transportation PHMSA Pipeline Mapper (for external pipeline awareness)
- All USD community members are encouraged to become familiar with evacuation routes, shelter-in-place procedures, and to maintain personal emergency kits.

## 11.5 Infectious Diseases

An influenza pandemic or other widespread infectious disease outbreak has the potential to cause rapid increases in illness and death across all age groups, including healthy individuals. A pandemic occurs when a virus mutates so that most or all of the world's population has little or no immunity, making them vulnerable to infection.

### A. Local Impact

A pandemic or infectious disease outbreak may simultaneously affect communities across South Dakota and surrounding regions. This could impact services provided by Clay County, the City of Vermillion, and USD.

Possible campus impacts include:

Delays in vaccine or antiviral availability

Disruptions to academic programs and campus operations

Interruptions to community support services such as transportation and health care access

### B. Campus Response

Initial response departments: Student Health Services (liaison to Clay County Health Department), Environmental Health & Safety, USD University Police, Housing

Potential campus response actions include:

- Providing care and shelter for campus residents, with accommodations for individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs (AFN). Shelter locations will consider wheelchair access, animal service support, quiet areas, and other AFN requirements. Communication services may include visual aids, certified American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters, assistive listening devices, and translation services for non-English speakers.
- Special handling of campus research activities to maintain safety and continuity
- Ensuring continuation or completion of academic instruction through remote learning or other methods as needed
- Potential campus evacuation or closure as directed by the President or designee
- Activation of campus communication systems to provide timely information and public health guidance
- Activation of business continuity plans to sustain essential campus functions
- Coordination with regional colleges/universities and local, state, and federal health authorities and first responders

### C. Individual Response

- To protect yourself and others from infectious diseases such as the flu:
- Get a seasonal flu vaccine each year—the CDC recommends this as the most important preventive step
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Stay home and limit contact with others when you are sick
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow when coughing or sneezing
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water
- Clean and disinfect commonly touched surfaces regularly
- Take antiviral medications if prescribed by your healthcare provider

USD community members are encouraged to maintain personal preparedness kits including hygiene supplies and medications.

## 11.6 Active Assailant/Act of Violence

An act of violence may include an active assailant (also referred to as an active shooter) or violent intruder seeking to cause mass harm in a condensed period. These incidents are unpredictable and may escalate rapidly, requiring immediate law enforcement intervention. All members of the USD community are encouraged to maintain situational awareness and report suspicious behavior to the University Police Department (UPD). UPD shall maintain tactical operations plans to respond to incidents of violence on campus.

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### A. Local Impact

An active assailant incident may result in injury, loss of life, significant psychological trauma, and the disruption of academic, residential, or administrative operations. Such incidents typically occur with little or no warning and can impact the broader campus environment, including law enforcement and emergency medical service capacities in Vermillion or other campus sites.

### B. Campus Response

Lead Response Department: University Police Department (UPD)

Support Departments: Student Services, Facilities Management, Student Counseling Center, and others.

#### Emergency Response Actions May Include:

- Immediate law enforcement operations to stop the threat.
- Activation of the Incident Command System (ICS) by UPD or the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), depending on the scale of the incident.
- Evacuation or secure-in-place orders for affected buildings or campus areas.
- Inclusive evacuation planning for individuals with disabilities or access and functional needs (AFN), including coordination with paratransit, local agencies, and provision of accessible transportation and communication tools.
- Building lockdowns or closures, with controlled reentry managed by law enforcement.
- Use of the USD emergency alert system (e.g., Everbridge) to notify the campus of real-time threats and instructions.
- Deployment of business continuity plans by departments to sustain critical operations or transition to remote services.
- Support for academic continuity, including remote learning options or alternative instruction plans.
- Protection of research assets, including secure laboratory lockdown procedures.
- Coordination with external partners, including the Vermillion Police Department, Clay County Sheriff, South Dakota Highway Patrol, Sioux Falls Police Department, and federal authorities as needed.
- Provision of emergency shelter or relocation support, with AFN accommodations such as quiet areas, assistive listening devices, personal assistants, service animal accommodations, and multilingual materials.
- Post-incident building inspections, re-entry clearance, and scene recovery.

#### Mental Health and Recovery Support:

Following an active assailant incident, the University will deploy student and employee mental health resources including crisis counseling, peer support, and wellness services. These may be coordinated by the USD Counseling Center and Human Resources.

### C. Individual Response

Individual action can save lives during an act of violence. USD follows the multi-option response strategy, aligned with the Run, Hide, Fight model and endorsed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

**If You Hear or See a Threat:**

**RUN:** If there is a safe escape path, evacuate immediately. Leave belongings behind, keep your hands visible, and assist others if possible.

**HIDE:** If evacuation is not possible, hide in a secure room, lock and barricade doors, silence your phone, and remain quiet.

**FIGHT:** As a last resort, if your life is in immediate danger, attempt to incapacitate the attacker by acting aggressively, throwing objects, and using improvised weapons.

**Additional Instructions:**

- Call 9-1-1 if it is safe to do so. If you cannot speak, leave the line open so the dispatcher can hear. You may also text 9-1-1.
- Follow law enforcement instructions when help arrives.
- Do not re-enter buildings until they are cleared by authorities.
- USD community members are strongly encouraged to complete Active Assailant Response Training. Training can be scheduled through the University Police Department.

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**D. Preparedness**

All departments and individuals should:

- Know your nearest exits and evacuation routes.
- Download Everbridge to receive emergency notifications.
- Practice emergency drills and active threat protocols.
- Maintain departmental emergency and business continuity plans.

## **11.7 Terrorism**

### **Terrorism Preparedness and Response**

Terrorism may occur in a variety of ways in the United States. Impacts across the United States, the State of South Dakota, and local jurisdictions such as Clay County may affect normal operating conditions at the University of South Dakota (USD) for a variety of reasons.

Conventional acts of terrorism cause physical damage to people or property and may include bombings, shootings, and hijackings. Bioterrorism causes serious harm or death to people through the spread of bacteria, viruses, or toxins via food, water supplies, or air. Chemical weapons may also be used to poison people, animals, and plants. The State of South Dakota and Clay County maintain emergency operations plans in the event of terrorist threats or attacks.

#### **A. Local Impact**

Incidents of this nature may cause injury or loss of life, disrupt academic and business operations, and allow little or no time for planning. Such events could directly impact the USD campus or the surrounding region.

## B. Campus Response

Primary Campus Response Department: University of South Dakota Police Department (USD Police)

State and local public health and emergency management officials will provide public alerts via television, radio, social media, and emergency notification systems in the event of a terrorist attack. USD will follow directives from Clay County Office of Emergency Management, the South Dakota Department of Public Safety, and other appropriate authorities.

### Response Activities May Include:

- Law enforcement operations by USD Police and local/state/federal partners
- Building evacuations, with special attention to individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs (AFN), including those reliant on public transit, persons with mobility limitations, and individuals experiencing homelessness. USD maintains procedures and resources for inclusive evacuation planning and will coordinate with local transit providers, including specialized transport services, as needed.
- Shelter-in-place orders for building occupants
- Building safety inspections
- Temporary building closures
- Provision of care and shelter for campus residents and displaced persons, with accessibility considerations such as:
  - Wheelchair access
  - Service animal accommodations
  - Quiet zones for sensory-sensitive individuals
  - Visual language translation and pictograms
  - Certified American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters
  - Video Relay Services (VRS) and Video Remote Interpreters (VRI)
  - Assistive listening devices
  - Non-English translation and accessible signage
  - Personal Assistant Services (PAS)
  - Large print and alternative format materials
- Safeguarding and proper handling of university research assets
- Planning for the continuation and/or completion of academic instruction

### Other actions include:

- Campus-wide evacuation, shelter-in-place, or closure, as directed by the USD President or their designee
- Activation of campus communication systems to inform about hazards and make public announcements
- Activation of departmental business continuity plans to ensure essential operations
- Coordination with the South Dakota Board of Regents and other local colleges or universities
- Coordination with local first responders, public utilities, and city, county, state, and federal agencies

### C. Individual Response

- Be alert and aware of your surroundings; report suspicious activity immediately to the USD Police Department.
- Follow instructions from local officials and university personnel.
- Take protective actions when needed, such as evacuation or shelter-in-place.

For more information on terrorism preparedness in South Dakota, individuals are encouraged to review resources provided by the South Dakota Office of Emergency Management at:

<https://dps.sd.gov/emergency-services/emergency-management>

## 11.8 Utility Interruption/Critical Infrastructure Failure

The potential for failure of campus, local, or regional utilities exists.

### A. Local Impact

Failures of this nature may cause short- or long-term interruptions to electrical, lighting, plumbing, ventilation systems, and water supplies, potentially leaving little or no time for proper planning. Impacts to the local community or the region may include a loss of communication systems and transportation. Impacts to the campus may include the inability to provide academic and business services under normal operating conditions.

### B. Campus Response

Campus initial response departments: Facilities Management, University Police, Housing

The list below summarizes response activities that may be necessary:

- Rescue operations
- Building evacuations; consideration should be given to individuals with disabilities and those with access and functional needs (including, but not limited to, those dependent on public transportation, and/or those with mobility challenges). Inclusive and accessible evacuation and transportation considerations should include requesting specialized vehicles from regional mass transit agencies, public or private paratransit companies, and other colleges/universities.

Building evacuation planning must consider who may need additional accommodation in the event of an emergency. In the event of campus-provided transportation, all signage and communication will comply with the guidelines for communicating with persons with access and functional needs, including:

- Accessible public information and messaging throughout the emergency or event
- Social media and web platforms to include alternative text for images
- Visual language translators or pictograms
- Use of certified American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters
- Video Relay Services (VRS) or Video Remote Interpreters (VRI) availability

- Assistive listening devices
- Non-English translators and signage
- Accessible materials such as forms and brochures
- Personal Assistant Services (PAS) availability
- Large font signage
- Building security and fire watch (residence halls)
- Building inspections
- Building closures
- Provisions for the care and shelter of campus residents; consideration should be given to individuals with disabilities and those with access and functional needs, including accessible considerations for shelters, temporary evacuation points, family resource centers, local assistance centers, and points of distribution. Such facilities will take into consideration accessibility features like wheelchair access, service animal support, and quiet areas. All programs and support services should consider visual language translation or pictograms, ASL interpreters, video relay services, assistive listening devices, non-English translation, and signage, accessible materials, and large format signage. Shelter locations should include a list of support services or third-party vendors who can assist those with disabilities or others with access and functional needs.
- Provisions for and special handling of campus research
- Provisions for continuation/completion of academic instruction
- Campus evacuation, shelter-in-place, or closure (at the direction of the President or his/her designee)
- Campus communication systems activated to provide information on potential hazards and public announcements
- Department business continuity plans activated to continue essential campus operations
- Coordination with South Dakota Board of Regents institutions or local colleges/universities
- Coordination with first responders, local utilities, and/or City, County, State, and Federal agencies

#### C. Individual Response

- Evacuate if instructed to do so; move cautiously.
- Laboratory personnel should secure experiments/activities that may present a danger while power is off or when restored.
- Turn off equipment and unplug electrical devices, computers, and light switches.
- Do not reenter the building until authorized by emergency personnel or the department safety coordinator.

Individuals on campus should become familiar with evacuation and shelter-in-place procedures; information may be found at [www.usd.edu/prepare](http://www.usd.edu/prepare). Individuals on campus should also maintain personal preparedness supplies; recommendations may be found at <https://www.ready.gov/south-dakota>.

## 11.9 International/Domestic Incident During Travel

The potential for an emergency incident or disaster involving University of South Dakota students, faculty, or staff traveling as part of their University activities exists.

All current and future study away participants have been sent an email at their USD accounts informing them about what to do in an emergency.

### University Police Department Instructions

- **CALLS AFTER HOURS:** In the event of a health and safety emergency away (abroad or off- campus), students and/or on-site coordinators will call the University Police Department during non-standard business hours.
- **HEALTH & SAFETY EMERGENCIES:** If the student and/or coordinator calls and is experiencing a true health and/or safety emergency please do the following:
  1. Ask if the student has contacted the on-site coordinator and/or local authorities for assistance. If not, collect the following information and have them hang up and immediately call local emergency services.
  2. Ask for the student's full name, first and last
  3. Description of the emergency
  4. Determine student's location: Country, city, district, circumstances (dorms, office building, train station, etc.)
  5. Get a local number where the student can be reached directly
  6. Inform the student that a Gallagher International Center representative will be called and will be contacting them as soon as possible
  7. Notify the Chief of the University Police Department
  8. Call the Gallagher International Center Emergency Contact:
    - a. First Contact: Kasie Heiden at 605-658-3598
    - b. Secondary Contact: Jessica Winterringer at 605-658-3594
  9. Email the information collected from the student to the email addresses listed above with the name and contact information of the person who took the call.

**OTHER Situations/Non-Emergencies:** If the person calling is reporting a situation that is not a health or safety emergency, please request that they call Global Learning Gallagher International Center during regular business hours (8am-5pm Monday to Friday) or to email [theworld@usd.edu](mailto:theworld@usd.edu) with details of the situation.

Example non-emergencies:

- Student lost her passport and needs it for a trip coming up in 4 days. (This is a serious situation, but can be dealt with during normal business hours. Instruct the student to contact the local coordinator for assistance and to call/email Gallagher International Center during normal business hours. However, if the student has lost her passport and is currently being detained by customs/immigration authorities, it is an emergency and the First Contact should be called.)

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- Student can't get into a course they want at the local university. (Again, this is not an emergency and can be dealt with the next business day.)

Each situation is different, so please use your best judgment to determine if it is a true emergency situation. If you are not sure if the situation is an emergency, call the First Contact.

### Gallagher International Center Contact Instructions

- When you receive a call, get a brief description of the situation from the University Police Department contact. Remind them to send an email with the details and go to the office.
- Collect the student's file (if applicable) to determine what program they are on and who the appropriate on-site or organization contact is.
- Based on the situation, either call the student back immediately or call the on-site coordinator to get more details and/or inform them of the situation.
- For catastrophic and/or fatal situations, contact the Vice President for Enrollment & Student Services at 605-658-6261 and the Dean of Students at 605-658-3555 to determine course of action involving contacting the student's emergency contacts, CISI insurance (or other) provider, student's family, USD media relations, USD campus community, etc.
- Continue to be in consistent contact with student, on-site coordinator, and/or insurance provider to determine course of action.
- Document all communication, actions, and outcomes.
- Prepare a formal Incident Report for the student's file and university records.

## 11.10 Extreme Weather

Extreme weather hazards in South Dakota, including severe thunderstorms, windstorms, heavy rain/hailstorms, tornadoes, and winter storms, can pose significant risks to the University of South Dakota campuses.

### A. Local Impact

Incidents of this nature may have a direct impact on the campus and/or the region. Extreme weather events may cause damage to structures, disrupt power and communication systems, and potentially result in injury or loss of life. These incidents may disrupt academic and business operations and may provide little or no time for proper planning.

### B. Campus Response

Initial response departments: USD Police Department, Facilities Management

The following response activities may be necessary:

Law enforcement response operations

Building evacuations: Special consideration should be given to those with disabilities and others with access and functional needs (including, but not limited to, those dependent on public transportation, pre-disaster homeless, and those with mobility challenges). Inclusive and accessible evacuation and transportation considerations should include: requesting specialized vehicles from local mass transit agencies or paratransit providers.

Evacuation planning should consider individuals who may need additional accommodations, and Safety Coordinators will be trained on Disability/Access and Functional Needs (D/AFN) evacuation considerations. If campus-provided transportation is required, all signage and communication will comply with USD's guidelines for accessible public information and messaging, including alternative text for images, ASL interpreters, and Video Relay Services (VRS) availability.

- Building occupants shelter in place
- Building inspections
- Building closures
- Campus evacuation, shelter in place, or closure (at the direction of the President or designee)
- Campus communication systems activated to provide information on potential hazards and public announcements
- Department business continuity plans activated to ensure essential campus operations continue
- Coordination with South Dakota Board of Regents institutions or local colleges/universities
- Coordination with local first responders, state utilities, and city/county/state emergency management agencies

### C. Individual Response

- If an emergency exists, dial 9-1-1.
- Seek shelter and follow the instructions of campus personnel or emergency first responders.

Individuals on campus should become familiar with evacuation and shelter-in-place procedures; detailed information can be found at USD's emergency preparedness website. Students and staff should also maintain personal preparedness supplies, following guidance on emergency preparedness available from local resources like South Dakota's Ready program.

## 11.11 Flooding

Floods in South Dakota can occur due to heavy rains or rapid snowmelt, causing flash floods or slow-rise flooding. These can disrupt infrastructure, damage property, and threaten public safety.

### A. Local Impact

Flooding may lead to loss of irrigation, destruction of infrastructure such as roads and utilities, and potential loss of life. Floods can significantly impact academic and business operations at USD and surrounding areas.

### B. Campus Response

Initial response departments: USD Police Department, Facilities Management, Housing, municipal law enforcement, fire and EMS services, and the Clay County Office of Emergency Management.

USD's response to flooding will align with guidance from local emergency management agencies and local first responders.

The following activities may be necessary:

- Law enforcement response operations
- Building evacuations: Consideration for those with disabilities and others with access and functional needs. Evacuation will include requesting specialized transportation as needed. Communication and evacuation procedures will follow USD's accessibility guidelines.
- Building inspections and closures
- Provisions for continuation of academic instruction
- Campus evacuation, shelter in place, or closure (at the direction of the President or designee)

- Activation of campus communication systems to provide hazard warnings and instructions
- Department business continuity plans activated to continue essential campus operations
- Coordination with local first responders, SD DPS, local utilities, and state and federal agencies

C. Individual Response

- If an emergency exists, dial 9-1-1.
- Stay away from flood-prone areas and avoid entering flooded roadways.
- Follow the instructions of campus personnel or emergency first responders.

## 11.12 Bomb Threat

Bomb threats, whether real or hoaxes, must be taken seriously. Explosive devices can be disguised as common objects and may be delivered or placed in a variety of ways. At USD, the safety of our students, faculty, and staff is the highest priority. This annex provides guidance for recognizing, reporting, and responding to bomb threats or suspicious packages.

A. General Information

Bomb threats may be received by phone, email, social media, handwritten note, or other means. Most threats are made via telephone and are intended to disrupt operations or cause fear. Regardless of the format, all threats must be reported immediately to the University Police Department (UPD).

Emergency Contact:

University Police Department (24/7)

Call 911 from any campus phone or

(605) 658-6199 from a mobile phone

Immediate Actions by Threat Type for students, staff, and faculty.

If You Receive a Bomb Threat by Phone:

- Stay calm. Do not hang up the phone.
- Notify the police immediately.
- Keep the caller on the line and listen carefully.
- Try to gather as much information as possible. Use the Bomb Threat Checklist if available.

Provide all details to law enforcement, including:

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- The exact words of the caller.
- Any caller ID number displayed.
- Observations about the caller's voice (accent, age, tone).
- Background sounds (machinery, music, crowd noise).
- Any questions answered by the caller (see below).
- Suggested Questions to ask the caller:
  - When is the bomb going to explode?
  - Where is the bomb located?
  - What does it look like?
  - What type of bomb is it?
  - What will cause it to explode?
  - Did you place the bomb?
  - Why are you doing this?

### If You Receive a Bomb Threat by Email or Social Media:

- Do not delete the message.
- Notify UPD/Law enforcement immediately.
- Take a screenshot of the message for documentation.
- Follow instructions from law enforcement or emergency personnel.

### If You Receive a Handwritten Bomb Threat:

- Handle the note as little as possible.
- Place the note in a protective envelope or folder.
- Call UPD immediately at (605) 658-6199.
- Document who discovered the note and who handled it.

### Suspicious Package or Object:

If you find a suspicious item or potential bomb on campus:

#### DO:

- Stay calm. Do not touch, move, or tamper with the object.
- Clear the immediate area and notify others nearby.
- Call UPD at (605) 658-6199 immediately.
- Follow instructions from law enforcement and emergency responders.

#### DO NOT:

- Use radios or cell phones near the object (radio signals can trigger some devices).
- Evacuate the building unless directed by UPD or emergency services.

## University of South Dakota EOP

- Activate the fire alarm system.
- Attempt to open, move, smell, touch, or inspect the package.

Signs of a Suspicious Package include but are not limited to:

- No return address
- Leaking fluid, stains, or unusual odor
- Wires, foil, or protruding materials
- Ticking or unusual sounds
- Unexpected delivery

### B. UPD Responsibilities:

Upon notification, the University Police Department will:

- Evaluate the threat.
- Coordinate with external agencies, including local law enforcement or bomb squad.
- Determine the need for building evacuation or shelter-in-place.
- Activate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) if needed.
- Provide timely updates and instructions to the campus community.

### C. Campus Community Responsibilities:

- Remain vigilant for suspicious behavior or objects.
- Report all threats or suspicious items immediately to University Police.
- Do not spread rumors or unverified information during an incident.

The USD Bomb Threat Check list is available at <https://www.usd.edu/-/media/Project/USD/DotEdu/About/Departments-Offices-and-Resources/University-Police/Bomb-Threat-Checklist.pdf>.

## 11.13 Civil Disturbances and Demonstrations.

The University of South Dakota supports the rights of students, faculty, and staff to express themselves through peaceful assembly, protests, or demonstrations. Most campus events of this nature are conducted in a non-disruptive manner. However, when a demonstration becomes disruptive, destructive, or violent, the University must take action to protect people, property, and the continuity of university operations. USD maintains a Protest Management Guide (PMG) and UPD operations plans that will be used to respond to civil disturbances and disruptive demonstrations.

## **11.14 Unexpected Death Occurring on University Property.**

### DEATH/SUICIDE/HOMICIDE/ACCIDENT AT USD

- Secure the immediate and secondary areas depending on place of event. Limit the access or egress from the area in all situations.

### INNER-UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATION

- In the event of a student death:
  - Notify the Chief of the University Police Department.
  - The Chief of the University Police Department will notify the Dean of Students.
  - The Dean of Students will notify the USD President and Media Relations.
- In the event of a faculty, staff, or visitor death:
  - Notify the Chief of the University Police Department.
  - The Chief of the University Police Department will notify the Director of Human Resources.
  - The Director of Human Resources will notify the USD President and Media Relations.

### INVESTIGATING THE SCENE

- The forensic investigation of the crisis scene will be under the direction of the law enforcement agency with primary jurisdiction and the Clay County Coroner.
- The University Police Department assisting at the scene will be identified to the crisis team by the Chief of the University Police Department.

### NOTIFICATION OF NEXT OF KIN

- Unless extenuating circumstances exist, the notification to the next of kin should be done in person, by a trained professional, e.g. law enforcement officer, minister, medical personnel, counselor, etc.

### DESIGNATION OF UNIVERSITY CONTACT PERSON

- The Vice President of Enrollment and Students Services shall designate on a case by case basis a specific university person the family can call any time of the day or night concerning the event.
- This person may also serve as an escort for the family or make arrangements for picking them up at the airport, possibly taking them to the funeral home, and making other local arrangements.

### DEATH IN RESIDENCE HALL

If the suicide or homicide took place in the residence hall, utilize the residence hall management plan as written.

The steps to be followed include:

1. Emergency counseling in the residence hall spaces for walk in counseling/support
2. Open the Danforth Chapel (as appropriate)
3. Utilize the information display in Muenster University Center (MUC) as well as campus email protocol to give information about services available for students
4. Maintain communication between complex staff and Residence Hall Administration

#### SUPPORT STAFF ACTIONS

- Student Counseling Center, Psychological Services Center and Educational Psychology initiate case staffing to identify potential suicide risks that may be triggered by the current crisis situation.
- The specific tasks to include a quick discussion with counselors, to identify the name of the victim, assess familiarity of any staff member with the victim's friends or significant others, etc. Ethical guidelines for confidentiality will be maintained.
- The University Housing office will assess similar information through RHDs and GAs and RAs and other floor members. Information of the deceased's friends and significant others need to be funneled to the crisis team (as appropriate).
- Medical staff prepare to assist students and staff as necessary.

#### PHYSICAL CHANGES DUE TO THE CRISIS

- Possible emergency housing plans may need to be made for students or staff, if the area of the homicide/suicide must be made secure,
- To identify temporary rooms for the students that were affected, setting of police lines and police barriers will take place as needed. Ensure cleanup of spaces once a body is removed. I.e. Director of the Student Counseling Center and at that person's discretion to provide follow through with counseling as needed. The residence halls contingency plan will make available several options if the death took place in a residence hall room including:
  - the painting of the room
  - the removal of the mattress
  - rearranging of the room as appropriate within the needs of any roommates or as the hall staff deem appropriate.
  - possibly vacating the room until the end of the semester
  - subsequent room occupants may need to be tactfully informed of the room's history for the succeeding semester