

# University Mass Notification Systems Policy

## ROWAN UNIVERSITY POLICY

**Title:** *University Mass Notification Systems*

**Subject:** University Communications

**Policy No:** *Adm: 2016: 02*

**Applies:** *University-Wide*

**Issuing Authority:** *President*

**Responsible Officers:** *Associate Vice President of Information Resources & Technology*

*Assistant Vice President for Public Safety*

*Vice President of University Relations*

**Adopted:** *03/07/2016*

**Last Revision:** *03/07/2016*

**Last Reviewed:** *03/07/2016*

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define and limit when administrative and academic officials at Rowan University can use Rowan Alert and Rowan Connect to send SMS text messages, voice over phone, and email.

### II. ACCOUNTABILITY

Under direction of the President, the Associate Vice President of Information Resources & Technology, the Vice President of University Relations and the Assistant Vice President for the Department of Public Safety, shall implement and ensure compliance with this policy. The Assistant Vice President for the Department of Public Safety and the Vice President of University Relations shall be responsible for utilization of Rowan Alert. The Rowan Connect Committee, chaired by the Associate VP of Information Resources & Technology, and consisting of management-level representatives from the Bursar's Office, IRT, Residential Learning & Inclusion, Strategic Enrollment Management, and Student Health Services, will be responsible for utilization of Rowan Connect.

### III. APPLICABILITY

This policy is applicable to all Rowan Alert and Rowan Connect communications utilizing the Rowan University network.

### IV. DEFINITIONS

1. **SMS** - Short Message Service. SMS is a message system designed for cellular phones. Unlike email, SMS messages, commonly referred to as text messages, are sent to phone numbers, not addresses. They are routed through a gateway, which connects directly to the carrier's network. SMS is also identified as SMPP - Short Message Peer to Peer Protocol.

### V. REFERENCES

1. IRT Rowan Connect website: <https://confluence.rowan.edu/x/PAN0Aw>
2. Rowan Emergency Information website: <http://www.rowan.edu/emergency/>

## VI. POLICY

1. Rowan University recognizes that communication to students and employees is critical to the success of the University, and that additional mediums of communication are needed to supplement electronic mail in situations that require rapid notification and response. Based on the increasing reach of mobile phones, Rowan Alert is utilized by the Department of Public Safety, Office of Emergency Management and University Relations solely for use in emergent situations, and Rowan Connect is utilized when an important deadline requiring action is approaching.
2. Subscriptions
  - a. Rowan Alert and Rowan Connect are both subscription services that allow users to opt out of the system. Initially, all students and employees with mobile numbers in Banner are opted-in to both services. All individuals are asked to update their mobile contact information via id.rowan.edu on a periodic basis as per user password reset guidelines.
  - b. All contact data is maintained in Banner, and transferred to Rowan Connect on a periodic basis. As new mobile numbers are transferred, a welcome text is sent to the subscriber, providing them with an option to remove themselves from Rowan Connect or stay connected. In the event that a person who is not affiliated with Rowan University is contacted via SMS or voice over phone, the person or department responsible for the communication shall immediately inactivate the mobile or telephone record in Banner.
  - c. Rowan Alert is the University's primary emergency alert notification system, maintaining a separate subscription process managed by the Department of Public Safety (DPS), Office of Emergency Management and University Relations. All faculty, staff, administrators and students will be required to provide their cell numbers to be used only by the DPS and only for Immediate and Emergency Notifications as set forth in Section C, following. Students will not be allowed to opt out of Rowan Alert. Faculty will be allowed to opt out of Rowan Alert only with the approval of the Provost. Staff will be allowed to opt out of Rowan Alert only with the approval of the Executive Vice President for Administration.
3. Acceptable Use Policy:
  - a. All communications to be sent via Rowan Alert or Rowan Connect will meet the following criteria:
    - i. SMS should not be used for information the user will need to reference later, such as receipts or confirmation codes, and any information sent by SMS should be readily actionable in a short timeframe.
    - ii. SMS is designed to supplement the communication methods currently used, and should not be used as the sole source of messaging.
    - iii. All SMS messages will be targeted to the appropriate subset(s) of these populations for effectiveness, based on the content and applicability to the target audience(s).
    - iv. The Department of Public Safety uses a number of message systems to deliver information to the Rowan Community, i.e. Short Message System (SMS), email, or a Daily Announcer. Selection of the message delivery used is dependent on whether the incident is currently occurring and poses an imminent threat to the Rowan community, or an incident that has already occurred, but requires timely notification.
      1. Immediate and Emergency Notification - Rowan Alert (SMS) shall be used only by the Department of Public Safety, the Office of Emergency Management and University Relations for an event that is currently occurring when there is an emergency or significant threat to campus safety. All Immediate and Emergency Notifications using SMS, must be prefaced with "ROWAN ALERT" to clearly identify the emergency message. Rowan Alert is used for incidents that pose an immediate threat to the campus community, or in the event of an unscheduled and immediate university closure, or evacuation of the campus. It is only for this kind of notification that cell phone information required by the University will be used.

2. Timely Warnings are sent through the University's mass notification system using the email feature, or through the Daily Announcer for events that have already occurred but still require notification to the Rowan community in a reasonable period of time. All Timely Warning messages sent must be prefaced with "TIMELY WARNING" to distinguish them. Timely warnings are required by applicable law to the campus community for any crime that "represents a serious or continuing threat to the students and employees" of the university. The incidents that require a timely warning according to the Clery Act are murder/non-negligent manslaughter, forcible sex offenses, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, major arson incidents or if the crime represents a serious or continuing threat to the university. Additionally, any hate crimes involving bodily injury or any of the previously listed crimes, that represent a continuing threat to the university community require a timely warning. Any other crimes that represent a serious or continuing threat to the community may also have a timely warning issued for them and they will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, including *consideration for Non-Stranger Sexual Assaults*.
3. Rowan Advisory messages are sent through the University's mass notification system, using the email feature, the Daily Announcer, or SMS. All Rowan Advisory messages sent must be prefaced with "ROWAN ADVISORY" to distinguish them. This covers all other events, etc. that DO NOT fall under the previous titles and involve non-emergency situations. Examples include but not limited to:
  - Power Outage
  - Traffic Advisory
  - Building closures, etc.
  - Non-emergency closures, such as a closures due to weather events
4. Rowan Connect shall be used only for urgent messages that require a timely action by the receiver, as there is an issue that may impact their status at the University or have financial or negative consequences if not acted upon. Rowan Connect will not be used for emergency communications, but can be used if there could be a financial impact to the University, and/or when there is a belief that students or employees are at risk, to mitigate individual and institutional risk. All Rowan Alert messages sent must be prefaced with "ROWAN ADVISORY" to distinguish them.
5. All SMS messages will begin with "ROWAN ADVISORY", "ROWAN ALERT", "ROWAN CONNECT", or "TIMELY WARNING" to identify the service provider and avoid confusion.
4. Due Diligence and Compliance of University Offices and Personnel: Rowan Connect features can be used to support any University Office Personnel that can demonstrate an acceptable use to the Rowan Connect Committee. Personnel are expected to comply with communication submission requirements as provided by the Rowan Connect Administrators, including by not limited to the content, recipients, and department contact information. Offices should consult appropriate Administrator and IRT personnel for assistance as needed.
5. Non-compliance and Complaints – Rowan Connect: When a student or employee believes that Rowan Connect has not been used in accordance with this policy, he/she is encouraged to seek to resolve that concern informally by communicating their concern directly to the personnel or office which has sent the communication.
  - a. In cases where an individual feels he/she would benefit from additional support or advocacy, or to initiate a formal complaint about non-compliance, he/she may contact the following offices:
    - i. Dean of Students (students)
    - ii. Human Resources (employees)
6. Non-compliance and Complaints – Rowan Alert: When a student or employee believes that Rowan Alert has not been used in accordance with this policy, he/she is encouraged to seek to resolve that concern informally by communicating their concern directly to the office which has sent the communication, e.g.: The Department of Public Safety, Office of Emergency Management or University Relations.

- a. In cases where an individual feels he/she would benefit from additional support or advocacy, or to initiate a formal complaint about non-compliance, he/she may contact the following offices:
  - i. The Vice President for University Relations
  - ii. The Assistant Vice President for the Department of Public Safety

## **VII. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **1. Rowan Connect Committee**

- a. The Rowan Connect Committee team is responsible to review and approve communication types to be sent by each department, to ensure that they meet the Acceptable Use Policy as defined below. The Committee members will also have the authorization to approve ad-hoc urgent message types that have not been reviewed and approved by the Committee. This will ensure that urgent messages can be delivered in a timely fashion, instead of waiting for the next regularly scheduled Committee meeting.
- b. The Committee will meet on a quarterly basis to do the following.
  - Review any modifications needed to the policy.
  - Review additional acceptable communication types and criteria for use by various departments across the university, including post-mortems for previous message types approved on an ad-hoc basis by committee members.
  - Review usage of Rowan Connect for university reporting, future licensing needs, and to address any concerns brought to the team's attention.
  - Review of summary of usage data to be presented to the Administrative Cabinet.

### **2. Rowan Connect Administrators**

- a. Each department will identify two to three staff members who can serve as "Administrators", responsible for compiling and sending out messages as defined by the Acceptable Use Policy (above). These Administrators will also be responsible for sending out urgent messages for other departments, as approved by the Rowan Connect Committee.