

**OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES & LEADERSHIP**

GREEK LIFE

***PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED IN THE EVENT OF
AN EMERGENCY OR TRAGEDY
2007-2008***

The following procedures are recommended in the event a tragedy or crisis occurs, whether on or off chapter property. Examples of such situations include, but are not limited to, the death or serious injury of a member, or a fire in a chapter facility. These recommendations are designed primarily for chapters with houses; however, most of the provisions are applicable to any organized group.

Some chapters may already have similar emergency procedures that have been developed by their general fraternity headquarters. This information will complement those procedures by providing names and telephone numbers of local contact people who can be of assistance.

MEMBER EDUCATION

1. Be certain that each member of the chapter understands that the Chapter President is the Officer-In-Charge of **every** emergency situation. The President may consult with other members depending on the situation; however, final decision-making authority rests with the President.
2. Determine a ranked order of chapter officers who are responsible in the Chapter President's absence and communicate the order to the entire chapter membership. Each officer should know where to locate a copy of this list of emergency procedures. The Chapter/Graduate Advisor and/or House Corporation Board President/other Alumni Advisors should also possess a copy of and be familiar with these procedures.
3. All members must know who is in charge and be prepared to follow instructions. Include a review of both the general fraternity emergency procedures and these procedures in your new member education program. Highlight these procedures at the beginning of each semester with the entire chapter membership

DEATH, SERIOUS INJURY, THREAT TO INDIVIDUAL LIVES

1. Restrict access to the chapter facility at once. Assign competent individuals to answer the telephone and the front door. The Chapter President cannot give instructions and maintain order if members are leaving and strangers are entering.

Permit only your members and appropriate officials to enter. Try to keep members off their personal phones to avoid the passing of incomplete information prior to a statement being issued by the President. If your chapter does not provide housing, identify a common meeting place.

2. If emergency assistance is necessary, dial **911** and provide the dispatcher with complete information on the situation. Be calm and concise. The dispatcher will contact the support and response teams requiring notification (e.g., ambulance, Fire Dept., Police Dept.).
3. Before you leave the telephone, call the Office of Student Activities & Leadership. During business hours call 683-3446. Inform the secretary that this is an emergency call. If it is past general office hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) proceed through the following list of University officials until you reach someone. **Do not hesitate to call at any hour!**

Kelly Jo Karnes, Associate Director, Student Activities & Leadership	343-9250
Don Stansberry, Interim Dean of Students	537-4956
Dr. Geneva Walker-Johnson, Vice President for Student Affairs	483-5752

If there is any doubt whether or not the situation is serious enough to warrant calling University officials, **PLEASE CALL!**

4. Your next call is to your Chapter/Graduate Advisor.

Name: _____ **Phone Number:** _____

5. Assemble your members in a group. Explain that there is an emergency situation and that the chapter facility is closed. Ask the members to cooperate in controlling outgoing phone calls until the situation is under control. The President will be the official spokesperson for the chapter.

Do not discuss the situation with anyone outside the chapter membership until the police, University officials, and your Advisor have arrived. At that time we will discuss exactly what has happened and determine jointly what steps will be taken to manage the situation.

If there are members of the chapter who are not present for this meeting, a member of the chapter should be assigned to inform each of them as to the situation upon their return.

6. Your general fraternity/sorority headquarters will need to be notified at the earliest opportunity. Specific information to be shared, as well as questions, which they

may be able to answer, can be formulated prior to the call through discussion with University officials and your Chapter/Graduate Advisor.

7. If the press should contact the chapter, only the Chapter President or Chapter/Graduate Advisor should speak on behalf of the chapter. With the help of your Advisor and University officials, an official written statement can be prepared. Decline comment until such a statement has been completed. **Do not** release any names until it has been determined that it is appropriate.
8. If the situation is a death outside the chapter living space, do not announce it until University officials and your Chapter/Graduate Advisor have arrived to help.
9. **Do not notify the parents.** In the event of a serious injury or death, medical or police personnel will notify the family. You should, however, have parent/guardian information on file and available to the proper authorities. When you know the family has been notified, it is appropriate for a chapter representative to call and share sympathies and concern.
10. In the event of a death, you will want to make arrangements for any roommates to temporarily relocate to another living space. Restrict access to the deceased member's room until his/her personal possessions are removed.
11. If a member dies, do not move any of the deceased student's personal possessions. When proper time has passed, you will call the family to ask what their wishes are regarding his/her personal possessions. You may offer to pack them in boxes or offer to assist the parents/guardians if they choose to pack the belongings themselves.

Before they arrive, be sure that all borrowed items are returned to the deceased student's room. If the parents/guardians do choose to pack the belongings themselves, you can make packing materials available and offer to help. Respect the family's wishes no matter how difficult that may become.

12. In the case of an attempted suicide, with or without serious injury, do not assemble your members or call parents/guardians. We will discreetly discuss the necessary steps in this instance once you have contacted the appropriate University officials and your Chapter/Graduate Advisor.
13. The University officials involved will initiate the notifications within the University of those offices, which would interact with the injured or deceased student (e.g., departmental offices, professors).
14. University officials are always available to counsel and to provide general assistance to chapter members. Do not hesitate to call for help. Individual and group counseling are strongly recommended following any crisis situation. No

matter how well things may appear on the surface, counseling and other support services are often necessary.

15. If the funeral is in-state, it will mean a great deal to the family for members of the chapter to attend. If the funeral is too great a distance for the general membership to attend, arrangements can be made for a local memorial service.

Most fraternities and sororities have ritual ceremonies to be conducted in the event of a member's death. Arrangements may be made by the Chapter President to hold this ceremony at the appropriate time.

16. In the case of serious injury or illness, inquire about the visitation wishes of the family and communicate this to and coordinate this with members of the chapter.
17. In any emergency use tact and caution in your statements to members, media/press officials, and others. Avoid speculation and hearsay. Remember to issue only the prepared official statement to the media/press.

FIRE

Chapters providing common housing should follow each of these steps on a **semesterly basis**.

1. Create a rooming chart resembling the house floor plan. List the residents of each room directly on the floor plan. Note any information next to the individual's name, which might become important to the Fire Department (e.g., physical challenges). Also, if a sleeping dorm is utilized, note the placement of beds and identify the occupant of each on the floor plan.
2. Make two copies of these documents. Give one to each of your next door neighbors (even if they are not a Greek chapter). Keep the original in a publicized place (e.g., chapter room, the Chapter President's room, a desk drawer in the foyer).
3. Develop escape routes for each room. Permanently affix the room's escape route to the back of that room's door.
4. Should a fire break out, dial **911**. When the Fire Department arrives, you will need to assist them in determining if anyone was left in the house, and if so, where they might be found. The floor plan can be of great benefit at a point when chapter officers may not have the time to try to recall numerous names and rooming situations.
5. Identify a common meeting place outside the house for members to gather in the event of a fire. This can be a tree, a nearby fraternity or sorority front lawn, or any

predetermined location. At that point, get a neighbor's copy of the rooming list and take roll. Make a note of any individuals who are missing and the probability of their remaining inside the house. This step must be taken as quickly and efficiently as possible.

6. The Chapter President or highest-ranking officer present will communicate this information to the Fire Department. The Fire Department Incident Commander will be identified either by wearing an orange vest with Incident Command on it, or by being inside a Fire Department vehicle with a green flashing light on top. Another designated officer should begin calling those individuals identified in the general emergency procedures listed previously (e.g., University officials, Chapter/Graduate Advisor). It is suggested that a listing of all necessary phone numbers be kept with the copies of the floor plan.
7. Keep chapter members together. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD ANY MEMBER OF THE CHAPTER RETURN TO THE BURNING BUILDING.** Nothing is more important than your lives!
8. Upon their arrival, University officials and the Chapter/Graduate Advisor will begin to make temporary living arrangements as necessary.
9. The Chapter President should organize a timed fire drill each semester. The Norfolk Fire Department is more than willing to assist in both the operational and educational components of a fire drill.
10. The chapter should sponsor a program/presentation by the Norfolk Fire Department on fire safety. Again, the Norfolk Fire Department is committed to public education of fire safety and prevention.

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