



# Emergency Notification (UCF ALERT System)

<b>Policy Number</b>	3-116.1
<b>Responsible Authority</b>	Associate Vice President of Safety and Security and Chief of Police
<b>Initiating Authority</b>	Vice President and Chief Operating Officer
<b>Effective Date</b>	7/24/2019
<b>Date of Origin</b>	8/31/2009

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## APPLICABILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY

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This policy is applicable to all - employees, volunteers, and guests on all University of Central Florida campuses.

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

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The University of Central Florida is committed to providing a safe working and learning environment to protect all members of the university community and to ensure compliance with federal regulation (34 C.F.R. § 668.46).

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## POLICY STATEMENT

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The University of Central Florida, upon confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving a threat to the health and safety of individuals occurring on any UCF campus, will provide timely notification to the university community to take reasonable precautions. Only authorized personnel can operate, activate, or deactivate the UCF ALERT System. This policy establishes procedures for the authorization, activation, operation, and testing of emergency notification systems.

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## DEFINITIONS

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**Activate.** Initiate an action or implementation of a system.

**Confirmation.** A UCF official (or officials) from the list of authorized individuals in the Procedures section of this policy has verified that a legitimate emergency or dangerous situation exists. Confirmation does not necessarily mean that all the pertinent details are known or available.

**Drills.** Test of a procedural operation.

**Exercises.** Test of coordination of efforts.

**Follow-through activity.** An activity designed to review the test.

**Immediate threat.** An imminent or impending threat to the health or safety of students or employees.

**Tests.** Regularly scheduled drills, exercises, and appropriate after-action reviews designed to assess and evaluate emergency plans and capabilities.

**Timely warning.** A message issued to the university community alerting of crimes that have already occurred on university owned or controlled property that continue to pose a threat to health or safety. Timely warnings are issued for both crimes to persons and crimes to property.

**UCF ALERT System.** A multimedia communication system that provides timely and accurate information about emergency situations that could affect the university, which is activated primarily for life safety situations.

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## PROCEDURES

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### I. Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)

- A. The University of Central Florida has a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), which outlines key operational responsibilities in the event of an emergency on campus. Specific procedures are identified in the CEMP to be followed in the event of a campus emergency. The CEMP identifies key emergency support responsibilities as coordinated with the appropriate UCF departments, as well as local, state, and federal agencies.
- B. UCF also maintains university policies, including the UCF Building Evacuation Policy (3-100), to highlight specific processes and procedures to guide the operations of the university. These policies align with the information identified in the UCF CEMP.
- C. UCF will immediately notify the university community, upon the confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of students or employees occurring on the campus.

- D. UCF will, without delay and taking into account the safety of the university community, determine the content of the notification, and initiate the notification system, unless issuing a notification will, in the professional judgment of responsible authorities, compromise efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency.
- E. UCF conducts tests to assess the emergency response and evacuation procedures on an annual basis. These tests may be announced or unannounced. In accordance with federal law, a summary of at least one test will be published on an annual basis.

## **II. Authority**

The following university personnel may authorize the activation of the UCF ALERT System for emergency notifications or timely warnings messages:

- Associate Vice President of Safety and Security and Chief of Police
- Deputy Chief of Police
- Police Majors
- Police Commanders
- Police shift supervisor on duty
- Senior police dispatcher on duty
- Director of Emergency Management
- Emergency Management Coordinators
- Assistant Vice President for UCF Communications
- Associate Director for UCF Communications and Public Safety Information Officer
- President
- Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

During an activation of the UCF ALERT System, the following university personnel have the ability to send messages through the UCF ALERT System:

- Police Dispatchers
- Director of Emergency Management
- Emergency Management Coordinators
- Assistant Vice President for UCF Communications
- Associate Director for UCF Communications and Public Safety Information Officer
- UCF Communications Coordinators

## **III. Activation and De-Activation of the UCF ALERT System**

- A. Individuals who have the authority to activate the UCF ALERT System must ensure that it is activated for life safety situations only and that it is not used for routine notifications.
- B. It is imperative that the notification system is activated immediately upon confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to health or safety.
- C. Depending on the scale and type of emergency, one or more of the notification systems will be used for emergency notifications or timely warnings.

- D. Testing of the UCF ALERT System will be conducted during scheduled times and dates. A timely announcement will be made to inform the university community of any upcoming tests. The Associate Vice President for Safety and Security and Chief of Police has the final authority to approve these tests.
- E. The deactivation of the UCF ALERT system will be done in stages, depending on the scale and type of emergency. A large-scale emergency will require that some UCF ALERT systems remain active until the entire university community is aware of its current status. For example: the UCF Emergency homepage may be used to provide information after the campus has been deemed safe by the appropriate authority.

#### **IV. Confirming the Existence of a Significant Emergency or Dangerous Situation**

- A. All students, employees, and guests should promptly and accurately report crimes in progress, life and death situations, crashes with injuries, and other suspected emergencies and dangerous situations to 911. Dialing 911 on campus will contact University Police. Individuals calling from mobile phones must specify their location and remain on the line until it is confirmed by the dispatcher.
- B. In response to reports of criminal activity, potential emergencies, or dangerous situations on campus, the UCF Police Department will take the required action either by dispatching an officer or by asking the caller to report to UCF Police Department headquarters to file an incident report. UCF Police Department investigators will investigate a report when it is deemed appropriate. Reporting incidents to the UCF Police Department is important to facilitate timely determination of the existence of a significant emergency or dangerous situation, and because it allows criminal offense information to be included in the annual disclosure of crime statistics and assessment for sending the timely warning messages to aid in the prevention of similar crimes.
- C. The UCF Police Department maintains a Daily Crime Log, which is accessible to the public and can be viewed on the [UCF Police Department website](#).

#### **V. How UCF ALERT Works**

- A. UCF ALERT is a multimedia communications system that provides timely and accurate information about emergencies that could affect the university.
- B. The UCF Department of Emergency Management, the UCF Police Department, and UCF Communications determine which notification systems will be used during an emergency. These entities work together to provide timely and accurate information to the university community. Together, they will determine how much information is appropriate to disseminate at different points of time.
- C. If these departments or the individuals listed in Procedure II – Authority receive information about an immediate threat to the UCF campus, they will:
  - 1. confirm that a threat exists;
  - 2. determine which areas of campus should receive the notification;

3. determine the content of the notification;
  4. initiate one or more of the notification systems;
  5. distribute updates to the initial notification, if necessary; and
  6. distribute a final notification informing the university community that the threat to the campus no longer exists.
- D. The entire university community will be notified when there is the potential for a very large segment of the university community to be affected by an immediate threat, or when a situation threatens the operation of the campus as a whole. The threat will continue to be assessed, and additional segments of the university community may be notified if the threat warrants such action. UCF ALERT messages will be used only for events that present an imminent danger to the university community or that will significantly affect university operations, such as bomb threats, road or parking closures due to an emergency, and extreme weather alerts.
- E. At all times, the best source for official news and information is the UCF website, [www.ucf.edu](http://www.ucf.edu). Members of the larger community, such as parents or campus neighbors, can visit the [UCF Police Department's Twitter page](#), to receive campus emergency information. The site will be updated during an emergency as information becomes available. Follow-up information pertaining to emergencies on campus will be disseminated using one or more of the notification systems.

For questions about UCF ALERT and how it is used, contact the UCF Department of Emergency Management.

## VI. **Notifications: Primary and Secondary**

- A. **Primary:** The following notification systems will be the primary and immediate method(s) the university community will be notified about an emergency on campus:
1. **UCF Emergency Homepage ([ucf.edu](http://ucf.edu)):** The UCF homepage will become the UCF emergency homepage during a major emergency and will provide updates, instructions, and information to the university community.
  2. **Mass Notification System (Voice and Speaker Sirens):** Indoor and outdoor sirens on campus will produce a tone followed by a voice message.
  3. **Text Messaging:** Members of the university community will receive a text message on their mobile phones with specific instructions, if they did not opt out.
  4. **Email:** Members of the university community will receive an email at the account provided on their emergency contact information. All members of the university community may sign up for a free Knights email account if they do not have one. It is important that this information is kept up to date.
  5. **NOAA Weather Radios:** UCF has National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) programmable weather radios distributed throughout

campus. In the event of severe weather, these radios will automatically sound the appropriate warning message distributed by the National Weather Service Forecast Office in Melbourne, FL.

6. **Social Media:** The UCF Police Department will share on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) official and consistent updates during emergencies.
- B. **Secondary:** The following notifications systems are other methods UCF may use to keep the university community informed of an emergency on campus. One or more of these systems may be used depending on the scale and size of the emergency.
1. **UCF Main Phone Line, 407-823-2000:** Recorded messages of current events and instructions will be posted.
  2. **Vehicle Public Address Speaker:** If an isolated or targeted message is required, university vehicles equipped with public address speakers (e.g., UCF police vehicles) may utilize this method.
  3. **Media Communication:** Depending on the nature and severity of the emergency, the local media may post breaking news or periodic updates regarding an emergency at UCF.
  4. **Radio (89.9 WUCF):** Depending on the nature and severity of the emergency, WUCF and local radio news stations may carry live breaking news or periodic updates regarding an emergency on campus. Their websites may also carry live streaming audio, audio clips, or text updates.
  5. **Facebook:** Official updates during emergencies may be shared via the UCF [Facebook page](#).
  6. **Twitter:** Official updates during emergencies may be shared via the UCF [Twitter account](#).
  7. **UCF Mobile App:** Those signed up to receive push notifications from the UCF mobile app will receive emergency updates through the app.

## VII. Testing

- A. At least annually, UCF will test the emergency response and emergency notification procedures. The test may be announced or unannounced and is designed for assessment of emergency plans and capabilities and measured against pre-defined goals. The test will contain each of the following steps:
  1. Be scheduled;
  2. Identify coverage concerns;
  3. Identify maintenance issues; and
  4. Conduct follow-through activities.

B. UCF will document each test conducted and retain test documentation for seven years. Test documentation will include at least the following:

1. A description of the exercise, i.e. the test;
2. The date the test was held;
3. The time the test started and ended; and
4. Whether the test was announced or unannounced.

Additional information on testing the UCF ALERT System is identified in UCF's CEMP.

#### **VIII. Timely Warning**

- A. The University of Central Florida will issue a timely warning to the campus community for reported criminal incidents that continue to pose an imminent threat to the campus community. Timely warning messages will be distributed as soon as the pertinent information is available, to enable people to protect themselves and prevent similar crimes from occurring.
- B. The decision of whether or not to issue a timely warning will be decided by the UCF Police Department on a case-by-case basis in light of all the facts surrounding a reported crime, including factors such as:
1. The nature of the crime;
  2. The continuing danger to the university community; and
  3. The possible risk of compromising law enforcement efforts.
- C. The timely warning message will include all information that would promote safety and that would aid in the prevention of similar crimes from occurring, as well as information about the crime that triggered the warning, but will never include a victim's personal identifying information.
- D. The timely warning will be issued using one or more of the notification systems, in an effort to reach the entire university community.

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#### **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

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[UCF Policy 3-100 UCF Building Evacuation](#)

[UCF Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan](#)

[UCF ALERT Website](#)

[Code of Federal Regulations, 34 CFR Section 668.46, Institutional security policies and crime statistics](#)

[United States Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education - The Handbook for Campus Safety and Security Reporting](#)

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## CONTACTS

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Emergency Management:  
3504 Perseus Loop, Orlando, FL 32816  
Phone: (407) 882-7111  
Email: [UCFEM@ucf.edu](mailto:UCFEM@ucf.edu)

University Police Department:  
3610 Libra Drive, Orlando, FL 32816  
Phone: (407) 823-5555  
Website: <https://police.ucf.edu/>

### POLICY APPROVAL (For use by the Office of the President)

Policy Number: 3-116.1

Initiating Authority: Misty Shepherd Date: 7/23/19

University Policies and  
Procedures Committee Chair: [Signature] Date: 6/27/19

President or Designee: [Signature] Date: 7/24/19