



Texas A&M University

Higher Education Center at McAllen Emergency Operations Plan

July 2024

Contact: Jessica Martinez



Signatures of Approval

This Emergency Operations Plan and its contents is a guide to how the Higher Education Center at McAllen (HECM) prepares for and responds to emergency situations. It is intended to capture specific authorities and best practices for managing incidents of any size and scope that may impact the building and the occupants.

This plan shall apply to all persons participating in mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery efforts on the HECM campus. Furthermore, tasked departments and personnel shall maintain their own procedures and actively participate in the training, exercising and maintenance needed to support this plan.

This plan and its supporting contents are hereby approved, supersedes all previous editions, and is effective immediately upon the signing of all signature authorities noted below.

Approved: _____ Date: _____

Vacant

Assistant Provost

Texas A&M University Higher Education Center at McAllen

Approved: *Manuel Vela* Date: 07/10/2024
[Manuel Vela \(Jul 10, 2024 16:07 CDT\)](#)

Manny Vela

Associate Vice President & Chief Operating Officer

Texas A&M University Higher Education Center at McAllen

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Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to outline HECM’s approach for organizing, coordinating and directing available resources toward effective emergency response operations. The plan includes an organizational structure establishing the authority and assigns responsibility for various emergency tasks. The plan is intended to provide a flexible and scalable framework, which:

- Helps prepare HECM employees, students, tenants, and visitors to successfully respond to an emergency
- Defines clear roles, responsibilities, and authorities in managing emergency situations
- Describes effective coordination among emergency organizations of the university; health system; local, state, and federal authorities for clear, rapid, factual, and coordinated communication when emergencies occur

Scope

The Campus has a responsibility to ensure the safety and security of its students, faculty, staff, and visitors. This scope of this plan is limited to the HECM Campus and the immediately adjacent parking lots.

Situation Overview

General

The HECM is currently a single-building campus located at 6200 Tres Lagos Blvd. in McAllen, Texas. The building is 52,000 gross square feet consisting of 3 stories and contains office spaces, laboratories, and academic instruction space.

Hazard Analysis

The HECM is exposed to hazards – natural and man-made – that have the potential for disrupting the normal working operations, causing casualties, and damaging or destroying the facilities. A summary of major hazards is provided in the table below.

Hazard Type	Likelihood of Occurrence (Low Medium High)	Estimated Impact on Public Health and Safety (Low Medium High)	Estimated Impact on Property (Low Medium High)
Actions of Violence (Active Shooter, Bomb Threats, etc.)	Medium	High	Medium
Biological Releases	Low	High	Low

Civil Disorder	Low	Low	Medium
Cyber Security	High	Medium	Low
HazMat Release	Low	Medium	Low
Structural Fire	Medium	Low	Medium
Terrorism	Low	High	High
Utility Disruption	Medium	Low	Low
Flood	Medium	Low	Medium
Infectious Disease Outbreak	High	High	Low
Severe Weather (Hurricane, High Winds)	High	Medium	Medium
Winter Storm	Low	Low	Low

* High likelihood means the hazard happens frequently and low likelihood means the hazard rarely happens or has not happened.

** High impact means significant injuries/illness or loss of life as well as a large loss of assets; whereas low impact means no impact, no injuries, minor loss of assets.

Capabilities Assessment

Emergency services are provided by the City of McAllen and/or Hidalgo County. The primary and secondary agencies for emergency services are listed below.

Agency Type	Primary	Secondary
Emergency Medical Services	City of McAllen (Contracted Ambulance Service) LoneStar EMS	
Fire Services	City of McAllen Fire Department	City of Edinburg Fire Department
Law Enforcement	City of McAllen Police Department	Hidalgo County Sheriff Office
Public Health	Hidalgo County Health Department	
Security Services	Vets Security America	City of McAllen Police Department
Environmental Health and Safety	TAMU Environmental Health and Safety	
Emergency Management	TAMU Emergency Management	

Agency Type	Primary	Secondary
Mental Health Services	TAMU CAPS	Tropical Texas Behavioral Health

Planning Assumptions

In addition to the planning assumptions provided within the Texas A&M University Emergency Operations Plan, the following are planning assumptions specific to the HECM campus.

- The HECM will continue to be exposed to and subject to the impact of those hazards described above as well as lesser hazards and others that may develop in the future.
- Emergencies may occur at any time and at any place. In many cases, dissemination of warning to the public and implementation of increased readiness measures may be possible. However, some emergency situations occur with little or no warning.
- The HECM is reliant on emergency services from the local jurisdictions. Therefore, it is essential to be prepared to carry out the basic life safety actions since it may take time for emergency services to arrive.
- Proper planning and preparedness activities with local emergency services will ensure an effective and coordinated response.
- Proper mitigation actions, such as floodplain management, and fire inspections, can prevent or reduce disaster-related losses. Detailed emergency planning, training of emergency responders and other personnel, and conducting periodic emergency drills and exercises can improve readiness to deal with emergency situations.
- The HECM officials and representatives must recognize their responsibilities for the safety and well-being of students, faculty, students and visitors; and assume their responsibilities in the implementation of this emergency plan.
- Proper implementation of these guidelines will reduce or prevent disaster-related losses.

Concept of Operations

General

The HECM officials and representatives have the responsibility to protect public health and safety and preserve property from the effects of an emergency. As such, the response priorities are, in order of importance:

- Protection of life and safety of students, faculty, staff and visitors;
- Secure critical infrastructure and facilities which are, in priority order:

- Facilities critical to health and safety;
- Facilities that sustain emergency response;
- Classroom and research facilities; and
- Administration facilities
- Resume teaching and research programs.

Level of Emergencies

Emergencies that may impact the HECM may vary in size and severity which influences the type and level of notifications, communication, and coordination. As such, three levels of emergencies have been identified to guide the notifications, communication, and coordination based on incident size and severity.

- Minor emergencies: These events would warrant an email notification to Texas A&M University, such as:
 - An unscheduled utility outage that causes classes and research activities to be suspended (four or more hours).
 - Student, faculty, or staff involved in an accident or incident not related to class or work but resulting in minor injury.
- Medium-scale emergencies: An incident in or around Tres Lagos that may impact students, faculty, or staff, such as:
 - A fire affecting the ingress or egress to and from the HECM.
 - An active threat in or around Tres Lagos but not directly involving the HECM.
 - Severe weather conditions that disrupt students, faculty, and staff from performing normal duties.
- Large-scale emergencies or involve significant threats to the life safety of students, faculty, or staff. An emergency at or involving the HECM that requires an emergency notification.
 - A bomb threat that results in the disruption of operations.
 - A fire within HECM.
 - Severe weather conditions that requires closure of the HECM facility and its operations.
 - An emergency that may result in a longer recovery period.

Minor and medium-sized emergencies may only require a notification to Texas A&M University. However, no formal action or support may be needed from Texas A&M University. Large-scale emergencies may require formal action or support from Texas A&M University. The support may be provided remotely or by sending personnel to the HECM.

Emergency Authorities

In order to meet these priorities, the officials and representatives must implement appropriate population protection activities (e.g. evacuations or sheltering in place), issue

timely emergency notifications and warnings, coordinate emergency public information, ensure interoperable emergency communications, and coordinate with local emergency services personnel.

The HECM Vice President & Chief Operating Officer or designee, as the senior administrator, is the primary local authority for the HECM. For rapid onset emergencies (e.g., building fire, chemical spill, active shooter, etc.), the HECM Vice President & Chief Operating Officer has the authority to:

- Alter personnel schedules in support of an emergency response; and
- Identify trained personnel as deemed essential for maintaining critical campus operations.

For emergencies with longer lead times (e.g., winter weather, hurricanes, etc.), the HECM Vice President & Chief Operating Officer may alter campus operations in support of an emergency response or for the safety and well-being of the campus community. Specific authorities related to altered campus operations due to inclement weather can be found in Attachment 3 of this plan.

Any implementation of emergency authorities, as listed above, will be communicated through normal chains of command as described in “Direction, Control, and Coordination” below.

Population Protective Actions

Depending on the nature of the emergency, the HECM personnel may implement population protective actions, as related to their job duties, prior to the arrival of local emergency personnel. Population protective actions, in accordance with the Building Emergency Action Plan (maintained under a separate title), include:

- Partial or full evacuation;
- Partial or full evacuations, or sheltering-in-place for hazardous materials releases; or
- Seeking safe shelter for acts of violence, tornado warnings, etc.

Personnel On-Call

Since emergencies can at any time, the HECM has established an on-call rotation to ensure certain HECM personnel are available. Individuals included in the on-call rotation are:

- Vice President and Chief Operating Officer
- Assistant Provost
- Executive Director
- Emergency Management Specialist
- Assistant Director
- Executive Assistant

- Program Coordinators

The on-call person will serve as the primary point of contact for the HECM during his or her rotation. This person is responsible for issuing any emergency notifications and warnings as appropriate. The on-call person may also serve as the HECM liaison with local emergency responders within the Incident Command Post.

Emergency Notification and Warning

Immediate notifications of emergency conditions are essential to preserve the safety and security of the campus and are critical to an effective response and recovery.

Depending on the severity of an incident and the immediacy of a notification, the on-call person may issue a warning through HECM Alert based on the criteria found in Attachment 2.

Alternative methods for notification to the campus community may be implemented depending on the nature of the incident. For a list of all the warning mechanisms, see Attachment 2.

Periodic updates should be provided to the campus community utilizing the most appropriate notification method until the emergency has been resolved.

Emergency Public Information

A coordinated effort to provide emergency public information is critical. These communications to the HECM community must be timely, accurate, and consistent. All HECM emergency communications should be routed through Communications Specialist III, who will be responsible for interfacing with any media. The Communications Specialist III will coordinate with Texas A&M University Division of Marketing & Communications, as appropriate.

Emergency Communications

Reliable and interoperable communications systems are essential to obtain the most complete information during emergencies and share information amongst HECM officials as well as the campus community and emergency response partners.

Communications equipment include:

- Telephones, cellular or landline, are the primary means of communication for contacting key emergency responders and Emergency Coordination Team members, and TAMU Executive Leadership. The HECM Senior Administrator has access to the Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) for priority calling during emergencies.

- Cellular-Based two-way radios utilized by facilities and security
- Bullhorns are available in the offices of the Floor Coordinators and a number of other locations on each floor of the HECM.

Interface with Local Responders

The HECM officials and representatives rely on the City of McAllen for emergency services as described in “Capabilities Assessment” above. In the event that an emergency on the HECM campus requires law enforcement, fire, or EMS assistance, the first available person should call 911 to notify emergency responders immediately. The person on-call should be notified immediately after calling 911 so that he or she can serve as the initial point of contact for arriving emergency responders.

Prior to the arrival of emergency responders, members of the Emergency Coordination Team should take actions as appropriate per their roles and responsibilities to the incident, as listed in this plan.

Upon arrival to the campus, emergency responders may choose to establish an Incident Command Post (ICP) per their policies/procedures. The person on-call will serve as a liaison between the HECM and local emergency responders.

Interface with TAMU College Station Campus

The HECM's priority during the emergency is to protect life safety and property. After emergency actions have been initiated per the EOP, notifications to Texas A&M University Executive Leadership should be made through normal chains of command. While Texas A&M University Executive Leadership may receive emergency notifications from HECM Alert, additional information concerning the nature of the incident, number/type of injuries, status of the facility, etc. should be provided and should include status updates, as appropriate, until the situation is resolved.

For larger or prolonged incidents, additional support staff may be sent from College Station to assist. Additional support staff may include, but not limited to, emergency management personnel, law enforcement or security personnel, or communications personnel as needed. Due to travel distances, however, it may take up to 24 to 36 hours before additional support arrives at HECM.

Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

Organization

Senior Administrator

- HECM Vice President & Chief Operating Officer
- Assistant Provost

Emergency Coordination Team

The HECM has identified key individuals to be members of the Emergency Coordination Team, to act in their specific roles and bear the responsibilities listed below. The primary members of the Emergency Coordination Team include:

- Executive Director
- Assistant Director
- Emergency Management Specialist
- Program Coordinator II
- Program Coordinator II
- Executive Assistant
- Communications Specialist III
- Security Supervisor
- Human Resources Generalist
- Licensed Professional Counselor

The secondary personnel for these key positions are listed below within the “Lines of Succession”. The Emergency Coordination Team may need to get additional information from other persons based on the emergency.

Building/Floor Proctors

The Building/Floor Proctors are responsible for assisting with notification and safe evacuation of occupants from their offices, classrooms, or other work areas among other responsibilities as defined in the Building Emergency Action Plan (maintained under a separate title).

Critical/Essential Personnel

Any personnel may be considered critical or essential depending on the situation. Some university employees (e.g., security, critical physical plant personnel, etc.), because of the nature of their jobs, may be identified as “critical or essential personnel”. Some individuals may be deemed critical or essential based on HECM’s continuity plan.

Assignment of Responsibilities

Senior Administrator

The HECM Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, or designee, will serve as the lead of the Emergency Coordination Team. In this capacity, the HECM Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, or designee, is the lead administrator of the HECM and maintains authority of building operations during emergency situations.

Emergency Coordination Team

- Maintain this plan for presentation to and approval by the senior administrators – as listed in this plan – for final approval and signature;
- Provide plan oversight; coordination with applicable stakeholders

- Create and establish annual training and exercise schedules to test functionality of the plan
- Establish building and departmental internal emergency notification lists
- Coordinate with emergency responders and/or Texas A&M University administrators regarding, but not limited to, emergency needs, status reports, and communications.
- Obtain and distribute information to building occupants, including students, employees, and visitors.
- Maintains financial or administrative records involved in the emergency response and recovery.
- Assigns team members' roles and responsibilities to ensure continuity and support if one or more members are unavailable during an emergency.
- Report to the HECM ECT emergency operations center.
- Initiate emergency notifications.
- Deploy Building/Floor Proctors for evacuation or sheltering-in-place as required.
- Notify Texas A&M Emergency Management of the nature of emergency.

Emergency Coordination Team Member On-Call

- Be available to respond to an emergency at the HECM at any time during his or her rotation.
- Issues emergency notifications and warnings during his or her rotation as needed.
- Serve as the HECM Liaison with local emergency responders
- Initiate appropriate notifications to Emergency Coordination Team members

Security

- Immediately contact the Emergency Coordination Team member on call and begin assessment of the emergency condition.
- Serves as a liaison with local law enforcement
- Provides access control of the building

Facilities

- Initiates procedures to secure facility for hazardous weather conditions
- Furnishes emergency power and lighting systems to the extent possible
- Provides technical knowledge about the facility
- Directs emergency repairs and protects equipment

Marketing & Communications

- Supports emergency notification and warning as needed
- Coordinates public information messaging with campus administrator, local first responders, and Texas A&M University Marketing & Communication

Mental Health

- Supports the mental health needs of students

- Provides consultation to faculty and staff
- Provides mental health crisis intervention

Human Resources

- Supports and guides Vice President & Chief Operating Officer on warning, and coordination of emergency notifications as needed
- Provides medical, and mental health resources and support to faculty and staff

Lines of Succession

Senior administrator

- Primary: HECM Vice President and Chief Operating Officer
- Secondary: Assistant Provost

Security

- Primary: Supervisor
- Secondary: Guard

Facilities

- Primary: Executive Director
- Secondary: Maintenance Manager / Lab Tech Coordinator

Marketing & Communications

- Primary: Communication Specialists III
- Secondary: Executive Assistant / Program Coordinator II

Mental Health

- Primary: Licensed Professional Counselor
- Secondary: none

Human Resources

- Primary: HR Generalist
- Secondary: HR Generalist (Kingsville)

Emergency Management

- Primary: Jessica Martinez
- Secondary: Leslie Lutz

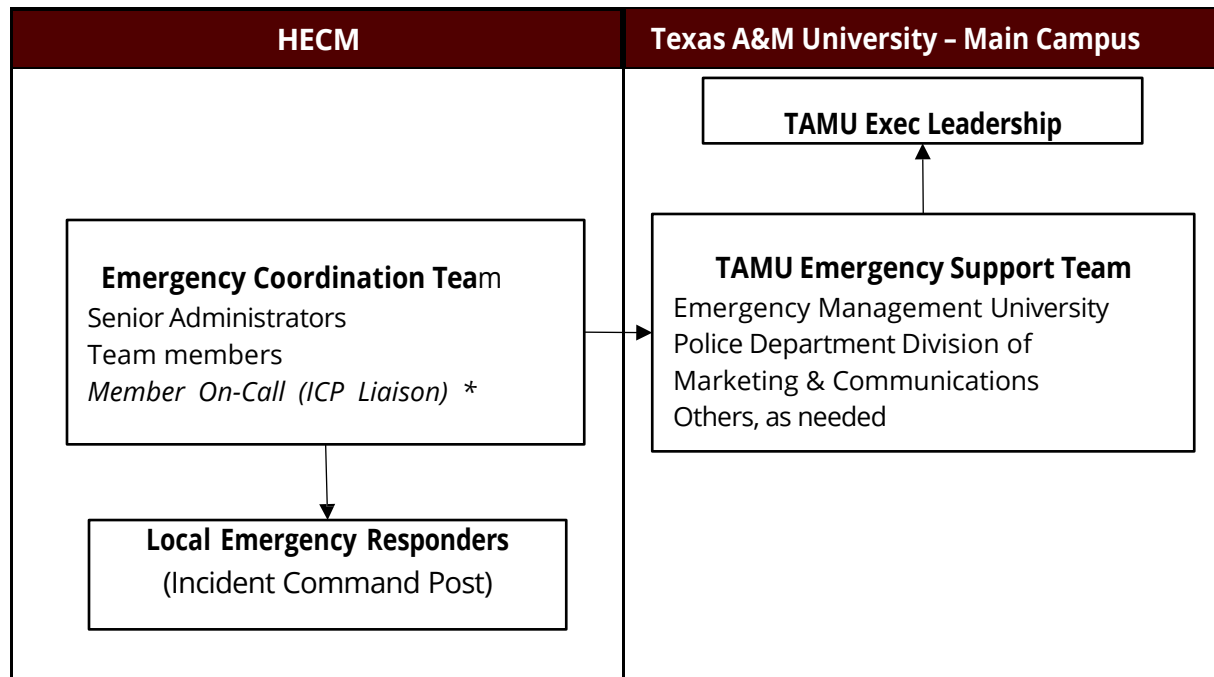
Direction, Control, and Coordination

General

The local emergency response organizations have responsibility for life safety actions at an incident site. These actions are coordinated through the Incident Command Post. A member of the HECM Emergency Coordination Team will serve as a liaison between the Incident Command Post and the HECM Emergency Coordination Team.

The HECM Emergency Coordination Team has the responsibility for decisions that affect the HECM community. This team is also responsible for communicating with TAMU Executive Leadership through normal chains of command.

The below diagram depicts the emergency management structure and flow of communication during an emergency.



Emergency Operations Center

The primary Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is located in HECM Conference Room 300. The EOC serves as the centralized location in which the Emergency Coordination Team will operate and make executive level decisions during an emergency. Response-related activities and work assignments will be planned, coordinated, and delegated from the EOC. During the course of an emergency, designated personnel should report directly to the EOC.

Should an emergency occur at HECM that prohibits use of the primary EOC, the Emergency Coordination Team has identified an alternate off campus at the Tres Lagos Community Center (5100 Tres Lagos Blvd., McAllen, TX 78504). The Emergency Coordination Team may meet virtually if an alternate location is unavailable.

Administration, Finance, and Logistics

After Action Reviews

Following an activation of the Emergency Operations Plan, members of the Emergency Coordination Team and senior administrators shall conduct an after action review. The

review of emergency responses can yield valuable feedback to the emergency planning process and enable the HECM officials and representatives to improve future emergency responses. The scope of after action reviews may range from small to large depending upon the complexity of the response.

An After Action Report should be generated following the review that captures the nature of the incident, response descriptions, and outcomes – what worked well and areas for improvement – and recommendations for future planning. A copy of the report will be provided to Texas A&M University Emergency Management. Texas A&M University Emergency Management will submit all after action reports to the Texas A&M University System Risk Management office in accordance with Texas A&M University System Policy for Emergency Management (34.07 and 34.07.01). A copy of the report will be available through Texas A&M University Emergency Management.

Agreements and Contracts

- No additional agreements or contracts exist

Plan Development and Maintenance

Maintenance

The Emergency Coordination Team is responsible for maintaining and updating this plan. The plan shall be reviewed annually and updated based upon deficiencies identified during actual emergency situations and exercises and when changes in hazards, resources, capabilities or organizational structure occur. A revised or updated plan will be provided to all departments and individuals tasked in this plan in addition to Texas A&M University Emergency Management.

Testing and Exercising

With the assistance and cooperation of Texas A&M Emergency Management, Emergency Coordination Team members will outline and arrange training reflective of their responsibilities for students, faculty, and staff to participate in annually.

Annual exercises will be held so Emergency Coordination Team members can practice their skills and evaluate the adequacy of the EOP. An After Action Report (AAR) for each exercise shall be developed and submitted to Texas A&M University Emergency Management. All exercises will be conducted in accordance with Texas A&M System Policy for Emergency Management.

Annual Plan Submission and Reporting

Texas A&M University Emergency Management is responsible for submissions and reporting of required plans and executive summaries to the TAMUS Office of Risk Management in accordance with System Regulation 34.07.01 for Emergency Plans.

Authorities and References

Authorities

There are no additional authorities beyond those listed in the Texas A&M University Emergency Operations Plan.

Plan Contact Information

Name and Position	Phone Number	Alternate Phone Number
Rick Margo, Executive Director	956.271.1341	
E-Mail: rrmargo@tamu.edu		
Department: Higher Education Center at McAllen		

Record of Change

Change Number	Date of Change	Description of Change	Change Made By:

Attachment 1: Contact List

Senior Administrators

Member	Title	Office / Cell	Email
Manny Vela	Vice President and Chief Operating Officer		
Vacant	Assistant Provost		

Emergency Coordination Team Members

Member	Title	Office / Cell	Email
Rick Margo	Executive Director	956.271.1341	rrmargo@tamu.edu
Jessica Martinez	Emergency Management Specialist	956.271.1352	jessica.martinez01@tamu.edu
Lucia Lopez	Assistant Director	956.271.1312	lucialopez@tamu.edu
Samantha Castellanos	Assistant Director	956.271.1305	samantha.castellanos@tamu.edu
Cyndi Beltran	Executive Assistant	956.271.1349	cyndibeltran@tamu.edu
Yahaira Hernandez	Communications Specialist III	956.271.1369	y.hernandez@tamu.edu
Maribel Rodriguez	Security Supervisor		_____
Marina Ramirez	Human Resources Generalist	956.271.1302	m_ramirez@tamu.edu
Claraly Pena-Leal	Licensed Professional Counselor	956.271.1366	cpena-leal@tamu.edu
Carmen Rojas	HR Generalist IV (Kingsville)	361.221.0685	crojas@tamu.edu
Norberto Munoz	Maintenance Manager		_____

Member	Title	Office / Cell	Email
Marie Amutan	Lab Tech Coordinator	956.271.1363	mamuta@tamu.edu
Sheherzad Amir	Administrative Coordinator	956.271.1355	saamir@tamu.edu
Leslie Lutz	Assistant Director of Emergency Management	979.821.1043	leslielutz@tamu.edu

Additional Resources

Entity	Phone Number
McAllen Police Department	956.681.2000
McAllen Fire Department	956.681.2500
Edinburg Fire Department	956.383.7691
Hidalgo County Sheriff Office	956.383.8114
Hidalgo County Health Department	956.383.6221
Tropical Behavior Health	956.289.7000

Attachment 2: Notification and Warning

Warning messages must be accurate, clear and consistent. All messages should include information describing the situation, actions to take, and where to get additional information.

Many warning mechanisms can be activated individually such as fire alarms and campus email. Alternatively, some of the mechanisms can be activated through HECM Alert.

HECM maintains a robust warning system. Therefore, below is a non-comprehensive listing of available warning mechanisms.

- Text Messages*
- Email*
- HECM Website
- Social Media*
- Mobile Application*
- Local Media
- Building Fire Alarms

The warning mechanisms denoted above by (*) can be activated by HECM Alert. HECM Alert is HECM's opt-out emergency notification system that gives HECM the ability to send emergency information advising of imminent threat through text messaging and mass email.

In addition to emergency messaging, timely warnings, as defined by The Clery Act, will be issued if a situation arises (either on or off campus) which in the best judgment of the Clery Compliance Officer or designee constitutes an ongoing or continuing threat to the HECM Health community.

Many factors are taken into account when deciding to and how to disseminate warnings. Below are some broad considerations for warning dissemination.

1. Type of hazard
 - What is the hazard? (Building fire, tornado, hazardous materials release)
 - What is the impact to the HECM? (Minor, major, catastrophic)
 - What is the potential for the situation to worsen?
 - Is the situation under control?
2. Life safety and property protection
 - What is the potential for death?
 - What is the potential for serious injury?
 - What is the potential for minor injury?
 - What is the potential for property damage?

- What is the potential for disruption to normal course of business?
- 3. Urgency
 - How soon does the message need to go out? (Seconds, hours, days)
 - Is there time for approval?
- 4. Audience
 - Who needs to be warned? (Students, faculty, staff, administrators, tenants, guests)
 - How many people need to be warned? (Few, dozens, hundreds, thousands)
- 5. System(s) capabilities
 - What are the limitations of each system? (Limited audience, lengthy delivery time)
 - How quickly can the messages be sent? (Immediately, minutes, hours)

Attachment 3: Altered Operations for Inclement Weather

Purpose

This procedure is to outline the authorities, operations, and responsibilities for altering campus operations due to the threat of or actual inclement weather. Alteration of campus operations is defined as the early dismissal, delayed opening, or campus closure.

Authorities

HECM retains local authority for the decisions relating to altering campus operations due to inclement weather.

HECM retains local authority to issue an HECM Alert to the campus population regarding the altered operation.

Procedure

Each campus will:

- Monitor local weather to determine if altered campus operations are warranted.
- Coordinate their decisions to alter campus operations with other TAMU components in the same jurisdiction.
- Take into consideration the actions of local school districts or other higher education institutions.
 - If local school districts and/or other higher education institutions alter their operations, the respective campus may alter their operations.
 - If local school districts and/or other higher education institutions remain open, the respective campus should remain open.
- Notify the following individuals, via a group email or text message, of the determination of altered operations and the reason for such determination.
 - Provost Office Representative
 - TAMU Executive Director of Emergency Management
 - TAMU Assistant Director of Emergency Management
- Issue the HECM Alert if campus operations will be altered.

Resources

Entity	URL
HECM website	https://mcallen.tamu.edu

Entity	URL
Local News – Weather	
National Weather Service	https://www.weather.gov/bro/
TXDOT Highway Conditions	http://www.drivetexas.org