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**Issuing Office:** Vice Chancellor  
for Administration and Finance

**Policy Number:** FY13-A&F-004-02

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**Policy Name:** UMass Boston Alert System

**Original Date Issued:** April 24, 2013

Revision #: 4

Last Update: June 25, 2024

**Purpose of Policy:** This policy establishes the guidelines by which the UMass Boston Alert System (“System”) will be used for distribution of emergency alerts. This System is also referred to as the ENS (Emergency Notification System.) This policy complies with the Department of Education requirements regarding timely notice of certain events as described 20 U.S.C. s. 1092(f), known as the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy (The Clery Act), along with the Campus Crimes Statistics Act (1998) and the Higher Education Reauthorization Act (2008).

**Applicable to:** All departments at UMass Boston.

**Policy:** All reports of fire or explosion should be made immediately by calling 911. To reach UMass Boston Police Dispatch direct, dial 617-287-7777 from a cell phone or campus phone. A reminder of this important reporting of an emergency will be issued annually by the UMass Boston Police Department.

The University of Massachusetts Boston has an emergency notification system in place to provide timely information and direction to students, faculty, staff, visitors, and other members of the campus community (hereafter referred to as “the campus community”). Upon confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving imminent or immediate threat to the health or safety of the campus community, occurring on or immediately adjacent to the campus (hereafter referred to as “confirmed threat to the campus community”), emergency notifications will be sent without delay via the UMass Boston Alert System.

The decision to issue an alert without delay, shall be decided by the Assistant Vice Chancellor for Facilities Management for facilities-related incidents; the Chief of Police for all public safety issues, criminal incidents, and campus-wide evacuations; the Director of Environmental Health and Safety for hazardous materials incidents; or the Director of Emergency Management for severe weather incidents. Decisions are made

on a case-by-case basis, in light of all the facts surrounding an incident or crime, including factors such as the nature of the incident/crime, the immediate or continuing threat to the campus community, and the possible risk of compromising law enforcement efforts.

The system has the capability to send alerts via email, cellular text message, cellular voice message, digital signage, PC desktop alerts (where available), campus TV screens, and social media (official UMass Boston Twitter and Facebook accounts), as well as the UMass Boston Smartphone Application.

Alerts sent to signal university closure due to a severe weather emergency will be sent by the Office of Communications as text messages, email and social media only. Severe weather closing information is also posted on the university website, main telephone line, UMass Boston Smartphone Application, and via local news media.

**Authority to Send Messages:**

- The Assistant Vice Chancellor for Facilities Management/designee, Chief of Police/designee, Director of Environmental Health and Safety/designee, or Director of Emergency Management/designee may request an immediate initial alert be sent by UMB PD Dispatch if there is a “confirmed threat to the campus community.” The authority of each office to trigger an alert is limited to the area overseen by each respective office.

Position	Type of Emergency Authorized to Alert
AVC Facilities Mgt. (or designee)	Confirmed facilities emergency causing immediate threat to the campus community.
Chief of Police (or designee)	Confirmed public safety threat to the campus community.
Director of EHS (or designee)	Confirmed hazmat emergency causing immediate threat to the campus community.
Director of Emergency Management (or designee)	Confirmed weather emergency causing immediate threat to the campus community. (Not routine weather closing messages sent by Communications.)

- Departments authorized to request initial alerts may request alerts only for their particular area as noted above.

- Following the initial alert, Communications sends all follow up alerts and “all-clear” messages.
- Communications via email, text, voice, digital signage, PC desktop alerts, outdoor speakers, and social media. This office may also send an initial alert for campus closures due to inclement weather or utility outages. Communications often crafts and sends follow up messages during an emergency or incident.

**Procedures:**

Access to the system is managed by the Office of Emergency Management. A list of staff trained and authorized to send mass-notification alerts is posted in the UMass Boston Police Dispatch area and Administration and Finance. Positions trained include Director of Communications, Communications staff, Director of Emergency Management and all UMass Boston Police/Dispatch Officers.

**Alerts:**

When there is a “confirmed threat to the campus community”, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Facilities Management, Chief of Police, Director of Environmental Health and Safety, or Director of Emergency Management (or designees) will immediately direct UMass Boston Police Dispatch or the Office of Communications, to send an emergency alert. The initial alert may be sent using one of the pre-scripted template messages stored in the Alert System, or crafted at the time of the emergency as needed. Following an emergency alert, a “All-Clear” alert may be necessary, sent by Dispatch or Office of Communications.

**Process Steps:**

1. Incident Commander (roles listed pg. 2 Authority to Send Messages) calls UMBPD Dispatch or Office of Communications, to send emergency alert right away
2. When possible, the position in charge of incident (Chief of Police/designee, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Facilities Management/designee, Director of Environmental Health and Safety/designee, or Director of Emergency Management/designee) sends an update email to Vice Chancellor of Marketing and Engagement (VCME), Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs (VCSA), VCAF, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, and Director of Emergency Management.

3. VCME and VCSA will contact the Chancellor
4. VCSA will notify the University Cabinet

Timely Warning:

Timely Warnings are notices to the community that a crime, which may pose a serious or continuing threat, has been committed on or around campus. Timely Warnings, under the Clery Act, will be sent as email broadcasts, and if necessary, may be sent in conjunction with a text message. Template email attached to this document.

Process Steps:

1. Chief sends warning request to Director of Communications cc'ing VCME, VCSA, VCAF, Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, and Emergency Manager
2. VCME and VCSA contact Chancellor
3. Director of Communications and Chief complete review of message copy
4. VCME closes loop with Director of Communications on sending alert
5. VCSA will notify the University Cabinet

Training:

The Chief of Police or designee and Director of Communications shall designate individual staff members to receive UMass Boston Alert System training provided by the Director of Emergency Management. Refresher training and drills shall occur each semester and when new technologies require additional training. These regularly scheduled trainings of personnel shall be documented by the Director of Emergency Management. The Chief of Police shall mandate regular training of UMass Boston Police Staff conducted by the Director of Emergency Management. UMass Boston Police Dispatchers log into the RAVE Emergency Alert System at the start of each shift. Once a week, each Dispatcher will send out a test alert template message to an internal list within the UMass Boston Police Department, testing their ability to login and send out an alert.

Testing/Maintenance:

The system shall be maintained by testing all modalities and verification through Information Technology, and the Office of Emergency Management. There shall be at least one scheduled test during each quarter. During each alert system test, Emergency Management, UMB PD, and Student Affairs Technology Services will test the University Hall Lockdown Button System. Each test and follow-up will be documented in accordance with the Clery Act.

**Definitions:**

- ENS – RAVE- UMass Boston Alert System

UMass Boston’s Emergency Notification System (ENS), contracted from Rave Wireless is hereafter known as the “UMass Boston Alert System”. The system is capable of issuing emergency alerts by text, email, voice, digital signage, PC pop ups, outdoor speakers, and via social media.

- Emergency Alert

An emergency alert is an urgent communication warning upon confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situations involving imminent or immediate threat to the health or safety of students or staff occurring on or immediately adjacent to the campus (hereafter referred to as “confirmed threat to the campus community”). Emergency alerts are sent via the UMass Boston Alert System. An example of a threat requiring an emergency alert would be an active shooter or hurricane/tornado warning. Weather emergencies that warrant cancellation of classes and events will be signaled by text messages and social media.

- Broadcast Emails

When conditions do not warrant the issuance of an emergency alert, the University may send information in the form of a Broadcast Email. Email broadcasts may be sent either through the University Outlook email system or as UMass Boston Alert System emails.

- Timely Warnings

Timely Warnings are notices to the community that a crime, which may pose a serious or continuing threat, has been committed on or around campus. The [Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act \(20 USC § 1092\(f\)\)](#) is the landmark federal law, originally known as the Campus Security Act, that requires colleges and universities across the United States to disclose information about crime on and around their campuses. The Act is enforced by the United States Department of Education.

- Shelter in Place

There may be a need to advise the community to shelter in place via text alert. If you are told to shelter in place, seek shelter inside a building and remain inside until the danger passes. Shelter in place is used when evacuating a building would cause greater risk than staying where you are. Shelter in place is the best approach for certain chemical releases were the doors and windows are closed and the ventilation, heating and cooling systems are shut down. During high winds or tornadoes, it’s often safest inside a solid building where you can stay

away from windows. In place protection can also be the best approach if there is an active shooting situation outside especially if you can lock your building. Officials will continue to gather information and announce when the threat is removed.

- University Hall Lockdown Button System

University Hall has a classroom emergency lockdown button system. These buttons when pushed, lock the door to the room in which you are located from the outside. The button also triggers a silent alarm that instantly notifies UMass Boston Police of a threat situation at the location where the button was pushed.

**Oversight Department:** Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance

**Responsible Party within Department:** Director of Emergency Management

**Monitoring:** Quarterly reports, including participation levels, training, and test results to Chancellor's Cabinet and the Director of Communications.

**Authority:** Clery Act, DOC. T99-060, Passed by the UMass BOT 8/4/99, revised 12/14/11. University of Massachusetts Emergency Management and Business Continuity and Planning Policy

**Related Documents:**

- Quarterly Report Format
- Pre-scripted Emergency Alerts

# SAMPLE: UMass Boston Alert System Quarterly Report

## 1. System Enrollment

New users during this period 2,142

65.81% of all enrolled have input at least one mobile contact

## 2. Activations:

12:00 PM      Everyone      Campuswide Alert Test      21,616      Completed

## 3. Performance Summary

Alert Summary : Campuswide Alert Test				
<a href="#">← Back to Alert Reports</a> <a href="#">Send Follow-up Alert</a> <a href="#">Download Alert Summary</a>				
Sent by: Pagan, Luis		Opt-In Accounts Targeted: 299		<a href="#">View Glossary</a>
Sent on: Oct 01, 2018 - 12:00:00 PM		Internal Users Targeted: 21317		
Expires: Oct 01, 2018 - 01:00:00 PM				
MODE	MODE PERFORMANCE		RESPONSES	ACTION
Text	Target Messages = 14164		10	
	Text  00h 08m 59s Overall  00h 49m 38s			
Email	Target Messages = 21,500		N/A	
	First Pass  00h 00m 35s Overall  00h 50m 06s			
Voice	Target Messages = 13935		0	
	Overall  00:24:01			
RSS	Status: Completed    Target http://content.getrave.com/rss/umb/channel1		N/A	
Alertus	Status: Failed    Target All Devices		N/A	
Twitter	Status: Completed Feed Name: UMass Boston Safety Content: UMass Boston Alert: This is a test of the UMass Boston Alert System. This is a regularly-scheduled system test. Followers: 678		N/A	
Twitter	Status: Completed Feed Name: UMass Boston Twitter Content: UMass Boston Alert: This is a test of the UMass Boston Alert System. This is a regularly-scheduled system test. Followers: 16356		N/A	
Facebook	Status: Completed Feed Name: UMass Boston Facebook Page Content: UMass Boston Alert: This is a test of the UMass Boston Alert System. This is a regularly-scheduled system test.		N/A	
CAP	Status: Completed    Profile: Profile for UMB TV Screens		N/A	
Guardian	Target Messages = 5		N/A	
	Completed			

# Sample: ENS Template Emergency Messages

\*Alerts listed are an example of a by building/parking lot alert. These alerts have a template for every UMB building, parking lot, and also includes neighboring sites like EMKI, JFK, Archives, and BC High.

## **ALL CLEAR – GENERAL**

UMass Boston Alert: All Clear. The previous alert has been cancelled. See the UMass Boston website for further information.

## **ACTIVE SHOOTER – Campus Center\***

UMass Boston Alert: Gun shots reported in the Campus Center. Avoid area. Emergency personnel responding.

## **BOMB THREAT – Campus Center\***

UMass Boston Alert: Unconfirmed Bomb Threat reported in Campus Center. Evacuate Campus Center and stay clear of area until further notice.

## **BOMB THREAT - GENERAL**

UMass Boston Alert: Unconfirmed Bomb Threat to campus. Evacuate campus in an orderly fashion.

## **BOMB THREAT - ALL CLEAR**

UMass Boston Alert: Bomb Threat all clear. No device was found.

## **CAMPUSWIDE ALERT TEST**

UMass Boston Alert: This is a test of the UMass Boston Alert System. In an emergency, this alert would contain pertinent information. This is only a test.

## **CAMPUSWIDE Evacuation (Standard)**

UMass Boston Alert: Campus-wide evacuation. Leave campus immediately following instruction from public safety. More info to follow.

## **CAMPUSWIDE Evacuation (Walking)**

UMass Boston Alert: Evacuate campus immediately. Quickly begin a non-vehicular evacuation off campus grounds. More info to follow.

## **Facilities Incident- Campus Center\***

UMass Boston Alert: Facilities incident in/near Campus Center. Avoid area. More information to come.

## **Fire- Campus Center\***

UMass Boston Alert: The Campus Center has been evacuated for a fire. Avoid area. Officials are on scene.

## **HAZMAT INCIDENT- Campus Center\***

UMass Boston Alert: Hazardous Materials reported in the Campus Center. Evacuate building. Avoid area.

## **HAZMAT INCIDENT- ALL CLEAR**

UMass Boston Alert: Hazardous materials incident resolved. No release of chemicals; no injuries. All clear.

## **HURRICANE CLOSING**

UMass Boston Alert: Due to Hurricane, the campus is closed. All activities and classes are canceled. Check [www.umb.edu](http://www.umb.edu) for updates.

## **Police Incident- Campus Center\***

UMass Boston Alert: Police incident in/near Campus Center. Avoid area. More information to come.

## **Public Safety Threat – Campus Center\***

UMass Boston Alert: Public Safety threat in/near Campus Center. Avoid area. More information to come.

## **TORNADO WARNING**

UMass Boston Alert: Tornado Warning. Seek shelter indoors, away from windows. Wait for all clear signal.

**TORNADO - ALL CLEAR**

UMass Boston Alert: Tornado Warning lifted. All clear. Resume normal activities.

**WEATHER CLOSING**

UMass Boston Alert: Weather Emergency -- The University is closed "February 5". Classes and activities are cancelled. See [www.umb.edu](http://www.umb.edu) for more information.

**WEATHER DELAYED OPENING**

UMass Boston Alert: Weather Emergency -- Delayed opening. The university will open at 11 a.m.

**WEATHER EARLY CLOSING**

UMass Boston Alert--Weather Emergency. Early Closing. The university will close as of 3 p.m. All afternoon and evening classes cancelled.

### Timely Warning Vs. Emergency ALERT

The Clery Act requires institutions of higher education to maintain two types of alerting systems for separate and distinct purposes. Below is a table breaking down the distinctions between these two types of notifications. UMBPD and Communications should use this resource to understand which alert should be sent depending on the circumstances of the incident in question.

	<b>Timely Warning</b>	<b>Emergency Alert</b>
<b>When should this alert be sent?</b>	When Clery crimes reported to a campus security authority or local law enforcement pose a serious or ongoing threat to the campus community	When there is confirmation of an immediate threat to the health and safety of the campus community (Active Threat – Gun Shots Reported, Public Safety Threat, Police Incident where for their safety people need to take action - avoid area (Bomb Threat, HazMat release etc....))
<b>Does the location of the incident matter?</b>	Within Clery geography on campus, <u>or in close proximity to campus</u> that pose a serious or ongoing threat	On-campus emergencies or close proximity that pose a serious immediate threat
<b>What should this alert contain?</b>	Date, nature, location of incident, how to report a similar occurrence	Information about the nature of the emergency and what changes one needs to make immediately as a result; evacuation procedures if necessary; avoid area, shelter in place. Assurance that an all-clear will be sent when emergency is over
<b>Who should receive this alert?</b>	Must reach entire campus community	Entire community. Can be segmented, if appropriate (special event list etc.)
<b>How is a determination made to send the alert?</b>	Case-by-case analysis if the factors above are present	Based on discretion of Incident Commander. Must always be sent if threat to community. Procedure in place (UMass Boston Alert System Policy) to confirm whether a significant emergency exists.
<b>Who issues the alert?</b>	An individual or office with authority and capability to issue campus-wide communication (Communications/UMBPD)	An individual or office with authority and capability to issue campus-wide communication (UMBPD, Communications) – NO DELAY
<b>How should it be disseminated?</b>	Most commonly email only	Emergency Alert System (text, email, voice, TV Screens, Computers) - Depending on time of day and emergency, we also have HPSA outdoor speaker system

## Timely Warning Email Template

Subject Line: Public Safety Timely Warning: **[Add Incident Title Details Here]**

UMass Boston Timely Warning:

*When issues of concern arise that may affect the UMass Boston campus and in compliance with the Clery Act, it is our practice to inform our community through a Public Timely Warning Alert.*

**[INSERT INFORMATION ABOUT INCIDENT]**

If you have any information that could assist in the case, please contact the UMass Boston Police Department at 617.287.7777 or email [public.safety@umb.edu](mailto:public.safety@umb.edu).