EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN DRAFT REVISION

**APPENDIX H: AUTHORITY AND PROCEDURES FOR SYSTEM WIDE POSTING
OF EMERGENCY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

This Appendix establishes the guidelines by which the emergency text messaging system will be used for distribution of emergency alerts to students, faculty, and staff that would be affected directly by a critical incident which poses an imminent threat to their health or safety given their presence on College grounds or its surrounding areas.

Definition of Terms in Statement:

- **Emergency Alerts:** Notifications regarding critical incidents that pose an imminent threat to the health or safety of the College community. Examples of such emergency incidents include, but are not limited to severe weather, hazardous materials incidents, and acts of criminal violence that broadly threaten the safety of the College community.
- **Text Messages:** Brief, direct notifications (typically not more than 125 characters) received on a cellular phone or similar text-communication handheld device.

Policy Statement: The Connecticut Community College System maintains a subscription to a third-party alert messaging service that enables designated college administrators to create text, email, and optionally voice messages for emergency alerts to members of the College community and send them to a list of subscribed cell phone users.

Text message emergency alerts are one element of the College's comprehensive emergency response protocol that provides for rapid notification to students, faculty, and staff about situations or events that are occurring on campus and its surrounding areas. The service is designed for those conducting regular College-related business in the immediate area and on all campuses.

The text messaging service with which the Connecticut Community College system has contracted with requires users to opt-in to the service by subscribing their cell phone or wireless device number and e-mail address through the myCommNet portal https://my.commnet.edu/. Users will encounter a myCommNet Alert channel on the portal's Home tab to create and maintain their account profiles within the myCommNet system. Subscribers may incur a charge from their provider for receiving text messages; therefore, the Connecticut Community College System uses text messaging primarily for emergency alerts.

1. **Creation and Distribution of Emergency Text Messages**
   - The following College personnel have the authority to approve dissemination of an emergency text message:
     1. President
     2. Dean of Administration
     3. Dean of Student Services

- Once approved, an emergency text message will be distributed by a trained system administrator to subscribers of the text messaging service prior to adoption.

2. **Follow-Up after an Emergency Text Message is sent:**

- **Notifications**
  Immediately after sending an emergency alert text message or when immediately practical to do so, the designee who created the message shall notify the other designated offices that the text message has been sent and shall describe the rationale for using text message notification. The purpose of this communication is to ensure that all offices are sharing consistent information and are not sending duplicate messages. Designated college personnel subsequently will coordinate with the appropriate institutional departments, in accordance with the College's Emergency Action Plan, to communicate additional information to the College community related to the critical incident using other communication modes (e.g., e-mail, web postings, Public Access channel, etc).
- **Archiving Text Messages**
  The text messaging system archives "sent" messages, but as a back-up, message creators will record the date, time, location, purpose, and content of all text messages that they send. This information will be forwarded to the designated college personnel where the official College record of all official text messages will reside. A copy of the archived message will reside on the Security Incident Management System in accordance with existing security reporting protocol.

3. **Primary College Contact with the Text Messaging Service Provider**

Each College President has identified a college designee to serve as the primary contact. This individual will be responsible for monitoring and renewing the annual subscription, performing regular system reviews and tests to ensure that the service is performing as expected, and serving as the primary point of contact between the service provider and the College.

4. **Renewal and Maintenance**

The College Designee will publish and announce that the database for the user group (recipients) will be purged on an annual basis to be marketed aggressively at the beginning of the fall semester. A sustained marketing effort of this communication tool will be made for all students, faculty, and staff throughout the year using existing web technology (portal) and traditional media (flyers, postings). (Pull in our FAQs and other documents)

Procedures: Detailed procedures on critical incident notification can be found at
http://www.commnet.edu/mycommnetsupport/alert.asp.

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