Timely Warning

Policy Type: Board of Visitors
Responsible Office: Virginia Commonwealth University Police Department
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Policy Statement and Purpose

It is the responsibility of the VCU Police to notify the University community in a timely manner when a reported crime occurs on or near the University campus which represents an ongoing or serious threat to the University community.

To outline a process that ensures that the University community is notified promptly with accurate information in the event of a reported crime in which there could be an ongoing or serious threat to the community or additional incidents in the future.

Noncompliance with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. VCU supports an environment free from retaliation. Retaliation against any employee who brings forth a good faith concern, asks a clarifying question, or participates in an investigation is prohibited.

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Who Should Know This Policy  

VCU Students, Faculty, Staff, Visitors and Patients

Definitions

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act)  
This Act is a federal statute codified at 20 U.S.C. § 1092(f), with implementing regulations in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations at 34 C.F.R. 668.46.

The Clery Act requires all colleges and universities that participate in federal financial aid programs to keep and disclose information about crime on and near their respective campuses. Compliance is monitored by the United States Department of Education, which can impose civil penalties, up to $35,000 per violation, against institutions for each infraction and can suspend institutions from participating in federal student financial aid programs. Additionally, the Clery Act requires timely notification to campus members whenever a crime represents an ongoing or serious threat to the safety of students or employees.

Timely Warnings

The timely warning is triggered when the VCU Police identify a reported crime that poses an ongoing or serious threat to students, faculty, staff and/or guests. The decision to inform the community shall be based upon the known facts and location of an incident.

Virginia Commonwealth University has designated what has been deemed as VCU’s “core campus geography”. A map of the core campus geography can be found at http://www.vcu.edu/police/. The Chief of Police will decide whether to inform the VCU community of possible ongoing criminal behavior and/or other events that may present an ongoing or serious threat or risk to members of the University community. Such timely warning provides opportunity for individuals to take reasonable precautions for their safety. Crimes that occur outside of the “core campus geography” but within the expanded VCU Police jurisdiction will be evaluated on a case by case basis. If there is an ongoing or serious threat or risk, information will be posted on the VCU Alert Website so that students, faculty, and staff are aware so that reasonable precautions can be taken for their safety.

Timely Warning/Crime Alert Incidents

The University community will be notified of crimes that represent an ongoing or serious threat to students and employees. They may stem from reports to University police or other state or local agencies. Those crimes that prompt a timely notification could include, but are not limited to:

- Murder
- Non-Negligent Manslaughter
- Sexual Offenses
- Robbery
- Aggravated Assault
• Arson

Public Safety Advisory

If only a segment or portion of the community needs to be informed, a public safety advisory will be sent via email to the relevant segment of the campus community.

Contacts

The VCU Police Department, in consultation with the Vice President for Finance and Administration, officially interprets this policy and shall revise or eliminate any or all parts as necessary to meet the changing needs of Virginia Commonwealth University. Please direct policy questions to the VCU Police Department.

Procedures

Notification Process

1. The senior police officer on duty will inform the Chief of Police of any crime that may pose an ongoing or serious threat to the personal safety of students, faculty, staff, patients and/or visitors.

2. The Chief of Police will determine whether the crime requires a timely warning, and will promptly notify the VCU and VCU Health System communities of the:
   a. Nature of the crime or immediate threat;
   b. Location, date and time of crime;
   c. Description of any suspect(s);
   d. Action recommended for University members;
   e. Crime prevention information, and;
   f. Contact number for the VCU Police Department

The timely warning is distributed by the Division of University Relations.

VCU Mass Notification System

In notifying the VCU and VCU Health System communities, one or more of the following communication channels may be employed as appropriate:

• An e-mail message sent with more detailed information to everyone with a VCU e-mail account.
• Posting on the VCU Alert Website at alert.vcu.edu which will be updated regularly with information and instructions about how to respond in an emergency situation.
• Text messaging, which is also the primary communications channel for any closings and delays for inclement weather.
• Digital screens, which have been placed in major academic buildings and all residence halls on both campuses.
• Social Media such as Twitter and Facebook.

Daily Incident Log

The VCU Police Department will maintain an Incident Log that will be posted daily to the Police Department’s website. The log will include the nature, date, time and general location of the incidents reported, as well as the disposition of the complaint, if that is known at the time the log is created.

The VCU Police Department reserves the right to exclude crime report information from the log in circumstances where posting may compromise ongoing police operations. Faculty, staff and students are encouraged to review the Incident Log periodically to become more familiar with the types and locations of incidents that may impact the University and Health System communities.

Forms

There are no forms associated with this policy and procedures.

Related Documents


Revision History

This policy supersedes the following archived policies:

12/01/11 Timely Warning

FAQs

There are no FAQs associated with this policy and procedures.