



## 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](mailto: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. 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 success team (CST) 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. The chapter president will contact crisis@deltagamma.org as well as the house corporation president (HCP) and the chapter adviser/advisory team chair (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 Chair. 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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 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.
    - i. The chapter president/new chapter consultant must contact the RD or RCS/NCC/CAC and [crisis@deltagamma.org](mailto:crisis@deltagamma.org) in the event of a crisis.
    - ii. The chapter president/new chapter consultant must contact [crisis@deltagamma.org](mailto:crisis@deltagamma.org) when there are issues involving the actual chapter housing or associated property such as flooding, storm damage, tornadoes and hurricanes.
    - iii. 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.
- iv. 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.
- v. 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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.