

# Emergency and Crisis Communications Plan

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SAN MATEO COUNTY  
**COMMUNITY**  
COLLEGE DISTRICT

# Overview



Introduction



Risk and Vulnerabilities



Authority



Defining Terms



# Introduction

The San Mateo County Community College District Crisis Communications Plan provides procedures for the coordination of communications both internally and externally in the event of a crisis situation. The plan outlines the roles, responsibilities and protocols necessary to guide the administration in sharing information with all of the district's audiences during an emergency or crisis. This plan is designed to handle all situations including those which would not necessarily evoke the activation of the Emergency Operations Plan, but **do** require an organized message be put forth to the stakeholders of the district. This plan can be utilized as an Annex in the EOP, or can function as a standalone document.



SAN MATEO COUNTY  
COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE DISTRICT



# Risk and Vulnerabilities

Two categories of incidents represent the risks and vulnerabilities that this plan is designed to address, although not all of the below will necessarily result in the activation of this plan:

<b>Emergencies:</b> <i>Incidents that threaten human life, safety, health, property or the environment.</i>	<b>Business Interruptions:</b> <i>Incidents that interrupt the process of education, research or other transactions essential to the District's mission</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student or staff death (suicide or homicide) related to the District</li><li>• Student or staff violence</li><li>• Natural disasters</li><li>• Terrorism</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Critical utility outages</li><li>• Demonstrations or unlawful building occupations</li><li>• ITS system failures or disruptions</li><li>• Data breaches</li></ul>




# Authority

## **The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics (Clery Act)**

- EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS:
- TIMELY WARNINGS:
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) Compliance
- California Emergency Services Act
- California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS)
- Incident Command System (ICS)





# Crisis Communications Team (CCT)

## ***ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CCT***

- The primary responsibility of the CCT is to provide communications counsel to District leadership regarding the potential reputational risks associated with key decisions, and to develop a communications strategy and messaging platform. This will enable leadership to increase understanding of (and support for) the District's position, and the steps it has taken. The CCT, when activated, is responsible for communications to *all* internal and external stakeholders. During an EOC activation, the Public Information Officer (PIO) reports directly to the EOC Director and is the authorized point of contact for media and government agencies that desire information regarding the incident. The PIO may be best to designate area(s) for news media to work and arrange press conferences, assembles and distributes releases and statements.
- The need to collect, analyze and disseminate does not end with the culmination of any given emergency. After an emergency, sharing mental health and relief agency resources, websites and hotlines should be pursued as possible to assist the college community in all aspects of recovery.



# CCT Leader Responsibilities

Developing communications strategy and core messaging

Function as PIO in Command Staff when the EOC is activated

Primary liaison with communications staff across District locations

On-going strategic communications advice and counsel to Policy Group members as required

Providing input into overall communications strategy based on likely concerns raised by internal stakeholders, including faculty, staff and union leadership

Providing input into overall communications strategy based on likely concerns raised by local, state and national political leaders, influencers and, regulators





# CCT Coordinator Responsibilities

Upon Activation, ensure the notification of all CCT members

As directed by CCT Leader, schedule and coordinate CCT meetings

Assist CCT Leader in setting agenda for each CCT meeting

Ensure accessibility and equipping of the CCT Meeting location

Assist CCT Leader in scheduling and setting agenda for District-wide communications meetings and / or communications





# Media Relations Responsibilities (CCT Leader may designate or fill role)

Providing input into overall communications strategy based on likely concerns and raised by media as well as broader communications objectives

Primary spokesperson unless incident or event suggests otherwise

Materials development such as holding statements, media advisories, press releases, media-focused Q&As

Reactive and proactive media relations, including organizing press conferences (either virtual or in-person) and for prioritizing and managing incoming media enquiries

Active media monitoring, rapid outreach & response to inaccurate information

Developing any emails/blogs/video-postings/tweets or other proactive communications from the President/ Chancellor in support of overall external communications strategy

# Emergency Notification System

The San Mateo County Community College District has installed an Emergency Announcement System (EAS) on each of the three campuses that allows emergency messages and alerts to be sent campus wide in an efficient and timely manner. Emergency alerts sent by the EAS are delivered over loud speakers mounted on building rooftops and building interiors. The command center for the device is located in Public Safety Office on each campus and will be activated under the direction of the College Presidents, Director of Public Safety, Emergency Manager, Campus Captains, or other designated personnel. The device will be utilized for emergencies related to severe weather conditions, a dangerous person on campus, an emergency situation, or other special incidents that may arise and appear to pose a potential threat to college students, faculty, staff, and visitors. In order to ensure SMCCCDs EAS is functioning properly, there shall be weekly tests delivered by the Office of Emergency Management and assessed by the Department of Public Safety.





# Emergency Notification Systems Cont.



**ALERTME  
(RAVE)**



**GWAMAIL 2.0**



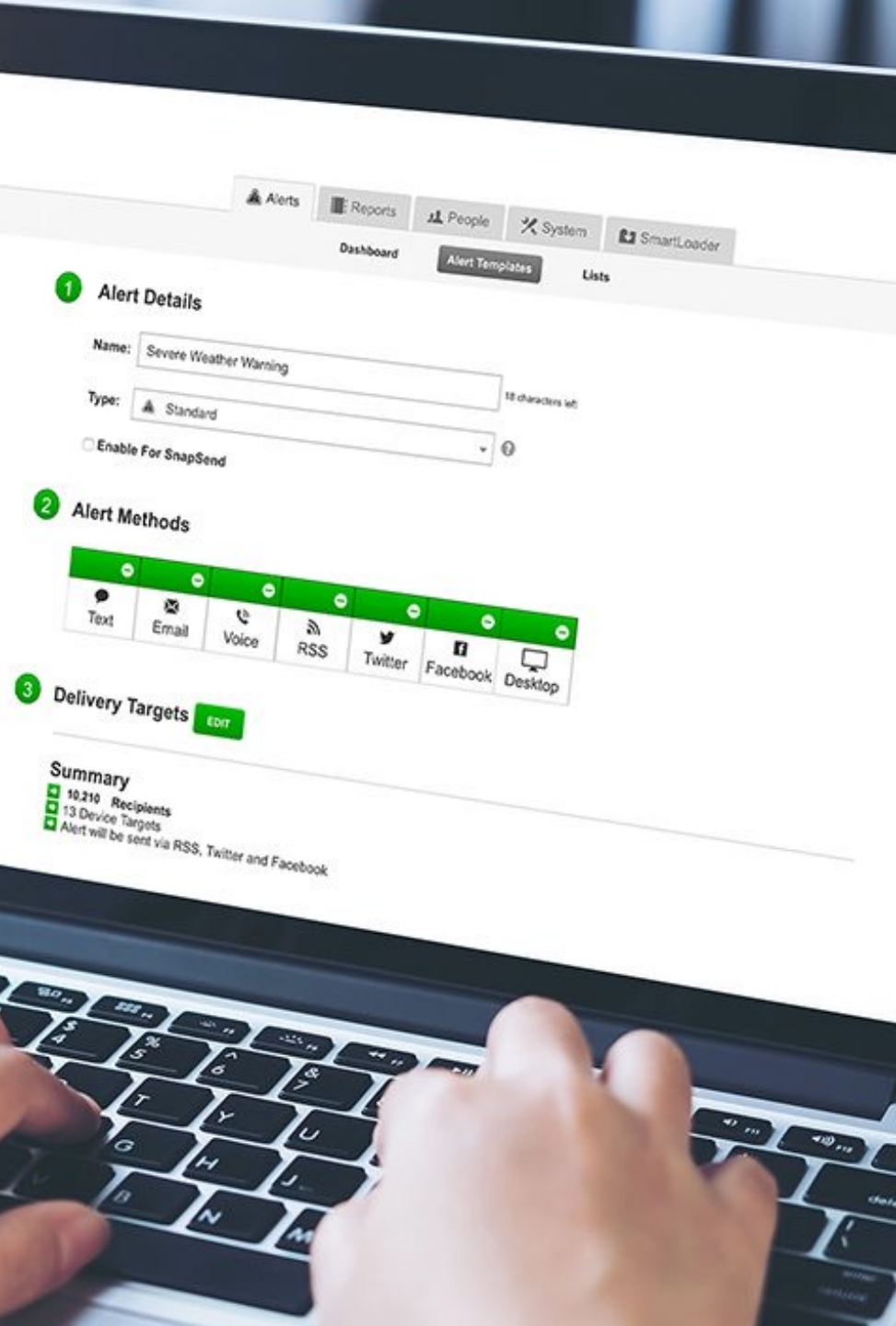
**SOCIAL MEDIA**



**WEBSITES**



**EMERGENCY  
HOTLINE**



# Emergency Notification Procedures

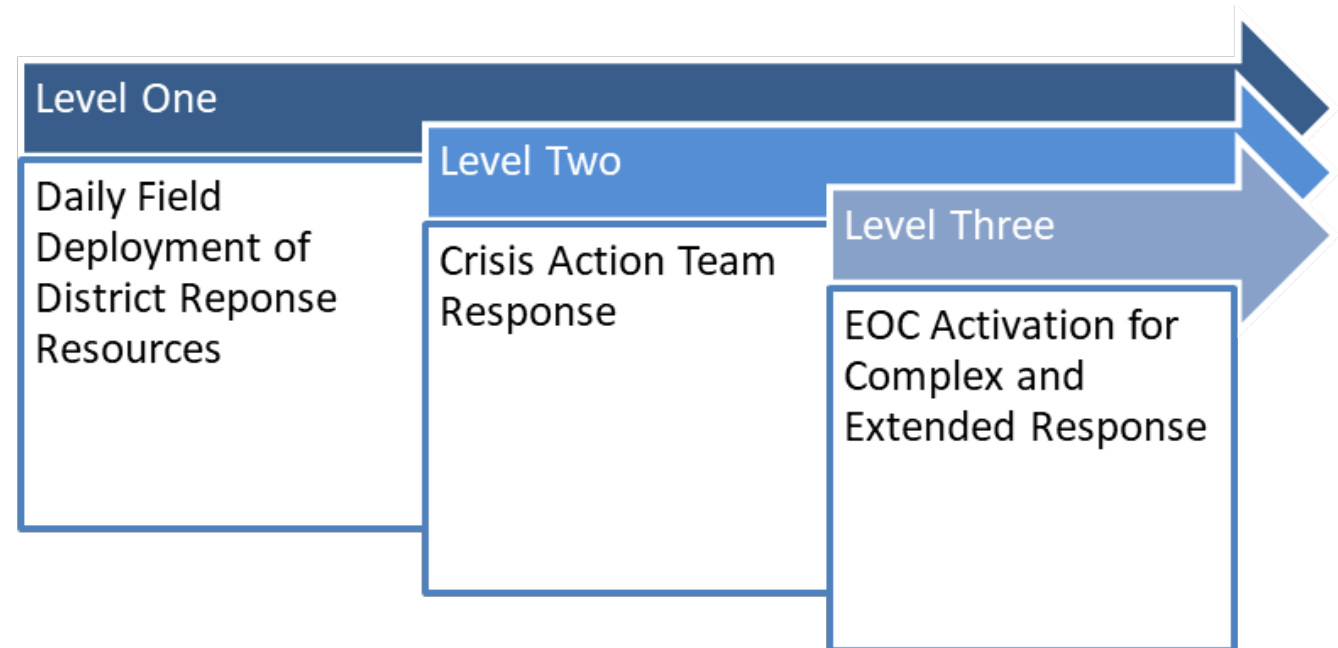
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The following are the procedures the San Mateo County Community College District will use to immediately notify the campus communities upon the confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of students, employees, and visitors occurring on or near the campuses. The following procedures shall also provide a list of the titles of the persons responsible for initiating the emergency notification system, content of the notifications, and determination of campus populations to be notified.



# Procedure to Notify Campus and District Crisis Action Teams (CAT)

- *The following procedures shall describe how Campus and District Crisis Action Teams will be notified. At each college campus within the District, anticipated or actual emergencies may result in three different levels of response. First is that of the initial field response of resources. This level occurs daily for instances that fall short of constituting an emergency, yet require immediate attention, and represents those first on the scene of any campus-related emergency. The second level of response involves the activation of the Crisis Action Team to oversee and manage a perceived campus-related threat or emergency response. Finally, the highest response level is for complex and extended duration campus-related emergencies, embodying itself in the activation of our EOC. The three level are depicted here.*



# CAT Teams are Composed of the following:

College President

Vice President of  
Student Services

Vice President of  
Administrative  
Services

Vice President of  
Instruction

Director of Facilities

Director of Public  
Safety

Campus Public  
Safety Captain

Campus Facility  
Manager

*Director of  
Information  
Technology Services*

*Public Information  
Officer*

*Executive Vice  
Chancellor of  
Operations*

*Chief of  
Operations/Facilities*

*Emergency  
Manager*

*Director of Web  
Services*



# Activating the CAT Template

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Rave and Cellular user groups have been formed with personnel occupying the above positions for each campus. When an emergency happens, anyone noted above is to message the appropriate Campus or District Crisis Action Teams. The message should contain the following information, and follow the following template:

- *This is*\_\_\_\_\_.
- *I am located at*\_\_\_\_\_.
- *The following* \_\_\_\_\_ *(emergency) has happened at this location*\_\_\_\_\_ *(give Campus/Location).*
- *Conditions are*\_\_\_\_\_.
- *We are taking the following Actions*\_\_\_\_\_.
- *We need the following*\_\_\_\_\_.
- *I (or this person)*\_\_\_\_\_ *has established command.*
- *I will be located at*\_\_\_\_\_.
- *Standby for further communications*\_\_\_\_\_.





## Procedure to Determine the Content of the Emergency Notification

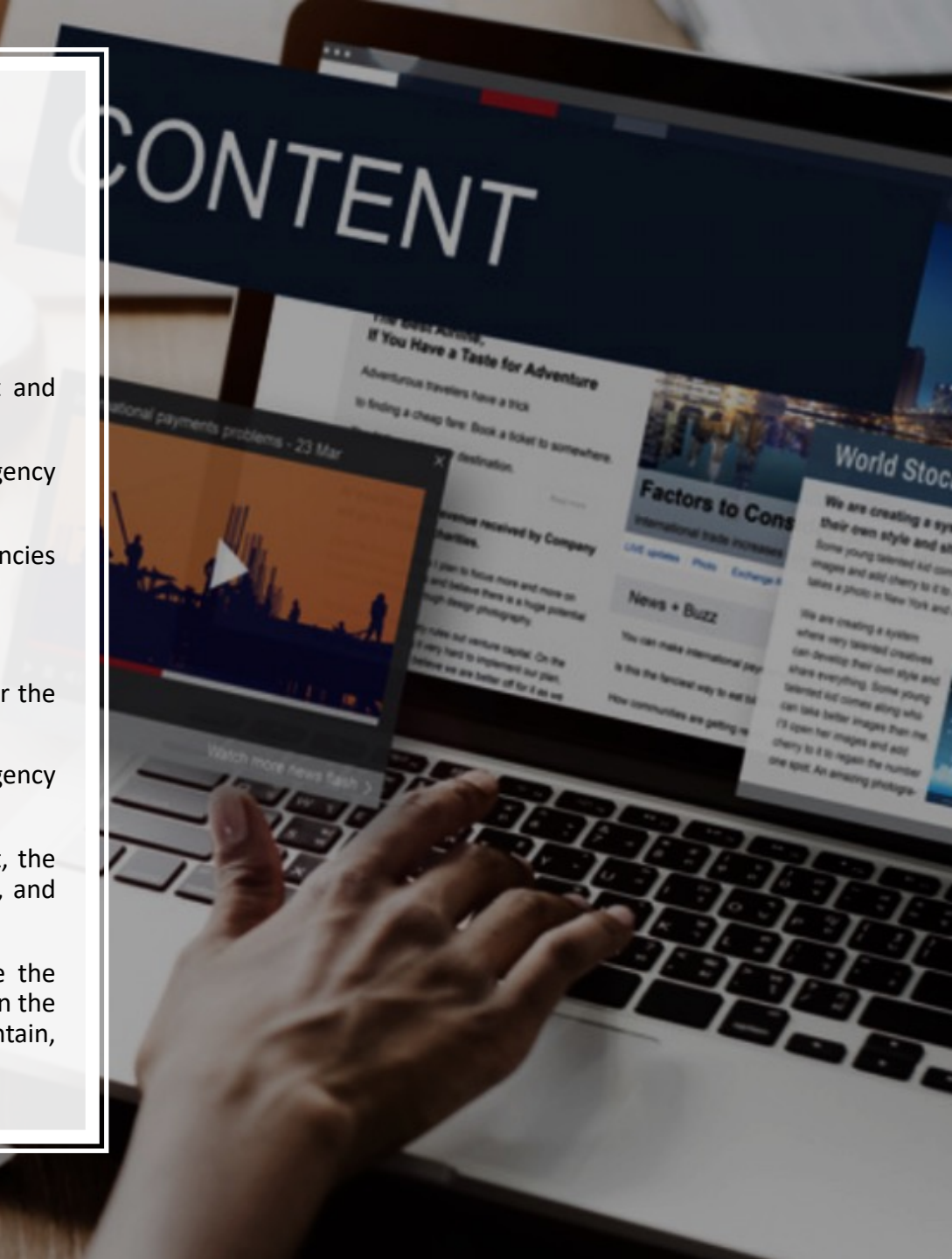
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- The following procedure shall describe how the San Mateo County Community College District will determine what information will be contained in an emergency notification. Content might differ depending on what segments of the District's community the notification targets. For example, in the event of an active assailant, messaging to the community on campus shall have instructions for dealing with the threat, while messaging for commuters to the campus shall instruct them to say away.



# Emergency Notification Content Procedure

1. Content shall be created to respond to threats and hazards identified in the THIRA (Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment).
2. Content will be collaboratively created by the Public Information Office and the Office of Emergency Management/Department of Public Safety.
3. It is the intent of the District to create pre-written messages for a variety of threats and emergencies to reduce the delay between event and notification.
4. The District may alter messaging depending on the scope and location of the event.
5. The District may create original notifications if the event has not been previously forecasted, or the original content in the pre-written notification fails to capture the current event.
6. Content in the original notification need not be exhaustive or completely accurate if the urgency requires an immediate notification to reduce loss of life, property, or environment.
7. Due diligence shall be made by the District Administration, Office of Emergency Management, the Department of Public Safety, and Public Information Office to collaboratively create, maintain, and deliver timely and accurate notifications.
8. The District will without delay, taking into account the safety of the 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





# Procedure for Determining Validity for a Significant Emergency or Dangerous Situation

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## Purpose

This procedure describes the process of how the San Mateo County Community College District will confirm that there is an emergency or dangerous situation. The Handbook for Campus Safety and Security (Chapter 6, pp 6-6) stresses that the confirmation must follow a coordinated process, and that process must have dedicated and trained personnel. Confirmation of an emergency or dangerous situation is requisite in preventing panic and false information which can cause greater harm. The San Mateo County Community College District maintains multiple layers of information gathering. Emergencies and dangerous situations can be extremely varied, and therefore, may require distinct confirmation that is particular to that specific event. Geographical and weather emergencies, such as earthquakes and inclement weather, can be verified by independent sources. On the other hand, fire alarms require secondary notification from first responders, or Public Safety. When analyzing incoming information for suitability for dissemination, the information should be vetted or verified through reasonable inquiry. For the purpose of this plan, reasonable inquiry can be established by asking all of the following questions:



# Procedure for Determining Validity for a Significant Emergency or Dangerous Situation Cont.

1. The San Mateo Community College District shall attempt reasonable means to verify the existence of the emergency through empirical investigation. The following may be means of confirmation:
  - Eye witness accounts
  - Multiple calls
  - Alarms sounding
  - News, weather forecasts
  - Emergency Responders
2. In the chance that a delay in confirming the emergency or dangerous situation could result in future injury, loss of life, or destruction of property; the District reserves the right to send a notification that alerts the community to the possible event with appropriate message content.
3. Number two (2) above is protected under the *Good Samaritan Law*, which offers legal protection to people who give reasonable assistance to those who are, or who they believe to be, injured, ill, in peril, or otherwise incapacitated.
4. It is the stance of the District to avoid delay under the Duty to Rescue Law, which requires people to offer assistance and holds those who fail to do so liable.
5. All employees shall not deviate from their Scope of Practice, which describes the procedures, actions, and processes that a healthcare practitioner is permitted to undertake in keeping with the terms of All employees shall not deviate from their Scope of Practice, which describes the procedures, actions, and processes that a healthcare practitioner is permitted to undertake in keeping with the terms of their professional license. The scope of practice is limited to that which the law allows for specific education and experience, and specific demonstrated competency.



## Procedure for how the District will initiate the Emergency Notification System, and who is responsible for initiating the Emergency Notification System

### *Purpose:*

The San Mateo County Community College District shall initiate Emergency Notification as soon as an emergency or dangerous situation is confirmed. This procedure shall delineate how the alerting system is activated, and a chain of authority relating to who shall be responsible for initiating the notification system. The District values notification redundancies as a fail-safe if a designated person is unable or unavailable to initiate the system. Having a chain of authority will also reduce duplication of efforts, and eliminate multiple alerts initiated for the same event.



# Procedure for how the District will initiate the Emergency Notification System, and who is responsible for initiating the Emergency Notification System Cont.

## Procedure:

1. San Mateo County Community College District shall staff Public Safety Dispatch from 6:30am-10:00pm, Monday through Friday.
2. Public Safety Dispatch can be notified of an Emergency by one or more of the following:
  - Land line/campus phone/911 call from campus land line
  - Cell phone
  - Media notification
  - Walk-in/In-person counter report
  - Radio by Public Safety in the field
  - Radio by Campus Captain/Floor Manager/Facilities
  - Call from emergency services
  - Fire Alarm/Water Flow Alarm
3. Upon confirmation of the emergency, the on-duty Public Safety shall be **PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE** for initiating the Emergency Notification System. The Department of Public Safety shall also make contact with designated officials.
4. After 10:00pm, on weekends, and holidays, the on-call Public Safety Supervisor shall be **PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE**.
5. If the Department of Public Safety is unable to send immediate notification, the Emergency Manager shall be next responsible to initiate the Emergency Notification System. The Chief of Public Safety and/or Emergency Manager shall contact District/College Administration immediately.
6. If the Department of Public Safety, or Emergency Manager are unable to initiate the system, the Public Information Officer (in conjunction with Campus Administration) shall initiate the emergency notification system.
7. Secondary Notifications, or follow-up notifications clarifying the initial notification, may be delivered by the PIO after confirmation with Emergency Management on the current status of the incident





## Procedure to determine appropriate segment of the District Community to receive an emergency notification

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### *Purpose:*

The San Mateo County Community College District maintains the flexibility to alert only the populations that are determined to be at risk in an emergency. For example, in the case of a gas leak on a single campus, the District may decide to only notify students and employees who attend or are employed on that specific campus. However, the District also reserves the flexibility to alert the entire District of that same gas leak if notification is beneficial for populations that use multiple campuses for employment or education.



# Procedure to determine appropriate segment of the District Community to receive an emergency notification Cont.

## *Procedure:*

1. The entire District community shall be notified when there is at least the potential that a very large segment of the District's community is at risk, or when a situation threatens the safety and/or operation of multiple campuses.
2. If the first notification only addresses part of the District's community, there will be a continuing assessment of the situation, and additional segments of the District's community may be notified if a situation warrants such action.
3. The determination to which District groups shall be notified shall be determined by College/District Administration, the Department of Public Safety, and Emergency Management.
4. Community Groups will be created collaboratively. Identification, creation, and the onboarding of these Groups into the Emergency Notification System will be determined by District/Campus Administration, Public Safety, Emergency Management, Public Information Office, and Web Services Management.



A woman with long dark hair, wearing glasses and a headset with a microphone, is seated at a desk in a call center. She is looking towards the right side of the frame. In the background, another person is visible, also wearing a headset, working at a desk. The background is filled with computer monitors displaying various data and charts. The lighting is dim, with a blueish tint, suggesting a professional office environment.

## Two-Way Radio Communications Plan

The San Mateo County Community College District maintains a central full-time dispatcher Monday through Friday, 0630-2200. Dispatch utilizes Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) software to aid in resource tracking and communication record keeping. Dispatch also attends phone calls for the three campuses; assigns officers to calls for service; and maintains interoperability with local law enforcement. The contact number for dispatch is 650-738-7000. Dispatch is also notified when any attempt is made to dial 9-1-1 from a campus telephone.



# Two-Way Radio Hardware

- The San Mateo Community College District Department of Public Safety currently utilizes the Motorola MotoTrbo Digital UHF and the Kenwood TK-3173 radio system to communicate with all DPS personnel; Office of Emergency Management, Facilities; District Chancellor/Vice-Chancellor; Building Captains; and the San Mateo Police Department. Each officer carries one XPR 7550e-Portable radio that is monitored at all times. There are two DPS patrol vehicles on each campus. Each patrol vehicle is equipped with an XPR 5550-Mobile radio.
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- The District also utilizes the Kenwood TK-3173 UHF compact portable radio, the newer NX-3200, and the Kenwood TK-880 UHF FM mobile radio. These radios are used daily by facilities in inter-college communications, but serve as an interoperable communication tool during a crisis or emergency. These radios can transmit to the Department of Public Safety on the *Public Safety Channel* (repeated throughout District), or can communicate on *Local 1 & 2 Channel* within the campus (non-repeated). The following groups have been assigned radios:

## WHO HAS RADIOS?



# Two-Way Radio Distribution Procedures

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Radios for Building Captains are purchased through the Emergency Management Budget. Radio allocation is jointly determined through the Office of Emergency Management, the Office of the Vice President of Administrative Services, and the Department of Public Safety. The determination of employee radio apportionment shall be based on the following parameters:

- *Employees shall be:*
- Building Captains, or
- Engaged in emergency response, recovery, and planning, or
- Geographically isolated on campus grounds
- Geographically located in poor WiFi and Cellular worksite settings

All College Campuses shall maintain a Building Captain Radio Cache of at least 10 Radios. The intent of the radio cache is to provide responding Building Captains or emergency response personnel radios in the event theirs are missing or not functioning. The Building Captain Radio Cache shall be maintained at the College Department of Public Safety.

Record Keeping for radio allocation shall be maintained by the Vice President of Administrative Services, and the Office of Emergency Management. Hard copies shall be stored with Public Safety Dispatch for reference in the case of an event. All Building Captains must ensure radios are returned to the Office of Emergency Management at the end of District employment.





# Two-Way Radio Testing Procedures

The Department of Public Safety shall conduct District Radio Testing on the third Tuesday of the month at 10:00am. All personnel assigned a radio, must maintain their radio and monitor for potential radio testing requests, and possible emergencies. Dispatch shall raise personnel requesting “Radio Check”. Personnel shall respond with their tile and radio descriptor below:

Descriptor	Summary
Loud and Clear	Clear and appropriate volume
Broken	Voice is critically intermittent
Muffled	Inaudible due to stifled sound
Low/High Volume	Too loud/quiet to hear with correct volume selected at radio

District Office	Cañada College	College of San Mateo	Skyline College
Chancellor’s Office	President’s Office	President’s Office	President’s Office
Executive Vice Chancellor’s Office- Administrative Services	Vice President of Administrative Services	Vice President of Administrative Services	Vice President of Administrative Services
Vice Chancellor’s Office- Facilities	Vice President of Instruction	Vice President of Instruction	Vice President of Instruction
Vice Chancellor’s Office- Auxiliary Services	Vice President of Student Services	Vice President of Student Services	Vice President of Student Services
Information Technology Services	Facilities	Facilities	Facilities
Public Safety	Athletic Center	Athletic Center	Public Safety
Public Information Officer	Health Center	Child Development Center	Child Development Center
Building Captain Group Supervisor	Building Captain Group Supervisor	Building Captain Group Supervisor	Building Captain Group Supervisor
Sustainability	Public Safety	Public Safety	

# Two-Way Radio Communication Procedures

In the event of an emergency or crisis, Public Safety officers shall cease 10-code communication, and partake in plain language.

Channel	Description
<b>DPS Dispatch 1</b>	<u>Primary</u> district-wide channel for all radio traffic during normal operations. Channel is used district-wide to provide maximum situational awareness. Can be used as a “hailing” channel to contact an officer and pull to another channel for lengthy conversation.
<b>DPS Dispatch 2</b>	<u>Secondary</u> district-wide channel can be used for lengthy conversations to keep <b>DPS Dispatch 1</b> clear. Used for large special events or involved operations.
<b>Public Safety</b>	Existing analog district-wide channel programmed into all legacy district radios. Will be monitored by Public Safety Officers for district personnel to call Public Safety
<b>CSM Maintenance</b>	For College of San Mateo officers only. This station is used to contact CSM Facilities.
<b>CAN Maintenance</b>	For Canada College officers only. This station is used to contact Canada Facilities.
<b>SKY Maintenance</b>	For Skyline College officers only. This station is used to contact Skyline Facilities.
<b>Local 1</b>	Line-of-site communication
<b>Local 2</b>	Line-of site communication
<b>San Mateo PD 1</b>	Primary dispatch channel for San Mateo PD, which is the jurisdiction in which CSM resides. Monitoring provides situational awareness for DPS officers at CSM. Transmitting on this channel will be done only in the case of a life/death emergency



# BUILDING CAPTAIN/FLOOR MANAGER RADIO COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Every Building Captain (BC) and Floor Manager (FM) shall have radio access to the Kenwood TK-3173 or the newer NX-3200. BCs and FMs shall communicate with each other on the appropriate College Public Safety channel. In an emergency (i.e. evacuation), the BC shall hail the Public Safety Dispatcher utilizing clear text. Below is the step-by-step process for Radio Communications:

- Make Sure radio is on
- Ensure volume is ALL THE WAY UP
- Ensure you are on the correct Campus Public Safety Channel
- Wait for a PAUSE in radio traffic
- Hold the radio 3-5 inches from your mouth
- Push the mic located on the side of the radio
- Raise the recipient first, then self-identify
  - I.e.; *"Public Safety Dispatch, CSM President"*
- Release the mic
- You do not need to say *'Over'*, *'Over & Out'*, or *'Roger'*
- If you are given a command, make sure you parrot the command, and update on status.

After an event, or a training drill, Building Captains need to maintain radio silence unless the emergency requires additional support. Often Building Captains flood Dispatch with unnecessary communications, while stepping on important traffic. This will reduce chatter on the radio, avoid communication being stepped on, and reduce the communication load for Dispatch. In the event of radio failure, BCs and FMs can utilize the ICS-213 Form to deliver hand written messages or cell/landline. ICS are general message forms, but any writing material will suffice.