

Policy 1112
Emergency Response and Recovery

Date of Current Revision: February 2023

Responsible Office: Vice President for Administration and Finance

1. PURPOSE

This policy provides a framework for the development of action plans available to the university during an emergency. It outlines the areas of responsibility and accountability in responding to emergency situations, provides for individual departments and divisions to develop response plans to deal with emergencies specific to their respective areas. It also provides for communication between departments and divisions concerning emergencies, as appropriate.

2. AUTHORITY

The Board of Visitors has been authorized by the Commonwealth of Virginia to govern James Madison University. See Code of Virginia § 23.1-1600; § 23.1-1301. The Board has delegated the authority to manage the university to the president.

3. DEFINITIONS

Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT)

A group of employees designated by the university to assist in formulating the university's response to an emergency. This group consists of three key sub-groups: The Policy Group, the Operations Group, and the Logistics/Support Group. This body is designed to provide cross-divisional communication and coordination of efforts for emergency response and recovery.

Emergency

A condition resulting from a natural or man-made occurrence that is of sufficient magnitude or duration to cause significant disruption in the accomplishment of university objectives.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

In cases of general widespread emergencies, the work space for the Operations Group.

Emergency Plan

A written plan to be enacted in the event of a disaster or other emergency. Such a plan includes an identification and ranking of critical functions, procedures for restoring these functions, assignment of responsibilities for activating and implementing the plan, and requirements for training, testing, and maintenance activities related to the plan.

Emergency Planning

The advance planning and preparations necessary to minimize loss of resources and provide reasonable assurance that critical university services and operations will be maintained in the event of an emergency.

Level 1 Emergency

A minor department or building incident that can be resolved by the responding service unit. This may result in calling in personnel and notifying the department where the problem occurred. Example: Physical Plant responds to a broken water pipe.

Level 2 Emergency

A department or building incident that can be resolved with existing university resources or limited outside help. A Level 2 incident is usually a one-dimensional event that has a limited duration and little impact to the campus community beyond those using the space/building in which it occurs. Example: A minor chemical or fuel oil spill, building loss of heat or electricity for several hours, or a minor fire confined to a room and not involving hazardous chemicals.

Level 3 Emergency

Emergencies that affect primarily people, rather than infrastructure. Some issues can become quite complex because of varied institutional and support responses that must be coordinated. Example: assaults, sexual assaults, building/office occupation, hate crimes, bomb threats, controversial speakers, symbolic structures, and bias-related crimes. In these situations, specific departmental plans may be implemented.

Level 4 Emergency

A major emergency that impacts a sizable portion of the campus and/or outside community. Level 4 emergencies may be single or multi-hazard situations, and often require considerable coordination both within and outside of the university. Level 4 emergencies also include imminent events on campus or in the general community that may develop into a major university crisis or a full disaster. Example: heating plant failure, extended power outage, severe storms, major fire, contagious disease outbreak, or domestic water contamination.

Level 5 Emergency

A catastrophic emergency event involving the entire campus and surrounding community. Immediate resolution of the disaster, which is usually multi-hazard, is beyond the emergency response capabilities of campus and local resources. Example: terrorist attack, earthquake or major hurricane that would require State and Federal assistance.

Logistics/Support Group

The group of employees who provide administrative support for the Operations and Policy Groups of the CIRT. This group also documents the situation status and tracks the use of resources at the university, and coordinates equipment and special installations during an emergency.

Operations Group

The group of employees in the CIRT who gather, confirm, and evaluate incident information, define and implement tactics and actions to resolve specific priority situations, identify resource needs and shortfalls, and reassign and deploy individuals in support of critical needs during an emergency. The core members of the group are listed below:

- Chief of Staff
- Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Assistant Vice President for Business Services
- Chief of Police
- Director of Emergency Management
- Director of Facilities Management
- Director of Residential Life
- Legal Counsel
- Assistant Vice President for Information Technology and CIO

As appropriate, the following individuals may be added to this core group:

- Director of University Health Center
- Director of Counseling Center
- Director of Human Resources
- Director of the Office of Student Accountability and Restorative Practices
- Director of IT- Infrastructure Services
- Director of Dining Services

Policy Group

The group of employees in the CIRT who approve overall priorities and strategies, issue public information reports and instructions, and act as liaison with governmental bodies and external organizations during a widespread (Level 4 or 5) emergency. The core members of the group are listed below:

- President (as required)
- Vice Presidents
- Chief of Staff
- Director of Emergency Management
- Executive Director of Communications and University Spokesperson

As appropriate, the following individuals may be added to this core group:

- Deans
- Chief of Police

Threats Assessment, Hazards, Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA)

An analysis of the potential jeopardies that a department might encounter. Included are the loss of a building, loss of an essential item of equipment, and loss of key personnel.

4. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all departments, units, divisions, and other administrative structures within the university. It applies to all levels of emergency.

5. POLICY

5.1 Each department, unit, or other administrative structure within the university designated by a vice president shall engage in systematic emergency planning.

5.2 Each vice president will appoint an emergency coordinator to organize the efforts of the division in response to an emergency.

5.3 The Emergency Plan developed by each department or unit shall be reported to the appropriate vice president.

5.4 In the event of an emergency, the emergency plan of each department, unit, and division affected shall be, to the extent possible, followed.

5.5 The CIRT shall be available during the emergency to advise the president and appropriate officials on the appropriate response to the emergency. All units should maintain contact with the CIRT and should provide information to the CIRT on their level of success in implementing their Emergency Plans in the event of an emergency, and to receive information on needs of the university to alter those plans to meet the specific emergency.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1 Predicted Emergency

When conditions permit and the impending emergency situation provides ample time, the Director of Emergency Management will assemble the CIRT Operations Group to formulate a plan of action for recommendation to the Policy Group. If time is of the essence, the plan will be recommended to the most senior executive officer available on campus.

6.2 Unpredicted Emergency

When an unpredicted emergency occurs or condition exists, it will be reported immediately to the Office of Public Safety, 540-568-6911 (on campus, 86911).

The Public Safety Dispatcher will follow a defined sequence of responses. The sequence, defined below, will be followed for nearly all emergency situations. Some situations might require a deviation from this sequence, but in all situations full and complete communication with university officials is required. The usual sequence to be followed is:

1. Dispatch police officers and make appropriate fire and/or medical rescue calls;
2. Notify the Chief of Police, (if criminal intent) or designee if unavailable, who will determine whether or not to initiate the police emergency notification telephone call list (located at Police Services Dispatch) or selectively notify appropriate individuals;
3. If the emergency notification list is initiated, the Director of Emergency Management acting as the Emergency Operations Group Leader (EOGL) will determine the appropriate level of emergency response and to what extent the CIRT (the Operations Group and/or the Policy Group) will become involved.

6.3 Declaration of an Emergency Condition

The President, Vice President for Administration and Finance, or Vice President for Student Affairs (depending upon availability) with the Director of Emergency Management, shall declare a state of University Level 4 or 5 Emergency when they deem it necessary to place into immediate effect emergency procedures and/or to close all or part of the university. This individual will also activate the CIRT Policy Group as the situation dictates. The President, Vice President for Administration and Finance, or Vice President for Student Affairs shall declare an end to the state of emergency when appropriate.

6.4 Response to a Level 3 Emergency

Consultation between the Director of Emergency Management, the Chief of Police, and the respective Vice President will determine the appropriateness or need to convene the CIRT. Some situations may be handled by the divisional or departmental emergency management plan. A variety of issues can become quite complex because of the varied institutional, student, and community responses that must be coordinated.

6.5 Response to a Level 4 or 5 Emergency

When a Level 4 or 5 emergency has been identified, the Director of Emergency Management shall notify the Chief of Staff to assemble the CIRT Operations Group. In the absence of the Director of Emergency Management, the respective Vice President whose area is most closely tied to the emergency will automatically assume this role.

Prior to assembling the CIRT Operations Group, on-scene responders are authorized to make necessary operational decisions and to commit resources to mitigate and control the emergency. Public Safety may also request help from other departments on an emergency basis, including asking staff to be pulled off less critical assignments to assist their officers.

6.6 Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) shall serve as the workspace for the Operations Group. The EOC has been established and is coordinated by the Director for Emergency Management and the Chief of Police. The EOC (regardless of location) shall have easy access to the following:

- Phone lines
- Radio access via a scanning radio for all campus and local municipal frequencies
- Campus computer network connections
- Large scale campus map
- Radio or cell phone communication
- Fax machine
- Access to television and other news sources
- A secure power source

6.7 Departmental Emergency Plans

Departmental emergency plans and procedures should identify threats, specify individual responsibilities, and describe the actions to be taken in the event of a disaster or other emergency. Plans must be in writing and should be reviewed at least once a year. Plans must be communicated to staff annually and after any substantive change. Testing of procedures should be conducted as appropriate. The CIRT shall be an advisory body and shall act as a resource for the university in structuring broad-based plans for handling unexpected problems associated with emergencies.

6.8 Specific Requirements for Information-Based Systems

The Virginia Information Technology Agency has established specific requirements for identifying critical applications and developing contingency management plans (including disaster backup and recovery procedures) for automated and manual information-based systems. Such systems generate, manipulate or depend on data. The contingency management requirements and responsibilities for these systems are addressed in Policy [1206](#) (Contingency Management for Technology-based Information Systems).

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

Vice Presidents and the Director of Emergency Management are responsible for threat assessment and for identifying those critical departments, functions, and/or applications within their respective divisions for which emergency plans and procedures are to be maintained.

The Director of Emergency Management is responsible for calling a meeting of the Critical Incident Response Team yearly to discuss and review this procedure.

Department heads/directors are responsible for developing, maintaining, reporting and testing emergency plans as designated by the appropriate vice president.

The CIRT is responsible for advising the president and administration on the appropriate response by the university to a specific emergency, and to advise departments on plans for emergencies. It is also responsible for the coordination of the university's response to a contingency.

All employees are responsible for following their unit's emergency plans in the event of an emergency.

All departments, offices and employees that generate, receive or maintain public records under the terms of this policy are also responsible for compliance with Policy [1109](#) (Records Management).

8. SANCTIONS

Members of the university who fail to follow emergency plans and the directives of officials at the university pursuant to those plans may be subject to disciplinary action.

9. EXCLUSIONS

In the event of the complete shutdown of the university, or the university's complete inability to continue to function, these provisions may not apply.

10. INTERPRETATION

The authority to interpret this policy rests with the president, and is generally delegated to the Vice President for Administration and Finance.

Approved by the president: March 1, 1999

Revised version: February 2023