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EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Disclaimer: No warranty, guarantee or representation is made by the University of the sufficiency of the information in this plan and the University assumes no responsibility in connection therewith. This plan and the Emergency and Safety Guidelines are intended to provide guidance for safe practices; it cannot be assumed that all scenarios are listed, or that additional information or measures may not be required.

I. PURPOSE

Athens State University's *Emergency Response Plan and Emergency and Safety Guidelines* establishes protocols to be followed should an emergency arise, as well as steps to return the department / university back to an operational mode as quickly as possible. The priorities of the *Emergency Response Plans* are to protect life, secure critical infrastructure and facilities, and resume the academic process.

II. DEFINITIONS

Campus – All property owned by the University.

III. PREVENTION/MITIGATION

The University has approximately 21 campus buildings on 35 acres on the main campus which is located in the City of Athens within Limestone County. The main campus is accessible from three sides by public streets. Athens State University also has an off-campus facility:

1. Alabama Center for the Arts – Morgan County/Decatur City

The Risk Management and Safety Committee, a standing committee of the University, continually (1) identifies risks, (2) evaluates, measures and prioritizes risks, (3) takes appropriate actions to control or respond to risks and (4) monitors, evaluates, and reports/records the effectiveness of risk controls.



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IV. REPORTING EMERGENCIES

Depending on the severity of the emergency, security personnel will contact the Vice President for Financial Affairs who will then contact the following (in descending order):

- President
- Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Services
- Chief Marketing Officer
- Vice President for University Advancement

Location	Report To:
Alabama Center for the Arts	Calhoun Security – 256-476-0884
AMSTI/Regional Inservice Center	Campus Security – 256-233-8222
The LaunchBox	Campus Security – 256-233-8222
Chasteen Hall	Campus Security – 256-233-8222
Main Campus	Campus Security – 256-233-8222

The Athens City Police Department, Athens Fire/Rescue, Athens/Limestone Hospital and the Limestone County Emergency Management Agency serve the **main campus, the Regional In-Service Center, The LaunchBox and Chasteen Hall.**

The Decatur City Police Department, Decatur Fire and Rescue, Decatur Morgan Hospital and the Morgan County Emergency Management Agency serve the **Alabama Center for the Arts.**



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V. EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS

The following tools may be utilized to communicate with students, faculty/staff and campus visitors regarding campus emergencies or threats.

Method	Responsibility
Campus PA System	Security
Text and Email and Desktop Alerts	Security Marketing and Communications
Telephone Communication	Security
Personal Contact with Personnel in Buildings	Security
Posts to University Website	Marketing and Communications
Contact Media Outlets	Marketing and Communications

VI. COMMUNICATIONS/MEDIA RELATIONS

In the event of an emergency, communication is vital. It is critical that messages be clear. To efficiently manage communications regarding any type of crisis, the Chief Marketing Officer will serve as the official spokesperson for the University. It is the responsibility of the Marketing and Communications Office to set a strategy that will allow for the most effective way to communicate with students, faculty/staff and the public when an emergency is declared. Certain events may require a single response or briefings with the media in order to keep the public informed.

The Marketing and Communications Office will work closely with the University President, administration, campus security, the Incident Commander, and other public safety entities, that may have jurisdiction. The Marketing and Communications Office, in consultation with the aforementioned, will be responsible for gathering and verifying information about a crisis, assisting in assessing its severity, and developing strategies on how information should be released to internal and external audiences.



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If needed and at the direction of the Chief Marketing Officer, a briefing room with facilities for media representatives shall be provided. Media representatives must be escorted or attended by University representatives at all times while on the University campus.

VII. INCIDENT RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

Response is taking action to effectively contain and resolve an emergency. University Administration may use any of the following protocols in response to emergencies.

EMERGENCY CLOSING/DELAYED OPENING
<p>Responsibility: Security Personnel will contact the Vice President for Financial Affairs who will then contact the following (in descending order):</p> <p>President Provost/VP for Academic Affairs and Student Services Chief Marketing Officer VP for University Advancement</p>

There are situations (e.g., inclement weather conditions, other acts of God, power failures, etc.) that will prevent Athens State University employees/students from performing their normal duties at the University and may require adjustment to the physical campus access and activities and business/academic operations.

Closing/delayed opening strategies include:

BUSINESS OPERATIONS/PHYSICAL CAMPUS	CLASSES
Open	Occurring, Not occurring, Remote
Closed	Not occurring, Remote
Remote	Remote



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Certain jobs (i.e., maintenance, Information Technology and Security) are often considered necessary during an emergency and require designated personnel to be physically present for work, when it is safe for them to do so.

In addition to the aforementioned areas, other Department heads that have areas of responsibility that are deemed necessary during inclement weather/emergency conditions will create a list of necessary personnel. These necessary personnel are informed and provided other pertinent information as deemed necessary by the department head/supervisor.

Necessary personnel must be available for emergency work and may be required to work when the University is closed.

The University does not wish personnel to take undue personal or property risks, therefore, employees are expected to use reasonable judgment, in keeping with their location and circumstances, as to whether or not they can or should report to work. However, if the University remains open, those employees who do not report to work must report their hours of absence as personal leave, sick leave, annual leave, or leave without pay. If an employee feels it is in his/her best interest to leave work early due to inclement weather or other emergency conditions, he/she must report his/her absence as personal leave, sick leave, annual leave, or leave without pay.

The following apply in situations requiring the opening/closing of the Physical Campus/Business Operations during inclement weather and/or other emergency situations. Decisions to close/delay opening will be made as soon as practicable.

PHYSICAL CAMPUS/BUSINESS OPERATIONS CLOSING

A. Advance Notice

If the President notifies employees in advance of the start of the work day (typically by 6:00 am) that the physical campus/business operations will be closed or will have a delayed opening, employees (to include those on annual, personal and sick leave) are not charged leave for the time off.



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Part-time and temporary employees are paid for any hours scheduled to work during the period of the closure. An employee not scheduled to work is not given credit for the additional time off.

Personnel deemed as necessary employees may be required to report to work as assigned. In certain situations, where closure of the physical campus/business operations is necessary, employees who are able to work from home may be required to do so. All areas should develop a plan for these “remote” working situations.

B. During Work Day

If the President or designee announces during the day that the physical campus/business operations will be closing early, an employee on annual, personal or sick leave is charged leave as scheduled. Non-exempt employees (including part-time and temporary employees) who worked all scheduled hours (if any) should report their full shift, as if worked, on the monthly timesheet.

VIII. LEVEL A – EMERGENCY

A **Level-A emergency** as detailed in the Emergency and Safety Guidelines, is a major emergency, major crisis, or disaster that requires an extensive response and commitment of resources and usually requires outside assistance.

EMERGENCY ADVISORY TEAM

During a **LEVEL –A Emergency**, the President of Athens State University or his/her designee will be responsible for declaring a state of emergency and activating the Emergency Advisory Team, if warranted. The President may also declare a Level-A Emergency to address recovery efforts related to any emergency situation.



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Once activated, the team will remain activated throughout the duration of the crisis or until such time that the campus environment is safe and operations can be resumed. Emergency Advisory Team members include:

- President
- Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Vice President for Financial Affairs
- Vice President for University Advancement
- Chief Information Officer
- Chief Marketing Officer
- Security
- Physical Plant Director

In the absence of the President, the line of authority to activate the team shall be (in descending order) as follows:

- Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Vice President for Financial Affairs
- Vice President for University Advancement

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (EOC)

During a **LEVEL-A** emergency, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) may be activated as the designated base for communications, planning and coordination.

The following locations have been designated as primary EOC locations:

- Waters Hall (Basement) – Primary location
- McCain Hall (Basement) - Alternate location

If activated, the President's Cabinet should report to the EOC during a **LEVEL-A** emergency. The President or his/her designee will serve as EOC Commander. The following individuals are designated to serve as the Incident Commander (IC), in descending order:



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- Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Vice President for Financial Affairs
- Vice President for University Advancement

The IC will assume front-line management of the incident and notify appropriate emergency response agencies of the situation. The IC and Emergency Advisory Team will perform a preliminary assessment to determine:

- the number and extent of injuries
- which facilities require evacuation
- whether outside assistance is necessary
- procedures for a head count of students and employees
- need for and location of triage/medical assistance area
- need for internal resources, i.e. building plans and drawings, employee database, student rosters, etc.

When first responders arrive on campus, the IC will typically transfer command to the first responders' incident commander, who will operate response efforts from a unified command structure.

ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL

During a **LEVEL-A emergency**, when a disaster declaration is made by the President, only approved students, faculty and emergency response staff are authorized to be on campus in the immediate disaster site.

The President's Cabinet and the following are considered essential personnel. Upon the declaration of a disaster by the President in coordination with the Emergency Advisory Team, these individuals should report to work at the location specified by the Emergency Advisory Team.

Library & Archives
Business Office

Library Director and Library Archivist
Assistant Vice President for



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Admissions & Records	Financial Affairs Director of Admissions, Registrar, Associate Vice President for Enrollment
Financial Aid	Director of Student Financial Services
Plant Operations	Director of Facility Operations and Facilities/Safety Clerk
Academic Affairs	Assistant Provost for Planning, Budgeting and Assessment
College of Business	College Dean
College of Education	College Dean
College of Arts & Sciences	College Dean
Student Success Center	Senior Director of Student Success
Student Activities	Director of Student Engagement,
President/Board	Chief of Staff, President's Office
Information Technology	Director of Information Technology Services
Academic Technology	Director of Client Support Services

MUTUAL AID AGREEMENTS

During a **LEVEL-A emergency**, for disaster response/recovery efforts on the **main campus, the Regional In-Service Center, The Launchbox, and Chasteen Hall**, Athens State University maintains a mutual aid agreement with the Athens City Police Department. In addition, the University utilizes the services of the Athens Fire and Rescue, the local ambulance service, and the Limestone County Emergency Management Agency.

The **Alabama Center for the Arts** utilizes the services of Calhoun Community College Security, the Decatur City Police, the Decatur Fire and Rescue, the Decatur Ambulance Service, and the Morgan County Emergency Management Agency.



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CONTRACTS FOR RESOURCES

During a **LEVEL-A emergency**, emergency procurement of required goods and services in direct support of a declared disaster must be in compliance with University procurement procedures. For federally declared disasters, a University representative will be appointed to work with FEMA.

IX. RECOVERY EFFORTS FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Recovery activities will vary depending on the nature and scope of the emergency. The goal of the recovery phase is to restore the learning environment following an emergency. Recovery activities include but are not limited to the following:

- Evaluating physical and structural damage
- Determining the degree to which equipment (i.e., computers, lab equipment) is functional.
- Determining if/how long classes should be postponed
- Conducting classes in off-site locations
- Changing class schedules, academic calendars or graduation requirements
- Identifying mental health resources to promote psychological and emotional recovery

Continuity of Operations

The purpose of a continuity of operations plan is to ensure the continuity of the essential functions under all conditions.

Continuity of essential operations plans are managed by each area Vice President. These plans ensure the University is capable of conducting its essential missions and functions.



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After Action Reports

Prior incidents and actions are evaluated by participants. These comments are incorporated into a written report summarizing the strengths and opportunities for improvement. These recommendations, if applicable, will be used to update the [Emergency Response Procedures](#).

X. PLAN REVIEW

The Vice President for Financial Affairs is responsible for the review of this plan every three years or more frequently as needed.