

UTSW- ALERT SYSTEM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Updated (IN RED) on 1-27-09

1. WHAT IS **UTSW-ALERT**?

UTSW-Alert is a system developed by UT Southwestern to communicate official information during an emergency or critical situation that disrupts normal operation of the UT Southwestern campus or threatens the health or safety of members of the campus community. All faculty, staff and currently registered students of UT Southwestern will receive alerts via:

- UT Southwestern Groupwise email
- UT Southwestern work telephone
- UT Southwestern pagers (provided for business use according to University policy)
- Personal devices when phone numbers are provided by faculty, staff and students:
 - Short Message Service (SMS) Text
 - cellular phone
 - home or message telephone

Text message warnings will allow you to learn of emergency situations as soon as possible no matter where you are located.

Except for regular testing of the system, **UTSW-Alert** will only be used to send timely public warnings of imminent danger or critical announcements. Registered users will not receive advertising or non-emergency text messages.

UTSW-Alert is a service that runs 24 hours a day - seven days a week - 365 days a year.

2. HOW DOES **UTSW-ALERT** NOTIFY ME OF ANY CAMPUS EMERGENCIES?

UTSW-Alert delivers messages similar to a “reverse 911” system. The system will use current contact information to send messages via a “best effort” basis to all the user’s contact pathways. It is extremely important that all faculty, staff and students update their personal information with current telephone numbers. (See question 8 to learn how to update your personal information.) **UT Southwestern users will be automatically enrolled** in **UTSW-Alert** to receive email, Short Message Service (SMS), cellular phone & telephone alerts via the UT Southwestern provided email and telephones and the personal phone numbers you provide.

UTSW-Alert uses a **confirmation tracker** that allows the system to send out the emergency message and then track your confirmation of receipt. Therefore, you may receive the message multiple times through various communications pathways. This is to ensure that you are notified of the emergency situation.

Therefore it is important to confirm receipt of at least one message. The system will then cease to contact you.

3. WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR UTSW-ALERT?

All faculty, staff and currently enrolled students are eligible for **UTSW-Alert**. All UT Southwestern faculty, staff and students will be automatically enrolled in **UTSW-Alert** to receive email alerts, Short Message Service (SMS) text messages, work and home phone messages.

4. IS THERE A FEE FOR THE UTSW-ALERT SYSTEM?

The **UTSW-Alert** service is free. However, depending upon the service plan for your personal cell phones, PDAs, pagers or home phones, you may incur fees from your wireless service provider. You are responsible for any applicable text messaging fees or cellular device fees for any **UTSW-Alert** notifications received, in addition to up to four (4) **UTSW-Alert** test messages that may be sent annually.

5. I AM A VISITOR OR CONTRACTOR, WHY CAN'T I ENROLL FOR THE UTSW-ALERT SYSTEM?

The program is currently available only to registered students, staff, and faculty of UT Southwestern.

Communication with visitors and contractors will continue through existing tools, including:

- Public Notices
- Building Enunciator Messages
- Status Line- 214-645-UTSW (8879) - Recorded Message
- UT Southwestern Website (www.utsouthwestern.edu/campusemergency)

6. IF I RECEIVE AN EMAIL FROM UTSW-ALERT, HOW WILL I KNOW THE MESSAGE IS VALID?

The **UTSW-Alert** system uses a service to process text messages, emails & phone calls.

- The "Caller ID" for a phone call/message from this system will be- **214-648-8879**
- The email "Sender Address" generated by this service will be:
campusemergency@utsouthwestern.edu

Please be assured that these messages are legitimate official communications from UT Southwestern. We are working with campus email systems to ensure **UTSW-Alert** messages are not recognized as spam. Note that one of the main reasons that this service is being used by UT Southwestern is to ensure the most reliable communications possible in the event of an emergency or critical campus situation.

7. IS MY PERSONAL INFORMATION SAFE ON THE UTSW-ALERT SYSTEM?

Personal home and cell phone numbers used by the **UTSW-Alert** service will be used exclusively for official University business. For this purpose, UT Southwestern may share this information with the **UTSW-Alert** notification system through database transfer.

UT Southwestern will maintain the confidentiality of such records to the extent permitted by law. For more details regarding student privacy concerns, please see the UT

Southwestern Information Security Policy section of the Information Resources Web site.

8. HOW DO I UPDATE MY E-MAIL ADDRESS OR CONTACT PHONE NUMBER(S)?

UTSW-Alert uses the contact information stored in the Human Resources (HRMS) and Students databases.

Faculty & Staff: Current employees should use the HRMS database which can be accessed through the **iAIM Website**. To ensure that you are able to receive alert messages, you must update your information on the **iAIM Web site** or through your department's administrative manager, whenever your contact information changes (cell phone, and/or home phone number). To access the **iAIM Web site**, please visit the following link: **iAIM** (<https://sws001.swmed.edu/iAim/login>)

An instructional PowerPoint presentation on how to update your information can be found on the UTSW-Alert webpage. (www.utsouthwestern.edu/utsw-alert)

Students: Students should contact the Office of Student and Alumni Affairs (Deborah Chen - deborah.chen@utsouthwestern.edu) to update their contact information.

9. MY FRIEND RECEIVED A TEXT MESSAGE ALERT, BUT I DID NOT. WHY?

First- Please ensure your wireless number is correct in the HRMS system. An instructional PowerPoint presentation on how to update your information can be found on the UTSW-Alert webpage. (www.utsouthwestern.edu/utsw-alert)

If you are still having issues updating your information, please contact your departmental administrator or Human Resources Systems & Benefits (214-648-9830). If you have further questions or issues, please send an email to UTSWAlert@utsouthwestern.edu with your full name and person number so that we can investigate your issue. You should have an answer within one business day.

10. I AM A PARENT OR CONCERNED INDIVIDUAL WHO HAS FAMILY OR FRIENDS AT UTSOUTHWESTERN. HOW CAN I REGISTER AND RECEIVE ALERTS?

The program is currently available only to registered campus community members (i.e. faculty, staff, & students) at this time. Other interested individuals may use the alternate communication methods by accessing the web site at www.utsouthwestern.edu/campusemergency or by calling 214-648-UTSW to seek out current information.

11. I HEARD THERE WAS AN INCIDENT ON CAMPUS; HOWEVER, I DID NOT RECEIVE AN ALERT. WHY?

If an incident poses no imminent danger or require a critical announcement for the campus community, an alert will not be sent.

12. HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE FOR EMERGENCY NOTIFICATIONS TO REACH ME?

Once it is determined that there is imminent danger or a critical announcement necessary to the campus community, an alert will be sent via **UTSW-Alert**. It is expected that email, text message and phone alerts will be sent on a "best effort" basis within 15 minutes, however delays may occur depending on the network conditions. Text messaging delays may also occur due to individual wireless phone carrier capacities.

13. I RECEIVED THE UTSW-ALERT PHONE MESSAGE ON A BUSINESS PHONE I SHARE WITH OTHERS. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Because many faculty, staff and students sometimes share a common business phone, you may answer the phone and receive a message from UTSW-Alert that needs to be shared with others in the shared workspace. The recipient should acknowledge receipt of the call - as requested by the system - and then should immediately inform all present staff, visitors or patients within the work area about the situation and any instructions that were provided.

14. I MISSED MY CALL AND RECEIVED A VOICE MAIL FROM UTSW-ALERT. HOW DO I RESPOND?

The system will leave a voice mail message if your answering machine picks up the call. It is meant to be informational and not lose the opportunity to convey the emergency message. Because you cannot respond to voice mails to confirm your receipt, you do not have to respond to the voicemail. The system will recognize that you didn't receive the message directly, and attempt to contact you again by that method, or any of the other methods available.

15. I RECEIVED A NUMERIC PAGE FROM UTSW-ALERT ON MY PAGER THAT LOOKS LIKE THIS: 18886674911 499206. HOW DO I RESPOND?

Because the message pathway is one-way, you will need to contact the system by calling the phone number and entering the "PIN" listed. In this case, the phone number is- 1-888-667-4911. The system will answer and ask you to select instructions in "United States English" or other languages. Select your choice, and then enter your PIN plus the "#" sign. In this case, the PIN number is- 499206.

The emergency message will then play for you. You will not need to confirm your receipt in this pathway as your entering of the PIN confirms your receipt to the system.

16. I RECEIVED MULTIPLE SMS TEXT MESSAGES. WHY ARE THERE SO MANY?

Due to character count restrictions on many wireless carriers, the maximum character limit may be reached by an emergency message from UTSW-Alert. If the character count of the UTSW-Alert message surpasses the wireless carrier's limits, the message will be automatically broken into manageable pieces.

In a real-life emergency, text messages will be crafted to convey the message in as few characters as possible to avoid this issue- if possible

17. I RECEIVED MULTIPLE SMS TEXT MESSAGES, BUT THEY WERE OUT OF ORDER. WHY?

This is another issue related the way a wireless carrier (such as Verizon or Cingular) handles text messages. The UTSW-Alert system sends the message in the correct order, but due to the character count restrictions, the message is broken into manageable pieces. In some cases, the order becomes rearranged during the transfer and recipients get the message out of order.

The system does account for this by placing the moniker- (1/3) which indicates that the message your reading is the first of three.

18. WHEN I RECEIVED AN EMAIL, HOW DO I CONFIRM THAT I RECEIVED THE MESSAGE?

In the body of the UTSW-Alert (campusemergency@utsouthwestern.edu) email message, a link is included that directs recipients to the external website page (3nonline.com) of the vendor (3n Global) which supports this system. This external website confirms your receipt of the message and tracks it for the University.

Do not “reply” to the email or send a message to the Office of Business Continuity as it will not track your response. You may continue to receive other forms of the emergency message because of this.

FOR ALL OTHER QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:

**Office of Business Continuity
214-648-0723**

campusemergency@utsouthwestern.edu
www.utsouthwestern.edu/utsw-alert