

General Policy - Emergency Notification

Purpose:

The safety of students and employees is a top priority of Bismarck State College. BSC has implemented emergency notification systems to allow the campus to contact students, employees and other designated individuals or agencies rapidly during an emergency. The emergency notification systems are:

Emergency Notification System (NotiFind)

The emergency notification system (NotiFind) will be used for emergencies as defined in North Dakota University System (NDUS) Emergency Notification Systems Policy 1902, <http://www.ndus.edu/policies/sbhe-policies/policy.asp?ref=2539&printable=1>.

This system will be used to quickly transmit urgent messages to students and employees. The notification can be sent to multiple devices (i.e., cell phone, work or home phone, email account, voice mail, text message, etc.).

Emergency Building Communications System (PA System)

The emergency building communications system is essentially a BSC campus-wide PA system that will allow emergency notification in buildings and rooms at all campus locations (i.e., Allied Health, Lineworker, and Mechanical Maintenance).

Definition:

An “Emergency” is defined as a situation that poses an immediate threat to the health and safety of someone in the institution or system community or significantly disrupts the institution or activities of the campus. Examples could include: active shooter, police initiated emergency, winter weather closing, fire emergency, tornado warning, hazmat emergency, severe weather alert, bomb threat, and hostage situation.

Policy:

Employees

1. Mandatory participation in the emergency notification system (NotiFind) will be required for all employees (including part-time and student employees).

2. Employees will be required to annually update their emergency notification information.
3. The information required will be campus e-mail and campus phone.
4. Other options for contact information are: home phone, home or work cell phone and text messaging.

Students

1. Students will need to verify their contact information for the emergency notification system (NotiFind) in the ConnectND/CampusConnection portal. Students will be encouraged to “opt in” by selecting the “I choose to participate” button located in the Campus Emergency Notification Information section of the CampusConnection portal. Students can select “I choose not to participate”, but this is discouraged.
2. Students will have the ability to update their contact information in the ConnectND/CampusConnection portal.
3. The portal will allow students to enter campus phone, home phone, cell phone, email, and texting information.
4. BSC will periodically remind students via email to review their contact information.
5. **Students are highly encouraged to participate in the emergency notification system (NotiFind).**

Collaborative Students and Employees

1. Collaborative (i.e., DSU, MiSU, UND, etc.) students and employees can receive emergency notifications from BSC if they “opt in” to the emergency notification system through the ConnectND/CampusConnection portal.
2. **Students and employees are highly encouraged to participate in the emergency notification system (NotiFind).**

Other Designated Individuals or Agencies (i.e. Bismarck Public Schools, ND University System employees)

1. Other individuals or agencies may participate in the emergency notification system (NotiFind) as designated by the BSC Emergency Notification System Planning Team.

Guidelines:

1. System tests will be completed at least once per semester.
2. Emergency notification contact information will be handled by ConnectND.
3. The emergency notification information for NotiFind will be refreshed a minimum of once per semester to allow for the removal of former employees and former students from the NotiFind system.
4. Authorized BSC administration and/or designated employees for each building will receive annual training on activating the systems.
5. These systems have the capability to be activated at any time.
6. Because BSC also has a building communications system (PA system), cell phone use for students while in class is left up to the discretion of the instructor.

7. In the event of an emergency, the PA system will be used in addition to NotiFind to contact students and employees.

Limits and Regulations:

1. Employee emergency information is exempt from North Dakota open records laws and as provided within NDUS Public Records Policy 1912 <http://www.ndus.edu/policies/sbhe-policies/policy.asp?ref=2432&printable=1> and may only be released as provided within that policy.
2. Student emergency notification information shall be excluded from directory information and is therefore confidential as provided under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). However, if a student phone number or email or other address submitted for the purpose of participation in an emergency notification system is also contained in other institution records (used for other purposes), the information is directory information and not confidential. However, if a student has exercised the student's right to refuse disclosure of directory information, then it is considered confidential.

References:

North Dakota University System (NDUS) Emergency Notification Systems Policy 1902
North Dakota University System (NDUS) Public Records Policy 1912

History of This Policy:

First policy drafted by the Emergency Notification System Planning Team on July 30, 2008.
Approved by the Executive Council on August 13, 2008.

Revisions – Approved by President Skogen June 2, 2009.