Tufts University

Crisis Communication Plan 2.2

Promulgation and Approval

Promulgation

The Tufts University Crisis Communication Plan that follows is the university's framework of authorities, roles, decision-making guidance, and organizational structures to enable the university to quickly disseminate accurate information to stakeholders using channels and formats that are accessible to all recipients.

Approval and Implementation

This is the Crisis Communication Plan for Tufts University, superseding all prior documents promulgated for the same purpose.

Reviewed by

Crisis Communication Team
July 13, 2021

Emergency Management Program Committee
September 16, 2021

Approved by

Michael Rodman
Vice President for Communications and Marketing
Tufts University
November 2, 2021

Rebecca Ping
Director of Emergency Management
Tufts University
November 2, 2021

Record of Changes

The version number format X.x.x indicates level of change since the previous version:

1. 0. 0
       ↳ Content correction, title or name change, typographical correction
   ↳   Revision or addition of an annex; modification of an existing section
↳   Major update, reorganization, or doctrinal change.

This list reflects changes made since the issuance of version 1.0.

Date	Description
May 5, 2017 1.0	Initial development of the Crisis Communications Plan
May 18, 2017 1.0.1	Updated § 4.1 and figure 2 to reflect organizational changes to Marketing and Branding and addition of Operations and Planning group.
November 2, 2021 2.0	Complete revision of entire plan to include addition of protocols in the appendices.
April 9, 2022 2.1	Minor adjustments in sections 3.1 and 5.2.2 in response to January 2022 functional exercise
August 9, 2022 2.2	Minor adjustments to references to Emergency Operations Plan in sections 3.1 and 4.10

Record of Distribution

This plan is intended to be readily available to the entire Tufts community through availability on relevant university websites including communications.tufts.edu and emergency.tufts.edu.

This plan is issued to:

- Members of the Crisis Communication Team
- Communications leads at Tufts' schools, centers, and departments.
- Executive Deans for each school (titles vary among schools to include Executive Associate Dean, Executive Administrative Dean, and Associate Dean)
- President and members of the Executive Policy Group, as defined in the Emergency Operations Plan.
- Designees who can serve as Emergency Manager, as defined in the Emergency Operations Plan

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Executive Summary

1.1. General Considerations

This Crisis Communication Plan considers a variety of closely related functions all organized under the single term "crisis communication." Planning was undertaken by a multi-disciplinary team, and considers the hazards affecting Tufts campuses and the variety of crises for which the plan may be needed. This plan dovetails with other related university plans and seeks to accommodate the information needs of a variety of audiences, including making information accessible for all intended audiences. Where possible, concepts and terminology from the National Incident Management System (NIMS) are used for compatibility with supporting entities in a major incident.

1.2. How Public Information is Managed in a Crisis

In an incident, a lead communications person is notified, either via TuftsAlert or by the Incident Commander or Emergency Manager and assumes the role of **Public Information Officer (PIO)**. For some non-safety-impacting crises, a member of the Media Relations team will be notified by a university administrator aware of the occurrence, and the Media Relations team member determines the need to escalate the issue.

The PIO manages delivery of public information and leads the **Crisis Communication Team**, consisting of members of University Communications and Marketing (UCM). While collaboration with other departments, senior leadership, and outside entities is valued, the PIO has the final authority to approve information for release and may exercise this authority unilaterally in time-critical situations.

The PIO participates in the **Emergency Operations Center (EOC)**, either joining the Zoom meeting upon notification or by being physically present in the EOC. Other members of the Crisis Communication Team operate from a **Joint Information Center (JIC)** that may also include assisting entities' public information representatives for major incidents.

During an incident or crisis, the university speaks with one voice through the PIO, and school-based communications officers echo or amplify consistent messages after the university message is delivered. Various channels selected by the PIO are used based on the circumstances. Selection of communications channels should always take into consideration the ability to be received by intended audience members with vision, hearing, language, or other accessibility needs. Members of the team act as liaisons to the press and coordinate press briefings.

Crisis communication is a two-way proposition, with members of the team also "listening" to the news media, social media, and the community to learn about unmet information and response needs and to correct misinformation and rumors.

1.3. Logistics, Administration, and Plan Maintenance

Coordination tools and channels are provided through university-sanctioned resources, including TuftsAlert, Elist, Zoom, WebEOC, Box.com, OneDrive/Sharepoint, and tufts.edu websites. Spaces on campuses are pre-designated for the EOC, JIC, and press briefing locations, though other spaces may be used as necessary. The lessons learned in After Action Reports (AAR) from actual incidents and exercises are used to evaluate this plan and shape revisions, which are reviewed at least annually by the Emergency Management and University Communications and Marketing.

Introduction

This plan has been developed as part of the university's Emergency Management Program and may often be employed in response to incidents or events that are managed under the university's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP); however, the Crisis Communication Plan may also be utilized for occurrences not impacting safety, health, property, the environment, or critical operations, which nonetheless require timely dissemination of information to mitigate the consequences of the occurrence.

2.1. Purpose

This Crisis Communication Plan provides a framework of authorities, roles, decision-making guidance, and organizational structures to enable the university to quickly disseminate accurate information to stakeholders using channels and formats that are accessible to all recipients. The Crisis Communication Plan works with the University Communications and Marketing Continuity Plan to enable the Crisis Communication Team to continue to function even after the university has been impacted by a disaster. The core purpose is summarized in the mnemonic AIR:

1. **Alert** – Warn impacted audiences with actionable guidance for protection and safety
2. **Inform** – Provide facts of an ongoing incident, or information about emerging risks
3. **Reassure** – Maintain or reestablish trust in institutions by helping stakeholders to restore their expectations in the face of unpredictable or uncertain circumstances.

2.2. Scope

The Crisis Communication Plan applies to the communications and warning resources utilized by Tufts University and the departments and organizations involved in public information and required to support disaster response and recovery operations. All protocols within the Crisis Communication Plan apply to human-caused and natural disasters. An essential element of the public information process will be establishing protocols to interface with the community, media, public officials, and other VIPs. The role of the PIO encompasses the full range of external affairs functions, including (but not limited to) public information, community relations and governmental affairs.

Variously referred to as stakeholders, audiences, or public, the plan considers the timing, content, and distribution of messaging to a variety of recipients:

- Students, including the varying needs of undergraduate, graduate, non-traditional, and professional students
- Faculty
- Staff
- Clients and patients
- Visitors and guests
- Parents and guardians, particularly of undergraduates
- Alumni
- Prospective students
- Donors
- Sponsoring agencies and grantors
- Trustees
- Neighbors
- Host community governments
- Partner institutions and corporations
- News media
- Government agencies

All public information efforts will serve and inform diverse audiences and be disseminated to access and functional needs communities through the Tufts communications channels and in conjunction with related agencies and organizations.

2.3. Situation

Tufts University ("Tufts") will periodically experience emergencies that require dissemination of critical information to our community. Public information is critical to alerting citizens to an impending emergency, directing and informing them before and during an emergency, and assisting them in the response and recovery phases of an incident. Such information is disseminated through the news media (radio, television, cable and print), email, text, voice messages, Tufts' website, and social media channels.

2.3.1. Hazard and Threat Analysis Summary

Because resources are finite, the university allocates prevention and preparedness resources towards those hazards and threats that pose the greatest risk.

Natural Hazards	Technological Hazards	Human-Caused Threats
Drought	Campus Fire or Explosion	Active Shooter/Active Threat
Earthquake	Hazardous Material Release	Cyberattack
Extreme Temperatures	Transportation Accident	
Floods, Extreme Precipitation	Utility Failure	
Infectious Disease		
Mid-latitude Cyclone (Nor'easter)		
Severe Winter Weather		
Shoreline Change		
Thunderstorms (Hail, Lightning, Wind)		
Tornado		
Tropical Cyclone (Hurricane)		
Wildfires/Brush Fires		

Table 1. Tufts University Identified Threats and Hazards, 2021 from THIRA 2.0

2.4. Public Education and Outreach

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is responsible for coordinating activities to inform the Tufts community (our "public") about the hazards affecting the university, threats to safety posed by those hazards, and risk reduction. General guidelines align themes with seasonal variations in risk and in community activity and recognizes the cyclical nature of the higher education population in seeking to reach audiences at key times as they progress through their time on campus. Awareness messaging will seek to incorporate seasonal themes and other opportunities to promote awareness, including capitalizing on heightened attention to any incidents that may attract the interest of the campus audience.

2.4.1. Venues and Formats

Delivery formats and venues for public awareness include:
- Tufts Emergency Management webpage: https://emergency.tufts.edu/
- Social media @TuftsReady and facebook.com/TuftsReady (staffed by Public Safety)

- o Automatic storm warnings are posted to @TuftsReady
- University-level social media channels (staffed by University Communications and Marketing)
- Tufts Emergency Response Guide
  - o List hazards and associated response actions.
  - o The guide is offered in print, online, and on the Tufts mobile app
- Employee orientation
- Student orientation
- Print materials (including the Annual Security and Fire Safety Report)
- Tufts Mobile (website and app)
- Tufts Announcements (email)
  - o e.g., severe weather warning emails including risk reduction steps prior to an oncoming storm
- Special events (e.g., panel discussions, Chili Fest)
- Targeted training programs for shared interest groups (e.g., training for a club or library staff)
- TuftsAlert emergency notification software
  - o This software is tested twice a year, at the start of the fall and spring semester, it includes information on how to sign up for emergency alerts, where to access severe weather updates, where to access general guidance on preparing and responding to emergencies (ERG), and where to find the Annual Security and Fire Safety Report

2.4.2. At Risk Populations

Outreach activities will follow the guidance provided in Section 3.4.

2.4.3. Risk Reduction

Risk-reduction steps and activities are communicated through all the formats listed in section 2.4.1. OEM provides the Tufts community with several education outlets to keep individuals aware of current threats (e.g., weather) and actions steps that will keep individuals safe (e.g., Tufts Emergency Response Guide)

2.5. Assumptions

The development of the Crisis Communication Plan is predicated on the following assumptions:

- Campus population and activity varies at different times of the day, the week, and the year, but many critical functions occur around the clock, every day of the year.
- Especially in light of flexible work arrangements post-pandemic, in the event of an emergency, some personnel with responsibilities for emergency management may not be physically at Tufts at the outset of a crisis.
- Each campus has unique needs and challenges and may be affected differently by a regional emergency.
- Incidents can occur with or without warning. Planning must consider rapid implementation in the instance of "no-notice" events.
- Some incidents and all disasters will require external assistance and cooperation with local government, private sector partners, state government, and federal government.
- Damage to campus infrastructure may also impair the capacity to coordinate response.
- Emergency functions performed by individuals and departments will generally parallel their normal day-to-day functions, though personnel may be reassigned if needed.

- Non-critical university functions not contributing to the emergency response may be temporarily suspended or operating in a diminished state.
- Undergraduate students, particularly those who rely upon the university for housing and meals, require more services and care than graduate students and employees (i.e., faculty and staff).
- Research activities create special hazards and response needs, including consideration for the welfare of research animals.
- An emergency may create a significant demand for information from various audiences, including those affected by the crisis and the news media.
- Communications during an emergency need to account for individuals with access and functional needs.

Concept of Operations

During a crisis situation, the Crisis Communication Team will seek to do the following:

- Disseminate <u>timely and accurate</u> information about a crisis situation to our stakeholders.
- Provide communications to <u>alert, inform and reassure</u> our stakeholders, including news media.
- Engage in a collaborative decision-making process. However, <u>the PIO is empowered to make independent decisions</u> if timing and circumstances necessitate.

3.1. Notification and Activation

The Emergency Operations Plan (§ 4.2) establishes the role of the Public Safety Communications Center for monitoring and detection, and as a centralized answering point for reports of incidents, that begins the process of recognition of an incident, notification of key personnel, and implementation of this and other plans. In the case of a confirmed emergency or other dangerous situation that poses an immediate threat to the health or safety of the Tufts community, the Department of Public Safety (DPS) is authorized to activate TuftsAlert to send an emergency message.

The Emergency Manager will determine the need to implement the Crisis Communication Plan and will contact one lead communications person to serve as—or assign as—PIO, attempting to contact in the order shown, in accordance with succession defined in § 4.1:

- Vice President for Communications and Marketing
- Executive Director of Media Relations
- Executive Director of Content and Planning

DPS will include the following information when contacting the PIO:

- A situation report summarizing the nature of the incident and actions under way
- Whether the EOC is being activated, to what level (i.e., partial, or full) and where, and the location of the command post
- The name and contact information for the Emergency Manager and the Incident Commander.

Upon receipt of the information above, the PIO assumes the responsibility to notify additional members of the Crisis Communication Team for response. The PIO or designee is also responsible for notifying school communications officers and keeping them updated throughout the incident.

Emergency Management will initiate a communication (via Zoom meeting, email, or text) with the Executive Policy Group (EPG) to provide initial information and discuss response and recovery actions. Upon receiving the Zoom URL, the PIO will join the Zoom meeting.

The Crisis Communication Team, depending on the incident and their role, will respond to the JIC, the EOC, or the incident scene.

3.2. Facilities – the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the Joint Information Center (JIC)

If the Emergency Manager activates the EOC, the PIO or a designee will be present and serve in the Public Information emergency support function role.

The Crisis Communication Team will set up a JIC that will be in close contact with the EOC. The PIO will determine if any additional members of the Crisis Communication Team also need to be in the EOC. If so, one or more representatives will be in the EOC, subject to available space, and other necessary staff will be in the JIC.

3.3. Joint Information System (JIS)

The JIS is the mechanism through which Tufts University organizes, integrates, and coordinates information both internally (university departments) and externally (city, state, federal, and private) to ensure timely, accurate, accessible, and consistent messaging during an incident. The JIS is scalable and adapted to address the public information needs of each incident. The JIC provides for the effective execution of the JIS.

The PIO (or a designee) is responsible for vetting the content of messaging with relevant Tufts departments. The focus is on assuring the accuracy and completeness of the information by consulting with departments having a subject-matter expertise and a role in the incident response.

When an incident involves participation by non-Tufts entities (including local government agencies, state agencies, and private contractors/companies), the PIO will work to ensure that PIOs of participating entities are included in the coordination of information for release.

Experience has shown that the technologically connected campus population expects information to flow very quickly; however, it is often not possible to provide comprehensive, accurate information in the early, chaotic stage of a crisis. Following notification of an incident, the Crisis Communication Team may craft and distribute brief messages acknowledging the nature of the incident and indicating that the university is responding to the situation and gathering information. As soon as the Crisis Communication Team is briefed on the incident, the team will determine a target time to distribute the message(s) and begin to draft its content. All messages will be created with the understanding that they will be viewed by students, faculty, staff, administration, news, social media, and partners.

The message(s) will seek to provide:

- Timely information. This includes making good on commitments to provide updates at a specific time, even if there is little or no news to report.

- Accurate information that seeks to alert, inform, and reassure.

- Consistent information, ensuring that the university speaks with one voice.

- A resource to address questions and concerns. Including requesting alternative formats of messages for accessibility.

At the time a message is sent, the team will determine a time when the next message will be delivered, even if that time is not publicized. As noted above, a message should be sent at this next appointed time, even if no new information is available or new information is expected to be available shortly. This ensures that a consistent tempo of information is maintained, notwithstanding the possibility that a message may need to be sent earlier if the situation or circumstance dictates.

3.4. Access and Functional Needs

All messages should be able to be received and understood by people with hearing or visual impairments.

- All written messages should be delivered in formats that can be processed by screen-reading applications, allowing recipients with visual impairments to have the message read to them. Messages should not be delivered or posted online as PDFs due to limitations of screen-reading applications to access the information in PDFs.
- Auditory messages (e.g., phone calls sent via TuftsAlert) should always be accompanied by an accessible written version of the information, such as a text message and/or email.
- Messages should avoid unnecessary use of colors that may make reading more difficult for recipients with abnormal color vision.

Messages should be written in plain, easily understood English, making the content accessible to people at various reading levels, and people whose first language is not English.

TuftsAlert pre-scripted warning messages are available in Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and Spanish (the most prevalent languages among stakeholders with low or no English proficiency) and supervisors can contact the Office of Emergency Management to have alert recipients configured for a particular language. Subsequent messaging and messages about lower acuity situations are distributed in English only; bilingual supervisors are expected to ensure that non-English-proficient staff are made aware of important information.

3.5. Rumor Control and Response to Inquiries

In addition to their role in crafting and distributing outbound messages, the Crisis Communication Team also helps to monitor news and social media to become aware of: community perceptions of the response, misinformation and rumors, and unmet information and response needs.

Any information gathered by the Crisis Communication Team will be shared with the PIO. The PIO may then share relevant information with the EOC and/or on-scene Incident Commander. Information gathered may help to shape response/recovery efforts and provide insight on information that needs to be included in the future public information messages for the incident.

To address rumors, members of the Crisis Communication Team may:

- Respond directly to the source of the incorrect information, particularly in the case of social media postings and news media reports
- Include or emphasize correct information in future public information messages for the incident.

In all cases, the information supplied to address rumors must be cleared for release through the PIO or must be part of previously cleared content.

If the answer to the inquiry is already established in information that is cleared for release, a direct reply may be provided by the Crisis Communication Team. For inquiries without previously cleared answers, the question or concern should be brought to the PIO.

The PIO and Crisis Communication Team are not required to respond to all inquiries or social media posts and should exercise discretion in responding to inquiries or social media posts that appear to be intentionally antagonistic or are off topic.

3.6. Spokespersons

Designated spokespersons are:

- Vice President for Communications and Marketing
- Executive Director of Media Relations
- Senior Vice President for University Relations and General Counsel

All spokespersons are qualified by virtue of their day-to-day roles, which align with their responsibilities during a crisis. All spokespersons will be trained on their role and responsibilities outlined in this plan once before assuming the title of spokespersons. All spokespersons will also be trained when any major revisions are made to the Crisis Communication plan.

3.7. Press Briefings

The spokesperson will conduct press briefings. If necessary, an additional member of the Crisis Communication Team will be assigned to act as a liaison (also refer to § 5.2.3 Press Briefing Areas).

As necessary, key members of the university senior administration or administrators directly involved in the incident may be called upon to speak with the press during a crisis.

Members of the Crisis Communication Team involved in the press briefing, the spokesperson, and any administrator(s) making a media appearance will confer before the briefing, ensuring all are prepared for the press briefing. The spokesperson and/or press briefing liaison remains on hand to coordinate.

3.8. Interface with VIPs and Public Officials

The PIO is responsible for interface with dignitaries, important visitors, and high-level public officials (local elected officials, state/federal appointees or elected officials). Any requests for escorts, tours, or briefings of such individuals or groups received by the PIO or the Crisis Communication Team will be coordinated with Government and Community Relations (University Relations). The Crisis Communication Team may assist as appropriate, particularly in helping to provide briefings or the latest incident summary. All escorts or tours must be coordinated with the on-scene Incident Commander or the EOC.

Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

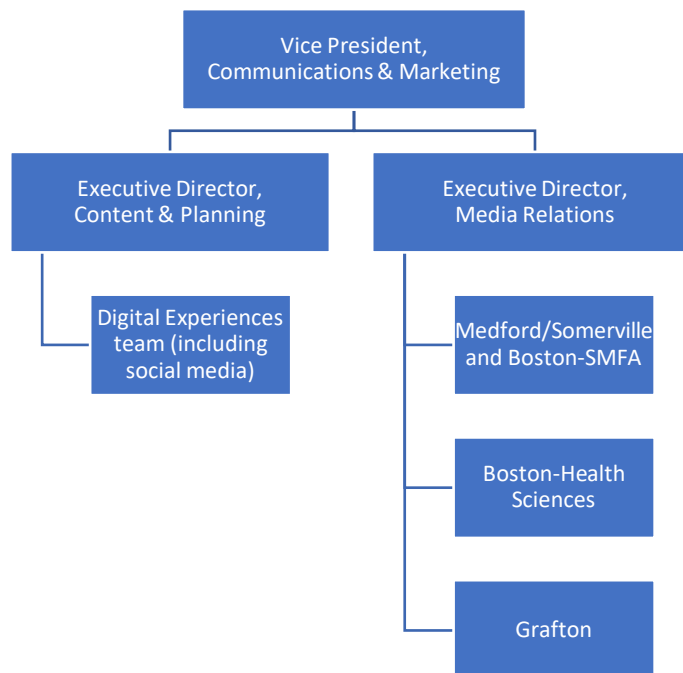## 4.1. Crisis Communication Team

The personnel principally responsible for crisis communication are staff in **University Communications and Marketing (UCM)**, led by the Vice President for Communications and Marketing and reporting to the Senior Vice President for University Relations and General Counsel and the University President.

Within UCM, **Media Relations** assumes a primary role in managing public information and making decisions about content and information release. The **Content and Planning** team supports time-sensitive communication using digital channels and monitors the inflow of communication via social media channels.

Together, these groups form the **Crisis Communication Team**.

Other members of University Communications and Marketing may be enlisted to support crisis communication as needed, at the discretion of Vice President for Communications and Marketing or the designated Public Information Officer.

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                    Vice President,
              Communications & Marketing
                          |
          ┌───────────────┴───────────────┐
   Executive Director,              Executive Director,
   Content & Planning                Media Relations
          |                                 |
   Digital Experiences              Medford/Somerville
   team (including                  and Boston-SMFA
   social media)
                                    Boston-Health
                                    Sciences

                                       Grafton
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If the Vice President of Communications and Marketing is unavailable to serve as initial PIO, the order of succession is:

2. Executive Director of Media Relations
3. Executive Director of Content and Planning

At any time, the initial PIO may designate any other qualified individual to serve as PIO, but otherwise remains in that role until either transferring responsibility to someone else or until the incident concludes. In the event of a protracted incident, the PIO must develop a staffing plan and schedule to assure adequate PIO coverage when needed and rest/off-duty periods for all crisis communication staff, including the PIO.

4.2. Public Information Officer (PIO)

The Crisis Communication Team is led by the PIO. General responsibilities of the PIO include:

- Coordinating emergency public information and warnings (notwithstanding the role of the Department of Public Safety in the university's Emergency Notification Policy)
- Crafting, approving, and distributing messages for internal and external audiences
- Managing media and public inquiries, including establish restrictions for media access, informing media and conduct briefings, and arranging for tours and other interviews for media
- Obtaining news and social media information that may be useful for incident management and emergency coordination
- Maintaining current information summaries.

All responsibilities may be carried out by the PIO directly or be delegated to members of the Crisis Communication Team.

4.2.1. Specific Duties and Authority

Public information will be developed by the PIO in consultation with the EOC and EPG, if activated, or the on-scene Incident Commander. The PIO must work with the Incident Commander to clear information to ensure that sensitive information that could jeopardize ongoing incident management (e.g., a law enforcement investigation) is not released. Information will be distributed to the affected Tufts community members, and internal and external constituencies through appropriate channels.

- The PIO always retains the ultimate authority to make public information decisions.
- The PIO can bring in additional staff members to help craft messages or to do so on behalf of the PIO.
- The PIO is responsible for seeking legal input from University Counsel on release of information for messaging, if the nature of the communication requires counsel review.
- The PIO has the authority to approve messages for release without further approval required and will customarily exercise this unilateral authority in the early, chaotic, and time-critical phase of a no-notice incident.
  - As the incident evolves, the PIO will use their discretion in determining which administrators need to be included in reviewing message content, as described in § 3.3.

  - As time and circumstances permit, the EPG (preferably through a single designee, customarily the Senior Vice President for University Relations and General Counsel) will be included in message approval, and once included will remain involved for successive messages for a given incident.

- The PIO will send the final message(s) to staff in the JIC for dissemination. Channels will be chosen based on the nature of the incident.

- The PIO will select the appropriate communications channel(s) based on the needs and circumstances of the incident, the nature of the message to be communicated, and the intended audience. Section 9.1 provides a list of channels and considerations to assist in selecting appropriate communication channels.

- o Channel selection will consider regulatory and policy imperatives, for example, if there is a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to health or safety (ref. 34 CFR § 668.46 and the university's emergency notification policy).
  - o Channel selection should also take into consideration stakeholder perception of a situation, for example, if community members perceive an immediate danger (even if none exists), more urgent channels should be considered to provide accurate information quickly.

- The PIO will share these messages with the relevant school executive deans and communications officers.
- If appropriate, the PIO will share these messages with Government and Community Relations.
- The PIO will collect and assemble feedback for the AAR.
- The PIO will coordinate training for the Crisis Communication Team.

4.3. Media Relations/Message Lead

The Media Relations/Message Lead is assigned by the PIO and may be tasked to be the liaison between the EOC and JIC. General responsibilities include:

- Drafting follow-up messages on the crisis incident
- Maintaining open dialogue with PIO and social media team
- Coordinating with Media Relations to assign staff to support media requests.

4.4. Social Media

General responsibilities for social media during a crisis incident include:

- Using Twitter and Facebook (and potentially Instagram) to send out initial information on crisis incident
- Sending out updates on crisis incident via social media channels deployed for this incident
- Searching social media channels using keywords related to crisis incident
- Reporting social media activity to the PIO and Media Relations team.

4.5. Web Lead

General responsibilities for the Web Lead during a crisis incident include:

- Drafting announcement email(s) and posting to the Tufts website
- Sending announcement email(s) to affected campus community
- Updating the alert area on the Tufts website
- Updating the Tufts phone line with information obtained from the PIO.

4.6. School-Based Communications Officers and Executive Deans

Along with the centralized role of University Communications and Marketing, individual schools may have their own communications professionals as well as an executive dean (titles vary among schools to include Executive Associate Dean, Executive Administrative Dean, and Associate Dean). Together, each school-based communications officer and executive dean are responsible for messaging to their communities that is consistent with the university message, following official university announcements, and providing any necessary additional details that are specific and unique to their school, such as academic accommodations, making services available to their students, or amplifying the university message in a manner of delivery that is

best suited to the audience of their school. The PIO should be informed of school-based messages in advance of sending.

4.7. Office of Emergency Management (OEM)

OEM monitors and coordinates the response university-wide to an emergency/crisis incident. General responsibilities for OEM during a crisis incident include:

- Activating Tufts emergency notification system
- Implementing the Crisis Communication Plan
- Activating the EOC
- Establishing Zoom meeting
- Establishing and maintaining a situational briefing schedule
- Sending out situation reports as required
- Establishing information sharing protocols with the JIC
- Facilitating the development of an AAR
- Supporting training for the Crisis Communication Team
- Tracking and maintaining training records of the Crisis Communications Team
- Maintaining the TuftsAlert system.

4.8. Tufts University Police Department (TUPD)

As first responders, TUPD is typically on scene first to initiate response actions and provide information on the emergency/crisis incident. General responsibilities for TUPD during a crisis incident include:

- Confirming that an emergency or dangerous situation exists involving an immediate threat to the health and safety of students or employees
- Serving as Incident Commander of incident
- Activating TuftsAlert
- Issuing Timely Warnings as required
- Providing traffic control and access control for designated areas (e.g., the EOC and press briefing areas)
- Maintaining training on TuftsAlert.

4.9. Communications Center

As the centralized point for receiving reports of emergency/crisis incidents, the Communication Center monitors hazards and disseminates information to TUPD. General responsibilities for the Communications Center during a crisis incident include:

- Monitoring and detection of incidents
- Receiving reports of incidents
- Dispatching of resources to an incident
- Activating TuftsAlert
- Notifying a senior-level department official of incident
- Maintaining training on TuftsAlert.

4.10. After Action Report (AAR)

In accordance with the EOP § 7.3, the Director of Emergency Management is responsible for collecting feedback and reviewing documentation following an incident and directing the development of the AAR. The PIO(s) for a given incident assumes the responsibility for collecting and assembling feedback and documentation for the public information function and the Crisis Communication Team, and for contributing information to the broader post-incident review process.

Logistics and Support Requirements

5.1. Coordination Tools

The Crisis Communication Team utilizes several coordination tools to support the effective implementation of this plan.

Coordination Tool	Use
Email	Routine coordination
Cellular phone (voice and text)	Time-sensitive coordination among individual team members
Zoom	Virtual meeting space for team coordination
WebEOC	Ongoing situational awareness
Box	Near-real-time document sharing, group editing, and archival

5.1.1. Email: Executive Policy Group (EPG) Distribution List

An email distribution list was created in order to quickly contact the Executive Policy Group (EPG). The email contains all members of the EPG plus the President (in Outlook, you can expand the list to see the individual members)

- EPG@tufts.edu
- Can be found in the global address lookup by searching "executive policy group"

5.1.2. Zoom

Zoom meetings allow sharing of video, computer screen, and audio content simultaneously, and allow participants to connect by telephone, computer, via an app on a smartphone or tablet, or from rooms with video displays. Zoom meetings may be recorded as part of incident documentation.

5.1.3. WebEOC®

While managing an event or incident at Tufts, WebEOC (tbc.webeocasp.com) is used to:

- Keep a running activity log of events and response actions
- Share information about significant events with other WebEOC users within the university, and share more significant events with other institutions in the Boston Consortium for Higher Education (TBC), for situational awareness
- Submit incident-related resource requests (from university departments, divisions, schools)
    - For those managing the incident, WebEOC can be used to review and prioritize those requests.

5.1.4. Box.com

Box is a university-sanctioned, cloud-based file sharing service accessible to everyone with a Tufts username and password. Detailed documentation is available at it.tufts.edu/box. Box can be used to share documents in near real time, for real-time group editing using the associated Office Online tools, and for long-term storage and sharing of files.

5.2. Operating Locations

5.2.1. Emergency Operations Center Locations

An EOC can be activated virtually, physically or a combination of both. Below are designated rooms on all four campuses that can function as an EOC in an emergency, or as a satellite to a centralized EOC on another campus. For reference, the locations of the designated EOCs are excerpted from the EOP.

Additional designated spaces have been identified on each campus location:

5.2.2. Joint Information Center (JIC) Locations

The PIO will active, operate, and deactivate the JIC as necessary. The JIC can be activated virtually, physically, or a combination of both modalities. Below are designated rooms on all four campuses that can function as an JIC in an emergency, or as a satellite to a centralized EOC on another campus.

5.2.3. Press Briefing Areas

When members of the press arrive on campus to cover a crisis/incident, they will be directed to go to a specially designated area on campus unaffected by the incident. Here, they will receive regular updates about the incident and be allowed to ask follow-up questions, if necessary.

Media staging areas will be designated in consultation with UCM, TUPD, and OEM.

A member of the Media Relations team will be stationed at this location and remain with the press until the incident is over. The building curator will be contacted as early as possible by the Media Relations designee assigned to the location, either in advance by phone or in person upon arrival.

5.3. Central Contact

Representatives of media organizations seeking to contact Media Relations are directed to email pr@tufts.edu or call (depending on which campus is of interest):

- Boston-Health Sciences campus 617-636-6586
- Grafton campus 508-839-7910
- Medford/Somerville and Boston-SMFA campuses 617-627-3069

Contact information is continually updated at communications.tufts.edu/public-relations/contact-public-relations.

Training

Members of the Crisis Communication Team will receive training on this plan, convened by the Vice President for Communications and Marketing with support from the OEM.

The Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan sets training goals for all members of the university involved in the emergency management program, including public information personnel.

6.1.1. Required Training

- Orientation to Tufts' Emergency Operations Plan (EM101), conducted by the Office of Emergency Management in a tailored offering lasting 1 hour
- [Public Information Officer Awareness](https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-29.a) (IS-29a), online 3 hours
  https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-29.a

6.1.2. Recommended Training

- [Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS 100)](https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.c), online 2 hours
  https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-100.c
- [National Incident Management System (NIMS) An Introduction](https://training.fema.gov/IS/courseOverview.aspx?code=IS-700.a) (IS-700), online 3 hours
  https://training.fema.gov/IS/courseOverview.aspx?code=IS-700.a
- [Multi-Hazard Emergency Management for Higher Education](https://training.fema.gov/hiedu/aemrc/eplanning/l363.aspx) (L-363), classroom 3 days
  https://training.fema.gov/hiedu/aemrc/eplanning/l363.aspx
- [Basic Public Information Officer](https://training.fema.gov/programs/pio/g290.aspx) (G-290), classroom 2 days
  https://training.fema.gov/programs/pio/g290.aspx

6.1.3. Additional Training Opportunities

The following training is not included in the Multi-Year Training and Exercise plan.

- [National Incident Management System (NIMS) Public Information Systems](https://training.fema.gov/IS/courseOverview.aspx?code=IS-702.a) (IS-702)
  https://training.fema.gov/IS/courseOverview.aspx?code=IS-702.a
- Additional FEMA-offered training is detailed at training.fema.gov/programs/pio/
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) training detailed at emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/training/
- Other training opportunities are available through contractors/consultants

6.1.4. Tracking Training Completion

OEM will maintain a training tracking spreadsheet that identifies required training and tracks completion date. The tracking spreadsheet will also capture recommended training completion. Inputs will be required from University Communications and Marketing and will be reviewed annually.

Plan Development and Maintenance

The Tufts University Office of Emergency Management in partnership with University Communications and Marketing owns and is responsible for maintaining this Crisis Communications Plan.

7.1. Testing and Evaluation

The plan will be reviewed and evaluated by Emergency Management and University Communications and Marketing annually. The plan will be tested and evaluated by Emergency Management and University Communications and Marketing every three years or on an as needed basis; testing will include the Joint Information Center and Joint Information System procedures. As part of the review, both parties may seek input and recommendations from Tufts University departments and/or the Emergency Management Program Committee and shall also consider the feedback and recommendations recorded in after action reports for exercises, trainings, or real-world events.

7.2. Revision

This plan should be revised every five years or as updates to plans, policies, or procedures determine necessary. As in the review process, both parties may seek input and recommendations from Tufts University departments and/or the Emergency Management Program Committee and shall also consider the feedback and recommendations recorded in after action reports for exercises, trainings, or real-world events.

A versioning system is used to communicate the level of changes in subsequent publications of this document. The version number format X.x.x indicates level of change since the previous version:

1.	0.	0
		↳ Content correction, title or name change, typographical correction
	↳	Revision or addition of an annex; modification of an existing section
↳		Major update, reorganization, or doctrinal change.

Maintenance changes may be approved by the Director of Digital Experiences or any director at a higher level within the Crisis Communication Team. Revisions may be approved by the Vice President for Communications and Marketing and the Director of Emergency Management. Major revisions are reviewed by the Crisis Communications Team and Emergency Management Program Committee and approved by the Vice President for Communications and Marketing and the Director of Emergency Management.

The record of changes since the previous major version is printed on page 3.

Authorities

Legal authority to undertake the development of this plan and subsequent actions in an emergency derives from the Trustees of Tufts College.

Appendices

9.1. Channels

Communications staff will select the appropriate communications channel(s) based on the needs and circumstances of the particular incident, the nature of the message to be communicated, and the intended audience. Messages can be sent through various channels:

Channel Matrix; color coding (red, orange, yellow, white) and row position indicate higher urgency modalities, with the most urgent at the top.

Channel	Manager	Use	Audience
TuftsAlert uses text (SMS), voice, email and social media	**Tufts Police or Office of Emergency Management (OEM)** sends initial alert **Communications and Marketing (UCM)** staff may send follow up alerts, if needed	Instructions on protective action that may be life-saving. 1 sentence	All Tufts
Non-alert broadcast message "Tufts University" through TuftsAlert	**OEM or UCM**	Information which is urgent but not life-saving; when other means are too slow or ineffective due to impaired infrastructure (e.g. a power outage) 1 sentence	All Tufts
Social Media (Twitter) @TuftsUniversity	**Social Media Strategist** or **Director of Digital Experiences** Messages may be retweeted by school handles as appropriate	Frequent, brief updates; individual replies; conversational engagement; rumor control; can link to more comprehensive updates 280 characters (approximately two sentences)	Some faculty, staff, and students AS WELL AS members of the general public with no affiliation to Tufts
Announcements eList (via eList Service)	**Director of Digital Experiences** or **a designee**	Timely warning of crimes (i.e., Clery Act), when it's unnecessary to wake people Multiple paragraphs	All Tufts (targeted by campus)

Channel	Manager	Use	Audience
Closings eList (via eList Service)	**Director of Digital Experience** or **a designee**	Usually used for weather-related campus closings Multiple paragraphs	All Tufts (targeted by campus)
Announcements webpage (announcements.tufts.edu)	**Director of Digital Experience** or **a designee**	Provides more comprehensive updates that can be linked to from Twitter, Facebook, email and Tufts.edu alert bar Multiple paragraphs	All Tufts
Tufts.edu homepage alert area	**Director of Digital Experience** or **a designee**	Quick alerts that link to the announcements webpage for more info 1 sentence	Anyone who visits Tufts.edu
617-627-INFO line(s)	**Director of Digital Experience** or **a designee**	Provides information on status of Tufts campuses and instructions for finding additional information/getting updates 1-2 sentences	Anyone who calls in
Social Media (Facebook)	**Social Media Strategist** or **Director of Digital Experience**	Less frequent informational messages; can link to more comprehensive updates; not used for urgent information 1-2 sentences	Some faculty, staff, and students AS WELL AS members of the general public with no affiliation to Tufts
Parents eList	**Either Public Safety or Student Services**, depending on the nature of the incident and urgency of the message.	Time-sensitive information regarding conditions that affect the safety of undergraduate students Multiple paragraphs	Parents of AS&E undergraduate students

Channel	Manager	Use	Audience
Alumni eList	**UCM (Digital Services team)**	Information (not necessarily time-sensitive) regarding incidents affecting the university that are relevant to alumni Multiple paragraphs	Alumni of one or multiple schools
External media	**Media Relations ED of MR or designee (Deputy Director(s))**	Rumor control, information regarding conditions that affect or are of interest to host communities or general public Multiple paragraphs	Media, host communities, broader public
Public officials	**SVP** and/or the **Executive Director of Government and Community Relations**		Public officials

9.2. Pre-Scripted Information Bulletins

The following resources offer information scripts related to hazards affecting Tufts University and are useful references for developing messages. Hazards with a fast impact have more prescriptive content, particularly the TuftsAlert scripts that are designed to be sent *without modification*. Hazards offering a longer reaction time are intended to use scripts as resources for crafting situationally specific messages.

Hazard	Reaction Time	Pre-scripted Information Source(s)
Active Shooter	Minutes	Pre-scripted TuftsAlert message "police emergency" http://emergency.tufts.edu/guide/active-shooter/
Energy Utility Failure	Minutes-Hours	http://emergency.tufts.edu/guide/utility-failures/
Explosive Device	Minutes	http://emergency.tufts.edu/guide/suspicious-package/ Further messages must be situation specific
Fire or Explosion	Minutes-Hours	Messaging goal is public information (not protective action) and must be situation specific
Hazardous Material Release	Minutes-Hours	Pre-scripted TuftsAlert message "chemical hazard" Further messages must be situation specific https://webwiser.nlm.nih.gov/ for protective action guidance – must be used in consultation with on-scene Incident Command and/or Technical Specialist(s)
Hurricane/Tropical Storm	Days	http://emergency.tufts.edu/guide/natural-disaster/#hurricane Further messages must be situation specific Closing scripts https://tufts.box.com/v/weatherclosing
Infectious Disease	Hours-Days	http://emergency.tufts.edu/guide/medical-emergency/#PublicHealthEmergency http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/id/epidemiology/factsheets.html https://www.cdc.gov/DiseasesConditions/
Pedestrian/Vehicle Collision	Hours	Messaging goal is public information (not protective action) and must be situation specific
Severe Thunderstorm	Minutes	Pre-scripted TuftsAlert message "severe weather" Pre-scripted TuftsAlert message "tornado warning" Protective messaging should be consistent with National Weather Service warning text, available in real time at https://alerts.weather.gov/cap/ma.php?x=1
Sexual Assault	Hours-Days	Messaging goal is public information (not protective action) and must be situation specific
Water Utility Failure	Minutes-Hours	http://emergency.tufts.edu/guide/utility-failures/
Winter Storm/Blizzard	Days	http://emergency.tufts.edu/guide/natural-disaster/#cold Protective messaging should be consistent with National Weather Service warning text, available in real time at https://alerts.weather.gov/cap/ma.php?x=1 Closing scripts https://tufts.box.com/v/weatherclosing

9.3 JIC/PIO Crisis Communications Protocol

Checklist available on Box: **https://tufts.box.com/s/l809kkklyk89412gklw1dzfw7jsv2i24**

9.4 Media Relations/Message Lead Crisis Communications Protocol

Checklist available on Box: **https://tufts.box.com/s/qgzqju7rxmh2gixdxrlsa0116zpac8gq**

9.3 Social Media Crisis Communications Protocol

Checklist available on Box: **https://tufts.box.com/s/nqxx4qvi9hj3yrz2vcekclpdyxi5udgq**

9.4 Web Lead Crisis Communications Protocol

Checklist available on Box: h**ttps://tufts.box.com/s/v66fvgc0s2wbgc0g3cepzwosvc9xe1of**

9.5 School-based Communications Leads – Crisis Communications Protocol

Checklist available on Box: **https://tufts.box.com/s/tm1thgr1r8uk6jeut64b7rjgrc5gngi6**

9.6 Emergency Management – Crisis Communications Protocol

Checklist available on Box: **https://tufts.box.com/s/56rjcou3t6yp9xoa1payw05xyf2u6isj**

9.7 TuftsAlert - Crisis Communications Protocol

Checklist available on Box: **https://tufts.box.com/s/jc3465i22rqd8ffuyq1cejmax04p6d2q**

9.8 Announcement Email - Crisis Communications Protocol

Checklist available on Box: **https://tufts.box.com/s/m8ycvp7araj9zi0kha0whky3jlsryyef**

9.9 Weather Message Templates - Crisis Communications Protocol

Weather message templates available on Box: **https://tufts.box.com/s/55tnneltej2688npb6igq5owbu0bx6as**

10. List of Acronyms

AAR – After Action Report

EOC – Emergency Operations Center

EOP – Emergency Operations Plan

EMPC – Emergency Management Program Committee

EPG – Executive Policy Group

JIC – Joint Information Center

JIS – Joint Information System

OEM – Office of Emergency Management

PIO – Public Information Officer

SMFA – School of Museum and Fine Arts

TBC – The Boston Consortium

TUPD – Tufts University Police Department

UCM – University Communications and Marketing