

University Policy 116 Clery Act Compliance – Procedure 116.1

Timely Warnings and Emergency Notifications

Initially approved: January 30, 2024

Authority: University Police Department

I. Purpose

The Western Carolina University Police Department (Department) provides Emergency Notifications and Timely Warnings about threats to the safety of the campus community. The purpose of this Procedure is to establish guidelines for the issuance of Timely Warnings and Emergency Notifications in accordance with the [Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act of 1998](#) (commonly referred to as the “Clery Act”).

II. Timely Warnings

A Timely Warning shall be issued when a Clery Act crime which has already been committed but presents a serious or continuous threat to the campus community occurs within Clery Geography, as defined by University Policy 116.

The purpose of a Timely Warning is to quickly notify the campus community of an incident involving a Clery reportable crime and to provide information that may enable community members to protect themselves from the incident and that may aid in the prevention of similar crimes.

The Chief of Police or designee will communicate Timely Warnings in accordance with the Department’s internal policies. Timely Warnings will be disseminated to the campus community via email and text message, and will be placed on the Department’s website.

The decision whether to send a Timely Warning will be made on a case-by-case basis in consideration of the following factors: the nature of the crime, the timeliness of the report, the continuing danger to the campus community, and the possible risk of compromising law enforcement efforts.

Timely Warnings will be considered for dissemination by the Department for the following classifications of reported crimes:

- A. Criminal homicide
- B. Sex offenses
- C. Robbery
- D. Aggravated assault
- E. Hate crimes

- F. Burglary
- G. Motor vehicle theft
- H. Arson

Crimes that would otherwise be reportable but are reported to a licensed mental health counselor or pastoral counselor, operating under the scope and authority of their license, are not subject to the timely warning requirement.

III. Emergency Notifications

An Emergency Notification shall be issued upon confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health and/or safety of the campus community. Immediate threats include both Clery Act crimes and other types of emergencies or events (weather-related, naturally occurring, human-caused, etc.) that post an imminent or impending threat to the campus community.

The decision whether to issue an Emergency Notification shall be made on a case-by-case basis in consideration of the following factors: hazard characteristics, threat to life safety and property, and urgency and delivery method capabilities. Emergency Notifications shall be issued without delay unless issuing a notification will, in the professional judgment of responsible authorities, compromise efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to otherwise mitigate the emergency.

The process for activating Emergency Notification protocols begins when a threat or emergency is reported to the WCU Emergency Communications Center, or to another Responsible Authority in accordance with the Department's internal policies.

All Emergency Notifications shall be distributed in a manner that is reasonably likely to reach the entire campus community in time for individuals to take precautionary measures. Methods of dissemination may vary depending on the severity of the crime/situation, the level of threat to the campus community, and the need to disrupt normal University operations to deliver the message.