

Lockdown Frequently Asked Questions

(Questions posed by staff/faculty after the Lockdown message sent to Mission College and West Valley College on May 6, 2013)

1. Why didn't the initial message say what campus was locked down?

Sending out a non-campus specific message was an oversight and the system has been corrected. We are very sorry for the confusion but happy that the event brought out a lot of good questions and vulnerabilities that can be corrected to improve our response.

2. What does Lockdown mean?

Lockdown means that there is one or more people on campus who pose a threat to life safety. The same term is used whether the person has a gun, a knife or some other type of weapon.

3. What should I do if I receive a Lockdown text message or phone call?

Assess your surroundings. If you see/hear a possible threat, decide if you can safely get away, or if you should hide. If you can get away, warn others as you go and find a safe spot where you can call 9-1-1 to report what you saw. Do not stand in the parking lot like you would for an evacuation. Keep moving off campus.

If you must hide, stay away from windows, lock doors, turn off lights, silence cell phones and do anything else you think will keep you secure. Continue to assess the situation. If the threat approaches your hiding place, have a plan to attack if confronted. For more information, read the campus Emergency Guideline on Shooter on Campus and watch the Run, Hide, Fight video and the Last Resort video all on the District website www.wvm.edu/emergency.

4. I'm a Building Sweeper with the Emergency Response Team. Should I still sweep my area if I receive a Lockdown notice.

No. You should immediately lock down with everyone else. See #3.

5. Should faculty continue their classroom instruction when lockdown is in effect?

No.

6. Should I specifically tell staff not to make phone calls during lockdown?

It is best to be quiet and focused on the situation. Use discretion if phone calls are necessary.

7. If people want to leave the locked room, should I force them to stay?

No but try to reason with them.

8. Do we have students evacuate building or bring them inside with staff to hide and wait?

Bring them inside if you can do so safely.

9. During this event, we had concerns about being too visible because of windows, no blinds, doors locking from the outside, etc. What can we do?

Report your concerns to the Facilities and Safety Committee who will work with you to determine if the situation should be corrected or if alternate safety measures can be taken.

10. Why didn't I receive the text message, phone call, etc?

Phone numbers are uploaded to the notification system every evening. If you keep your Personal Information current in the MyWebServices portal, you should receive the notices. We have identified some groups of students and employees who are not in the system (contractors, part time) and we are correcting the problem.

11. Why did I receive multiple phone calls/texts on my phone?

The system attempts to contact you twice by phone, email and text. If you quickly acknowledge receipt (press 1 after voice message, reply Yes to the text or email) the additional attempts will stop. Sometimes the system is faster than you are so you will get duplicates because the sending process was initiated before the acknowledgement.

12. Why didn't the message tell me what the threat was?

The message is pre-loaded into the computer so that it can be sent out as quickly as possible. If we create the message at the time of the event, precious time will be lost. Assume that there is someone with a gun and plan accordingly.

13. Why wasn't the P.A. System on the new fire alarm used?

Staff did not have access to the panel due to lockdown. Also, notification procedures have not been updated on when/how to use it. Updates in progress.

14. Why didn't the classroom emergency phones ring?

People who knew how to use the system on campus were not able to use it due to lockdown and there is no procedure for support from West Valley or the District.

15. Why wasn't the website updated with current information?

The people on campus who know how to update the system were locked down and there is no procedure for support from West Valley or the District.

16. Why didn't we keep receiving updates about suspect description or police activity?

Once people are locked down, sending phone messages could give away a hiding place. In order to give updates as quickly as possible, we need to develop another method for you to access additional information. Options we are looking at to post verified information include Facebook, Twitter, email and Campus/District websites. When the event is over, we will announce over P.A. System and send Emergency Response Team members door to door. (procedures still pending).

17. Can I communicate with the personnel of the affected campus via phone or text?

No. If you call someone who is hiding, the phone could give away their position.

18. If I receive a Lockdown notice through WVM Alert, should I call 9-1-1 or Campus Police officers to confirm?

No. They are busy. You will be keeping them from doing their job.

19. I'm in the Center Space of the Main building and there is no roof over me. Should I run outside?

No. If you can lock your door and hide in your space so that you cannot be seen, do that. If you can safely get to another room that locks, do that. If you cannot get away, have a plan to attack if confronted.

20. Once my door is locked, should I let people in who knock?

Use common sense. If you are sure that the person is not the threat and you can safely open the door, do it. If you are uncertain, tell them to hide somewhere else. It will be a judgment call based on the situation.

21. My building has a lobby and interior doors. Should I lock them both?

Only if you are sure it is safe to exit your interior door. If possible, lock both.

22. Why wasn't there anyone in the parking lot to coordinate the evacuation?

No one should be standing in a parking lot during a lockdown. If you have run out of a building, keep running until you are completely off the property to a safe location where you can monitor what is happening and wait until you are sure it's safe to return. Don't even take time to go to your vehicle.

23. The SWAT team was telling specific areas to evacuate but I thought they were supposed to lock down?

Lockdown is the correct procedure UNTIL you are instructed to leave by police. Follow their directions and keep your hands visible at all times. Avoid pointing or yelling.

24. What were the police doing?

The police were following their procedures to locate and address the threat.

25. If I see people walking around outside, does that mean the lockdown has been lifted?

No matter what you see others do, DO NOT assume that the lockdown has been lifted until you receive the information from WVM-Alert, telephone, P.A. System etc. If you can shout to them to tell them to take cover, without putting yourself in danger, do it.

26. When the lockdown is lifted can someone be on the intercom and announce that lockdown was lifted?

Yes, future events will include a verbal notification that the situation is over, either by P.A. system, bull horn or door to door.