

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GUIDE



ABILENE
CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY

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Emergency Management Guide

INTRODUCTION

Abilene Christian University (ACU), like any other organization, is potentially subject to man-made or natural incidents that could threaten its community, core academic mission, and physical environment. Although there is no reason to believe that ACU is subject to any specific threat or danger, the university has developed this plan as a proactive means of emergency preparedness. The reality of events in the world today mean that more than ever ACU must take safety and security seriously and proactively address potential incidents as part of its overall efforts to advance the university's mission.

The ACU Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) establishes the framework to ensure that the University is prepared to deal with critical incidents that would require extraordinary protection of life, property and/or continuity of operations. The EOP provides an integrated approach to respond to and recover from the impacts of a crisis on ACU's campus in coordination with local, state, and federal agencies and authorities.

The EOP and Emergency Management Guide (Guide) provide a comprehensive emergency management concept of operations that ensures coordination and cooperation among multiple departments, organizations, and jurisdictions. They address the responsibilities of university departments throughout various phases of emergency response, management, recovery, and analysis. The Guide depicts in broad terms how the campus will prepare for and respond to man-made or natural incidents/emergencies.

Purpose and Scope

The Guide covers students, faculty and staff at ACU's campuses and its affiliate programs abroad. ACU's individual campuses will develop procedures specific to those entities but may utilize the concepts set forth in the Guide. This Guide prioritizes the safety of those who live, work and study at ACU and provides communications methods to inform internal and external stakeholders of incidents and/or emergency situations. In the event of any campus incident/emergency, the safety and security of ACU's students, faculty, staff, and visitors are the highest priority.

The Guide outlines the emergency response concepts and procedures under which all elements of the ACU campus will operate during incidents and/or emergency situations in order to fulfill its academic mission with minimal disruption.

I. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ROLES

Law Enforcement

The ACU Police Department (ACUPD) is on duty 24/7 and should be notified at 325-674-2911 of all accident, incidents, and emergencies. The department is fully staffed with State of Texas certified police officers who are fully trained in responding to emergency scenarios and routinely conduct joint training exercises with local and regional first responders to ensure their readiness. ACUPD officers serve as the first responder to all emergency incidents and will implement response protocols as the situation warrants.

Incident Commander

The Incident Commander (IC) is the ACU Chief of Police or designee and is the primary individual responsible for coordinating the university's initial response to a campus incident/emergency. The IC will direct and manage emergency responses in conjunction with the Vice President of Student Life through the authority of the President of the University. The Chief of Police is also the primary liaison between ACU and federal, state, and local emergency management agencies.

Emergency Operations Center

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is the central operations center utilized during emergency situations. The EOC directly supports the IC and is fully equipped to communicate with the campus and external agencies.

Emergency Response Team

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) is always on call and is responsible for staffing the EOC and coordinating and/or directing necessary resources to support the IC during emergency situations. The ERT also assists the President and senior University leaders in developing and implementing strategies, tactics, and the overall plan for managing a campus emergency. The ERT provides general oversight of all emergency response and recovery operations and determines the appropriate courses of action to ensure that emergency management decisions are inclusive of all university operations and lead to timely restoration of the university's mission. The ERT is comprised of: Chief of Police; Vice President for Student Life; Director of Risk Management, Director of Public Relations; Director of Physical Resources; Director of Residence Life; Director of the Medical Clinic; and the Safety Manager. ERT members regularly plan, train, and communicate strategies to mitigate campus emergencies.

II. NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

In Case of Emergency:

DIAL 9-1-1

ACU Police Department

(ACUPD):

1634 Campus Court

Abilene Texas 79601

Emergency Calls: 325-674-2911

Fax: 325-674-6098

From internal phone to

ACUPD: Dial Ext: 2911 or 2305

Abilene Police Department:

Emergency Calls 911

Internal Notification System

Emergency situations can occur at any time. Members of the university community have a responsibility to notify University officials of incidents/emergencies as they are observed. ACUPD should be notified of all emergencies and will respond to the scene and coordinate (as needed) with University officials concerning intuitional response and/or community notifications.

Emergency Information Dissemination

In an emergency that has been determined to pose a danger or imminent threat to the health and safety of the surrounding community, information will be disseminated to the ACU community and the public without delay. University officials will determine the content of the emergency message and initiate the notification system as soon as possible unless the notification will, in the judgment of responsible authorities, compromise the efforts to assist victims or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency. In many instances this information may be provided by external emergency responders in lieu of or in addition to the University itself. The means of dissemination may vary on a case-by-case basis depending on the nature of the incident/emergency and the communication process.

The Chief of Police, in coordination with University leaders and ERT personnel, will determine the significance of the emergency to include; which members of the ACU community to notify, which information to include in the notification, and will be responsible for initiating the notification system(s). While emergency information dissemination may at times be coordinated by the Chief of Police through the Office of Vice President for Student Life, Office of The President, Office of Risk Management, or the ERT; the Chief of Police is ultimately responsible for and has authority to initiate notification systems as needed without prior consultation with University leaders in the event of an emergency. University Marketing is responsible for drafting and disseminating internal and external communications related to incidents/emergencies in coordination with the Chief of Police, the ERT, and University leaders.

The primary means of emergency information distribution are: ACU ALERT, ACU Emergency blog, university-wide broadcast email, telephone, and news media. ACU ALERT is the primary method to rapidly communicate an emergency by way of email and text message to the ACU community. All faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to enroll at acu.edu/acualert and follow the registration instructions to receive this free service. Another University communication venue is the emergency blog at emergency.acu.edu which will be used to provide information and guidance to our campus as the emergency situation develops.

III. EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES

Emergency Response

When an incident occurs, ACUPD officers are dispatched to the scene and if warranted the Chief of Police is notified. ACUPD officers provide direction and assistance in mitigating the incident, including coordination with local law enforcement, fire, or emergency agencies. The Chief of Police notifies senior University leaders and coordinates with other relevant external agencies/authorities.

An incident or series of critical incidents which requires the University to disengage resources from normal operations to provide extraordinary protection of life, property and/or operations will constitute a campus emergency. The Chief of Police directs actions to prepare for or respond to all incidents or emergencies that may occur and coordinates the appropriate response dependent on the scope and nature of the specific incident/emergency.

The first step in mitigating campus emergencies is the development and implementation of an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for each potential incident. Secondly, key personnel e.g., facility Emergency Managers and Residence Life staff receive training and participate in drills and exercises to test their procedures. Familiarity with procedures, timely execution, and communication are essential elements to emergency management.

Facility Emergency Management

Facility Emergency Managers and Residence Hall Directors/Resident Assistants are responsible for implementing plans/procedures and issue directions to occupants when there is a perceived threat. The following are the general procedures for effectively managing emergencies affecting facilities.

Evacuation Procedures

Evacuation will be directed in the event of a fire, chemical or gas leak, or other potential threat to people within the facility.

- For Fire call 911 and activate the nearest fire alarm pull station
- In case of fire, occupants will evacuate via the nearest exit, alert others, and not use elevators
- For other emergencies, contact ACUPD and provide information concerning the incident
- Alert occupants and direct how to (specifically) evacuate the facility and where to assemble
- Report evacuation status and prevent people from reentering the facility

Shelter-in-Place Procedures

Shelter-in-Place is normally directed in the event of severe weather, tornado, or other potential threat emanating from outside the facility.

- Contact ACUPD and provide/receive accurate information concerning the emergency
- Alert occupants to the situation and direct them to the shelter and of necessary actions/precautions
- Report shelter status, injuries, and facility damage or other hazards
- Prevent people from exiting the facility until receiving the “all clear”

Lock Down Procedures

A lockdown is a temporary sheltering technique that may last for several hours and is utilized to limit exposure to an "Active Shooter" or similar threat. When alerted to lockdown, occupants of any facility within the affected area will lock all doors and windows preventing entry or exit to anyone until receiving the “all clear” or being directed to evacuate. This procedure converts any facility into a large “safe room.”

- Contact ACUPD and provide/receive accurate information concerning the emergency
- Alert occupants to the situation, direct them to lockdown, and lock all exterior facility doors
- Lock doors/windows, close blinds/curtains, and turn off equipment/devices that emit light/sound
- Report lockdown status, headcount, injuries, and control entry/exit to the room
- Prevent people from exiting the facility until receiving the “all clear” or directed to evacuate

If you encounter the shooter, you should immediately call 911 to report the incident, seek a secure area, remain calm, reassure others, assist the injured, and wait for law enforcement response.

Evacuation, shelter-in-place, and lockdown can involve the entire campus or only a few facilities, depending on the nature of the threat.

Campus Emergency Management

Everyone is responsible for assisting in making our campus a safe place by being alert to suspicious situations or activities and promptly reporting them to ACUPD at 325-674-2911. The following are the general procedures for effectively managing general emergencies.

Suspicious Device

An explosive device may be placed on the campus with or without warning. If a suspicious object or what appears to be an explosive device is discovered the person should NOT touch it. Immediately clear the area and call ACUPD.

Bomb Threat

A bomb threat is usually made by phone and the recipient should attempt to have the person relaying the threat answer the questions below and then immediately notify ACUPD.

Ask the caller:

- When is the bomb going to explode?
- Where is the bomb located?
- What kind of bomb is it?
- What does it look like?
- Why did you place the bomb?

Keep talking to the caller as long as possible and record the following:

- Time of call
- Age and sex of caller
- Speech pattern, accent, or possible nationality
- Emotional state of the caller
- Background noise.

In the event of a suspicious device or bomb threat, immediately call ACUPD, quickly and quietly clear the area, and do not open drawers, cabinets, or turn lights on or off.

ACUPD officers will respond to the scene and implement procedures to mitigate the situation. If occupants are directed to evacuate the facility/area, they will move a minimum of 300 feet from the suspected bomb or suspicious device.

Disruptive Individual

A disruptive individual is someone who:

- Makes threats of physical harm to others or themselves
- Behaves in a bizarre manner or is out of touch with reality
- Appears to be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs

Steps to take when dealing with a disruptive individual:

- Contact ACUPD and give your name, location, and a brief description of the incident
- If possible provide a name and/or description of the individual
- Maintain a safe distance and do not confront or attempt to restrain the person
- Try to keep the person calm and within sight until assistance arrives

Violent or Criminal Behavior

If you are a victim or witness to a crime, you should promptly notify ACUPD as soon as possible and report the incident, including the following:

- Brief description of the incident to include the time and location
- Description of person(s) and/or property involved

If you observe a criminal act or a suspicious person on campus, immediately notify ACUPD and report the incident. Assist the officer(s) when they arrive by supplying them with all additional information and encouraging others to cooperate.

IV. PLANNING AND TRAINING

Emergency Planning

The Emergency Planning Committee oversees the development and implementation of the university's EOP. The committee also ensures key personnel are trained and core processes are regularly tested to evaluate the University's response capabilities and procedures. University faculty, staff, and students also participate in ongoing training and testing opportunities. Members of the committee include: Vice President for Student Life; Director of Risk Management; Chief of Police; Director of the Medical Clinic; Provost; Director of Residence Life Education & Housing; Director of Physical Resources; Executive Director of Information Technology; Director of Public Relations; Director of Human Resources; and Safety Manager.

Orientation and Recurring Training

Members of the ACU community are introduced to safety and security issues and emergency procedures as part of their introduction to campus life and at regular intervals during their work and life on campus.

Faculty and Staff

Basic safety and emergency response information is provided during the new employee orientation process. Information is presented concerning basic response protocols and contact information based on the most likely emergencies/incidents to occur on campus. Regular updates may be provided to faculty and staff via distribution of newsletters or brochures, the Emergency Management web page, or university-wide broadcast email.

Students

Safety and security information is provided to all students on an annual basis. New students and their parents obtain information during orientation. Sessions provide students with emergency response procedures, safety tips, and campus contact information. Students living in on-campus residence halls and apartments participate in mandatory annual meetings with their resident assistant or hall director at the beginning of each academic year. Students living off campus receive this information as part of a required off campus student orientation session each fall. Regular updates may be provided to students via meetings, brochures, the Emergency Management web page, or university-wide broadcast email.

In addition, faculty, staff, and students planning to study abroad are required to participate in an orientation session that addresses safety and security issues unique to their location before beginning their respective programs.

Residential Facility Preparedness

Residence Life staff are provided education, resources, and receive special safety and emergency preparedness training and are required to sign training documentation prior to assuming their roles. These individuals receive annual training covering facility Emergency Action Plans, applicable fire protection systems, and general safety procedures.

All on campus residential facilities conduct a fire evacuation drill during the fall and spring semesters. In addition, utilities and communications systems are tested regularly to ensure reliability.

Emergency Preparedness

Drills, tests, and exercise are conducted annually to evaluate the University's ability to respond to a variety of potential emergency scenarios, help assess the adequacy of the EOP, and reinforce participant's knowledge of emergency plans/procedures. Comprehensive planning is essential to ensuring the event is conducted safely and poses minimal disruption to curriculum or other campus events.

A drill is an announced event. Details may be kept confidential to increase realism, but participants will be informed of the date, time, location and basic overview of what will occur.

A test is an unannounced event. No details will be released to the general populace of the campus. The intent is to assess execution of plans/procedures under simulated realistic conditions.

An exercise may be an announced or unannounced event designed to evaluate campus-wide procedures to mitigate an emergency. This may be accomplished in a "table top" venue with the ERT and/or senior ACU leadership or a simulated event impacting the entire campus.