



Crisis Communication Policy

- 1. Purpose.** This document defines the Delta Gamma Crisis Communication policy for use by Delta Gamma Fraternity members, alumnae, and leadership (Council, Leadership, and Executive Offices) to effectively manage communications through a formal, clearly defined channel in order to mitigate crisis, or serious negative repercussions for Delta Gamma Fraternity and its chapters and maintain a reputation of leadership and transparency on vital issues, breaking news and health/safety concerns. Delta Gamma Fraternity is committed to taking a preemptive approach to crisis events in the interest of our members' wellbeing and the organization's public relations image, using disclosure whenever possible as the preferred strategy for preventing or minimizing public relations crises.
- 2. Applicability and Scope Statement.** This policy applies to all Delta Gamma Fraternity members, alumnae, volunteers and Executive Offices staff members. The objectives of this crisis communications policy are: to prepare Delta Gamma Fraternity leadership to effectively and nimbly manage crisis events; to respond in a unified, professional manner that reinforces Delta Gamma leadership and creates loyalty and unity; to strategically enhance the Delta Gamma brand and ensure the public understanding of the value provided by Delta Gamma Fraternity; to manage the distribution of critical, often sensitive, information to the media, members, and public; and to inform members of the Fraternity's position to help shape a consistent response.
- 3. Affiliations.** This policy is a supplement to the general communications policies. Refer to the Communications Handbook, CCOM, the Circularizing policy, the Media Interview/Approval/Collegiate policy, the Public Relations/Dissemination of Information policies, the Social Media policy, and the Delta Gamma Style Guide.
- 4. Effective date.** This policy is in effect immediately.
- 5. Responsibilities Section.** As a Fraternity with a presence on publicly and privately assisted institutions, Delta Gamma has an obligation to keep the public informed of its activities. In order to preclude misinformation and delayed responses during times of crisis, it is necessary that the media have immediate contact with those sources who can provide the most timely, correct, and accurate responses and messages. Delta Gamma Fraternity communications in times of crisis are intended to inform all targeted internal and external audiences, to demonstrate concern for the safety and wellbeing of lives, to safeguard chapter and Fraternity facilities, assets and rituals, and to maintain a positive image of Delta Gamma.

 - a. Fraternity President/ Executive Director.

(1) Only the Fraternity President or the Executive Director or their designated representatives may speak on behalf of Delta Gamma Fraternity.

(2) The Fraternity President or the Executive Director will notify the Council Trustee: Communications and the Director of Marketing and Communications (Executive Offices Staff) of incidents that may escalate into public relations crises, and chapters or members will do so as well through communicating with crisis@deltagamma.org.

b. Director of Marketing and Communications, Executive Offices.

(1) The Director of Marketing and Communications and/or the Communications Department will manage all communications as directed by the Fraternity President, the Council Trustee: Communications, and the Executive Director, and issue all approved statements.

(2) The Director of Marketing and Communications will be responsible for developing crisis communications strategies.

(3) The Director of Marketing and Communications will also monitor local, state, provincial, and inter/national news coverage of Delta Gamma Fraternity and advise of issues or trends that may lead to negative stories.

(4) The Director of Marketing and Communications will notify Council and the relevant Region Team of a crisis situation and give status updates as they are available.

c. Council.

(1) The Council will advise the Fraternity President and Executive Director of incidents that may escalate into public relations crises, in addition to notifying the corresponding collegiate development specialist (CDS) who deals with the chapter and other key staff by emailing crisis@deltagamma.org. All communications will be coordinated through the Director of Marketing and Communications and will be in accordance with guidance provided by the Fraternity President, Council Trustee: Communications, and the Executive Director.

(2) If appropriate, Council will inform the appropriate Regional Teams and Leadership members of the incident, actions being taken or recommended responses. This may be done by conference call, CC on emails, etcetera.

d. Housing. Chapter president will contact crisis@deltagamma.org as well as the House Corporation President (HCP) and the chapter adviser/Advisory Team Chairman (ATC) who will then immediately communicate with the Regional Director (RD) when they have knowledge of or anticipate an incident that could affect Delta Gamma Fraternity. Director of Marketing and Communications will notify the Council and Fraternity Housing Corporation/Office of Housing and give updates as necessary.

(1) Fraternity Housing Corporation will notify the House Corporation, the Director: Housing Resources, and the Regional Housing Specialist to notify, give recommendations, and give updates.

- (2) The chapter, the House Corporation, and the chapter advisers must notify the RD.
- (3) In the event of a crisis involving the actual chapter house or associated property, the chapter president must also notify the House Corporation President (HCP) in addition to her email to crisis@deltagamma.org.
- (4) When the chapter is not in residence (during breaks or summer), the House Director and/or the HCP/EO staff FMC/LLC specialist must notify crisis@deltagamma.org of a crisis that has impacted or will have the potential to impact the actual chapter house or associated property.

e. Foundation. Foundation staff will notify the Executive Director of the Foundation should they learn of incidents that may escalate into public relations crises. The Executive Director of the Foundation will then notify the Chairman. The Executive Director of Foundation will notify crisis@deltagamma.org of incidents that may escalate into public relations crises and affect the Fraternity.

f. Leadership Members. Leadership Members, who are generally the first point of contact, should immediately contact the Regional teams and crisis@deltagamma.org when they have knowledge of or anticipate an incident that could affect Delta Gamma Fraternity. If there is a crisis that affects a chapter facility, a Leadership Member should also contact the Regional Team or New Chapter Team and crisis@deltagamma.org. The RD is the one who manages the situation with local volunteers.

g. Executive Offices
Staff.

(1) Will alert crisis@deltagamma.org and an appropriate RD, Regional Collegiate Specialist (RCS)/ Regional Alumnae Specialist (RAS)/New Chapter Coordinator (NCC)/Council Appointed Coordinator (CAC), Fraternity Housing Corporation (FHC), Housing Directors and the Regional Housing Specialist (RHS) when they have knowledge of or anticipate a crisis incident or crisis media event.

(2) Will monitor chapter or member activity via periodic checks with Leadership and Internet alerts to ensure policy adherence.

(3) Will send communication summaries, in partnership with the Director of Marketing and Communications, out to Council, Leadership, and the volunteers.

h. Collegiate Chapters.

(1) The chapter president is the collegiate point of contact for the chapter and is responsible for directing and informing the collegiate chapter. In the event the chapter president is unable to serve in this role, the vice president: social standards or vice president: finance shall serve. In the case of a new chapter that has not yet held elections, the new chapter consultant will be the collegiate point of contact for the chapter and is responsible for directing and informing the collegiate chapter.

(a) The chapter president/new chapter consultant must contact the RD or RCS/NCC/CAC and crisis@deltagamma.org in the event of a crisis.

(b) The chapter president/new chapter consultant must contact crisis@deltagamma.org when there are issues involving the actual chapter housing or associated property such as flooding, storm damage, tornadoes and hurricanes.

(c) All radio, television, print and social media interviews or statements require the approval of the Fraternity President, the Executive Director or their designee prior to participating.

(e) Statements or interviews for a newspaper article must be approved by the Director of Marketing and Communications. If a newspaper article will have national and/or international circulation, it must also be approved by the Fraternity President or Executive Director.

(f) Monitor chapter or member activity to ensure policy adherence.

(i) Alumnae Groups.

(1) The alumnae group president is the point of contact for the group and is responsible for directing and informing the alumnae group. The alumnae group president must contact the RD and the RAS/ADS and the Director of Marketing and Communications in the event of a crisis.

6. Policies.

a. All crises (or anticipated crises) should be reported to crisis@deltagamma.org. No one is authorized to speak to the news media in a crisis without clearance from the Fraternity President or Executive Director.

b. Only the Fraternity President or the Executive Director or her designated representative may speak on behalf of Delta Gamma Fraternity. Final approval of all disclosures and strategies will rest with the Fraternity President or the Executive Director or their designated representative.

c. All formal responses to external media will be managed through the Director of Marketing and Communications, through guidance of the Executive Director and Fraternity President. The Director of Marketing and Communications will approve statements for accuracy and compliance with Delta Gamma policies. The Director of Marketing and Communications will distribute verified information as quickly as possible to internal and external audiences.

d. Members and alumnae in a region will immediately inform their RD or RCS/NCC/CAC/RAS and crisis@deltagamma.org when they have knowledge of or anticipate a crisis incident. This is to ensure that information is funneled through the correct sources.

e. Refer media inquiries to the Delta Gamma Fraternity Executive Offices at

media@deltagamma.org in care of the Marketing and Communications Department and the Director of Marketing and Communications. Refrain from answering questions or offering information or unsolicited advice.

f. Any dissemination of information on an inter/national level must have approval of the Fraternity President or the Executive Director or their designated representatives.

7. Definitions.

a. Crisis. Crisis is defined as a significant disturbance in Delta Gamma Fraternity's activities which results in a serious health or safety issue of a member, an illegal action occurring to or by a Delta Gamma member or property, or an incident resulting in extensive news coverage and public scrutiny and which has the potential to cause long-term public relations challenges.

b. Crisis Media Events. Crisis Media Events are defined as any incident that may result in external media interest, whether formal through established outlets or informal through social media and other electronic means, that could negatively affect the international brand of Delta Gamma Fraternity and/or have a negative or harmful effect on Delta Gamma members or staff. Media contacts, including telephone calls, social media outreach and on-site reporters, should be expected if a serious accident, incident, or death occurs. This includes but is not limited to:

(1) Death or serious injury of a potential new member, member or Delta Gamma employee.

(2) Death, injury or incident involving alcohol, illegal or prescription drugs or social events.

(3) Death, injury or incident involving a member, new member or non-member/Delta Gamma employee at or during a chapter event.

(4) Death, injury or incident involving a member or new member or non-member/Delta Gamma employee that occurs on chapter property.

(5) Death, injury or incident involving a member or new member that occurs on the university campus.

(6) Death, injury or incident involving a member, new member that is affiliated with the Fraternity/Sorority community.

(7) Fire, earthquake, flood or other natural disaster affecting the chapter or surrounding area.

(8) Inappropriate actions of a member, new member, or non-member. Inappropriate actions include but are not limited to: improper use of social media sites or accounts; inappropriate posts on the internet; attendance at unsanctioned parties; violations of the Delta Gamma Constitution, the policies and procedures, the Statement of Obligation, chapter bylaws and standing rules; violations of university regulations; illegal activity and violations of local, state, provincial and federal laws or guidelines.

(9) Situations involving suspected criminal activity on or nearby the university campus. Such situations include, but are not limited to, campus bomb threats, campus “lockdowns,” shooting sprees and riots.

(10) Outbreaks of infectious or endemic diseases on or nearby the university campus such as influenza, COVID-19, meningococcal disease, Lyme disease, or tuberculosis.

8. Policy Proponent. The proponent of this policy is the Director of Marketing and Communications.

Approved by Council: December 14, 2020.

Appendix A

Crisis Management Procedures

The following guidelines are to be used for any tragedy or crisis that occurs on or off chapter property. Examples of such situations include, but are not limited to:

- Death or serious injury of a member or new member;
- Injury or incident involving alcohol, drugs or social events;
- Injury or incident involving a member, new member or a non-member at or during a chapter event; this includes chapter meetings held in campus facilities, such as classrooms;
- Injury or incident involving a member, new member or a non-member that occurs on chapter property; and
- Fire, earthquake, flood or other natural disaster affecting the chapter or surrounding area.

Annual Chapter Responsibilities

Each year, Delta Gamma Executive Offices will send a video via email to every collegiate chapter member and new member that outlines the Fraternity's crisis management procedures. It is the responsibility of each member to watch the video and familiarize themselves with these procedures.

Emergency Procedures

1. **Do not allow the accident victim to be disturbed by untrained people.** Keep curious onlookers away; protect the dignity of the injured person.
2. Call 911 or the appropriate emergency number. Briefly and calmly explain the situation so that the emergency personnel can respond appropriately.
3. **Close the chapter facility or restrict the area where the accident has occurred to all non-Delta Gammas except for medical or police personnel.** Assign a responsible member to control access to the house. **For example, if the accident occurs on campus property, appropriate university/college officials should be allowed access.**
4. Call the advisory team chairman (ATC). Arrangements for notifying her should be established in advance. If the advisory team chairman cannot be reached, call the Regional Collegiate Specialist/Council Appointed Coordinator/New Chapter Coordinator.
5. Call the Regional Collegiate Specialist/Council Appointed Coordinator/New Chapter Coordinator.
6. Call the university/college person (Panhellenic advisor, Fraternity/Sorority Advisor, etc.) who is responsible for sororities.
7. Contact Delta Gamma Executive Offices in the event of serious injury or death.

8. **Do not contact parents/guardians/support system.** Medical or police personnel will accurately inform the proper individuals.
9. Assemble all members and new members for a chapter meeting. For chapters that do not have a facility, the location for this meeting should be established at the beginning of each academic year and provided as part of the biannual review of the Crisis Management Procedures. Explain that there is an emergency. If the chapter has a facility, explain that the facility is closed. Stress that everyone should remain calm and that all emergency measures have been taken.
10. **Advise the members and new members that they are to refrain from discussing details or speculating about events with anyone outside the chapter including campus representatives or media outlets; the collegiate president is the official spokesperson for the chapter.**
11. Hold all outgoing telephone calls from the chapter facility or all chapter members in the case of a large-scale incident until the situation is under control and parents/support system have been notified by medical or police personnel.
12. Inform members and new members who are not aware of the situation of the emergency and remind them of the confidentiality of the situation.

Statements to the Media

Media contacts should be anticipated if a serious accident or death occurs. Telephone calls as well as on-site reporters and social media outreach may be expected. Use the following procedure:

1. Consult the advisory team chairman and Delta Gamma Executive Offices, before commenting on the situation.
2. Formulate a careful statement and send that draft to the advisory team chairman and Delta Gamma Executive Offices for approval. The president should speak for the chapter after consulting with Executive Offices staff department of marketing and communications.
3. Do not show fear, anger or hysteria. Be mature, brief, dignified and careful.
4. **Do not** allow yourself to be drawn into extensive discussion of what has occurred. **Do not** feel you must answer every inquiry; there is nothing wrong with telling reporters that you do not wish to comment. However, avoid the use of the term "no comment." Instead, tell them that you will seek additional information and they may call later.
5. **Do not** draw conclusions, provide details, lay blame or speculate in any way.
6. **Do not** mention names.

Post Emergency Protocol (Serious Injury)

1. **Do not** remove or disturb any personal belongings in the member's room (in Delta Gamma facility, dormitory or apartment) unless instructed to do so by the accident victim or her family.
2. Determine the visitation wishes of the family and coordinate these with members/new members.

Post Emergency Protocol (Death)

1. **Do not** remove any personal belongings from the woman's room (in Delta Gamma facility, dormitory or apartment). **Do not** let anyone enter the room except police or other officials. If the woman lived in Delta Gamma housing and there is a roommate, move her out of the room temporarily.
2. If the woman lived in Delta Gamma chapter facility, ask the family members what their wishes are with regard to the transfer of the woman's possessions. Regardless of where the woman lived, if the family chooses to come and pack the belongings themselves, give them as much support as possible (arrange for transportation to and from the airport, supply boxes for packing, etc.). If the woman lived in a Delta Gamma chapter facility, keep the room locked until that time.
3. Encourage members/new members to show loving concern and support. Understand, however, that this is a difficult time for the family and that they may want privacy.
4. As soon as possible, notify Executive Offices of the name and address of a parent/guardian contact where an official letter of sympathy can be sent. Include personal information (offices held, etc.,) as well as cause of death.
5. Plan chapter attendance at the funeral if the service is open. Delta Gamma has a beautiful memorial service that may be appreciated by the family members but respect their wishes in this regard. The memorial service may be held in the chapter house.

Remember: Professionals are always available for counseling and other assistance. Do not hesitate to call for help. Individual and group counseling is strongly recommended following any crisis situation. No matter how well things appear to be going, utilizing counseling and other support services is both wise and appropriate. Your CDS or university fraternity/sorority life staff can assist you with finding these resources on your campus.

Appendix B

Quick Reference Guide for Confidential Information (formerly What NOT to Share)

1. Collegiate chapter bylaws and standing rules may NOT be shared. Model bylaws may be shared with the section regarding voting removed.
2. Recruitment voting methods/rules may NOT be shared. Information obtained or discussed during Evaluating Committee Meetings or Membership Selection regarding Potential New Members may NOT be shared.
3. Minutes of chapter meetings and Honor Board hearings (unless by court order) may NOT be shared. However, chapter sanctions can be shared with the university and/or law enforcement officers that are not member specific.
4. Chapter budgets may NOT be shared. Letters ascertaining an approved chapter budget or that chapter is in good standing financially may be sent.
5. Names of members involved in poor behavior may NOT be shared. (These women are urged to present themselves to the administration.) Per legal advice, consult the Fraternity President or Executive Director if requested to submit names.
6. Membership demographic information may NOT be shared. We do not maintain statistics regarding the racial or religious composition or sexual orientation of our membership.
7. Formal ritual ceremonies may NOT be shared.
8. Any personal contact information of our members may NOT be shared.
9. The Fraternity Constitution may be shared as it is a public document on file at the Library of Congress.
10. Urge careful questioning when asked to sign anything on behalf of your chapter. Prior to signing a document (such as University standards, relationship or housing agreements) please submit to the Fraternity President through your Collegiate Development Specialist for review and approval.

Appendix C

Sample Communication Piece to Council and Volunteers

From EO Department of Marketing and Communications

Re: Campus incident at XXX chapter involving a blizzard. Power is out and school is closed.

Contacts: Chapter ATC is working to find alternate housing. Hotel about 15 minutes from campus is being secured. Regional Director is checking in with chapter and advisers at 8, 12 and 4 each day to get update on ETA of power being restored. Will contact EO at 4:00 p.m. each day to give a progress report. FHC Office has contacted HC and HD and employees have been sent home until further notice.

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Liz Thompson at lizt@deltagamma.org.

