

CAMPUS ALERTS

I. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Mount Aloysius College Safety & Security Department in partnership with Student Affairs and assistance from Public Relations/Marketing to issue “Timely Warning and Safety Alert” reports to the campus community on all major crimes or incidences of significance that occur on or adjacent to campus and are considered threats to the MAC community in compliance with The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act) and the Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting Act (UCR). These warnings are posted and distributed through a variety of mediums to include, but not limited to, flyers, mass e-mail/voice-mail notifications and the MAC Campus Alert notification system. The warnings are designed to provide timely notification to the campus community of a crime or a safety concern. The warnings provide information regarding the matter in question, and assist all concerned in taking appropriate safety precautions.

II. PROCEDURES

A. ISSUING A CRIME ALERT

- a. When a crime that falls within the realm of the Clery act reporting requirements and is reported to Mount Aloysius College, the following criteria should be taken into consideration when deciding whether or not to issue an alert:
 1. Geographic location of the crime/incident
 - a. What is its reasonable proximity to campus or a College building/facility
 - b. Is it within reasonable “walking distance” of campus?
 - c. Is it a location or area frequented by Mount Aloysius College students for social, academic, recreational, or other purposes
 2. Use of a weapon – was one used against the victim, or just displayed
 3. Injury to victim – generally any injury requiring at least initial First Aid treatment would be enough to justify issuing a warning
 4. The duty of MAC to warn the community about situations that may put the community at risk.

III. TYPE of ALERTS

a. Crime Alerts

- i. Are issued about individual crimes against persons (e.g., any assault, robbery, any hate crime), and any series/patterns of personal or property crimes (e.g., multiple thefts/burglaries, thefts from autos on a particular campus parking lot) in which a member of the College community or the College itself is the victim; and;
- ii. Are generally confined to crimes which occur on the campus.

b. Safety Alerts

- i. Are issued about serious crimes against persons that occur in the nearby areas that students are likely to frequent, and neighborhoods where significant numbers of students live in private, non-college housing.

c. Resident Hall / Workplace Crime Prevention Advisories

- i.* Are the similar to Crime Alerts and are issued when a single crime or repeat pattern of crimes occur only in/at one particular on-campus residence hall or one academic/administrative building.
- ii.* Are issued when the department is informed about a crime, and notification would contribute to the safety of the occupants of that building and also represents a unique criminal offense or pattern that occurs only in a sole location; or has the low likelihood of occurring in most other areas on campus; and would not be of interest to the entire college community from a crime prevention standpoint.

IV. APPROVING AUTHORITY

- Only the Director of Safety & Security/ or Designee, Vice President for Student Affairs, or President of the College or their designees may authorize, approve and direct that a Crime or Safety Alert be issued.
- When there is a question as to whether a Crime or Safety Alert should be issued, the Director of Safety & Security/ or Designee, Vice President for Student Affairs, Director of Public Relations/Marketing shall consult with the President to make a determination.

V. GETTING STARTED: DEVELOPING the ALERT

a. When to issue an Alert - Crime and Safety Alerts should be issued as expeditiously as possible after a serious crime has been brought to the attention of the College. Acceptable reasons for delaying the issuance of an alert would be late reporting by the victim, difficulty in making subsequent contacts with the victim to obtain necessary details about the crime, delayed notification to MAC Safety & Security because the original crime report was taken by a local police agency, or difficulty in obtaining a copy of the crime report from another agency.

b. If an incident meets the criteria in Part I above for issuing an alert; every effort should be made to contact the Director of Safety & Security to review the need for the alert. If the Director of Safety & Security is not available, follow the emergency response protocol and contact the person designated.

Form/templates – Select the proper pre-printed “Crime Alert” or “Safety Alert” template/blank form. Alternate the color of the blank used. This is important since multiple Alerts may be posted around campus at the same time.

Alert number designation – The number of each Alert will be comprised of the incident report number it is associated with.

Date of Issuance – Directly below the Alert number, place the date that the Alert is being issued – not the date of the crime/incident giving rise to the Alert.

Title – Type the title in bold, all Caps, using the classification that appeared on the Incident Report. To conserve space, it is suggested that for some offenses – e.g., Robbery while armed – just use a shortened title, like “Armed Robbery.” If the Alert is about more than one crime that occurred at the same location over a short time period (e.g., 2-4 days) shorten it as much as possible. DO NOT use titles like “Physical Assault” or “Altercation” – call it what it is...“Simple Assault” or “Aggravated Assault”. One exception to this rule – if the Alert is about Sexual Offenses, you may save space by using the somewhat generic term “Sexual Assault”.

Text/body – The text should be short and factual What, When, Where of the crime. Start out by identifying the source of the report. If the victim reported the crime to us first, begin with “MAC received a report today/yesterday that...” If

another agency took the initial report and we're doing an Alert to make sure the campus is aware of a serious crime, begin "MAC was notified yesterday by CTPD/PSP or whatever Police that..."

Tone – Keep the tone and vocabulary business-like and professional, yet sensitive to the student-victim. Remember – this is not a big campus, and word will travel quickly via the grapevine. Avoid putting details in the text that could identify the student-victim, even to a small group, like the residents of his/her dormitory. To reduce concern and alarm by those who read the Alert, if the victim was not physically harmed or injured during the crime (e.g., a weapon was displayed but no assault took place while the robbery was in progress), say so! Be sure not to include any details about the crime that only the suspect could possibly know about, just as would be done with a news release to external media.

Suspect Description – Provide as detailed a description as possible of the suspect. If the victim could not give one, say so.

Community Assistance – Always include the request to notify Mount Aloysius College Safety & Security and/or Cresson Township Police if the suspect is observed on or near campus.

Crime Prevention Tips – Always finish with some relevant "Crime Prevention Tips" (maybe 3-5, depending on how much space is left at the bottom of the page, allowing for the footer) or "Protect your car from..." or "Protect yourself from..." followed by the tips listed in bullets. Try to avoid wording tips so that it appears you are criticizing the victim's behavior or actions which preceded the crime, even if in your own experience you conclude that the victim's carelessness may have made him/her unnecessarily vulnerable to being victimized.

Sexual Assaults – In ALL cases where an Alert is about any type of Sexual Assault, and in most cases involving other assaults (Simple, Aggravated, etc.), after preparing the first draft of the Alert, contact the victim by phone or in person. If by phone, read the entire text of the Alert to the victim; if in person, allow the victim to view/read the draft Alert. Allow the victim to make reasonable but not wholesale or major changes in the wording of the text. For example, if the victim prefers that the word "stopped" be substituted for "accosted"; "touched on the arm" instead of "grabbed from behind"; "attacked" instead of "assaulted"; make those minor substitutions, unless to do so contradicts the classification of the crime. It is recommended that you contact the Marketing/PR department for consultation. If the victim is simply too traumatized to be interviewed prior to the 48-hour guideline for issuing the alert, a representative from Counseling Services may be able to get the information for you.

Exception – In other cases, especially property crimes, and in what are colloquially referred to as "garden variety" thefts or street robberies, it is not necessary – but still preferred – to have the victim approve the alert text. This is particularly the case when another police agency has taken the Incident Report, thus making the narrative a matter of public record and likely already available to the local media. Examples, a theft of a backpack left behind in a common area is a simple, garden variety theft.

VI. ISSUING the ALERT

Give first priority to issuing the Alert electronically, i.e., via email and the MAC Safety & Security web site, in conjunctions with the Director of Public Relations/Marketing.

A. Posting hardcopy/paper flyers

A copy of the Alert shall be placed in the "Pass-on" book to be read by all Officers.

Safety & Security Officers on-duty or Student Security Officer shall be assigned to hand-carry multiple copies of the Alert to the on-duty Residence Life Staff to distribute in the residence halls, and post the Alert at all non-residential buildings.

The Officers on the next shift after the postings were placed shall be responsible for checking all buildings before the end of their shift to make sure the postings are present and re-hanging any if needed. Be sure to stress to officers alike that the way they post these Alerts leaves an impression, either positive or negative, with those who pass by, and will determine whether a student stops to read this important information or be totally distracted from the message by the unkempt and sloppy manner in which the Alert was posted.

C. Removal of Alerts

All Alerts are to be removed 30 calendar days from the date of posting, as it appears at the top of the Alert or if the situation causing the alert has been resolved. Night shift MAC Safety & Security Officers shall monitor existing Alerts, and remove old Alerts.

VII. RECORDS RETENTION

The incident reporting system serves as an archive for all alerts issued. Printed and electronic copies will also be filed in the office of Student Affairs Division for a period of seven (7) calendar years in accordance with the Clery Act retention schedule.

Alerts will also be posted to the MAC Safety & Security website when issued, and archived during the current academic year. Following Commencement in May, all alerts for the previous academic year will be deleted.