

University of Toronto Policy on Crisis Preparedness and Response

Crisis situations on campus are governed by the policy on Crisis Preparedness and Response. In addition to the policy, there exist internal and external policies and statutes that define the University's roles and responsibilities in a crisis situation. University officers are reminded that each and every crisis requires a response as set out in the policies and within this guide.

If a University officer is uncertain about the seriousness of an incident, s/he is directed to contact the leaders of the Emergency Response Team immediately to assist in an assessment.

The Crisis Manager, as designated by the President, has full decision-making authority in the implementation of this policy.

Intent

The University of Toronto is committed to protecting its community, facilities, and property from the effects of spontaneous, unpredictable crisis situations by establishing specific guidelines, procedures, and resources for coping with local critical incidents, community emergencies, and large-scale disasters.

Definition

Under this policy, a crisis is defined as a temporary, urgent, and/or critical situation that threatens or causes harm to people, the environment, or University property, or disrupts critical operations.

Priorities

The foremost priority in responding to crisis situations is the safety of University of Toronto students, faculty, staff, and affected community residents. The University is also committed to limiting or containing the extent of damage incurred during a crisis, including making provisions for the safety and protection of research animals, University facilities, property, and grounds. Other priorities include ensuring clear and effective communication with University of Toronto constituencies throughout an emergency situation, and the recovery and restoration of academic and research operations.

Measures

The University of Toronto has developed a Guide To Responding to Crisis on Campus that details a wide range of institutional support mechanisms that can be brought to bear in an institutional emergency, depending on the nature and extent of the crisis. The prevention, precautionary, and response procedures outlined by the Guide are designed to protect human and animal life, to limit or contain the extent of damage to facilities and property, to permit communication systems to function despite suspension of normal operating conditions, and to enable the institution to respond in a safe, orderly, and efficient manner.

The Guide is revised on a regular basis so that it will remain as current as possible. The Guide is distributed to the President, Vice-Presidents, Principals, Deans, Senior Administrators and members of the Crisis Management and Emergency Response Teams. Additional copies may be obtained from University of Toronto Police.

Authority

Teams with designated team leaders will be established at the onset of an emergency to coordinate the University's response, implement procedures, and monitor the progress of the situation. These teams will be activated depending on response levels established according to criteria and procedures detailed in the Guide. Once a response level is established, team leaders are authorized to mobilize University of Toronto staff and resources as required to deal effectively with the situation.

The University of Toronto will work with the City of Toronto and related community organizations to ensure appropriate mutual aid provisions are in place in the event of a large-scale crisis, and that suitable lines of authority are established and understood.

Implications

The University of Toronto requires all faculties, divisions, and facilities to prepare appropriate emergency and business continuity plans consistent with University of Toronto policies. It is the responsibility of individual departments to be familiar with the content of the Guide and to assess their individual planning and emergency resource requirements in light of the considerations raised by it. The Guide may be used as a resource to identify sensitive or vulnerable operations and to assist in formulating suitable precautionary procedures.

All persons occupying space controlled by the University of Toronto are subject to the procedures and authorities outlined by this policy. Violations of this policy, including refusal to evacuate a building or area upon activation of an alarm or failure to follow the directions of emergency personnel during an emergency or emergency drill shall constitute unacceptable behaviour and will be subject to appropriate corrective and/or disciplinary action by the University.

Policies

The following is a list of University of Toronto policies that may need to be consulted in developing a crisis response strategy.

Statement of Institutional Purpose

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/mission.html>

Policy on Access to Information and Protection of Privacy

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/access.html>

Statement on Freedom of Speech

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/frspeech.html>

Policy on the Disruption of Meetings

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/disrupt.html>

Statement on the Bearing of Firearms

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/firearms.html>

University of Toronto Police Policy

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/police.html>

Statement on Human Rights

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/hrights.html>

Statement on Prohibited Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/harass.html>

Code of Student Conduct

<http://www.utoronto.ca/govcncl/pap/policies/studentc.html>

For more information or to obtain a copy of any of the above, contact:

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November 12, 2004

MI/critical incident response/university of toronto policy on crisis preparedness and response