

Mass Notification Policies and Procedures

###Date###

**Purpose**

This policy establishes the process for #Name of Local Government# to send emergency and routine notifications to the residents, visitors, travelers, and staff of #Name of City or County#. Mass notifications can be sent via voice call, text message, email, social media, ATOM feeds, IPAWS and other various connected channels. The CivicReady® mass notification system is an essential component of any municipal emergency operation plan. This document is intended to be general, describing policies, jurisdictional roles and responsibilities, and activation guidelines rather than specific step-by-step procedures.

**The Role of CivicReady**

The CivicReady system will be used to notify all subscribed and imported contacts of any designated emergency. The system will be used to inform all subscribed contacts of routine and day-to-day instances based on subscription preferences. Only authorized staff personnel is approved to create, test, and launch notifications.

**System Description**

The primary intent of the CivicReady mass notification system is to disseminate early warning and time-sensitive information to residents, visitors, travelers, staff, and businesses during the time of an emergency event. CivicReady can also be used to disseminate routine and day-to-day communications to the same audience.

CivicReady is available 24/7/365 and has been pre-loaded with verified white and yellow page data. This residential database is confidential and shall not be disclosed or utilized except by authorized personnel for emergency notifications.

Additionally, citizens have the option to provide additional contact information via self-registration from, a direct system URL, the CivicReady myAlerts mobile app, and text-to-join for emergency alerts.

**System Responsibility**

#Name of Department or Contact# is the sponsor of the CivicReady system and will take appropriate measures to ensure that CivicReady is in a state of operational readiness at all times. It is the responsibility of all participating departments and agencies to maximize citizen benefits from the system. Authorized administrative users must respect the integrity of the database and fully comply with the policies outlined in this document. If any individual or department commits a violation, the right is reserved for disabling that individual or department’s login(s).

**Enrollment Procedures**

* Enrollment in the CivicReady mass notification system is available to residents, visitors, travelers, staff, and businesses.
* To receive CivicReady notifications, members must enroll online, through the CivicReady myAlerts mobile app, or by text-to-join opt-in. Enrollees must provide contact information and validate the wish to be notified.
* All staff members are encouraged to enroll in the CivicReady mass notification system. All personnel with an email or phone number provided by the #City# or #County# will be imported to receive staff notifications.

**System Testing - We recommend regular testing at least quarterly, though dependent on the department and resources.**

* The CivicReady mass notification system shall be tested #specify periodical testing timeframe#.
* The test will be a full-scale launch to all subscribed and imported members, or to a pre-designated test group.
* Tests shall be conducted during regular business hours and shall be announced as a routine test to all staff, citizens, and travelers with no required action.

**Emergency Usage**

The use of CivicReady for emergency activity includes:

1. The dissemination of critical, safety-related information to individuals within a short timeframe
2. Communicating with safety-responder staff, volunteers, and other parties about an approaching or present emergency event.

An **emergency** is defined as an occurrence that presents a significant risk to the health, safety, or general well-being of the residents, visitors, travelers, staff, businesses or to the property of #Name of City or County#. Examples of emergency warning messages include:

* Imminent or perceived threat to life or property
* Disaster notifications
* Evacuation notices
* Public health or safety emergencies
* Any notification to provide emergency-related information

In general, CivicReady should be used for emergency communications when the public needs to take action. Examples include:

* Evacuate
* Prepare for natural disaster
* Active shooter
* Take shelter
* Boil water order
* Missing child or AMBER AlertTM
* Avoid the area

Only personnel from the following departments shall be authorized to launch emergency notifications to the emergency subscriber list.

* #
* #
* #
* #

These authorized personnel can approve and send CivicReady emergency notifications in the case of an emergency impacting #Name of City or County#.

* #
* #
* #
* #

**Emergency Notification Procedures**

* Launching CivicReady emergency notifications shall be the responsibility of #City or County Department#. Emergency notifications will not be activated without prior approved access to the CivicReady system. Network administrators can grant approval and do not require approval from another staff member to launch notifications. A network administrator is defined as an administrator with full access to the entire CivicReady solution and functionality. During weekends or holidays, a member of #City or County Department# shall be designated for launching the CivicReady mass notification as needed.
* IPAWS shall be used in addition to the standard communication channels when applicable. If there is imminent threat to life or property, it is applicable to use IPAWS.
* The safety of all residents, visitors, travelers, staff, and businesses is the highest priority, and communications will be sent based on the information CivicReady administrators have at the time.
* In the case of an emergency, a network administrator will proceed to send a notification. If multiple network administrators can notify during an emergency, they should coordinate and check the system reporting to ensure the notification is not sent simultaneously by numerous individuals.
* When launching CivicReady emergency notifications use geotargeting tools when possible to only contact citizens that are in or near the area that is impacted.
* Utilize all accessible channels to notify during an emergency including voice call, text message, email, social media, ATOM feeds, etc. and IPAWS when applicable.
* All CivicReady emergency notifications shall include:
	+ An indication that the notification is a CivicReady emergency notification
	+ Time/date
	+ Description of the emergency
	+ Description of any suspect(s) and any weapon (when available)
	+ Instructions for actions to be taken by recipients
	+ When/where to receive further information
* CivicReady emergency notifications should be posted to all available channels including voice call, text, email, social media, and push notification.

**Emergency Notification Updates**

* Updates to any emergency situations should be sent immediately as they become available.
* An all-clear notification should be communicated once the emergency situation has been resolved.

**Routine Usage**

A **routine** communication is defined as information about non-life threatening general or day-to-day occurrences. The public and staff should be given the opportunity to elect routine notification subscription enrollment separately. Routine notifications are made available for subscription and are labeled to clearly reflect what will be communicated, e.g., road closures or community events.

Personnel from the following departments shall be authorized to launch routine notifications to relevant subscriber lists.

* #
* #
* #
* #

In general, CivicReady should be used for routine communications when the public or staff groups need more information or have subscribed to a certain group for regular updates to be disseminated via CivicReady.

Utilize all accessible channels for routine notification including voice call, text message, email, and social media. Keep in mind the citizen self-registers and choose their own contacting preferences.

Routine Examples include:

* Trash pick up reminders
* Departmental or employee communications
* Office closures
* Road closures or traffic notices
* Meeting reminders
* Event specific messages
* Other non-emergency communications

**Internal Usage**

**Internal** communications are defined as communications initiated by and sent to internal contacts including staff, volunteers and other private parties. Internal communication groups are created and maintained internally with contact imports as opposed to self-registration.

Internal usage can be used for both emergency and routine communications.

Personnel from the following departments shall be authorized to launch routine notifications to relevant imported lists.

* #
* #
* #
* #

Utilize these channels for internal communications: voice call, text message, and email.