



CHAPTER CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

This crisis management plan has been developed to aid chapters in case of an emergency. A fraternity emergency situation may be prompted by any of the following occurrences:

- An accident resulting in severe or fatal injuries, or a member attempting or committing suicide.
- A fire or explosion in the fraternity chapter facility.
- Substantial damage to the chapter facility caused by a storm, flood, tornado, or earthquake.
- Deliberate damage to the chapter facility from malicious mischief, sabotage, or a riot.
- Chapter member, members, or the entire chapter being accused of violating local, state, federal, or university/college laws, rules, or regulations.

There may be other types of emergencies not identified above, but in all cases, follow these guidelines.

GUIDELINES:

1. **The chapter president is in charge** during all emergency or crisis situations until he is relieved by the chapter advisory board chairman, house corporation officer, or General Fraternity representative. In the absence of the president, the next highest-ranking chapter officer should assume these duties.
2. **Contact the proper authorities** (i.e. police, fire, ambulance, etc.) immediately. These emergency telephone numbers should be posted by each chapter house telephone.
3. **The building should be closed and secured immediately** if the emergency has occurred in or around the chapter facility. Only members, appropriate supervisory personnel, and the proper authorities should be allowed admittance.
4. **The president should contact the Crisis Management Helpline at (513) 523-6345.**
5. **The president should notify each of the following individuals or offices within one hour of the emergency.**

CRISIS MANAGEMENT HELPLINE: (513) 523-6345/OPTION 8			
	Name:	Business Phone:	Home Phone:
Phi Delta Theta General Headquarters:	Dir. of Chapter Services	(513) 523-6345 ext.256	(513)523-6345(8)
Chapter Advisory Board Chairman:	_____	_____	_____
House Corporation President:	_____	_____	_____
Province President:	_____	_____	_____
Phi Delta Theta’s Insurance Agent:	James R. Favor & Co.	(800) 344-7335	(303) 745-8669
Greek Advisor/University Official:	_____	_____	_____

6. **The president should call a meeting of all members to inform them of the emergency** and to review this crisis management plan.
7. **All members should be instructed to make no statements, comments, suggestions, or remarks to the media.** The president is the only spokesman for the chapter until he is relieved of those duties as described in guideline #1 above. Refer to “How to Work with the Media in a Crisis” for assistance.
8. **Sample Media Statement which can be used:** “This is an unfortunate and regrettable event. The Fraternity is cooperating fully with all interested parties. Further information will be given promptly when we have fully completed our investigation.”

PHI DELTA THETA CHAPTER ACCIDENT/CRISIS OCCURRENCE FORM

The chapter president should complete this form within 24 hours of the incident. Please mail or fax it to Phi Delta Theta General Headquarters at 2 South Campus Avenue, Oxford, Ohio, 45056 or fax (513) 523-9200.

Chapter Designation: _____ School Name/Location: _____

Date of Incident: _____ Time: _____

Person(s) Involved: _____

Position/Affiliation: _____

Employee? Yes No If yes, what is the supervisor's name: _____

Length of time employed? _____

Was the person injured involved in task/job/other: _____

Did the incident result in an injury? _____

Nature and extent of injury: _____

Did the injury require any medical attention? If so, describe in detail. _____

Describe in detail the circumstances surrounding this incident: _____

Location of the incident: _____ Date of this report _____

Did this incident result in any property damage? _____

What was the nature and extent of the damage? _____

Was a police report filed concerning this incident? Yes No If yes, please attach a copy to this report.

Has there been any media coverage of this incident? Yes No If yes, please explain in detail: _____

Please provide the following information for all witnesses to this incident.

	Chapter President	Witness #1	Witness #2	Witness #3
Name				
Address				
City, State, Zip				
Telephone Number				

Reported submitted by: Name: _____ Title: _____ Date: _____

HOW TO WORK WITH THE MEDIA IN A CRISIS

The first public relations step to take when a media-covered crisis occurs is to call Phi Delta Theta General Headquarters. During business hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time) call (513) 523-6345. After the office has closed or on the weekends, call (513) 523-6345 and press option 8 to be transferred. The GHQ staff will assist you in dealing with the media or may even relieve you of the responsibility and speak to the media directly on your behalf.

The media is *not* out to get you. A reporter's primary job is to *report* the full story. Be polite and responsive when questioned. This is the best way to get balanced reporting of the situation. Limit your answers to the facts you know.

Remember: *nothing is off the record.* If you tell anything of importance, they will probably use it, *on* the record or *off*.

One person, usually the chapter president until he is relieved by someone of higher authority, should officially comment on any type of crisis. The appointed spokesman should have as many of the facts as possible in a reasonable amount of time before speaking to the press, and he should avoid commenting on a situation that is unclear. Do not volunteer information. Do not answer with information about which you do not have personal knowledge. Always speak clearly, use proper English, and avoid slang.

DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

- Be honest . . . be factual . . . be prompt!
- If you do not know the facts, don't speculate. Say that you will get the information promptly.
- Release bad news in a timely manner.
- Avoid responding with "No comment," "I don't have that information" or "I can't answer that at this point" are examples of preferred replies.
- Answer only the questions asked.
- Avoid getting frustrated or mad.
- Stay cooperative and united.
- Do not repeat negative questions or phrases.
- Recognize and do not reply to trick questions.
- **Remember: *Nothing is off the record!***

TELEVISION AND RADIO INTERVIEWS

- Use word pictures, anecdotes, and examples that are strictly applicable and accurate.
- Make key (most important) points first, simply and accurately.
- Repeat crucial information.
- Keep a calm voice, even when challenged.
- Use appropriate language and avoid sarcasm, slang, or crutch phrases.
- Avoid nervous laughter.
- Speak for the organization, not from a personal point of view.
- Correct inaccurate statements.
- Face the interviewer; concentrate on talking with him/her, not the camera. Listen, so that responses will be accurate and appropriate.
- Remember microphones are very sensitive and will pick up any noise or side comments.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

Crisis management is much more than just stopping or avoiding a crisis. Crisis management is also crisis prevention, planning for a crisis, and damage control (public relations work dealing with the media after a crisis occurs). Public relations is the one aspect of crisis management that is often ignored.

Having a good reputation and an ongoing relationship with all of your publics (neighbors, local authorities, or university officials) before an unfortunate occurrence will benefit the chapter in handling a crisis.

If your chapter has a positive reputation among university administrators, the administration will likely be more willing to help your chapter recover from a crisis. If other students feel positive about your chapter, they will be less likely to speak badly of you after a crisis.

When positive relationships have not been established, addressing a crisis will be more difficult. This points to the urgent need to have a crisis management public relations plan.

IN CASE OF SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH:

1. Notify the authorities immediately (dial 911).
2. Call the Phi Delta Theta crisis management helpline at 1-513-523-6345 (plus option 8 after business hours).
3. Follow the Phi Delta Theta crisis management plan.
4. Allow only authorized personnel in the room or chapter facility (keep the door locked until authorities arrive.)
5. Allow a professional to notify the relatives. After approval from the university officials and the General Headquarters, the chapter president or chapter advisory board chairman should call the parents to express the chapter's concern.
6. Assist in the coordination of the hospital visitation or funeral/memorial attendance if asked.
7. Do not move anything in the room until instructed by parents or police. After the incident is over, ask the parents what they wish to be done with possessions (in event of a member's death or leaving school). Every effort should be made to help gather the member's possessions if the parents make such a request.

REPORTING AN INCIDENT OR CRISIS

In order to help you understand what needs to be reported and how to go about reporting it, we have compiled a short list of important ideas to use as general guidelines. Chapter members have a responsibility to promptly report all incidents that could result in an insurance claim. Prompt reporting often can prevent minor incidents from developing into major problems.

Remember, DO NOT admit liability or responsibility for any occurrence or accident. In general, liability claims are a result of conditions on your premises and/or general operations that are likely to involve someone other than members, employees, or officers.

WHAT DO I REPORT?

- Any incident that caused or contributed to an injury or death.
- Any demand for compensation, whether verbal or written.
- Any lawsuits or subpoenas served on you or your chapter by an officer of the court.
- Any contacts by an attorney or investigator asking about an occurrence that happened at the chapter facility or that involved chapter members.
- While on the scene of the accident or occurrence get names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all parties involved and of all witnesses.

WHAT DO I DO AFTER I REPORT?

- Do not admit responsibility or liability in any accident or occurrence.
- NEVER discuss an incident with an attorney or investigator without clearance from General Headquarters or James R. Favor & Company.
- Appoint one spokesman (usually the chapter president) to handle any questions from outsiders about the occurrence.
- Instruct the chapter members not to discuss the incident with anyone outside of the Fraternity.
- Within 48 hours, submit a detailed written narrative to General Headquarters, with as much information as possible including witnesses, circumstances leading to the occurrence, whether alcohol was involved and if it was a chapter-sponsored event. See the Crisis Occurrence Form.
- Continue constant communication with General Headquarters and James R. Favor & Company.

WHAT CAN I DO TO PROTECT MY CHAPTER, MY FRATERNITY, AND MYSELF?

- Use common sense and good judgment.
- Feel free to contact General Headquarters and/or James R. Favor & Company with any questions.
- Report all the facts as they happened. Do not attempt to hide or alter the facts no matter how damaging they may seem. Investigations are based on the facts as reported.