

Emergency Response Protocols for the Virtual Environment

Purpose:

This document defines the steps to follow should a potential emergency occur in the online environment (either synchronous or asynchronous).

How to respond if an emergency occurs during synchronous engagements:

- If a student experiences a medical emergency or a staff member witnesses violence while engaging in the synchronous online environment, the best option for ensuring that appropriate medical assistance arrives is to have the student or someone in their household contact 911.
- Additionally, contact the Palomar College Campus Police Department at 760-891-7273 to report your concerns.
- If you believe that the student is beginning to have difficulty, ask for the student's address or current location and a cell phone number, if possible.
 - Remain on the Zoom call with the student in trouble but ask all others to leave; remove others if needed.
 - Contact the Palomar College Campus Police Department at 760-891-7273 to report your concerns.
 - Remain calm and provide all relevant information to the dispatcher to ensure the student's location and circumstances are accurately communicated. Give as many details as you can to the dispatcher.
 - Palomar College Police will be able to initiate an appropriate emergency response and has access to additional resources to identify the individual's address of record.

Supports in the Asynchronous Learning Environment:

The implementation of remote learning due to the impacts of COVID 19 has led to many challenges for students, faculty, and staff alike. This environment has produced feelings of uncertainty, and our students may be experiencing both social and economic impacts that may or may not be discussed in the online environment. While on campus, there is a general awareness of the resources that exist to support students in need, including Behavioral Health Services, Campus Police, and the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT). It is important to understand that, even in our current remote online environment, we do have these supports in place to address students who make disclosures that elicit concern for their safety or wellbeing.

What types of disclosures may occur in the online environment?

- Suicidal/homicidal verbalizations or written communication (threat of self-harm or harm to others)
- Severe depression
- Dis-regulated behavior (bizarre or seriously inappropriate behavior or communication)
- Trauma or loss
- Victim of violence (domestic violence, sexual assault, violent crime)
- Homelessness/severe financial hardship
- Food insecurity

How to respond to a disclosure that elicits concern for student safety or wellbeing:

- Take disclosures seriously.
- Acknowledge the student's disclosure in a supportive and non-judgmental way.
- Submit a [Palomar College Incident Report](#) to communicate the details of the student's disclosure and to ensure that the student is connected with appropriate supports.
 - Include all concerning communications with your incident report.
 - Incident Reports will be routed to members of the Palomar College Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) for intervention.
 - The BIT will connect students with appropriate campus and community resources to ensure their needs are met.

Additional Considerations for Specific Disclosures: Emergency

Suicidal/homicidal verbalizations or written communication (threat of self-harm or harm to others)

- If there is immediate concern for student wellbeing related to threats of harm to self, advise the student to contact 911.
- Additionally, advise the student of the 24-hour suicide prevention hotline, available at (800) 273-Talk (8255).
- Contact the Palomar College Police Department at 760-891-7273 to communicate your concern for the student's wellbeing and provide all available information, including the nature of the disclosure, student identifiers, and any available contact information. You should also forward any concerning communications to policedispatchers@palomar.edu.

Severe depression

- If there is immediate concern for student wellbeing related to threats of harm to self, advise the student to contact 911.
- Advise the student of the 24-hour suicide prevention hotline, available at (800) 273-Talk (8255).
- Contact the Palomar College Police Department at 760-891-7273 to communicate your concern for the student's wellbeing and provide all available information, including the nature of the disclosure, student identifiers, and any available contact information. You should also forward any concerning communications to policedispatchers@palomar.edu.

Additional Considerations for Specific Disclosures: Non-Emergency

Dis-regulated behavior (bizarre or seriously inappropriate behavior or communication)

- Advise the student that you are concerned with the nature of their behavior and that you want to ensure that they are connected with appropriate resources to support them through their educational journey.

Trauma or loss

- Advise the student that Palomar College has a team of professionals in Behavioral Health Services who provide counseling support to students in need.
- Provide the student with the contact information for Behavioral Health Services.

Victim of violence (domestic violence, sexual assault, violent crime)

- Refer all sexual violence, sexual harassment, and Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) incidents and potential incidents of violence against women to Shawna Cohen, the

Palomar College Title IX Coordinator at 760-744-1150, ext. 2608 or scohen@palomar.edu, to ensure appropriate actions are taken.

Homelessness/severe financial hardship

- Provide the student with information about [CARES Act Emergency Funding](#).
- Refer students to the [Office of Student Life & Leadership webpage](#). Basic needs and community resources (www.211.org) including food, diapers, showers, Cal Fresh, housing, hotlines, are provided. Student can reach the office by email or phone calls during regular work schedules.

Food insecurity

- Provide the student with information about the [CARES Act Emergency Funding](#).
- Refer students to the [Office of Student Life & Leadership webpage](#). Basic needs and community resources (www.211.org) including food, diapers, showers, Cal Fresh, housing, hotlines, are provided. Student can reach the office by email or phone calls during regular work schedules.