

CRISIS COMMUNICATION

This procedure is governed by its parent policy. Questions regarding this procedure are to be directed to the identified Procedure Owner.

Category:	D. Community & Corporate Relations
Parent Policy:	D03
Approval Date:	June 9, 2020
Effective Date:	June 9, 2020
Procedure Owner:	Vice President, Development

Overview:	<p>During an emergency the College's Incident Command Team (ICS) will be the first people notified. Under the ICS structure, all communications activities will be conducted through the Information Officer.</p> <p>During a crisis where ICS is not enacted, communications will be handled by the Vice President, Development and the Corporate Communications & Marketing team, including creating key messages and communications tactics, identifying the appropriate spokesperson, and managing the distribution of messages to all audiences.</p>
Procedures:	<p>Media Relations Adopting a pre-emptive approach to media relations is critical in successful crisis management. Disclosing information as soon as it is verified can be a highly effective strategy, since it keeps the institution's voice on the initiative and quickly eliminates the "breaking news" interest in a story. This technique often summarily defuses a public relations crisis, even when the subject is unpleasant or embarrassing.</p> <p>Spokesperson A single spokesperson will be designated by the Vice President of Development & Strategy. The spokesperson will be a senior leader of the College who will act as the public face of Olds College during the emergency or crisis, participating in news conferences and interviews as needed.</p> <p>Media inquiries All media requests should be forwarded to the Corporate Communications and Marketing department. If approached by the media, staff, faculty and board members should politely decline to respond to media inquiries and offer to arrange for the College spokesperson to contact the media representative. The College will issue news releases, media advisories and/or host news conferences as appropriate, during the emergency or crisis. In some instances, media will be coordinated with other agencies, such as RCMP, Alberta Health Services or the local fire department.</p>

Olds College Alert App

During an emergency, the first communication will be sent to staff, students and visitors using the Olds College Alert App. Members of ICS have access to send alerts using the app. Updates and additional alerts will be sent using the app throughout the emergency. An “all clear” message will be sent notifying staff, students and visitors that the emergency is over.

Social Media

Key messages and updates will be shared with the public using Olds College official Twitter and Facebook: :

- Twitter: @OldsCollege
- Facebook: Olds College (@OldsCollege)

To prevent the spread of misinformation and help share the official Olds College messages it is crucial that all other College affiliated Twitter accounts refrain from commenting on the situation and instead simply retweet @Olds College.

All other College affiliated Facebook accounts should refrain from commenting on the situation and instead simply share Olds College newsfeed posts.

The Corporate Communications & Marketing team will monitor all social media feeds (Linkedin, Instagram, YouTube, Snapchat, TikTok, Twitter and Facebook) during a crisis or emergency to respond to all inquiries and questions, and to monitor public perception of Olds College reputation and brand.

Website

If deemed appropriate, the emergency web banner will be put up on the oldscollege.ca homepage. The banner will direct people to an information and update page on the website. All public updates will be posted to the webpage, along with all news releases and media advisories. Social media posts will direct people to the website for more information.

Email

During a crisis, email may be used to communicate updates and provide information to staff, faculty and students. It is important to note that during an active emergency, the Olds College Alert App will be used instead of email.

However, following the emergency or during a crisis email will be the tool of choice to send messages to our internal audiences, including: staff, faculty, students and board members. Email can also be used to send information to students, if appropriate.

Definitions:

Incident Command Team (ICS): team responsible for emergency response at the College.

Crisis: an event that prompts significant news coverage, social media publicity and public scrutiny that can negatively impact Olds College’s reputation, operations or financial stability. A crisis can occur as the result of a legal, management, advocacy, political, or public relations issue. There are two forms for crisis: sudden or smoldering.

Emergency: an unexpected or dangerous event that requires a response from police, fire or ambulance.

Related Information:

[Emergency Response Plan](#)

Review Period:

3 years

Revision History:

Revision: October 17, 2016
Revision: June 9, 2020