

HS107 Critical Incident and Crisis Management Policy

HS107	Health and Safety	Critical Incident and Crisis Management
Handbook Inclusion	Staff and Faculty	
Programs	All	
	Created/Effective Date	January 2025
	Reviewed	January 2025
	Accountable	Leadership Team/CIRT
Documents/Forms		

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for effectively managing critical incidents and crises at Western Community College (WCC).

Policy Statement

To ensure the safety and well-being of students, staff, and visitors, minimize disruption to college operations, and protect the institution's reputation, WCC has instituted this policy and created a Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT).

WCC is committed to:

- Ensuring the safety and well-being of all members of the college community.
- Responding promptly and effectively to critical incidents and crises.
- Maintaining clear communication channels during emergencies.
- Providing resources and support to those affected by such events.

Definitions:

- **Critical Incident:** An event or situation that poses a significant risk to the safety, security, or operation of WCC and requires immediate action.
- **Crisis:** A situation that escalates beyond a critical incident and threatens the long-term functional operations, reputation, or survival of WCC.
- **Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT):** Appointed members within the College's community to oversee management of facilities and operations during critical incidents and crises experienced by the college.

Scope

This policy applies to all WCC campuses, employees, students, contractors, and visitors. It covers critical incidents and crises, including but not limited to natural disasters, health emergencies, violent incidents, cybersecurity threats, and infrastructure failures.

General Guidelines

Roles and Responsibilities

Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT):

- **Composition:** The team will include senior management, campus managers, security personnel, and relevant department heads.
- **Responsibilities:**
 - Assess the situation and determine the appropriate response level.
 - Coordinate and oversee the response to critical incidents.
 - Communicate with internal and external stakeholders.
 - Document actions taken and review outcomes post-incident.

Campus Managers:

- Ensure that emergency procedures are in place and communicated to staff and students.
- Act as the on-site coordinator during a critical incident.

Employees:

- Familiarize themselves with emergency procedures.
- Follow instructions from CIRT and emergency personnel.
- Report critical incidents promptly to campus managers or security.

Students and Visitors:

- Follow emergency instructions from WCC staff.
- Report any safety concerns or incidents immediately.

Procedure

Preparation and Prevention:

- Conduct regular risk assessments to identify potential threats.
- Maintain and review emergency response plans annually.
- Provide regular training and drills for staff and students.

Response:

- Upon identification of a critical incident, notify CIRT immediately.
- Activate the emergency response plan.

- Communicate with stakeholders through designated channels, ensuring timely and accurate updates.
- Provide support services to those affected, such as medical assistance (First Aid) or counselling.

Recovery:

- Assess the impact of the incident and implement measures to resume normal operations.
- Review the response and identify lessons learned.
- Update emergency plans and procedures based on the review.

Communication

- WCC will maintain a communication plan to ensure timely dissemination of information during emergencies.
- Designated spokespersons will communicate with media and external agencies.
- Internal updates will be provided via email, text messages, and campus announcements.

Training and Awareness

- Mandatory emergency preparedness training will be provided for all employees annually.
- Students will receive an orientation on emergency procedures at the start of their program.

Compliance Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action for employees and students, as applicable.

Review and Updates This policy will be reviewed every two years or after a significant critical incident, whichever comes first.

Approval and Authority This policy is approved by the President of Western Community College and will be enforced by the Critical Incident Response Team.