



University of Pennsylvania Police Department 4040 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa 19104		 
Directive: 98	Subject: Emergency Notification System	Effective Date: 11/20/2012
Order of: Gary Williams, Chief of Police		Amended Date: 08/01/2023

I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to establish guidelines and procedures for activation of the University of Pennsylvania Emergency Notification System in the event of an emergency.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the UPPD, to quickly notify the University of Pennsylvania and surrounding Philadelphia community of critical information about an impending or ongoing major emergency or critical incident. This is accomplished through three (3) key methods: Personal Electronic Devices; Siren and Public Address Systems; and Digital Displays / DPS Website. This policy comes from the University’s requirement to issue emergency notifications and timely warnings under the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (The Clery Act 20 U.S.C § 1092).

The University of Pennsylvania Police Department’s (UPPD’s) Communications Center, known as “PennComm”, maintains separate directives, known as the “PennComm Operating Procedures”, (SOP’s). These Operating Procedures shall be the standard policy and procedures for the operation of the PennComm Center.

It shall be the policy of the UPPD that officers working in the PennComm Center will abide by the PennComm SOP’s as well as all UPPD departmental directives relative to police action taken within the PennComm Center.

All emergency notifications utilizing the University of Pennsylvania Emergency Notification System must be authorized by the Vice President for Public Safety.

III. Scope

This directive shall affect all sworn officers, as well as all civilian employees working in the PennComm Center.

IV. Definitions

- A. **UPenn Alert:** An emergency notification system which allows the University to send messages to all registered community members, faculty, staff and students via personal electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, etc.) through text messaging and email.
- B. **Penn Siren Outdoor System (Penn SOS):** An emergency notification system comprised of multiple outdoor speakers capable of transmitting voice intelligible emergency messages and alert tones to the outdoor campus environment. Penn SOS is not designed to penetrate buildings, but will be audible above normal street noise. The Penn SOS emergency notification system has also been extended indoors to buildings that have been equipped with an upgraded fire alarm and emergency voice evacuation system (EVACS), enabling the building's occupants to receive the emergency notifications and messages indoors through the building's fire alarm speakers.
- C. **UPenn Alert Team:** An on-call group consisting of the Vice President for Public Safety, Chief of Police, the Director of PennComm Emergency Communications Center, the on-duty PennComm Dispatch Supervisor and the on-duty UPPD Police Operations Room Supervisor (ORS), and others.
- D. **Crisis:** A crucial or decisive point or situation, which may impact by the temporary or permanent loss of a vital function or operation, or which may also result in, or generate serious threat to, the safety of individuals or the environment. Such a situation could occur immediately or over a period of time.

V. Procedures

- A. Response to a Specific Crisis Incident
 - 1. While this directive outlines the general crisis management steps to be implemented as warranted, the following directives will guide actions to be taken for specific situations:
 - a. **Directive 7: "Hazardous Conditions"**
 - b. **Directive 9: "Responsibilities at Crime Scenes"**
 - c. **Directive 30: "Critical Incident Management Procedures"**
 - d. **Directive 60: "Crisis Management Plan"**
 - e. **Directive 62: "Bomb Threats and Searches"**
 - f. **Directive 63: "Hostage/Barricaded Subject Plan"**
- B. UPenn Alert

1. The UPennAlert Station is located inside of the PennComm Communications Center at UPPD Headquarters. An instruction manual for the system shall be stored at the UPenn Alert Station.
2. Responsibility for initiation and activation of the UPennAlert System rests with the on-duty UPPD Police Operations Supervisor (ORS) and the on-duty PennComm Supervisor.
3. Authorization for activation of the UPennAlert System shall be given by the Vice President for Public Safety or designee.
4. The decision to initiate the UPennAlert System will be based on the severity of any crisis that may cause an immediate threat to the life and safety of the University community and its visitors. Events that may warrant the initiation of the UPennAlert System shall include, but are not limited to:
 - a. **Emergency Closure**
 - 1) Catastrophic event aftermath
 - 2) Weather emergency
 - 3) Policy decision from Crisis Management Team
 - 4) Confirmed intelligence of a potential threat against the University
 - b. **Lock Down**
 - 1) Active shooter/threat in a specific building or area
 - 2) Hostage situation in a specific building or area
 - 3) Random violent actor
 - c. **Lock Out**
 - 1) Response to an active shooter/threat in another building or area
 - 2) Response to a previous shooter with no known location of perpetrator
 - 3) Confirmed intelligence of a potential threat against the University
 - 4) Civil disturbance
 - 5) Protest
 - 6) Prisoner escape

d. Evacuation

- 1) Declared Emergency by the U.S. Government, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, City of Philadelphia or the University of Pennsylvania
- 2) Active shooter/threat
- 3) Fire in a building
- 4) Fire or other emergency in the vicinity of a building
- 5) Natural disaster
- 6) Explosion
- 7) Flood
- 8) Water damage
- 9) Power outage or other utility interruption
- 10) Suspicious package (found device)
- 11) Structural damage to a building
- 12) Hazardous Materials Incident
 - a) Biological
 - b) Chemical
 - c) Nuclear
 - d) Radiological
 - e) Explosive
- 13) Confirmed intelligence of a potential weapons of mass destruction event

e. Shelter-In-Place

- 1) Hazardous materials incident
 - a) Biological
 - b) Chemical
 - c) Nuclear

- d) Radiological
- e) Explosive
- 2) Weather emergency
- 3) Natural disaster
- 4) Prior to a large-scale evacuation
- 5) Confirmed intelligence of a potential weapons of mass destruction event
- f. **Avoidance of Hazardous Condition**
 - 1) Structural damage or collapse
 - 2) Flooding
 - 3) Energized wiring or equipment
 - 4) On-going emergency response operations
 - 5) Protest
 - 6) Civil disturbance
- 5. In the event of a pending or ongoing critical incident, the ORS shall access the UPennAlert Station and utilize the "Live Mode" program to initiate a conference call with the UPennAlert Team.
 - a. The Vice President for Public Safety shall determine if and what type of UPennAlert will be sent, based on the recommendations of the UPennAlert Team.
 - 1) If an emergency alert is authorized to be sent, the on-duty PennComm Dispatch Supervisor shall utilize the "Live Mode" program and select the appropriate message, enter the location of the alert, select the recipient group and initiate the alert.
 - b. The on-scene UPPD Commander should be in direct contact with the ORS so that up-to-date information can be provided to the UPennAlert Team.
- 6. The on-duty PennComm Dispatch Supervisor shall be instructed via the chain of command to send an "All Clear" message when appropriate. The on-scene Commander shall notify the UPennAlert Team when the incident is deemed under control or clear; The Vice President for Public Safety shall determine when the "All Clear" message is sent based on the recommendations of the UPennAlert Team.

C. Penn Siren Outdoor System (Penn SOS)

1. The Penn SOS Station is located inside of the PennComm Communications Center at UPPD Headquarters. An instruction manual for the system shall be stored at the Penn SOS Station.
2. Responsibility for activation of the Penn SOS System rests with the on-duty PennComm Dispatch Supervisor.
3. Authorization for activation of the Penn SOS System will be given by the Vice President for Public Safety or designee.
4. In the event of a pending or ongoing critical incident, the ORS and PennComm Dispatch Supervisor shall immediately initiate a conference call with UPennAlert Team.
 - a. The Vice President for Public Safety shall determine if and what type of Penn SOS Audible Warning Message will be sent, based on the recommendations of the UPennAlert Team.
 - b. The on-scene UPPD Commander should be in direct contact with the ORS so that up-to-date information can be provided to the UPennAlert Team.
5. If a Penn SOS Audible Warning Message is authorized to be sent, the PennComm Dispatch Supervisor will initiate the assigned pre-recorded message and broadcast the alert.
 - a. In the event that the Penn SOS software application fails, a message can still be sent by using the secured manual override phone at the Penn SOS Station. (The key is located in the **Morse key box** accessible by the ORS)
 - 1) If all systems fail inside of PennComm, a back-up system is available for use, located at 3401 Grays Ferry Avenue (Pennovation Works).
6. The on-scene UPPD Commander shall notify the ORS when the incident is deemed under control or clear; The ORS shall then update the UPennAlert Team;
 - a. The Vice President for Public Safety shall determine when the “All Clear” message should be sent, based on the recommendations of the UPennAlert Team;
 - b. The PennComm Dispatch Supervisor shall be instructed by the Director of the PennComm Emergency Communications Center when to send an “All Clear” message.
7. Testing of the Penn SOS System shall be conducted on a monthly basis.
 - a. Penn SOS will be tested on the first Friday of every month at 11:00 am using Westminster Chimes.

8. A quarterly test of the Penn SOS will be conducted in conjunction with the University's annually required campus wide test of the UPennAlert Emergency Notification System. This test will be announced in advance and posted on the Public Safety website.

D. DPS Website/Digital Displays

1. The Executive Director of Operations will be responsible for ensuring the update of the DPS website throughout campus during the course of all emergencies or when any UPennAlert and/or Penn SOS alerts have been generated.
2. The message on the website will be consistent with the message broadcast in the alert.
3. The DPS Website should provide additional details regarding the specific incident.

E. Annual Review and Training

1. All UPPD Supervisory personnel and PennComm supervisory personnel shall be trained in the use of the UPennAlert and Penn SOS Systems. Instruction manuals for both systems are located inside of PennComm at the UPennAlert/PENN SOS station.
2. A campus wide test of the UPenn Alert Emergency Notification System will be annually. This test will be announced in advance via a University-wide notification and posted on the Public Safety and University of Pennsylvania homepages.

F. Compliance

Violations of this directive, or portions thereof, may result in disciplinary action.

G. Officers Assigned to Other Agencies

Officers of this department assigned to or assisting other law enforcement agencies will be guided by this directive.

H. Application

This directive constitutes departmental policy, and is not intended to enlarge the employer's or employee's civil or criminal liability in any way. It shall not be construed as the creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims insofar as the employer's or employee's legal duty as imposed by law. Violations of policy will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting.