

## **WIU EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Western Illinois University's Emergency Alert System (WEAS) allows WIU officials the ability to reach all students and employees with time-sensitive information during unforeseen events or emergencies using voice, e-mail and text messaging. During critical situations, WEAS will be used to broadcast pertinent information and provide details on appropriate response.

The contact information you provide on the Emergency Alert Contact Update screen will not be shared with other entities, and it will be kept private and confidential. The contact information is used only for the WEAS. It will not update the university's student record or personnel systems.

If you have a direct number that bypasses your department's general number and automated attendant, then you should enter your direct telephone number for more efficient emergency contact use.

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**QUESTION:** Why does the Emergency Alert Contact Update screen automatically appear when I sign on at the beginning of each semester?

**ANSWER:** Every member of the WIU campus communities is being required to review and update or simply verify their emergency contact information at the beginning of each term.

**QUESTION:** All of my contact information is already correct. How do I exit the Emergency Alert Contact Update screen?

**ANSWER:** At the beginning of the term when the Emergency Alert Contact Update screen automatically displays after signing in, go to the bottom of the screen and click on "I have reviewed my information and everything is accurate," then click the Enter button.

**QUESTION:** What contact data should I provide the WIU Emergency Alert System (WEAS)?

**ANSWER:** WEAS can deliver messages to up to two home, two school, two cell phone numbers, and one text messaging device. The WIU e-mail address is automatically included, but you may enter an additional e-mail address. If you want to be notified of an emergency between semesters, click on those options as well.

The best emergency contact number may be your cell phone. Also enter your cell phone number in the "SMS Phone" prompt to receive emergency text messages.

**QUESTION:** I heard others received a voice message from the emergency alert system, but I did not. Why?

**ANSWER:** It is possible WEAS does not have your contact information, or the information it has may be inaccurate. Please sign on to STARS at <http://mvs.wiu.edu/stars.html> or MVS/WIUP (employees) to verify your information.

**QUESTION:** I heard others received a text message on their cell phone from the emergency alert system, but I did not. Why?

**ANSWER:** To receive text messages, you need to enter your cell phone number on the Emergency Alert Contact Update screen at the SMS Phone prompt.

**QUESTION:** How do I opt-in to receive text messages from the emergency alert system?

**ANSWER:** To receive text messages, you need to enter your cell phone number on the Emergency Alert Contact Update screen at the SMS Phone prompt.

**QUESTION:** If I change cell phone providers, do I need to opt-in again?

**ANSWER:** No, as long as you keep the same cell number. If your cell number changes, enter the new number on the Emergency Alert Contact Update screen.

**QUESTION:** I received an emergency message in my e-mail inbox, but when I clicked the link to play the message nothing happened. Why?

**ANSWER:** You may not have a default media player like Windows Media Player or Quicktime installed. Download these players from [www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com) or [www.apple.com](http://www.apple.com) and install them on your computer to listen to messages.

**QUESTION:** I received an emergency message but I missed the information. What should I do?

**ANSWER:** While on the call, you can replay the emergency message by pressing the star key (\*) at the end of the message. You may also check your e-mail to locate the link for the emergency message.

**QUESTION:** I received the emergency message but it kept looping/repeating. Why?

**ANSWER:** The system does its best to detect whether it has reached a live person or an answering machine. Sometimes background noises cause the system to repeat the message. If this happens, use the mute feature on your phone or move to a quieter location to prevent a repeat of the message.

**QUESTION:** I see a Caller ID display of 309/298-9999. Who is this?

**ANSWER:** When the WIU Emergency Alert System sends a message, it always displays a Caller ID. This unique number was established to help you recognize the incoming message is an emergency notification. Please save this number on your cell phone as a contact.

**QUESTION:** I am a student who lives at school for part of the year and at my parent/guardian's home for part of the year. What should I enter at the "Home Phone" prompt when I provide my emergency contact information?

**ANSWER:** The system allows for two school telephone numbers and two home telephone numbers. Students should include their school residence telephone number in one of the School Phone prompts on the Emergency Alert Contact Update screen. You may also enter your parent/guardian's home telephone number in one of the Home Phone prompts. If you do this, your parent/guardian's home telephone will be contacted in the event an emergency notification is initiated during the semester.

**QUESTION:** If I change any of my telephone or cell phone numbers on the Emergency Alert Contact Update screen, will it also update my student or employee file?

**ANSWER:** No. All updates made on the Emergency Alert Contact Update screen will only update the WIU Emergency Alert System.

**QUESTION:** My office has an extension number. Will WEAS dial my extension number too?

**ANSWER:** No, not at this time. However, we want to begin collecting extension numbers as WEAS should have that capability in the future.