

TYPE:	Administrative
TITLE:	Emergency Communications
NO.:	ADMIN-265
RESPONSIBILITY:	Chief Administrative Office + Associate Vice-President, Communications and Marketing
APPROVED BY:	Durham College Leadership Team
EFFECTIVE DATE:	May 2023
REVISED DATE(S):	
REVIEW DATE:	May 2026

1. Introduction

The Communications and Marketing (C+M) department co-ordinates emergency communications through designated channels including campus-wide emails to employees and students, posts on ICE, social media, digital screens, Durham College (DC) website, DC mobile app and, as appropriate, the media.

2. Purpose

This policy and procedure outlines activities and protocols that facilitate effective and relevant communication internally and externally as appropriate when there is an emergency affecting the Oshawa or Whitby campus.

3. Definitions

Refer to [Durham College's Standard Definitions](#).

4. Policy statements

- 4.1. Internal communications are guided by DC's mission, vision, values, brand and policies.
- 4.2. C+M will provide clear, concise, accurate, and timely communication as a necessity to employees, students and key stakeholders.

5. Procedure

- 5.1. During an emergency situation the C+M department is responsible for providing information to the campus community. Since emergencies are generally unpredictable by nature, the department has a comprehensive Emergency Preparedness Communications Plan and Emergency Communications Checklist in place designed to help the College communicate effectively during emergency situations on campus.

- 5.2. For situations involving Durham Regional Police Service (DRPS), the C+M department will strive to do the following whenever possible:
 - 5.2.1. Commit to timely and transparent communication, sharing information to the extent it can without jeopardizing a police investigation. Communications may include sharing links to DRPS information (e.g. news releases) through authorized channels, including DC social media accounts when appropriate and when additional information will benefit employees and students.
 - 5.2.2. Consult with the Ontario Tech University Communications department and provide notice of any campus-related communication prior to sending College messages.
 - 5.2.3. Communicate with students and employees (where appropriate) in advance of any media communication being issued by DRPS that is related to the College.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1. 6.1. Communications and Marketing

- 6.1.1. 6.1.1. The associate vice-president, Communications and Marketing is responsible for overseeing emergency communications for all DC's campuses and locations.
- 6.1.2. The C+M department is solely responsible for the creation and distribution of all internal and external communications during an emergency. Employees should not engage in communications activities related to the emergency in any form (email, social media, etc.) in order to avoid confusion or negatively impact C+M's ability to communicate clear and accurate information to College stakeholders.
- 6.1.3. The C+M department may utilize a variety of communications channels, as appropriate, including but not limited to email, social media, ICE, the corporate website, the DC mobile app, media releases and press conferences.
- 6.1.4. The C+M department serves as the College's official point of contact for media.
- 6.1.5. All employees in the C+M department are required to uphold the confidentiality of information pertaining to DC.

6.2. Office of Campus Safety

6.2.1. In the event of an emergency at the Oshawa or Whitby campuses, or at one of the College's other locations, the College's manager, Emergency Management has responsibility for declaring the emergency and notifying the campus Emergency Management Response Team (EMRT). Working with C+M they ensure that the impacted location (students and employees) are notified of a potential or occurring situation and the course of action being taken to resolve it.

6.2.2. In the event of a high-level emergency, the Office of Campus Safety is responsible for notification of an active threat on campus and will activate Alertus. When the manager, Emergency Management declares the situation contained, C+M will initiate communications, as necessary, to provide key information to the campus community regarding the status of the situation, instructions for further action, etc.

7. **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act considerations**

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards have been considered in the development of this policy and procedure and it adheres to the principles outlined in the College's commitment to accessibility as demonstrated by the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

8. **Non-compliance implications**

Non-compliance with this policy and procedure could negatively impact the current and prospective College community with both external stakeholders and the media, which could lead to significant financial loss and damage to the College's reputation.

9. **Related forms, legislation or external resources**

- Emergency Management Plan