

How to Deal with Difficult Situations

Behavioral Disorders

(Examples: Eating Disorders, Substance Abuse, Mental Illness, Etc.)

RA Perspective

- A. Gather as many facts as possible from roommates, custodians, etc.
- B. Talk to AC/HC about your concerns
- C. Monitor situation
- D. Develop a plan of action to confront situation
- E. Refer student to appropriate agency (UCS, Health Iowa, etc.)
- F. Continue to monitor behavior of residents, roommates
- G. Document everything-we need facts to make an intervention or referral

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Follow up on referral
- B. Mandate referral when necessary and contact AC/Kate Fitzgerald with details

Bloody Fluids & Blood Borne Pathogens

RA Perspective

- A. In all blood situations, ONLY Area Coordinators and Hall Coordinators can clean up the mess. Contact the Pro Staff Member On-Call.

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. See University Housing Blood borne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan
- B. Document and report incident to AC/Kate Fitzgerald

Bodily Fluids-Non Blood

RA Perspective

- A. The RA on-call should clean up the mess using the office cleaning products and vomit dust. Always wear rubber gloves. If you can not handle the mess, call another RA to help! In certain situations residents' causing the mess should be responsible for cleaning the mess.

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Assist as necessary and appropriate

Death

RA Perspective

- A. Assess the condition
- B. DON'T MOVE THE BODY
- C. Call 911 for ambulance and police
- D. Call Pro-Staff Member On-Call
- E. Talk to roommate, does he/she need a different place to live? (RA may do this if they have close relationship with resident).
- F. Talk to residents on the floor about death. (RA may do this if they have close relationship with floor residents).
- G. Document incident
- H. Along with Pro Staff, set up grief and loss programs for floor/ways to remember person

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Call 911 for ambulance and police
- B. Call AC/Kate Fitzgerald
- C. Talk to roommate, does he/she need a different place to live?
- D. Talk to residents on the floor about death
- E. Parents will be contacted by the hospital
- F. Call Contracts & Assignments to cancel contract
- G. Along with RA, set up grief and loss programs for floor

- H. After the funeral, Kate Fitzgerald will contact parents and find out what we can do to help, move things out of room (provide boxes, box up room, etc.)
- I. Contact Contracts & Assignments to see how long we can keep the room unoccupied (2-3 weeks)
Meet parents/survivors when they come and offer someone to help them move out

Difficult Parent/Contacting Parents

RA Perspective

- A. If a parent calls you, listen to parent concerns
- B. Indicate what you can do as an RA
- C. Follow up with the resident regarding concerns (if appropriate)
- D. Document the conversation
- F. If you feel a parent should be contacted, call the On-Call staff member. RAs should never take the initiative to call parents or discuss an incident with a parent!

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Listen to parent concerns
- B. Indicate what you can do as an Area Coordinator/Hall Coordinator
- C. Follow up with the resident and RA
- D. Document and notify AC/Kate Fitzgerald
- E. Get back to the parents as appropriate

Drugs

RA Perspective

Step 1: Suspicion of drug use - (i.e. smell reports)

Step 2: RA determines location

Step 3: RA finds back-up for confronting the situation:

1. Contact Pro Staff Member on Call immediately

A. Upon arrival of the Pro Staff Member On Call RAs should leave the area unless
GA-Assistant Hall Coordinator/Hall Coordinator state otherwise

B. Confrontation will be made by Professional Staff & DPS

Step 4: Documentation must occur immediately – by next business hours or within 12 hours

Pro Staff Perspective

Step 1: Assess the situation and make a determination whether to contact DPS immediately or confront the situation independently first (Once DPS is called they will immediately handle the situation once they are on the scene)

Step 2: Document the situation (either collaborate with RAs or write an individual account)

Step 3: Report incident to AC/Kate Fitzgerald

Elevator Breakdowns

RA Perspective

A. Assess the situation to determine if anyone is trapped in the elevator

1. If no one is in the elevator

A. Place an “OUT OF ORDER” sign by the elevators on 1st floor

During the period of early move-in and the week of check-out, a single broken elevator can be called in for repair

2. If there are students in the elevator:

A. Call the Pro Staff Member On-Call

B. Send 1 RA back to the elevator and calm the residents and inform them of what steps are being taken to solve the problem

C. Send 1 RA to meet the elevator repairmen to show them where the residents are trapped (may take an hour for a repairman to arrive, Emergency Maintenance will always be on scene first)

D. Upon repair, the RA should obtain the names, room #'s and social security #'s of everyone involved - and why they think the elevator was broken

E. Document the situation on an Incident Report

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Contact Emergency Maintenance
- B. Follow up with any students who were trapped in the elevator

Employee Injury

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. How severe is the injury? Life threatening injuries should go to UIHC/911
- B. Non Life threatening should go to Employee Health Clinic (M-F, 8-5; after 5:00 and on weekends, refer to ER) Employee Health Clinic web page:
<http://www.uihealthcare.com/depts/employeehealthclinic/index.html>
- C. Complete First Report of Injury form through the HR Self Service website. Email notifications will be sent via email within 24 hours to the employee's supervisor and HR Unit Representative, as well as the injured employee.
- D. Follow any instructions given to employee by Employee Health Clinic or UIHC
- E. Meet with employee and Shannon Bartlett to discuss any reduction/limitations in work

To access the HR Self-Services Site go to <https://hris.uiowa.edu/portal/>. If you have questions regarding this information, contact your Human Resources Representative or joni-troester@uiowa.edu in the UI Benefits Office.

Fire

RA Perspective

- A. Pull a nearby alarm
- B. Call the Pro Staff Member On-Call
- C. Can the fire be extinguished? If so use the nearest extinguisher
- D. If the fire can not be extinguished proceed to the front desk to help with evacuation of the building
- E. Once at the front desk, get your evacuation card and follow the instructions on it
- F. Desk will call Iowa City Fire Department and they will take over scene upon arrival
- G. After the signal to return to the building has been given, report to the front desk to return your card and for a debriefing
- H. Document incident ASAP
- I. Information Control/Media Questions should be referred to departmental representative-Carrie Kiser-Wacker

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Evacuate building and make sure RAs are following the evacuation cards
- B. If requested, provide a room roster for the Iowa City Fire Department. (Building list or alpha)
- C. IC Fire Department responds and takes over scene upon arrival
- D. Survey damage and any personal injuries
 - 1. Process Workers' Compensation accident report forms (as necessary)
- E. Call AC/Kate Fitzgerald...if Kate can not be reached contact Drionne Smith or Von Stange...if Von Stange can not be reached contact Vice President Jones
- F. Reset panel, emergency maintenance may need to be called to reset heat detectors, smoke detectors, etc.
- G. Take pictures of the damage
- H. Call Facilities and Operations (John Josten) the following morning so that they can survey the damage
- I. Questions that should be answered:
 - 1. Do any students/parents need to be notified?
 - 2. Do students need a place to live (room/lounge)?
 - 3. Do pictures need to be taken of the damage?
 - 4. Are any staff injured? If so, send to the hospital and fill out insurance forms.
 - 5. Are there any salvageable items in the room that can be removed to eliminate smoke damage?
- J. Information Control/Media Questions should be referred to departmental representative-Carrie Kiser-Wacker

First Aid

RA Perspective

- A. Call 911...State the following clearly and calmly
 - 1. Identify yourself
 - 2. The type of emergency (heart attack, suicide attempt, etc.)
 - 3. Where the emergency personal is to report
 - 4. A phone number where you can be reached
- B. Call the Pro Staff Member On-Call
- C. Have another RA or the Pro Staff Member On-Call meet the First Responder
- D. Provide the First Responder with any information they may need from the resident's Confidentiality Card

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Assist as needed

Harassment

RA Perspective

- A. Report to Pro Staff immediately
- B. Document situation within 24 hours

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Examples: E-Mail, Telephone, Stalking
- B. Talk with student - is there evidence?
- C. Encourage Student to file report with DPS (student should begin to document every incident)
- D. Follow-up
- E. Inquire if there is anything we can do from a safety aspect. (i.e. room transfer)
- F. Determine if a pattern is developing
- G. DOCUMENT & Notify Kate Fitzgerald/AC

Hazardous Material Spills

(A hazardous materials incident may be a spill or release of chemicals, radioactive materials or biological materials inside a building or to the environment. The user may manage simple spills. Major spills or emergencies require emergency assistance from 24-hour emergency agencies, i.e., the city Fire Department or Johnson County Hazardous Material (HAZMAT) Team.)

RA Perspective

- A. In all Hazardous Material situations, ONLY Area Coordinators and Hall Coordinators will handle the situation. Contact the Pro Staff Member On-Call

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Follow up with resident ASAP
 - 1. Simple Spill
 - Does not spread rapidly
 - Does not endanger people
 - Does not endanger environment.
 - Trained individual can clean up
 - 2. Major Spill of Emergency
 - Spreads rapidly
 - Endangers people
 - Endangers environment
 - Must call 911
- B. Immediate Action
 - 1. Simple Spills should be cleaned up by the person causing the spill
 - 2. Major Spills or Emergencies
 - Dial 911
 - Evacuate, assemble at a safe distance
 - Account for individuals

- Wait for and provide information to responders
- C. Notifications and Reporting
 - If the incident involves any radioactive materials, or is a major spill of hazardous materials notify the Health Protection Office. Call 335-8501 during business hours (weekdays 8-12 AM and 1-5 PM), or the Public Safety Department at 335-5022 during non-business hours.
 - If the incident releases a hazardous material to the environment or beyond University boundaries immediately notify the University Environmental Manager. Reports to Iowa Department of Natural Resources must be made as soon as possible and not later than six hours after discovery of incident.

Infectious Disease

RA Perspective

- A. Contact Pro Staff and assist as necessary and appropriate

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Is the student in the hospital?
- B. Is the disease contagious? Could the community be affected?
- C. Document case
- D. Call Kate Fitzgerald/AC to develop a plan of action
- E. Information Control is important

Large Incident

(Defined as a confrontation situation that needs more than one RA – Eg. Large party in room or lounge, hallway gathering)

RA Perspective

- A. Contact at least one other RA to accompany you to the room
- B. Go to the room-knock & introduce/identify yourself
- C. Ask residents of the room to come out of the room
- D. If no response after 2-3 tries, call Pro Staff Member On-Call for back-up
- E. Document on an Incident Report within 24 hours

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Go to the room-knock & introduce/identify yourself
- B. Ask residents of the room to come out of the room.
- C. If no response after 2-3 tries, call Department of Public Safety in for back-u.
- D. If the resident(s) refuse to open the door and you need to enter the room, use a master key (but proceed with caution)–Safety is important in this situation. DPS can not be present during a room entry
- E. Document the situation (either collaborate with RAs or write an individual account) and turn in report to Kate Fitzgerald the next business day
- F. Meet with the residents as soon as possible after the incident
- G. Consult with AC/Kate Fitzgerald as needed

Medical Emergencies

RA Perspective

- A. Assess situation
- B. Contact the Pro Staff Member On-Call
- B. Call hospital for consultation if needed
- C. Call Ambulance/Public Safety for transport to hospital
 - * If student is passed out or unconscious, call 911
- D. Another staff member should meet the ambulance in front of building with elevator key or someone to hold elevator
- E. Escort First Responder personnel to room
- F. Crowd control/rumors
- G. Document situation and keep AC/HC informed of serious illnesses
- H. Follow up with resident ASAP

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Respond and assist as needed
- B. Report to Kate Fitzgerald the next day or as happening
- C. Follow up with resident ASAP
- D. Complete Post Hospitalization Form

Missing Resident

RA Perspective

- A. Try to contact the resident by phone/mail/message
- B. Get information from roommate/neighbors
- C. Document situation
- D. Talk with AC/HC
- E. Once found, follow up with the resident about concerns
- G. If parents are involved, try to have resident follow up with them ASAP

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Try to contact the resident by phone/mail/message at dining lines
- B. Get information from RA/roommate/neighbors
- C. Consult with Kate Fitzgerald
- D. Key into room (ONLY with permission from Kate) to see if there is any information that might give you clues
- E. Contact Public Safety to help investigate (if needed)
- F. Once found, follow up with the resident as soon as possible
- G. If parents are involved, try to have resident follow up with them ASAP
- H. At no point should RA contact parents or the police

Riots/Protests/Unauthorized Gatherings

RA Perspective

- A. Do not try to stop protesters; try to get them in and out of the building as soon as possible
- B. Call the Pro Staff Member On-Call
- C. Once the protesters are out of the building - write an incident report and report any damages that may have occurred
- D. Call Pro Staff Member On-Call and have them contact emergency maintenance if anything needs to be fixed that night
- E. Notify other staff members of situation in the event that protesters come back

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Do not try to stop protesters; try getting them in and out of the building as soon as possible
- B. Once they are out of the building -- write an incident report on damage
- C. Call emergency maintenance if anything needs to be fixed that night.
- D. Take pictures if needed
- E. Call Kate Fitzgerald
- F. Media questions should be referred to departmental representative-Carrie Kiser-Wacker
- G. Notify staff of situation in the event protesters return

Safety/Security Issues

RA Perspective

- A. Have residents fill out incident reports
- B. Call Public Safety to file a report
- C. Talk with residents about incidents
- D. Determine if any repairs need to be done to the room so that it is safe for the night (i.e. broken window, lock, and door) and call the Pro Staff Member On-Call if necessary
- E. See if a pattern develops on your floor
- F. Post signs/memo to remind residents about safety concerns/incident

- G. Rumor control/parent calls regarding incident

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Have residents fill out incident report.
B. Speak to residents regarding incidents
C. See if a pattern develops
D. Post signs/memos to remind residents about safety concerns. Notify other halls regarding the possible posting of signs in their areas
E. Call Public Safety to help investigate situation, possibly increase rounds on floors of concern
F. Follow up with residents to ensure they are feeling safe
G. Rumor control/parent calls regarding incident
H. Are there any facilities changes we can do to help student feel safe?
 1. Lock change
 2. Install chain on door
I. Keep AC/Kate Fitzgerald posted on incident
J. Mandatory reporting form

Sexual Assault Occurred in Building

RA Perspective

- A. Talk with resident and try to get them to go to the hospital
B. Call the Pro Staff Member On-Call
C. Follow up with RVAP, UCS, or Crisis Line
D. Write incident report regarding case
E. Are there any security issues that need to be addressed?
F. Rumor control (consult with your AC/HC and UCS to determine the best method of approaching concerns that arise on the floor)
G. Continue to check on resident (counseling needs)

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Mandatory Report is needed
B. When did the assault occur? If within 24 hours:
 • Does the victim want to go to the hospital for an examination -- accompany them if they want to go to hospital and arrange for a member of RVAP to arrive as well?
 • Give Victim RVAP -- Residence Hall brochure describing options
 • Explain resources that are available -- At minimum, give the victim the telephone number to RVAP crisis line. The RAs should also understand that the RVAP crisis line is for any post incident issues that they may experience
C. If possible, find out if:
 • Did the assault happen on or off campus?
 • Does the victim want to speak to another AC/HC? If the victim does not want to talk with another AC/HC, tell victim that the RA will forward information with their name to the other AC/HC who in turn will forward a report to the Dean's Office without their name
 • Does the victim know the assailant? Does that assailant live in the residence halls?
 • Document the report, excluding victim names -- make sure to include the resources you provided the victim
 • Does the victim want to report it to the police? If it involves a university student, does the victim want the University to investigate the case?
 • Does the victim want to change rooms?
 • Does the victim want to change phone numbers? DPS can help with this aspect
D. What determines if the Pro Staff Member should discuss the incident with victim:
 ▪ If the victim does not want to talk-Pro Staff should send a letter outlining information about resources
 ▪ If the victim wants to report-Pro Staff should initiate a meeting with the student

Suicide Attempt

RA Perspective

- A. Talk with resident and try to assess severity of incident
- B. Call Pro Staff Member On-Call/AC
- C. Call for consultation (crisis line, UCS on call, or Emergency Room)
- D. Call 9-911 if needed, but may need to try to talk to resident to see if he/she is willing to go seek help; if in doubt, call hospital or University Counseling Service staff to ask for advice
- E. Information control with floor/staff
- F. Call University Counseling Service and ask what types of steps should occur once resident is back on the floor
- G. Refer to UCS for counseling sessions
- H. Document incident

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Talk with resident and try to assess severity of incident.
- B. Call 9-911 for ambulance and police
- C. Call Kate Fitzgerald.
- D. Consult with Dean's Office
- E. Talk with roommates, if needed.
- F. Information control with staff.
- G. Call University Counseling Service and ask what types of steps should occur once resident is back on the floor.
- H. Follow up with RA to see if counseling is needed.
- I. Talk to suicidal resident once he/she is back in the halls.
- J. Refer to UCS for counseling sessions.
- K. Is there any need to contact parents or On Call staff member to warn anyone (Call Kate Fitzgerald or UCS for consultation)?
- L. Mandatory Reports- Post Hospitalization form

Suicide

RA Perspective

- A. Assess the condition
- B. DON'T MOVE THE BODY
- C. Call 9-911
- D. Call Pro Staff Member On-Call/AC
- E. Talk to roommate, does he/she need a different place to live? (RA may do this if they have a close relationship with resident)
- F. Talk to residents on the floors about death (RA may do this if they have close relationship with the floor)
- G. Document incident
- H. Along with Pro Staff, set up grief and loss programs for floor

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Call 9-911
- B. Call Kate Fitzgerald
- C. Talk to roommate, does he/she need a different place to live?
- D. Talk to residents on the floor about death
- E. Parents will be contacted by the hospital
- F. Call Housing to cancel contract
- G. Along with RA, set up grief and loss programs for floor
- H. After the funeral, Kate Fitzgerald will contact parents and find out what we can do to help, move things out of room (provide boxes, box up room, etc.)
- I. Contact Housing to see how long we can keep the room unoccupied (2-3 weeks)
- J. Meet parents/survivors when they come and offer someone to help them move out

Threats

RA Perspective

Bomb Threat

- A. Fill out the Bomb Threat Data Form (as you are receiving the call)
- B. Call the Pro Staff Member On-Call

- C. Call Public Safety
- D. Proceed to/or remain at the main entrance of the building threatened and relay any information to Public Safety Officers or the Pro Staff Member On-Call
- E. If the decision is to evacuate the building, DPS will notify the Iowa City Fire Department

Pro Staff Perspective

Bomb Threat

- A. Consult with DPS
- B. Evacuate the building-if determined necessary
- B. Call Kate Fitzgerald

Tornado Watch

A watch merely indicates that because of certain atmospheric conditions a tornado could possibly develop.

RA & Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Inform the desk staff to listen to the weather radio for more information (if tornado watch becomes a warning).

Tornado Warning (details on Residence Hall Severe Weather Alarm System on following page)

A warning means that a funnel cloud, cloud rotation, or tornado has been sighted near Iowa City or that one is moving in the general direction of Iowa City. This will coincide with the city sirens being sounded.

RA Perspective

- A. The desk staff with enacting the verbal alarm via the fire panel (following the directions posted by the fire panel)
- B. Immediately report to the desk
- C. Assist with the evacuation of residents to a safer space (Safer space is defined as interior hallways in the basement or first floor; areas away from glass. Mayflower residents may use the underground garage)

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Immediately report to the desk
- B. Assist with the evacuation of residents to a safer space (Safer space is defined as interior hallways in the basement or first floor; areas away from glass. Mayflower residents may use the underground garage)
- C. Close the front desk and forward the phone to the RA Duty Cell Phone
- D. Along with the desk clerk, locate the battery operated weather radio, flashlights, and alpha list that are at the front desk and take them to the safer space
- E. Remain in the safer space until an “all clear” signal is given or until the warning timeframe has expired

Johnson County will sound a steady three-to five minute warning upon the issuance of a tornado warning by the Johnson County Sheriff's Office. Residence Hall Verbal alarms will remain active until the Pro staff member directs the system be cleared.

Unusual Evacuation Situations

(Examples: Gas leaks, floods, etc.)

RA Perspective

- A. Assist Pro Staff as needed

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Follow fire evacuation procedures.
- B. Call Kate Fitzgerald.
- D. Make sure everyone is accounted for and out of the building - use building roster to double check.

Vandalism

RA Perspective

- A. Report to Pro Staff via an Incident Report (if the vandalism requires Emergency Maintenance to be contact, call the Pro Staff Member On-Call)
- B. Get as much information from floor residents as possible

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Are patterns of vandalism developing? Is it offensive to anyone?
- B. Document
- C. Involve DPS on large incidents
- D. Develop plan with RA, Maintenance, Custodial (increase rounds, video surveillance, floor meeting, etc.)
- E. Take pictures if needed
- F. Notify Kate Fitzgerald

Weapons

RA Perspective

- A. Report or suspicion of a weapon in a room
 1. Contact Pro-Staff Member On-Call
 2. If unavailable...Call DPS for assistance
- B. Guns must be removed from the building **immediately!** Any weapons will be removed with the assistance of DPS
- C. Hunters may not store guns in the hall at any time.

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Contact DPS for assistance
- B. Call Kate Fitzgerald

Things to Keep in Mind

RA Perspective

- A. Document everything
- B. Don't "sit on problems too long"
- C. If needed, call the Pro Staff Member On-Call for consultation
- D. If it will make the news, call the Pro Staff Member On-Call and your building's AC/HC so he/she is not surprised
- E. **NEVER SPEAK** to student's parents, relatives, friends, or media about anything which you have learned about through the job
- F. It is also important **not to talk to the press** about any problems which have occurred in the building
- G. Never speak about an incident in a public area (i.e. cafeteria, hallway, etc). All incidents and people involved are confidential
- H. If you are confronting a situation which effects other RA's you must notify them about the situation that has occurred

Pro Staff Perspective

- A. Document everything
- B. Train RAs "not to sit on problems too long"
- C. If needed, call your AC/AC on duty
- D. **ALWAYS KEEP KATE FITZGERALD INFORMED OF WHAT IS GOING ON IN YOUR BUILDING**