CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE PROTOCOL

January 2026

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Purpose
Critical incidents globally, nationally, regionally and locally have an impact on the Guilford College community. At times there is a need for the College to respond, through delivering messages to the campus community (and sometimes to the wider community including parents and alumni) and providing support resources for campus constituents. This protocol outlines ways in which this is accomplished in a well-coordinated fashion and attends to community care.

Definition
Critical incidents are events outside the normal experience that pose actual or perceived threats that can overwhelm both an individual's and organization's coping resources.

Resources
Safety Report
Emergency Operations Plan
Community of Care Form

> Items not included below that are considered Emergency are items such as: active violence against community members, severe weather, fire, utility failure, law enforcement activity, and timely warnings

Procedure
Step 1: In the event of a critical incident, members of cabinet or faculty, staff or students, will work with the Chief Communications & External Relations Officer (and other relevant leaders) on a response plan to include communications, if warranted, to the campus community and wider community if necessary.

Step 2: In collaboration with the Chief Communications & External Relations Officer, the listed department/office will prepare a message to share internally. The President, in consultation with the cabinet, will determine if a response needs to be shared externally, ordinarily by the President.

Step 3: A timeline for sharing information and the channels through which the information will be shared will be confirmed.

Step 4: Information will be shared, and a plan for following up or responding to questions and feedback will be established.

Community Response Team:
Director of Counseling

Dean of Students

Director of Human Resources

Director of Public Safety

Provost

Chief Communications & External Relations Officer

Senior Client Support Specialist

Management Table

Incident Type	Internal Critical Incident Communication	External Critical Incident Communication	Department/ Office	Resources /Responses	Connection to Guilford Core Values
Domestic/ international affairs (i.e. war, genocide, unrest, riots, identity violence, terrorism)	Email to the community at the beginning of each semester as a reminder of our values as reviewed by Communications and Marketing (C&M) Community members will have the option to complete the Community of Care Form to submit topics of concern around current events that could result in a conversation about campus values during a Community of Care time. The form will be monitored by the Community Response Team and they will follow up in each case. The Community of Care time will be a space for listening and speaking and learning.	As needed through Alumni Relations and Advancement Office	Public Safety for concerns of violence	College Core Values Peace and Conflict Studies Department Community and Justice Studies Program Reminder of Community of Care Form	Community Diversity Equality Excellence Integrity Justice Stewardship
School shootings/ violence on national campuses, Guilford County or North Carolina	Email to community Internal text through ReGroup System for local occurrences and timely messages		Public Safety Student Affairs	Reminder of protocols and safety procedures Reminder of campus and community resources (i.e. counseling services, employee assistance program-EAP)	Community

Incident Type	Internal Critical Incident Communication	External Critical Incident Communication	Department/ Office	Resources /Responses	Connection to Guilford Core Values
Community member death	Email to the community	C&M for notable Guilfordians (i.e. long time faculty member, etc)	Initial notification by President's Office, follow up by: Friends Center, Counseling, Student Affairs	Grief is a normal and evolving process. It's normal to have a response. Reminder of campus and community resources (i.e. counseling services, employee assistance program-EAP, Friends Center) Details may not be forthcoming to respect family privacy	Community Stewardship
Political events and elections	Email at the beginning of the school year imparting information about voting Email to the community Community members will have the option to complete the Community of Care Form to submit topics of concern around current events that could result in a conversation about campus values during a Community of Care time. The form will be monitored by the Community Response Team and they will follow up in each case. The Community of Care time will be a space for listening and speaking and learning.		Student Affairs Relevant academic departments	Information for how to vote, where poll locations are, how to find information about the candidates Sample email	Community Diversity Equality Excellence Integrity Justice Stewardship

Incident Type	Internal Critical Incident Communication	External Critical Incident Communication	Department/ Office	Resources /Responses	Connection to Guilford Core Values
Health crisis (i.e. outbreak, numerous cases, flu, mono)	Email at the beginning of each semester or season to share preventative messages with support from C&M Email to the community		Student Health (Counseling) Human Resources Dept Health and Safety Task Force as needed	Reminder of campus and community resources (i.e. counseling services, employee assistance program-EAP, Friends Center) Procedures based on campus health status Eagle Physicians/Urgent Care	Community
Community member (staff/ faculty/ student/ partner) misconduct	Email to the community as reviewed by Human Resources, Public Safety, Student Affairs, C&M and the President In person/live community forums as warranted	As needed per the advisement of C&M and the President	Human Resources Student Affairs C&M Provost Office President's Office Associated programs or departments as needed Bias Incident Report Team as needed	Restorative Justice framework Trainings for the community and community member(s) who committed the misconduct as warranted Reminder of campus and community resources (i.e. counseling services, employee assistance program-EAP) Bias Incident Report Team	Community Integrity Justice

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Weather emergencies including severe weather warnings Note: These emergencies tend to occur in the winter and in hurricane season but can happen at other times.	Internal text through ReGroup System (Public Safety) Email to the community (Provost), Website posting including homepage banner (C&M)), social media (C&M), Guilford Guard app.	Website and social media (C&M), Guilford Guard app; External text (Provost/Public Safety) and Advancement communications platform (Student Affairs/Public Safety) for parents, families and others, when warranted.	Public Safety, Provost's Office (when classes are affected), Student Affairs/ Advancement (when families are involved) Facilities (potentially including campus building contacts), C&M	Weather Emergency Policy; also, the Emergency Operations Plan may be used in extreme situations that create danger or damage.	Community Excellence Stewardship
Cyber Events	Internal text through ReGroup System Email communication to affected departments and/ or groups		IT Dept C&M Provost if affecting classes Legal counsel as needed	Any necessary protocols for engagement	Community Stewardship
Facilities issue (i.e. utility emergencies-heat, electricity)	Internal text through ReGroup System Email communication		Resident Housing Team Provost if affecting classes C&M	Any necessary protocols for engagement	Stewardship

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