



Emergency/Crisis Response Policy

Category: Health and Safety;

Jurisdiction: Vice President, Administration and Finance;

Approval Authority: Executive Team;

Established on: February 23, 1994;

Amendments: April 27, 1995; August 2007; August 2010; 2012; January 2016;

February 2018; March 2021; March 2023, April 2025;

Most **Recent Review:** April 15, 2025.

Purpose

This policy is intended to establish guidelines for the effective response to a major emergency, crisis, or disaster that threatens the safety or well-being of our University community, or the normal operations at either of our campuses.

Definitions

An Emergency is an unforeseen event that interrupts "normal" activity within the University, requiring extra support, resources, clean-up, or recovery. Situations which disrupt or undermine the sense of personal security that students and staff require to function effectively in the University community are recognized as Emergencies.

Emergencies are categorized into Levels depending on their severity and the level of management required:

Level 1. Emergencies that significantly disrupt or impair an individual or group within the University community from fulfilling their duties or role;

Level 2. Departmental or functional Emergencies that significantly disrupt or impair the ability of a University unit to fulfill its role or services, yet do not significantly impair the University at-large from continuing normal operations; and

Level 3. Emergencies that significantly disrupt or impair the ability of the University at-large to deliver basic core services (e.g. computing, library, student records, admission and registration processes, payroll); and/or academic, research, and administrative services; and/or basic utility services (i.e. hydro, water, gas, phone); or

Emergencies that adversely affect, or present a clear and imminent danger to the safety of any number of persons on our campuses (e.g. building structure failure, active assailant(s), pandemic/epidemic).

Emergency Operations Control Group (EOCG)

Designated members of senior staff responsible for key facets/units/operations on our campuses that are critical to the effective response to an emergency situation.

The following positions are permanent members of the EOCG:

Thunder Bay Campus

- President
- Vice President (Administration & Finance)
- Provost & Vice President (Academic)
- Vice President (Research & Innovation)
- Director of Security Services
- Associate Vice-President, Communications

Orillia Campus

- President
- Principal
- Associate Vice President, Administration (Orillia Campus)
- Media, Communications & Marketing Associate
- Human Resources Partner
- Facilities Manager
- Administrative Officer
- Manager, Security Services (Orillia)

Other University employees may be seconded to the EOCG as required.

Emergency Operations Centre (EOC)

Space where EOCG members gather to effectively send and receive urgent communications, coordinate responses to emergency, and plan for recovery phase.

The following spaces may be designated EOC locations during an emergency, depending on the crisis and access to them:

Thunder Bay Campus

- Governance Conference Room
- Vice Presidents' Conference Room
- Conference Room A (Bartley Residence)
- Physical Plant Boardroom (Avila Centre)
- Virtual space (Zoom meeting)
- Or such other location agreed upon by EOGC members

Orillia Campus

- Principal's Office
- Heritage Place meeting room

- Virtual space (Zoom meeting)
- Or such other location agreed upon by EOGC members

Policy

Preparation and Support Strategies:

Lakehead University is committed to maintaining a safe environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

Emergency Operations Control Group members are committed to emergency planning and preparation that includes training, support, and helping ensure the continuity of operations on our campuses.

Response Strategies:

When any level of emergency occurs on our campuses, the response strategy will follow the following order of priority:

1. Protect lives;
2. Protect the health and safety of all responders;
3. Protect property and infrastructure;
4. Protect the environment; and
5. Restore the academic, research and administrative operations of the University.

The response strategy is also related to the Level of Emergency experienced.

Level 1. These Emergencies require routine response and are managed by the Office of Security Services. Management of the emergency focuses on the delivery of basic primary response services (e.g. through Security Services or any external/community first responder unit) and coordination of basic secondary response services (e.g. through Health and Safety, Physical Plant, Associate Vice-President, Communications).

Level 2. These Emergencies require enhanced responses over those required for Level 1 emergencies. Such responses are managed/coordinated by:

Thunder Bay Campus

- Senior security officer or designate to act as liaison between the University and first responders' leadership;
- Director, Security Services and/or the Vice President (Administration & Finance). If the Emergency warrants, the Vice President (Administration & Finance) in consultation with the Director, Security Services, may appoint additional staff from affected University units or EOCG members.

Orillia Campus

- Manager, Security Services or designate to act as liaison between the University and first responders' leadership;
- The Principal, in consultation with the Manager, Security Services, may appoint additional staff from affected University units or EOCG members.

Media relations support is provided on-site by a representative of the Communications/Media Relations team and supports the University's designated first responders' liaison.

Level 3. Emergencies, requiring resources not possessed by Lakehead University. Initial response will be similar to those for Level 1 and 2 emergencies, and supplemented with additional/external resources, as necessary, as approved by:

Thunder Bay Campus – Vice President (Administration & Finance) or another member of EOCG in their absence.

Orillia Campus – Principal, designate, or another member of EOCG in the absence of either.

EOCG serves as the authority for information management, decision-making, communications, and resource allocation during an emergency response and recovery.

Response Procedures:

All emergencies have six main phases:

1. Emergency occurs;
2. Assessment/First Response;
3. Action
4. Communication;
5. Recovery; and
6. Return to Normal Operations.

These six phases translate at each of the Emergency Levels into the following scenarios:

Level 1 Emergency

1. Emergency occurs.
2. Security Services is alerted and an Officer is dispatched.
3. Security Services Officer assesses the nature of the emergency and the response required, and confirms the Level 1 Emergency categorization. The security officer continually assesses the level of emergency.
4. Security Services Officer requests additional support as needed (e.g. Security Services Manager/Director, Police, Fire Department, paramedics, Health and Safety, Physical Plant, Chief of Staff, Communications/Media Relations).
5. First response emergency assistance is rendered as required.
6. Support efforts to share critical information with the University community, President's Office, external media, or members of the public, as necessary.
7. University response is rendered as required and emergency ends.
8. Recovery phase and return to normal operations.

Level 2 Emergency

1. Emergency occurs.
2. Security Services is alerted and an officer is dispatched.
3. Security Services Officer assesses the Emergency and the response required.
4. Security officer requests additional support as needed (e.g. Security Services Manager/Director, Police, Fire Department, paramedics, Health and Safety, Physical Plant, Associate Vice-President, Communications).
5. Security Services Manager/Director determines that the emergency response required is beyond the capabilities of the Security Services Office and contacts the Vice President (Administration & Finance) – Thunder Bay Campus, and/or the Principal – Orillia Campus.
6. Emergency response is rendered as necessary.
7. Communication:

Thunder Bay Campus - Vice President (Administration & Finance) notifies the President and determines if additional staff or members of the EOCG are required to manage Emergency response or recovery operations.

Orillia Campus – Principal notifies the President and determines if additional staff or members of the EOCG are required to manage Emergency response or recovery operations.

8. Any pertinent communications to the University community, external media or members of the public are released through the Associate Vice-President, Communications.
9. Recovery phase begins, as managed by the Vice President (Administration & Finance) – Thunder Bay Campus, and Principal – Orillia Campus.
10. Return to normal operations.

Level 3 Emergency

1. Emergency occurs.
2. Security Services is alerted and an officer is dispatched.
3. Security Services Officer assesses the Emergency and the response required.

4. Security Services Officer requests additional support as needed (e.g. Security Services Manager/Director, Police, Fire Department, paramedics, Health and Safety, Physical Plant, Associate Vice-President, Communications).
5. Security Services Manager/Director determines that the Emergency response required is beyond the capabilities of the Security Office and contacts the Vice-President (Administration & Finance) – Thunder Bay Campus and/or the Principal – Orillia Campus.
6. Emergency response is rendered as necessary.
7. Communication:
Thunder Bay Campus – Vice President (Administration & Finance) notifies the President and may convene the EOCG in a designated EOC location. Additional staff may be added to the EOCG as required. Any pertinent communications to the University community, external media or members of the public are released through the Associate Vice-President, Communications.
President informs and updates Chair of Board of Governors.
Orillia Campus – Principal notifies the President and may convene the EOCG in a designated EOC location. Additional staff may be added to the EOCG as required. Any pertinent communications to the University community, external media or members of the public are released through the Associate Vice-President, Communications. President informs and updates Chair of Board of Governors.
8. Recovery phase begins, as managed by the Vice President (Administration & Finance) – Thunder Bay Campus, and Principal – Orillia Campus.
9. Return to normal operations.

Recovery Phase

This phase recognizes that Emergencies may have short-and long-term social and psychological effects that impair the ability of staff and students to function properly, even though physical evidence of the event is no longer evident. Accordingly, crisis counseling will be made available and arranged by the Office of Human Resources in conjunction with Student Health and Counseling Services.

In addition, the recovery phase will also include a review of the University's response to the emergency to determine the effectiveness of the emergency response and recovery, and to prepare for any external inquiries prompted, or likely to be prompted, from the event.

Emergencies involving University animals

If an emergency involves animals housed in University animal care facilities, the Animal Care Committee Veterinarian and Chair of the Animal Care Committee will be called to deal with known or possible injuries or stresses suffered by the animals.

<https://www.lakeheadu.ca/research-and-innovation/ethics/animal-care-and-use-program-policies-and-procedures>

Emergencies involving hazardous materials

If the Emergency involves hazardous or dangerous materials, such as radioactive substances, the Lab & Biosafety Specialist will be notified.

In departments or areas where specialized Emergency response protocols are required (e.g. response to hazardous conditions, emergency in restricted areas etc.), the Office of Human Resources, Security Services and Physical Plant must be advised by the Vice-President (Administration & Finance) and provided with these protocols.

Emergency training for University employees

All University personnel likely to be involved in the response to an on-campus emergency will be provided appropriate training, as required. Training will be managed by the Offices of Human Resources, Security Services, or Risk Management.

Review Period: 5 years;

Date for Next Review: 2029-2030;

Related Policies and Procedures: To be determined;

Policy Superseded by this Policy: None.

The University Secretariat manages the development of policies through an impartial, fair governance process, and in accordance with the Policy Governance Framework. Please contact the University Secretariat for additional information on University policies and procedures and/or if you require this information in another format.

Office of the University Secretariat

Hours: Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4:30pm;

Location: University Centre, Thunder Bay Campus, Room UC2002

Phone: 807-343-8010 ext. 7929

Email: univsec@lakeheadu.ca