



**For Emergency or  
Help on Campus:  
Dial 911 Police-Fire-Medical  
or Campus Security 6523**

**WHARTON COUNTY JUNIOR COLLEGE  
DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PLAN**

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## WHARTON COUNTY JUNIOR COLLEGE DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PLAN

### I. Introduction

#### A. Why have a Disaster Preparedness Plan? and what is it?

Unfortunately, tragedies resulting in crisis situations have arisen all across the United States in recent years. College campus environments have not been exempt. Statistics indicate there is need for a formal College Disaster Preparedness Plan.

The Wharton County Junior College (WCJC) Disaster Preparedness Plan is being designed to coordinate the efforts and responses of WCJC personnel if a crisis occurs. This Disaster Preparedness Plan will consist of two major parts. The first will be *General Information on How to Handle an Event*; the second will be a *Business Contingency Plan*.

Both parts of the Disaster Preparedness Plan are meant to be a continuous “work in progress” and will be refined and expanded to ensure the College is prepared for any event that might occur in the coming the years. The Disaster Preparedness Committee, which is composed of Director of Human Resources (Co-Chair), Director of Facilities Management (Co-Chair), Director of Marketing and Communications, Director of the Sugar Land Campus, Director of the Fort Bend Tech Center, Dean of Financial and Business Services, Resource Development Officer, Instructor of Radiologic Technology, Instructor of Associate Degree Nursing, and Human Resources Specialist (Committee Secretary), has developed the *General Information on How to Handle an Event*. This part of the Disaster Preparedness Plan is available on the WCJC web site.

The *Business Contingency Plan* is a multiple section document developed by each major department that supports a function of the College. As the sections of the *Business Contingency Plan* are prepared, the departmental section will be presented, reviewed, and approved by the Executive Cabinet, which is composed of the President, Senior Vice President of Instruction, Vice President of Workforce Development, Continuing Education, and Distance

Learning, Vice President of Financial Services, and Vice President of Technology and Institutional Research.

Once a department's *Business Contingency Plan* is approved, a copy will be maintained in the specific department for use as needed. A master copy of the all departmental *Business Contingency Plans* will be maintained in the Presidential Office. If an event occurs, the Executive Cabinet will coordinate activities. Changes and/or revisions to a departmental *Business Contingency Plan* will need to be presented, reviewed, and approved by the Executive Cabinet before implementation. The *Business Contingency Plan* will not be available on the WCJC web site.

**B. What is WCJC's responsibility?**

1. Develop a Disaster Preparedness Plan for emergencies.
2. Inform staff through the College web site that WCJC has a formal disaster preparedness plan.
3. Coordinate activities during an event and conduct a thorough aftermath review of activities to ensure there are no weaknesses in the Disaster Preparedness Plan.

**C. What constitutes a disaster?**

A disaster is, by definition, a sudden and extraordinary misfortune, bringing with it destruction of life and/or property. There are numerous events, such as the following, that constitute a disaster:

1. Natural disasters such as hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, and lightning
2. Workplace situations such as bomb threats, suspicious objects, and medical emergencies
3. Widespread illnesses such as avian flu or an influenza pandemic

#### **D. Who serves on the Disaster Response Team?**

The composition of the Disaster Response Team (DRT) will include at a minimum (Core Team):

- Chair, President/Plan Coordinator
- Senior Vice President of Instruction (Plan Coordinator in the absence of the President)
- Vice President of Financial Services
- Vice President of Technology and Institutional Research
- Vice President of Workforce Development, Continuing Education, and Distance Learning
- Director of Admissions and Registration
- Dean of Student Services/Director of Dual Credit Enrollment
- Dean of Financial and Business Services
- Director of Marketing and Communications
- Director of Facilities Management
- Director of the Fort Bend Technical Center
- Director of Human Resources
- Director of the Sugar Land Campus
- Distance Learning Program Director

The DRT is responsible not only for assessing the initial nature and scope of the situation, but also coordinating all activities during the event and for reviewing all actions taken once the event is over to ensure any weaknesses in the Disaster Preparedness Plan are corrected before any future events.

If the situation requires a central “Operations Center,” the Presidential Conference Room will be used to coordinate all activities related to the event. Not all events will require a central “Operations Center.” Each event will be looked at individually and assessed according to its specific needs.

#### **E. How are employees notified of an emergency?**

The President (or a designated representative) will ordinarily initiate all communications relative to declaration of general emergency conditions. Once a declaration has been made, the Director of

Marketing and Communications will communicate through proper channels information regarding the emergency and any subsequent updates.

Exceptions to the above will occur when there is a failure of telephone communication due to a physical breakdown or destruction of lines between the President's Office and the individual College campuses. Exceptions will also occur when the emergency is of such a nature that there is no time for such notification (e.g., tornado or explosion). In the event, and until communication is restored, the Campus Director will use his/her judgment as to the proper action to be taken. The President's Office will make maximum possible use of radio-equipped vehicles to restore lost telephone communication with all campuses.

Once the President or a designated representative(s) has declared an emergency condition, telephone lines within the College are to be kept available for emergency use only. To ensure this, the following actions will be taken:

- As soon as an emergency situation has been announced by the President's Office, the Telephone Console Operator will handle emergency calls only.
- Employees should limit their use of the WCJC telephone system and use other forms of communication not to tie up telephone lines.
- The President and Campus Directors will keep their telephone lines clear for emergency calls only.

**F. What emergency numbers should I know?**

The following are important telephone numbers to use during an event:

[College Administration Officers](#)  
[College Administration Staff](#)

## AGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

### **For an emergency, call 911**

| <u>Department</u>                 | <u>Telephone<br/>Number</u> |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Wharton Police Dept.              | 979-532-3131                |
| Richmond Police Dept.             | 281-342-2849                |
| Sugar Land Police Dept.           | 281-275-2500                |
| Wharton Fire Dept.                | 979-532-4811                |
| Richmond Fire Dept.               | 281-232-6871                |
| Sugar Land Fire Dept.             | 281-491-0852                |
| Wharton County Sheriff            | 979-532-1550                |
| Fort Bend County Sheriff          | 281-342-6116                |
| Texas Department of Public Safety | 979-532-1740                |

## **II. What is the proper individual employee response to a disaster?**

### **A. Explosion**

Chemicals, leaking gas, faulty boilers, or falling aircraft are some possible causes of life-threatening explosions.

#### **If you hear or are in the area of an explosion:**

1. Dial 911 or Campus Security-Wharton 6523 or Cell 979-282-1993, Sugar Land 8433 or Cell 979-282-1028, FBTC 1501 or Cell 979-282-1027.
2. Be prepared for possible further explosions.
3. Crawl under a table or desk.
4. Stay away from windows, mirrors, overhead fixtures, filing cabinets, bookcases, and electrical equipment.
5. Do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in obvious immediate danger (of fire, building collapse, etc.).

6. Feel doors for heat before opening, and open carefully.
7. Watch for falling objects.
8. Do not use elevators.
9. If requested, accompany and assist persons with disabilities.
10. Do not use matches or lighters.
11. Limit use of telephone to calls for emergency services.

**B. Fire or suspected fire**

1. If a burning odor or smoke is present, pull a fire alarm to activate the fire alarm system.
2. If possible, shut off gas in your area.
3. If you can help control the fire without personal danger and have received training, take action with available fire extinguisher or fire hose. If not, leave the area.
4. Never allow the fire to come between you and an exit.
5. Leave the building, checking as you leave to make sure everyone has left the immediate area. Close doors behind you to confine the fire.
6. Once you have evacuated the building, dial 911 or Campus Security-Wharton 6523 or Cell 979-282-1993, Sugar Land 8433 or Cell 979-282-1028, FBTC 1501 or Cell 979-282-1027 and report the location of the fire and the material burning if known. Make yourself available to responding fire and police personnel as they arrive to supply information.

**C. Audible fire alarms**

1. If the audible fire alarm sounds, [WCJC Emergency Response Team](#) for the building will evacuate the building.
2. Shut off any gas in your area.

3. Leave immediately. Do not delay to locate personal items.
4. Try to make sure that all members of your department hear the alarm and evacuate the area by quickly checking nearby restrooms, storage rooms, etc. as you exit.
5. Use the nearest stairway. Do not use the elevator.
6. If requested, accompany and assist persons with disabilities.
7. Shut all doors behind you as you go. Closed doors can slow the spread of fire and smoke.
8. Evacuate as quickly as possible but in an orderly manner. Do not push or shove.
9. Once outside, move at least 100 feet from the building.
10. Meet at a predetermined location to account for all members of your unit.
11. Return to the building only when given the "all clear" by Campus Security or other emergency personnel. Do NOT assume that when the audible alarm ceases it is safe to enter the building. There are many possible reasons for the alarm to stop sounding.

**D. Flooding and water damage to a building**

Serious water damage can occur from a number of sources: broken pipes, clogged drains, damaged skylights or windows, or construction errors.

**If a water leak occurs:**

1. Immediately, contact with the exact location severity of the leak as indicated below:
  - Wharton Campus - Call Facilities Management 6546 or College Security 6523 or Cell 979-282-1993

- Fort Bend Technical Center - Call Campus Director 1504 or College Security 1501 or Cell 979-282-1027
  - Sugar Land Campus - Call Campus Director 8412 or College Security 8433 or Cell 979-282-1028
2. If there are electrical appliances or outlets near the leak, use extreme caution. If there is any possible danger, evacuate the area.
  3. If you know the source of the water and are confident of your ability to stop it (i.e., unclog the drain, turn off the water, etc.), do so.
  4. Be prepared to assist as directed in protecting objects that are in jeopardy. Take only essential steps to avoid or reduce immediate water damage, such as covering objects.

#### **E. Hazardous material spill**

A hazardous material spill is a spill in which there is a significant amount of a hazardous material released or one in which the release of the substance cannot be controlled. Examples of hazardous materials in quantities that would be considered a spill are more than one gallon of bleach, more than 100 ml of sulfuric acid, over one gallon of gasoline, and any quantity of mercury. Examples of infectious materials include blood and other body fluids.

##### **1. Hazardous material spill response**

- a. If the hazardous material is exposed to your skin, immediately flush the affected area with copious amounts of water for at least 15 minutes, and then seek medical attention.

- b. WCJC has a spill kit for minor spills. For minor or major spills contact:
- Wharton Campus - Facilities Management 6359 until 5 p.m. or Campus Security 6523 or Cell 979-282-1993 or 911
  - Fort Bend Technical Center - Campus Security 1501 or Cell 979-282-1027 or 911
  - Sugar Land Campus - Campus Security 8433 or Cell 979-282-1028 or 911
- c. Stop the source of the hazardous material, if possible.
- d. Evacuate the immediate area, closing doors behind you.
- e. Unless trained, DO NOT ATTEMPT to clean up the spill yourself.
- f. Make yourself available to emergency personnel to supply critical information to aid in the clean up.

Provide as much of the following information as possible:

- Where has the hazardous material spill occurred? Specify the floor, room number, and location in room.
- Have there been a fire and/or explosion?
- Are there any injuries? If so, how many?
- What material has been spilled?
- What is the state of the material (i.e., solid, liquid, gas, combination)?
- Is any of the hazardous material escaping from the spill location in the form of chemical vapors/fumes or running or dripping liquid?

## 2. Infectious material spill response

- a. If the infectious material is exposed to your skin, immediately wash with soap and water.
- b. Unless trained, DO NOT ATTEMPT to clean up the spill yourself.
- c. Contact:
  - Wharton Campus - Facilities Management 6359 until 5 p.m., or Campus Security 6523 or Cell 979-282-1993
  - Fort Bend Technical Center - Campus Security 1501 or Cell 979-282-1027
  - Sugar Land Campus - Campus Security 8433 or Cell 979-282-1028
- d. Make yourself available to responding environmental health and safety personnel to supply information to aid in clean up.

## F. Hurricane

Hurricanes Katrina and Rita have made all of us aware that the Gulf Coast must be prepared for major hurricane events. It is the responsibility for not only the employee but also the College to prepare in advance to meet any situation. Hurricanes do not happen overnight usually. Several stages of a hurricane usually occur prior to the decision by the President to close the College.

### 1. What are the various stages of a hurricane?

The Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico hurricane season extends from June 1 to November 30 each year. Hurricanes usually start as **tropical disturbances** that may become hurricanes usually can be tracked for several days before the storm builds to a dangerous size and makes landfall. The National Weather Service (NOAA) issues the following advisories when land areas are in danger:

- a. **Hurricane watch** means a hurricane may affect coastal and inland areas. A hurricane watch means that hurricane conditions are a real possibility although it does not mean they are imminent. When a hurricane watch is issued, everyone in the area covered by the watch must listen for further advisories and be prepared to act promptly if a hurricane warning is issued.
- b. **Hurricane warning** is issued when a hurricane is expected to strike an area within 24 hours. Advisories containing hurricane warnings may also contain an assessment of flood danger in coastal and inland areas, small craft warnings, and gale warnings for the storms peripheries, estimated storm effects, and recommended emergency procedures.

**2. Hurricane strength categories**

| Category | Winds (MPH) | Water Surge (Feet) |
|----------|-------------|--------------------|
| 1        | 74 - 95     | 4 - 5              |
| 2        | 96 - 110    | 6 - 8              |
| 3        | 111 - 130   | 9 - 12             |
| 4        | 131 - 155   | 13 - 18            |
| 5        | Over 155    | Over 18            |

A Category 5 hurricane is 250 times more destructive than a Category 1 hurricane. The right front quadrant and the area around the eye are the most dangerous. Most severe wind damage is on the backside of the storm.

Other basic information regarding hurricanes can be found at the [National Hurricane Center-NOAA](#)

**3. Does WCJC have an emergency plan for hurricanes?**

Yes, WCJC has developed an extensive emergency plan in the event of a tropical storm and/or hurricane to ensure the safety of WCJC faculty, staff, and students. The College's primary concern is the safety, health, and well-being of WCJC

community members. All decisions reflect this ethic.

**The President, or in the absence of the President, the Senior Vice President of Instruction, is the official coordinator of WCJC's emergency plan during a hurricane event. The coordinator will assemble the Disaster Response Team (DRT) when the National Weather Bureau announces a hurricane watch for the College's service areas.**

- **The DRT is responsible for making decisions during the pre-season preparation, threat assessment, class cancellation, and College closure stages.**

The College's web address, [www.wcjc.edu](http://www.wcjc.edu), explained via campus wide email, will have the latest information on the status of the operation of the College. Official information is also communicated to local TV or radio news programs. In the event of a server malfunction, a backup emergency web page will also be accessible through the same web address.

Since the danger of misinformation and rumor are greatly increased during any emergency period, the President has designated the Director of Marketing and Communication as the official source of College announcements.

#### **4. What is WCJC's hurricane emergency plan?**

WCJC's Hurricane Emergency Plan is divided into five stages. The action steps indicated in the stages may or may not be taken within the stages listed, depending on the circumstances of the storm and time of day in which the stage occurs. In addition, the DRT Plan Coordinator may declare a change in stage at any time due to the unpredictable nature of hurricanes.

- Stage One: Threat Assessment
- Stage Two: Class Cancellation
- Stage Three: College Closure
- Stage Four: Aftermath

##### **a. Stage One: Threat Assessment**

Stage One begins when a weather pattern is elevated to tropical storm status and poses possible danger to the Texas Gulf Coast. The College may be under Stage One for several weeks or days before predicted storm landfall.

Under Stage One:

1. The Coordinator convenes the DRT to assess available information and begin implementation of the plan. Information is taken from the National Weather Service, American Red Cross, and from local, county, and states offices of Emergency Preparedness.
2. The Coordinator directs the Director of Marketing and Communications to update the Emergency Information Line with current College operating status, special instructions, and next scheduled update.
3. Information is distributed to WCJC community via email and WCJC Internet Website Home Page.
4. Resident students receive explicit instructions from Student Services staff regarding hurricane procedures.
5. Employees are advised to begin researching other forms of transportation if they are not evacuating by car.
6. Director of Facilities Management will test emergency equipment and re-check supplies, including first aid kits.
7. All College vehicles gas tanks are filled and are under the supervision of the Director of Facilities Management. If practical, these vehicles are moved a safe location.

8. Within 4-6 days of predicted landfall, the Coordinator directs DRT to enact general hurricane protocol to secure their specific areas of responsibility.
9. Prior to 72 hours of predicted landfall, DRT makes decision whether or not to cancel classes. Once the decision has been made to cancel classes, DRT monitors the ongoing weather conditions and decides whether/when to close the College.

**b. Stage Two: Class Cancellation**

Upon cancellation of classes, non-resident students are required to leave campus and are not permitted to remain in any campus building for any reason. Resident hall students will be notified that dorms must be closed.

Under Stage Two:

1. The Coordinator directs the Director of Marketing and Communications to update the Emergency Information Line and announces effective time of class cancellation, closure of residence halls, special instructions, and next scheduled update.
2. Resident students will be advised by the Dean of Student Services to activate their personal evacuation plans and leave the storm area immediately. Resident students are required to lock their room doors upon evacuation.

**c. Stage Three: College Closure**

1. The Coordinator directs the Director of Marketing and Communications to update the Emergency Information Line announcing emergency closure, special instructions, and next scheduled updates.

2. The Coordinator directs Campus Security to lock campus buildings. All faculty and staff must vacate.
3. Campus Security with the assistance of custodial and grounds employees will check all buildings for compliance with this requirement. All interior doors are locked, exterior doors are locked and chained, if possible, and laminated signs are posted on buildings announcing College closure and official "keep out/trespass warning" notices.
4. The Coordinator relieves DRT of duty and its members are no longer required to be on campus. Emergency personnel (i.e., Physical Plant, Campus Security, etc.) with a possible exception of key emergency personnel designated by the Coordinator are required to leave campus immediately after securing the buildings and are not permitted to remain in any campus building for any reason.
5. The Coordinator exchanges personal contact information and a proposed contact schedule with the Vice Presidents, Director of Facilities Management, and the Director of Marketing and Communications before leaving the campus.

**d. Stage Four: Aftermath**

No one is permitted except DRT to return to WCJC's campus until the College has been deemed safe. Once the storm has passed, and if the campus is accessible, Facilities Management and Campus Security will inspect for damage to all buildings, grounds, and utilities, and report to the Coordinator on any unsafe campus conditions. Emergency repairs will be made if practical.

Under Stage Four:

1. The Coordinator communicates safety report to DRT.
2. The Coordinator communicates available information from the local, state offices of emergency preparedness, including flooding, road closures, curfews, etc.
3. DRT assesses all available information and either proposes a reopening date for College operations or issues additional emergency instructions.
4. If possible, the Coordinator directs the Director of Marketing and Communications to update the Emergency Information Line with current College operating status, special instructions, and next scheduled update.
5. If possible, the Coordinator contacts Director of Marketing and Communications or, alternately local media with current College operating status.

**College is deemed safe:**

1. The Coordinator announces official end of emergency.
2. Announces date and hour the College will reopen.

**College is deemed unsafe:**

1. The Coordinator announces the College is deemed unsafe and will remain closed until repairs can be made.
2. If needed, a remote Administrative Center will be established and this site will be communicated to employees via the WCJC Internet Website Home Page.

## EMERGENCY LINKS

- [American Red Cross](#)
- [National Weather Service](#)
- [Broadcast Alert Stations-Emergency Procedures Handbook](#)

### **5. What should I do to my workspace if a hurricane warning is expected?**

When a hurricane warning is expected, employees should prepare their areas for possible closure. The following precautions should be taken:

- All loose boards or debris must be disposed of or stored in a safe place.
- All window shades must be completely rolled down on the rollers and secured at the bottom.
- All Venetian and/or mini blinds must be lowered and securely fastened in the bottom brackets.
- All books, papers, typewriters, printers, computers, televisions, and other equipment must be moved as far away as possible from windows or other areas that might be damaged and admit water into the building. These items must be stored at least three to five feet above the floor to protect them from water damage due to flooding.
- Office records, student records, and other similar papers must be given maximum protection and receive prompt attention before and after the storm.
- All valuable equipment such as office machines, projectors, and televisions must be locked in a secure room offering maximum protection against theft, windstorm damage, and rising waters.
- All refuse receptacles, cartons, and other miscellaneous items must be stored inside the building.
- All windows must be closed and fastened. Using tape on windows offers little protection against a window being broken.

**6. When will I know if I should not report to work?**

Check early-morning news broadcasts and the WCJC Internet Website Home Page at [www.wcjc.edu](http://www.wcjc.edu) whenever the College is under a Hurricane Watch or Hurricane Warning. The President will decide to close the College no later than 5:00 a.m. and will notify the media no later than 7:00 a.m. Announcement that the College will not open will be made through the Marketing and Communications Office to Houston area and local television and radio stations [[Broadcast Alert Stations-Emergency Procedures Handbook](#)] and will appear on the WCJC Internet Website Home Page.

**7. When will I know if I should report to work after a hurricane?**

The President will announce the official end of emergency for the College via the WCJC Internet Website Home Page and there will be an official announcement on the Emergency Information Line. Both will contain the date and hour the College will reopen.

**G. Tornado watches and warnings**

A **tornado watch** means that weather conditions are favorable for the formation of a tornado. A tornado warning is issued when a tornado has actually been sighted in the surrounding area. Emergency warning sirens are activated in Wharton when there is a tornado warning.

## 1. **Emergency warning sirens**

The emergency warning sirens in Wharton emit a continuous three-minute sound warning. The siren is used to alert the public of an impending danger such as tornado, severe thunderstorm with high winds or large hail, hazardous material spill, or a national threat. If you hear the siren, you should take cover inside and tune into your local radio or television stations for further instructions. If you cannot get to a radio or television, initiate tornado protection procedures as this is the most likely reason for the siren to sound.

The siren does not sound for the entire duration of a tornado warning. Do not assume that the danger has passed when the siren stops sounding.

**The emergency warning siren in Wharton is tested each Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. These tests last for 30 seconds. If the emergency warning siren sounds at a time other than Wednesday at 6:30 p.m., you should initiate tornado protection procedures.**

### **a. If a tornado warning has been issued and you are inside:**

- Stay inside.
- Stay away from outside walls, windows, mirrors, glass, overhead fixtures, and unsecured objects such as filing cabinets or bookcases.
- If possible, move to a below-ground-level floor, interior corridor, or room or office without windows and crouch low with your hands covering the back of your head and neck.
- Do not use elevators.
- If requested, assist persons with disabilities to the safest area on the same floor.
- Do not leave the shelter area until after the storm is over.

- Continue to monitor the weather via radio or television until the tornado watch has been lifted for your area.
- b. If a tornado warning has been issued and you are outside:**
- Look for a nearby safe structure in which to take shelter.
  - If you are in your car, get out of it. Never try to outrun a tornado.
  - If there is no shelter, lie down flat in a low area such as a ditch away from trees with your hands covering the back of your head and neck.
- c. If a tornado directly hits the College:**
- Check the WCJC Internet Website Home Page [www.wcjc.edu](http://www.wcjc.edu), or the local media for information on the status of reopening the College.

## **2. Tornado shelter guidelines**

**Basements** - These areas are considered good shelter areas if well constructed and not subject to serious flooding, but there are few.

### **Best available shelter areas for buildings without basements**

- Lowest floor level of building
- Areas under a short span ceiling
- Interior of building
- Room areas with framed construction rather than load bearing walls
- Interior corridors on lowest floor near east or north side of building
- Avoid corridors that may develop into a wind tunnel (i.e., those that open toward the south or west).
- Put as many walls as possible between you and the south and west of the building.

### **Stay away from**

- South and west walls of a building
- Windows and doors
- Large rooms with free-span roofs (e.g., Gymnasiums, Cafeterias and Auditoriums)

### **Danger to consider**

- Disintegrating effects of wind pressure against walls, windows, and doors on the south and west sides of buildings
- Collapse of high portions of a building such as chimneys and equipment into lower areas
- Missiles propelled through the air by high winds
- Explosive effect when the air pressure inside the building momentarily is higher than the outside

## **III. What should I do regarding dangerous workplace situations?**

### **A. Bomb threat**

#### **If you receive a telephone bomb threat:**

1. Listen carefully. Be polite and show interest. Try to keep the caller talking so that you can gather more information about the device, the validity of the threat, or the identity of the caller. Listen carefully for background noises.
2. Note the telephone number of the caller if your telephone has a display.
3. Gather as much information as possible. If possible, use the Bomb Threat Checklist to question the caller in a polite and non-threatening manner.
4. Upon completion of the call, immediately dial 911 or Campus Security-Wharton 6523, Sugar Land 8433, FBTC 1501. Then complete the Bomb Threat Checklist while the call is still fresh in your memory. Do not use portable radio equipment or cell phones. Use landline telephones only.

5. Remain available to answer questions.
6. If the threat was received by another individual and he/she is relaying information to you, use the Bomb Threat Checklist to gather as much information as possible.

**B. Suspicious object**

A suspicious object is defined as any package, parcel, container, or other object that is suspected of being an explosive device because it is out of place or unusual for that location and cannot be accounted for, or because a threat has been received.

**If you find a suspicious object:**

1. Do not touch the object.
2. Move people away from the object.
3. Do not use portable radio equipment or cell phones within 100 feet of the suspicious object.
4. Dial 911 or Campus Security-Wharton 6523 or Cell 979-282-1993, Sugar Land 8433 or Cell 979-282-1028, FBTC 1501 or Cell 979-282-1027 immediately
5. Follow police instructions precisely.
6. Do not attempt to evacuate the building without the authorization or assistance of emergency personnel. Current emergency management guidelines caution against automatic evacuation. In most cases, people are likely to be more secure in their offices or classrooms than in hallways that have not been searched or outdoors where an actual threat may be even more likely to exist.
7. If a search of the building is conducted, you and other staff may be asked to accompany officers since you are more likely to notice something out of the ordinary in your own area or facility.

### **C. Demonstration/disturbance**

Not all demonstrations are unlawful, refer to WCJC [Regulation 371](#) “Facilities Usage by Community Groups” and WCJC [Regulation 372](#) “Facilities Usage by Student Groups” The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that certain activity is protected under the U.S. Constitution. However, any demonstration on College property that interferes with the educational function of the institution or in which violence, property damage, or other unlawful behavior occurs is unlawful.

If you have a question about whether a demonstration is unlawful, call Campus Security at:

- Campus Security-Wharton 6523 or Cell 979-282-1993
- Sugar Land 8433 or Cell 979-282-1028
- FBTC 1501 or Cell 979-282-1027

**If a disturbance appears to threaten the safety of faculty, staff, or students:**

1. Immediately call:
  - Campus Security-Wharton 6523 or Cell 979-282-1993
  - Sugar Land 8433 or Cell 979-282-1028
  - FBTC 1501 or Cell 979-282-1027
2. Lock doors if possible and appropriate to isolate the disturbance.
3. Take steps to protect your own safety and the safety of other faculty, staff, and students.
4. Encourage people to leave the area.

### **D. Hostage situation**

**If you are involved in a hostage situation:**

1. Dial 911 or Campus Security-Wharton 6523 or Cell 979-282-1993, Sugar Land 8433 or Cell 979-282-1028, FBTC 1501 or Cell 979-282-1027, if possible, and supply as many details as

possible including number of persons involved, description of hostage takers, weapons displayed, threats made, etc.

2. Do what you are told without argument.
3. Do not attempt to negotiate or argue with the hostage taker.
4. Try to get others to remain calm. Tell them to do what they are told.

#### **E. Medical emergency**

**If someone becomes ill or is injured and requires immediate assistance:**

1. Dial 911 or Campus Security-Wharton 6523 or Cell 979-282-1993, Sugar Land 8433 or Cell 979-282-1028, FBTC 1501 or Cell 979-282-1027. Provide detailed information on the location of the ill or injured person.
2. Unless trained, do not attempt to render any first aid before assistance arrives.
3. Do not attempt to move a person who has fallen and appears to be in pain.
4. Attempt to obtain the following information from the ill or injured person:
  - a. Name, if not known
  - b. Description of symptoms
  - c. Allergies
  - d. Medications
  - e. Major medical history (heart condition, asthma, diabetes, etc.)
5. Remain at the scene after emergency personnel have arrived to provide information.

Additional information is contained the [Emergency Procedures Handbook](#).

## **F. Power outage**

1. Keep a flashlight in your area.
2. Contact:
  - Wharton Campus - Facilities Management 6359 until 5 p.m. or Campus Security 6523 or Cell 979-282-1993
  - Fort Bend Technical Center - Campus Security 1501 or Cell 979-282-1027
  - Sugar Land Campus - Campus Security 8433 or Cell 979-282-1028
3. Provide assistance to others in your immediate area that may be unfamiliar with the space.
4. If you are in an unlighted area, proceed cautiously to an area that has emergency lights.
5. If you are in an elevator, stay calm. Use the emergency button or telephone to alert officials.

## **G. Suspicious mail or package**

Some typical characteristics of a suspicious letter or package, which in combination may trigger suspicion, are:

- Restricted marking such as "Personal" or "Special Delivery"
- No return address or one that cannot be verified as legitimate
- A city or state in the postmark that does not match the return address
- Unusual weight based on size
- Lopsided or oddly shaped, strange odors, oily stains, crystallization, protruding wires, rigid or bulky, excessive tape or string

**If you receive a suspicious letter or package:**

1. Do not try to open it.
2. Isolate it.
3. Immediately call:
  - Campus Security-Wharton 6523 or Cell 979-282-1993
  - Sugar Land 8433 or Cell 979-282-1028
  - FBTC 1501 or Cell 979-282-1027

**If you open a parcel containing suspicious material or alleged to contain suspicious material:**

1. Set it down where you are. Do not move the contaminated material. If any material spills out of the letter or package, do not try to clean it up and do not brush off your clothes as this could disperse material into the air.
2. If the material is corrosive or presents an immediate danger, wash or rinse your hands.
3. Close the door to the area where the suspicious parcel was opened and do not allow others to enter the area.
4. Immediately call:
  - Campus Security-Wharton 6523 or Cell 979-282-1993
  - Sugar Land 8433 or Cell 979-282-1028
  - FBTC 1501 or Cell 979-282-1027
5. Stay at the scene to answer questions from Campus Security. If anyone enters the closed area in which the suspicious letter or package, that person should also stay at the scene.

**H. Workplace violence**

Workplace violence often begins with inappropriate behavior or signs that, when detected and reported, may help prevent its occurrence. The following information may be helpful in detecting or anticipating workplace violence and help to create a safer, healthier workplace for everyone.

## **Examples of workplace violence**

### **1. Threats, direct or implied**

- Physical conduct such as pushing, shoving, or striking that harms or has the potential to harm people or property
- Conduct that harasses, disrupts, or interferes with another individual's performance
- Conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment

### **2. Potential warning signs**

- Verbal, nonverbal, or written threats
- Fascination with weapons or violence
- New or increased stress at home or work
- Expressions of hopelessness or anxiety
- Insubordinate behavior
- Dramatic change in work performance
- Destruction of property
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Externalization of blame

### **3. Risk factors that contribute to workplace violence**

- Termination of employment
- Disciplinary actions
- Ongoing conflicts between employees
- Domestic or family violence
- Financial problems

### **4. Workplace violence prevention**

- Be aware of what is going on around you at all times. Awareness is a proven method for increased personal safety.
- Tell your supervisor when you notice unusual or suspicious behavior.
- Do not hesitate to call Campus Security-Wharton 6523 or Cell 979-282-1993, Sugar Land 8433 or Cell 979-282-1028, FBTC 1501 or Cell 979-282-1027 for help.

- Remember: A safe workplace is everyone's responsibility.

**If violence occurs or there is an immediate threat of violence:**

1. Leave the area immediately if possible. If this is not possible, try to lock yourself in a secure area.
2. If possible, dial 911 or Campus Security-Wharton 6523 or Cell 979-282-1993, Sugar Land 8433 or Cell 979-282-1028, FBTC 1501 or Cell 979-282-1027. Give Campus Security as many details as possible.

**IV. What do I need to know about a widespread illness event?**

**A. What are the types of flu?**

1. **“Stomach flu”** is not really the flu, as there are no respiratory symptoms. Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea without the fever, cough, aching, and respiratory symptoms is actually gastroenteritis, but some people call it "stomach flu."

This form is caused by other microorganisms and has no relationship to true influenza.

2. **Flu or influenza** is a respiratory illness caused by airborne viruses that spread from person-to-person by droplets from coughing or sneezing. The period between becoming infected with the virus and becoming ill is usually one to four days. The contagious period is three to five days from the onset of symptoms. Symptoms of the flu, or influenza, are:

- Fever (up to 104 degrees) and sweating/chills
- Headache, muscle aches, and/or stiffness
- Shortness of breath
- Vomiting and nausea (in children)

A cold and flu are alike in many ways. A stuffy nose, sore throat and sneezing are usually signs of a cold. Colds are less severe and not as dangerous.

3. **Avian flu** is a virulent viral disease affecting poultry and other birds in Asia. It is also called "bird flu." It has caused a small number of cases of flu and even some deaths in people who have been in direct contact with infected birds. No cases of sustained human-to-human transmission have been established as of May 2006; however, scientists are concerned that the avian flu virus may mutate and become transmissible between humans. Avian flu virus has not been found in the U.S.

Every year, usually between December and May, between 5% and 20% of the population in the U.S. becomes ill with the flu, or influenza. This is the normal course of **seasonal flu** to which we have become accustomed. It can cause serious illness and even death in the very young, the elderly, and other individuals with impaired resistance and chronic illnesses. For this reason, everyone should get a flu shot unless your health care provider advises you otherwise. See below for more information on getting a flu shot.

4. **Pandemic Flu** is a more dangerous form of flu. In 1918, 1957, and 1968 the flu season in the U.S. was especially severe, and resulted in a much higher number of illnesses and deaths. Public health experts believe that a flu pandemic is likely to occur again in the future. Scientists worry that a mutant form of avian flu, under certain circumstances, could eventually cause a flu pandemic although this scenario may never happen.

It is prudent to learn about flu prevention, get a flu shot, wash your hands often, and follow travel and public health advisories.

## **B. How does flu spread?**

Flu viruses spread in respiratory droplets caused by coughing and sneezing. They usually spread from close person-to-person contact, though sometimes people become infected by touching something with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth, eyes or nose. The virus can live for as long as two hours on surfaces like doorknobs, desks, and tables.

Healthy adults infected with the virus may be able to infect others beginning one day **before** symptoms develop and up to five days **after** becoming sick. That means that you can pass on the flu to someone else before you know you are sick, as well as while you are sick.

### **C. How does one prevent the flu?**

While avian flu is not a risk to individuals at this time, there are several things a person can do to keep from getting seasonal flu:

- 1. Get a flu shot.** When you are vaccinated, it reduces your chances of getting seasonal flu. Since the flu season can last through May, even January is not too late to get a flu shot. However, it takes two weeks after the shot to develop adequate immunity.

**Faculty and staff** should contact their health care provider (the State Health Plan should pay for it) or take advantage of the flu clinics offered by various local agencies and drug stores.

- 2. Wash Your Hands.** Hand washing is effective in preventing the flu, cold, and other infectious diseases. According to the U.S Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), rubbing your hands together with soap and water is one of the most important ways to prevent infection.

Disease-causing germs can enter your body when your unwashed hands touch your nose, eyes, mouth, and open wounds. Make hand washing a habit and encourage others in your workplace to do the same.

When soap and water are not available, you can use an antibacterial hand cleaner to cleanse your hands. Choose alcohol hand rubs with 60 - 95% alcohol (usually listed as isopropyl, ethanol or propanol). Glycerol or other skin conditioning agents are helpful additives. Read the directions and use the hand rub appropriately. Never wipe the product off; allow your hands to air dry. When used properly, these sanitizers reduce the transmission of disease-causing germs.

**3. Other ways to prevent the flu include:**

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- Cover your mouth with tissue when sneezing
- Stay away from others if you are sick; don't go to class or work
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick

**D. Should I get help if I am sick?**

If you develop symptoms of the flu, contact your health-care provider. There may be medications to relieve your symptoms. Get plenty of rest, drink many liquids, and avoid using alcohol and tobacco.

The flu can be debilitating, causing the person who is ill to be bedridden for extended periods. Be alert to the well-being of your friends, relatives, and co-workers. Those with the flu may need assistance in getting medical attention and care.

If you are at special risk from complications of flu, you should consult your health care provider immediately upon recognizing flu symptoms. Those at risk include people 65 years or older, people with chronic medical conditions, pregnant women, or children.

**E. Does WCJC's have an emergency plan for a pandemic influenza event?**

Yes, WCJC is taking significant steps to prepare the College for a pandemic flu event. As of May 2006, WCJC formed a Disaster Preparedness Committee to work with the Executive Cabinet to conduct pre-event planning and prepare specific pandemic flu response procedures. The planning will be on going and will involve critical personnel and departments throughout the College.

The Disaster Preparedness Committee has developed the following objectives to guide the executive leadership in making decisions during a pandemic influenza event.

1. Establish a system that immediately identifies essential personnel, operations, and services relative to the College's mission and objectives.
2. Provide employees via this Disaster Preparedness website accurate and timely information regarding the College's efforts to respond to a pandemic influenza event. This will include a list of local and state resources to meet the healthcare needs of staff and faculty as appropriate during a pandemic influenza event.
3. Meet the needs of students living on campus as appropriate during a pandemic influenza event.
4. Establish a master emergency *Business Contingency Plan* for a pandemic event.
5. Coordinate and make large-scale policy decisions during the evolving and extended timeframe of a pandemic based on a set of consistent and clearly articulated criteria developed through the Emergency Operations Center composed of the Executive Cabinet and President Cabinet.
6. Coordinate response efforts at WCJC externally with all relevant partners including state and local health departments and state and local emergency managers.

This could include participation in state, county, and local response activities related to vaccine distribution.

**G. What is WCJC's plan to handle a pandemic influenza event?**

The Disaster Preparedness Committee has recommended the following plan be adopted and implemented by the Executive Cabinet to fulfill the objectives recommended by the committee.

**1. Objective One**

Establish a system to identify essential personnel, operations, and services related to the College's mission and objectives.

**a. Possible scenario and anticipated events**

It is likely the College will be faced with concerns about business continuity during the course of an influenza pandemic. Those concerns may be raised under as series of different scenarios including the following:

- Due to public concern about influenza, staff and faculty stop coming to work. This scenario may play out even in the absence of a single case of disease in Texas.
- Following recommendation from local or state officials, College administrators decide to cancel all or some classes.
- Following recommendations from local or state officials, College administrators decide to close all or some College operations.

**b. Preparedness planning focus**

The College should develop a *Business Contingency Plan* as part of pandemic planning. This plan should include a department by department assessment of which operations and services can be closed or canceled for both short and long duration, and which operations and services must be maintained (if any) to:

- Protect or serve the populations on campus
- Assure the security of the campus
- Address our core mission of teaching

This assessment must include a determination of the numbers and types of personnel necessary to maintain those operations and services. Some related questions include:

- If an employee is deemed essential, and does not come to work, are there consequences? If an

employee is deemed non-essential but continues to come to work, are there consequences?

- What is our capacity to support telecommuting for employees?
- What is our capacity to support web-based education for students?

**c. Responsible departments**

- Executive Cabinet (lead)
- All College Departments

**d. Issues to be addressed**

This is an important, yet labor intensive task, which will require extensive discussion and analyses across all departments on all campuses.

- **Action Item:** President will convene the Executive Cabinet and prepare a memo instructing all College supervisors to analyze the requirements for their specific areas of responsibility. Develop a plan and submit it to the Executive Cabinet by September 1, 2006.

**2. Objective Two**

Provide employees via this Disaster Preparedness website accurate and timely information regarding the College's efforts to respond to a pandemic influenza event. This will include a list of local and state resources to meet the healthcare needs of staff and faculty as appropriate during a pandemic influenza event.

**a. Possible scenario and anticipated events**

- News reports on the local, state, or federal level that cause employees to become concerned regarding their safety.

- Questions will arise as to the validity of the information.

**b. Preparedness planning focus**

- The Disaster Preparedness website has been designated by the President as the College's primary source of information on pandemic influenza and events.

**c. Responsible departments**

- Web Site Administrator
- Human Resources
- Marketing and Communications

**d. Action item**

The Marketing and Communications Department will coordinate news releases and additional information on an event provided on the web to ensure employees are kept accurately abreast of an event.

**e. Responsible individuals**

- Executive Cabinet
- Director of Marketing and Communications
- Director of Human Resources
- Web Administrator

**f. Action item**

Promote a "hand washing campaign." Hand washing is a basic element of personal hygiene to prevent the spread of influenza and many other contagious diseases.

**g. Responsible individuals**

- Director of Marketing and Communications
- Director of Facilities Management

- Web Administrator

### **3. Objective Three**

Ensure the master emergency *Business Contingency Plan* is an effective plan for a pandemic event.

#### **a. Possible scenario and anticipated events**

The College has not had an opportunity to utilize this plan yet as it is currently under development by the various departments of the College.

#### **b. Preparedness planning focus**

The Executive Cabinet and President Cabinet will review each department's *Business Contingency Plan*. Approved departmental plans will then be coordinated into the master emergency *Business Contingency Plan*.

#### **c. Responsible departments**

- Executive Cabinet
- President Cabinet
- All departments of the College

### **4. Objective Four**

Meet the needs of students living on campus as appropriate during a pandemic influenza event.

#### **a. Possible scenario and anticipated events**

- Public fears related to pandemic influenza may result in students returning home to their families independent of any determination by the College to cancel classes or close residence halls. In addition, resident hall supervisors may decide not to remain on campus.

- Local, state, or federal officials may recommend the closing of educational facilities.
- It is anticipated that all students may not be able to return home rapidly, particularly out-of-state students.

**b. Preparedness planning focus**

Although multiple possible scenarios exist related to housing issues on campus, the College will be well positioned to rapidly respond to most anticipated situations if specific plans are in place for the following:

- Monitoring daily census in each residence hall.
- Monitoring overall student health in each residence hall.
- Monitoring staff absenteeism in the food services and housing support positions.
- Decision-making threshold for closing residence halls (due to efficiency rather than disease transmission issues).
- Implementation plans for closing residence halls based upon the recommendation of the College, local, state, federal officials.
- Identifying housing options for isolation and quarantine for students who may be sick.

**c. Responsible departments**

- Student Services
- Resident Hall Supervisors
- College Dining Services
- Senior Vice President of Instruction

**d. Action item**

A written plan will be developed to address the issues outlined above for residence halls. This plan will be reviewed by the Senior Vice President of Instruction and,

when approved, submitted to the Executive Cabinet for review and approval.

**e. Responsible individuals:**

- Dean of Student Services (Lead)
- Residence Hall Supervisors
- College Dining Services

**5. Objective Five**

Coordinate and make large-scale policy decisions during the evolving and extended timeframe of a pandemic based on a set of consistent and clearly articulated criteria developed through the Emergency Operations Center composed of the DRT.

**a. Possible scenario and anticipated events**

- It is anticipated that the College Emergency Operations Center composed of the DRT will be activated at the first indication that a coordinated campus response is warranted.
- This Center will be established to ensure that appropriate decisions are made centrally, and through an agreed upon chain of command.
- The College has not had an opportunity to utilize this system for such a large complicated and long-lasting event.

**b. Preparedness planning focus**

Example of campus wide policy questions for consideration:

- Will faculty be allowed to cancel classes based upon personal opinion?
- Will those decisions be made at the Division level?
- How will those decisions be communicated?

- What process will be used to ensure consistency and avoid confusion?

**c. Action item**

The Executive Cabinet will review pre-event activities related to emergency planning.

**d. Responsible individuals**

- President
- Senior Vice President of Instruction
- Vice President of Technology and Institutional Research
- Vice President of Financial Services
- Vice President of Workforce Development, Continuing Education, and Distance Learning

**6. Objective Six**

Coordinate response efforts at WCJC externally with all relevant partners including state and local health department and with state and local emergency managers. This could include participation in state, county, and local response activities related to vaccine distribution.

**a. Possible scenario and anticipated events**

- It is anticipated that as a pandemic unfolds, multiple agencies will be activated to handle the event.
- Colleges, in general, are often overlooked within these broader systems, although WCJC is working to be sure that the College is integrated effectively with the broader systems.
- The sheer number of activated systems and the anticipated length of this particular response will pose communication and coordination challenges for all those involved.

- Vaccine against this flu strain will not become available until approximately four months after the pandemic arrives in the United States.
- When the vaccine becomes available, it will be distributed to state health departments in limited batches.
- Although unknown at this time, it is anticipated the College could be asked to participate as a vaccine distribution center.

**b. Preparedness planning focus**

Develop a rapid external and internal communication system for all College employees with pandemic influenza response assignments with external agencies.

**c. Responsible individuals**

- Director of Marketing and Communications
- Director of Facilities Management
- Vice President of Financial Services

**d. Action item:**

Be prepared to serve as a vaccine distribution center at each campus.

**e. Responsible individuals:**

- Director of Facilities Management
- Dean of Student Services/Director of Dual-Credit Enrollment
- Director of Human Resources
- Director of Marketing and Communication

**H. What are some questions employees might have regarding a pandemic event?**

**1. How are sick leave requests handled during a pandemic emergency?**

If the Governor has NOT declared an emergency, the normal provisions for sick leave apply. Employees who call in sick, or say they are caring for a family member who is sick, will be eligible for sick leave under WCJC Sick Leave [Reg 851](#). If FMLA is applicable, normal procedures for FMLA will be followed.

If the Governor has declared an emergency, it is possible that the directive will create different procedures. Alternate procedures may be implemented under the guidance of the Governor's directive.

**2. How are vacation requests handled during a pandemic emergency?**

If the Governor has NOT declared an emergency, the normal provisions for vacation and leave will apply. Supervisors can grant such requests to the extent feasible. Supervisors may also deny requests when the workforce is so depleted that normal business function could not be conducted.

If the Governor has declared an emergency, it is possible that the directive will create different procedures. Alternate procedures may be implemented under the guidance of the Governor's directive.

**3. How will employees be paid during a pandemic emergency?**

WCJC has set up a mechanism to continue to pay employees during a pandemic emergency. Unless the Governor declares an emergency and the directive changes, the normal procedures will be followed. All employees who are at work or on sick leave will be paid. Employees who neither work nor have accrued leave to cover hours missed will not be paid.

**4. What are the different reference sources that have been used by WCJC to develop its pandemic plan?**

The Wharton County Junior College is utilizing many different sources and references for pandemic planning. The most

relevant documents guiding Wharton County Junior College's pandemic planning as follows:

- a. "Colleges and Universities Pandemic Influenza Planning Checklist" was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as a guideline for planning. The document can be reviewed at <http://pandemicflu.gov/plan/Collegeschecklist.html>.
- b. The Department of Environment, Health and Safety compiled a comprehensive list of documents and links relevant to university pandemic planning. This list can be accessed at <http://www.cshema.org/resource/pandemic0306.htm>
- c. Addition information about seasonal flu and pandemic flu can be found on the following web sites: World Health Organization at [http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian\\_influenza/en/](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/)
- d. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic.htm>
- e. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services at [PandemicFlu.gov](http://PandemicFlu.gov)
- f. U.S. Department of Environment, Health and Safety at <http://ehs.unc.edu/index.htm>