

Crisis Management Outline

Crisis management is much more than just dealing with a crisis, it is stopping or avoiding a crisis as well. It is also about crisis prevention, planning for a crisis, and damage control after a crisis.

A fraternity or sorority emergency situation may be prompted by any of the following occurrences:

- An accident resulting in severe or fatal injuries, sexual assaults or domestic disputes, or a member attempting or committing suicide
- Fire or explosion in the fraternity chapter facility
- Substantial damage to the chapter facility caused by storms, floods, tornadoes, or earthquakes
- Deliberate damage to the chapter facility from malicious mischief, sabotage, or riots
- Chapter member, members, or the entire chapter being accused of violating local, state, federal, or university/college laws, rules, and regulations

There may be other types of emergencies, which are not identified specifically above. When an event like this occurs, it can do irreparable damage to the future of the chapter if not handled correctly. The guidelines listed below will help the chapter deal with the crisis in the most effective and efficient way and put the chapter on the track towards normal operations. Please contact your National Headquarters for crisis management information specific to the organization.

Crisis Management Plan as Outlined by the FIPG Manual (www.fipg.org)

Procedures to be followed by the Chapter President in the event of an emergency or tragedy:

1. WHO IS IN CHARGE DURING AN EMERGENCY?

Be certain that each person in your chapter knows that you as president are in command of every emergency situation involving serious injury or death. In your absence, have a ranking order of officers established and be sure they know where to find this written procedure. You should already have arranged with your chapter advisor and housing corporation president as to how they are to be notified. Be sure also that your house mother/father/director is aware of these procedures.

2. IF A TRAGEDY OCCURS

If a tragedy has occurred within your chapter, close the house at once. You cannot give instructions if your members are leaving and strangers are entering. Permit only your members and appropriate officials to enter.

3. EMERGENCY PHONE CALLS TO MAKE

You need to make several phone calls immediately.

1st: The school's security emergency number and/or the local emergency number. If the emergency situation is a fire, your alarms may or may not automatically bring a fire truck; therefore, immediately call the fire department. Do not hesitate to call the campus police regardless of the situation.

- *School's Security Emergency Number*
- *Local Emergency Number: 911*
- *Fire Department*
- *Campus Police*

2nd: Call the campus Greek Advisor, Dean, or campus contact. This person will discuss the situation with you and in all serious cases will be at the house or chapter meeting place in a matter of minutes. Always call, day or night, if you are in doubt as to whether a situation is serious or not.

- *Greek Advisor*
- *Dean of Students*
- *Other University Contact*

3rd: Call your national fraternity's administrative office. Call your chapter advisor. Call your corporation president. Call your risk management advisor.

- *National Headquarters Office*
- *Chapter Advisor*
- *Corporation President*
- *Risk Management Advisor*

4th: Contact your liability insurance carrier

- Willis HRH
1.800.736.4327
www.WillisFraternity.com or www.WillisSorority.com

4. INFORMING MEMBERS AND MAKING PUBLIC STATEMENTS

Assemble your members in a group. Depending on the situation, out-of-house members may need to be called in. It is important that all members remain calm during the crisis. Explain to them that there is an emergency situation and that the house is closed. Ask them to cooperate in halting outgoing phone calls until the situation is under control. *Do not discuss the situation until the Greek advisor, chapter advisor, or housing corporation president arrives.* Instruct your members to make *no statements to anyone other than school or fraternity/sorority officials.* As the president, you make any appropriate statements to the media after the situation is under control and you have discussed the content of your statement with school and fraternity/sorority officials. Make sure, however, that everyone knows what your statements will be.

5. WHEN A MEMBER IS INJURED, BECOMES SERIOUSLY ILL, OR DIES

Do not notify parents. In the event of a serious accident or illness, the medical personnel will notify parents and advise them of the student's physical condition. In the event of a death, the appropriate school or fraternity official should notify parents.

If the situation is a death outside the house, do not announce it until a fraternity staff member or official has arrived to help. Be very careful about this information. If the member or associate member was living in the house, do not move any of the deceased student's personal possessions. Since most members share a room, perhaps you will want to move the roommate somewhere else temporarily. You should call the family to offer sympathy on behalf of the chapter. Ask what their wishes are in regard to the possessions. You may offer to pack them in boxes, but chances are the parents will prefer to do this themselves. Before they arrive, be sure that all borrowed items are returned to the student's room, and if possible, lock it. When the parents do arrive, you may want to have empty boxes available and offer help. This is an emotional trauma for parents so they may not want to be with any of their child's friends.

It is, of course, proper to send sympathy cards and notes, flowers, etc. If a funeral is not too distant, it would mean a great deal to parents for some of the members to attend. Check your ceremony manual for the memorial ritual, and offer it to the parents in advance of final arrangements.

6. IF A MEMBER ATTEMPTS SUICIDE.

In the case of a suicide attempt, with or without serious injury, do not assemble your members or call parents. All of this, no doubt, seems grim and harsh. Everyone hopes that no chapter president will ever have to use these procedures. But sadly, that hope is not realistic. Tragedies do occur. Usually, they are unpredicted. You can ease the situation for all by being prepared to follow these procedures and guidelines.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Agency/Contact Name and Contact Information

- EMERGENCY 911
- Local EMT
- Local Fire Department
- Local Police
- Campus Police
- Campus EMT
- Fraternity/Sorority Advisor
- Chapter Advisor
- Risk Management Advisor
- Corporation Board President
- Alumni Association President
- National Headquarters