



Fraternity and Eating House Emergency Procedures

D A V I D S O N C O L L E G E

Crisis management guidelines are provided in an effort to give a logical framework in the event of a crisis involving your organization. Though our hope is that preventative measures such as fire safety, alcohol regulation, risk management, and hazing abolition will help organizations avoid any potential crises, it is unrealistic to believe that no Patterson Court organization will ever need guidelines. Tragedies do occur and cannot be predicted. Taking the time to prepare for—and ultimately prevent the tragedies that can be avoided could save not only the life of a member, but also the life of your organization.

These guidelines should be used if a crisis or tragedy involving your organization occurs either on or off Davidson College property. Examples of such situation include, but are not limited to:

- Injury or death of a member or guest;
- Fire in the organization house;
- Injury or accident involving alcohol at social events;
- Injury or accident involving a member and/or non-member at/or during an organization event or on chapter property.

Some organizations may already have similar crisis management guidelines that have been developed by their inter/national organizations. This documentation supplements those procedures by providing names and telephone numbers of college officials who can be of assistance.

Educate Your Members!

1. The entire Executive Board of your organization should review these crisis management procedures and be familiar with important concepts of handling a crisis. Every organization officer should have a copy of these procedures.
2. Be certain that all members in the organization (including new members) know that the organization president is in charge of every emergency situation. Though the president may choose to consult with other members who have some expertise or insight, final authority should rest with the president.
3. In the event the president is absent, the next ranking officer should assume control. If such rankings are not already in place, organizations should define officer rankings and include them in the organization by-laws.

4. All members must know who is in charge and be prepared to follow instructions. Include a review of the organization's crisis management guidelines in a risk management program each semester. The house manager should also be aware of the procedures.

General Procedures for Dealing with a Crisis

1. **In nearly all situations** [i.e., major emotional crisis (suicide talk/attempt, depression, etc.), major health injury (alcohol poisoning, life threatening trauma, etc.), crime (assault, major theft, harassment, fight, etc.)], **the president's first call will be to the 9-911 emergency number.** Briefly and calmly explain the situation so that the emergency personnel can respond appropriately. Make sure to provide exact location and means of communication (i.e., phone or pager). For minor crises (i.e., vandalism, knowledge of emotional trauma to member, etc.), please contact a Student Life staff member (Patterson Court Advisor or on-duty person) or Campus Police immediately.
2. **Contain the area.** If the crisis occurs in the house, close the house immediately to all non-members except for medical, police, or Davidson College personnel. Any guests in the house should be asked to leave. Assign one or more responsible members to calmly control access to the house. Be ready to document the situation.
3. **Contact College officials.** During business hours (8:30 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday) contact the Patterson Court Office at 704/894-2188. Tell the person answering the phone that this is an emergency and ask for the Patterson Court Advisor.

If the College's administrative offices are not open, contact the Campus Police at 704/894-2178. Inform the contact of the nature of and location of the emergency and tell him or her that you have already contacted 9-911 emergency personnel. Campus Police will then contact the necessary College personnel.

4. **Contact your organization's alumni and/or faculty/staff advisor and inform him/her of the situation.** Ask him/her to come to the organization house immediately in order to consult with the Executive Board officers and College officials. When that is completed, contact your inter/national headquarters (if applicable).
5. **Inform your members, including new members, about the situation.** Explain that there has been an emergency and that the house is closed to all but members and appropriate College/emergency personnel. Instruct the members not to speak to anyone outside the organization about the incident except police and College officials. Do not discuss details, speculate on events, or otherwise elaborate on the situation until police, College officials, and/or organization advisor(s) arrive. Emphasize the need to remain calm and assure organization members that everything is under control. If there is a need to inform members who are not present, the president may delegate this responsibility to another member.

Serious Injury or Death of a Member

1. In the event of a serious injury or death, medical or police personnel will notify the family. **Do not notify the parents.** Current parent/guardian contact information should

always be on file in the Dean of Students Office and with the organization. After you know the entire family has been contact, it is appropriate then and only then for an organization representative to call and share the organization's concern.

2. In the case of a serious injury or illness, contact the member's family regarding their desires for visitation by organization members. Always respect the wishes and desires of the family even if the member insists on more frequent visits.
3. In the case of a death, members' attendance at a funeral or memorial service should be coordinated with the funeral director and the family.

Managing the Media

1. If the news media contact the organization, only the designated spokesperson (usually the organization president or advisor) should speak for the organization. With the assistance of the organization's legal counsel (where possible), the organization advisor, inter/national headquarters (where applicable), and Davidson College officials, the organization should carefully prepare a formal statement to be issued to the media. Prior to the development of such a statement, the following standby statement may be useful:

" We can confirm that [describe incident briefly] occurred on [day] at [time] at [location]. We will do all we can to provide information as it becomes available. Currently, we are working with the appropriate authorities. Further information will be provided once we have completed our investigation of all pertinent matters."

Absolutely NOTHING else should be said.

2. Keep the organization house locked. Permit only members and appropriate officials to enter.
3. Consider holding additional press briefings away from the organization house. Involve advisors, College officials and inter/national headquarters staff (where applicable) in such decisions.
4. Do NOT release any names to the media until a College official has advised that the timing is appropriate.