



NATIONAL LEADERSHIP & SKILLS CONFERENCE

2022

Crisis and Communications Plan

Atlanta Emergency Assistance

Emergency Assistance: 911

City of Atlanta Police: 404-614-6544

Fire: 404-546-7000

MARTA Police: 404-848-4911

MARTA See Something Say Something viaText: 404-334-5355

GWCC Department of Public Safety: 402-223-4911 or dial #4911 within building on red phones.

State Farm Arena: If medical assistance is needed, notify a State Farm Arena staff member or text a message and exact location to (404)-878-3030. First Aid is located on the lower level of State Farm Arena next to the Guest Service Center and on the upper level of the arena across from Section 220/221.

Atlanta Ambassadors (downtown assistance or directions): 404-215-9600

Closest hospitals:

Grady Memorial Hospital

80 Jessie Hill Jr. Drive SE
Atlanta, GA 30303
Phone: 404-616-1000

Atlanta Medical Center

303 Parkway Drive
Atlanta, GA 30312
Phone: 404-265-4000

Emory University Hospital Midtown

550 Peachtree Street NE
Atlanta, GA 30308
Phone: 404-686-4411

For SkillsUSA national staff and SkillsUSA state directors

Updated May 2022

SkillsUSA

14001 SkillsUSA Way

Leesburg, VA 20176

703-777-8810 or 844-875-4557

www.skillsusa.org

Preface

“In everything one must consider the end.” – Jean de La Fontaine

Unfortunate events can occur quickly and without warning. Planning is a crucial step in dealing with any crisis in a calm and effective manner. The welfare and safety of all SkillsUSA members is always the ultimate goal. This plan focuses on the SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference (NLSC), but these tools and resources may be used for any state or local event. A crisis is any situation that threatens members or participants, or the integrity or reputation of the SkillsUSA organization. It may be an event that can be attributed to SkillsUSA, that affects SkillsUSA, or it can be the perception of the media, members or the public that our association did not react appropriately to circumstances. We are sharing this plan as a way to formalize how SkillsUSA will handle a critical incident at the national conference. This SkillsUSA plan covers the basics of crisis management and crisis communications following an incident.

This guide can help SkillsUSA staff and SkillsUSA state directors be ready to assist their delegations in the event of a critical incident. This guide can also be used as a framework to develop a state-level crisis plan. Your state plan should be tailored to the scope and size of your events and facilities, and should reflect your state or local school emergency policies. It is wise to review your plan annually and update it as needed. When hosting or attending any event conference, state leaders should appoint a crisis team of at least two individuals plus themselves to handle critical events.

This plan was prepared at the request of the SkillsUSA Board of Directors to establish policy and procedures during a crisis at our national conference. SkillsUSA staff and SkillsUSA state directors should be familiar with this resource and keep a link to the guide on your computer or mobile device. This guide is not provided as legal advice nor as a mandate or directive but as a resource to guide your thoughts and actions in the event of a crisis during a state or national conference.

What is a critical incident?

A critical incident is an emergency situation that takes place quickly and has long-lasting implications. Most critical incidents have these characteristics:

- Involves serious illness, injuries or fatalities of one or more persons.
- Involves destruction or the displacement of groups of people.
- Involves large-scale, sustained interruption of services.
- Involves terrorism or violence to others.
- Involves evacuation of participants from a program site.
- Involves an emergency situation with multiple victims.

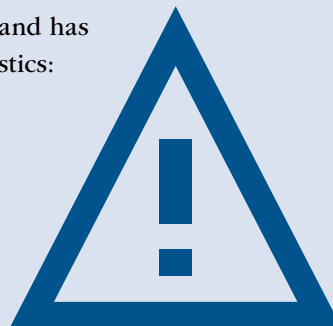


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Contact Lists

- Internal Contact Lists
- Service Suppliers
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- SkillsUSA Code of Conduct for NLSC

Incident Reporting Forms

- SkillsUSA Incident Reporting Form
- Underage Missing Person
- Bus/Car/Ground Transportation Accident
- Fire Emergency
- Intruder or Trespasser
- Bomb Threat or Suspicious Package

Points to Remember

In a crisis it is important to gather facts, respond quickly, notify others and to make careful decisions with the best information that is currently available.

- **Call 911 FIRST when a situation requires police or medical assistance**
- **Have a list of emergency contacts for the delegation and keep it accessible to you and your state team**

At national conference, state leaders are provided with Crisis Management Cards that are distributed at your registration appointment or at the first SkillsUSA state director meeting. The Crisis Management Card should be placed in the conference badge holder behind your name tag, or in your wallet, so it is easy to locate in an emergency.

At in-person events, report any crisis to the Conference Manager or to Executive Director Chelle Travis or her team. Anyone in the conference headquarters or SkillsUSA offices can assist to connect you to the right person.

If a SkillsUSA participant is removed from any conference facility due to a very serious illness or injury and taken to a doctor's office, hospital or urgent care center for medical treatment, please report it to their advisor and SkillsUSA state director. Make note of where they are taken and what happened. Also write down what the names of anyone who witnessed the injury or illness (official reports can be filled out later). Be sure to notify a parent or legal guardian. If a student needs to go to the doctor from the conference hotel due to an illness such as strep throat or a cough, it should be treated, but do not report routine illness to national staff.

For critical incidents, a crisis command center will be set up at SkillsUSA Headquarters in the convention center. If necessary, the SkillsUSA team will hold a crisis meeting. We must speak with one voice in a crisis. Therefore, SkillsUSA will appoint one or more official spokespersons for the organization. Staff and SkillsUSA state directors should defer to the executive director, the crisis team and the official spokesperson. This ensures we share correct information while also respecting the privacy of our members. Making remarks during a crisis can also have legal implications.

Steps in a Crisis

There are five steps to follow in a critical incident:

1. In the event of an emergency, call 911 before taking action or contacting others.
2. If there is immediate danger, move all participants out of harm's way and treat the injured until help arrives.
3. If the event results in serious injury, fatality or affects the health of two or more people, initiate the Crisis Plan as outlined in this guide and contact executive director Chelle Travis.
4. Assess all situations carefully; don't ignore them, but do not overreact as effective and calm action is critical.
5. Information from witnesses may be crucial to emergency personnel, authorities or the crisis team; ask witnesses for their contact information.

Pandemic Guidance

SkillsUSA has continued to provide COVID-19 guidance around our ability to host in-person events and our decisions related to national conferences. Our primary concern is the health and safety of students and stakeholders. Separate guidance documents have been provided to SkillsUSA state directors for the SkillsUSA Championships and NLSC, and the latest information is located on SkillsUSA CONNECT in the SkillsUSA state director section. SkillsUSA has sample COVID Travel Waivers you can adapt for your state. Request a sample from Chelle Travis or the Office of the Executive Director if your state department of education or school systems have not provided these. It is important to have a health and safety plan in place and communicate it to your delegation members before they travel.

SkillsUSA State Director Responsibilities

1. SkillsUSA state directors become members of the crisis team, if a member of your delegation is involved.
2. SkillsUSA state directors should immediately report any critical incident to the SkillsUSA executive director.
3. If the national staff determines there is a crisis, the SkillsUSA state director will be called right after any 911 emergency calls are made.
4. SkillsUSA state directors will determine who makes contact with their families and schools. National staff can assist with initial contact or follow-ups.
5. SkillsUSA state directors should confirm cellphone numbers for delegation members at your on-site orientation.
6. During orientation, review the hotel fire and weather emergency plans, and designate where to meet in the event of evacuation from the hotel. Anticipate the needs of individuals with disabilities.
7. Remind your members to report suspicious activity.
8. All luggage, personal items and tool boxes should have ID tags. All participants should have a photo ID.

Tips for State Leaders

Keep your cellphone on and charged at all times.

SkillsUSA state directors should be available in an emergency. Be sure to assign back up support as well. Provide your cellphone number to advisors, state officers or others who may need to reach you, including the SkillsUSA national staff. Your state team should know your daily schedule. Maintain contact information for all delegation members. Meet with your hotel staff when you arrive to NLSC and know how to reach hotel security. Review any emergency plans with your team.

Review the **SkillsUSA Code of Conduct** on page 17 at your first onsite state delegation meeting, including disciplinary actions to be carried out for any violations.

If the Event Involves an Injury or Death

As soon as emergency becomes known, determine the extent of injuries, where victims are taken, names of the victims and status of the injured.

- Identify victim(s) as completely as possible
- Write down information and contacts for follow-up
- Report to executive director or conference manager
- Notify the SkillsUSA state director
- SkillsUSA state director notifies family and school
- Notify immediate family before releasing information
- Designate someone to stay at hospital until family can arrive

Crisis Team Roles and Responsibilities

The crisis team evaluates the crisis, takes corrective action and launches appropriate internal and external communications. The SkillsUSA state director is included as a member of the crisis team if his or her state is involved.

The executive director, the conference manager and her team and the national headquarters department directors must maintain a copy of this plan, accessible from any location.

All staff and all SkillsUSA state directors should carry a crisis card with them at all times. These crisis cards are updated annually and provided during the conference on-site registration appointment.

Other individuals may be appointed to serve on the crisis team including SkillsUSA state directors; members of the board of directors; individuals involved in the incident; national staff members; technical committee members; other volunteers; conference center, hotel or convention and visitors bureau staff; and legal counsel.

Crisis Team Members

SkillsUSA Crisis Team Leader: Chelle Travis, leader

SkillsUSA Crisis Management Team: SkillsUSA Conference Manager Courtney Ferrell and leadership team members Kim Graham, Kelly Horton, Tom Kercheval and Gina Flores Stumpf. Other staff, partners, suppliers or vendors will be assigned as needed, depending upon the type of crisis and their areas of responsibility or expertise.

Crisis Communications Team: Office of Communication members including director Tom Kercheval, Karen Kitzel, Jane Short, Craig Moore, Scott Price, Hayley Uffelman and media room volunteers, as needed.

Role of the Executive Director and Conference Manager

- Leads the crisis team and establishes a command post
- Makes all operational decisions, leads crisis meetings
- Serves as point persons to receive information
- Serves as official spokespersons for the association
- Consults with the board of directors
- Assigns staff or others to the crisis team
- Delegates authority to others to carry out tasks

Role of the Crisis Management Team

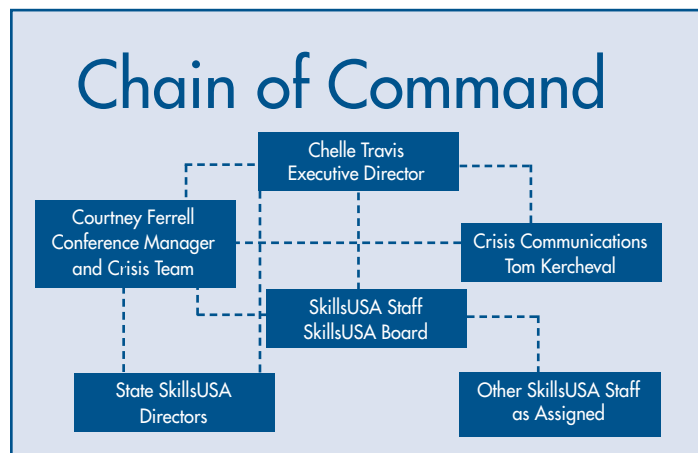
- Helps establish the command post
- Supports the executive director and conference manager
- Oversees and manages corrective actions
- Helps authorities gather information from witnesses
- Assesses the incident and formulates a joint plan of action
- Coordinates with convention center, hotels or authorities
- Maintains a written record of incidents and actions

Role of the Director of Communications

- Establishes a communications plan of action
- Writes messages, statements and press releases
- Disseminates information to stakeholder groups
- Oversees media inquiries and story development

Role of the Director of Administration and Finance

- Oversees and manages financial aspects of crisis
- Establishes temporary staff operations or field offices
- Works with affected parties to resolve all issues



Continuity of Leadership

In the event the executive director is unable to perform her duties during national conference, the following temporary leadership succession is in place, listed in the order of succession:

- SkillsUSA Leadership Team working as a group
- Board President, working with Leadership Team
- Director, Office of Education
- Director, Office of Administration and Finance
- Director, Office of Communications
- Director, Office of Business Partnerships/Development

The Board of Directors will call an emergency meeting to designate leadership roles and responsibilities, if necessary.

Potential Emergencies

Some emergencies will strike without warning, and some are highly unlikely. Other emergencies can be anticipated such as hurricanes and floods. Here are potential emergencies to consider:

Natural disasters: flood, fire, hurricane or earthquake.

Illness: COVID-19, a viral outbreak or food poisoning.

Member-related individual acts: accidents while using tools or equipment; acts against people or property including burglary, vandalism or physical or sexual assault; missing

person; accidental death; homicide, suicide or active shooter scenarios.

Transportation incidents: Accidents involving students and advisors while traveling to conference by car, bus, train or plane.

Lost, stolen or missing goods: Substantial amount of missing or stolen tools, equipment, prizes or other materials; theft of money.

Office building or conference facility emergencies: Cancellations by hotel or conference facilities; prolonged loss of power at hotel or conference center; fire or flood; roof collapse; chemical spill; major vandalism, terrorism or bombing at convention center, hotel or other site.

Lost data; breach of computer systems; or damaged computers and printers: Loss or breach of data for registration and scoring. Lost or damaged computer systems.

Association management emergencies: Unanticipated departure of a key employee due to quitting, firing, illness, accident or death; termination or unanticipated departure of a key volunteer; financial wrongdoing, theft or unanticipated loss of funding; protests by members or activists; lawsuits against the organization; substantial shortage of judges or volunteers; serious error in judgment by staff or volunteers.

Notifications During an Emergency

The executive director will initiate notification by phone, group or individual text messages, emails, information posted on the SkillsUSA website, social media or other communication as appropriate. Follow any instructions provided. Keep cellphones charged and powered on.

Conference Evacuation

- Remain calm, be quiet and listen for instructions.
- If you see fire or smell smoke, call 911.
- If there is a fire, an audible alarm will sound.

Medical Emergencies

- When in doubt, call 911 for emergency assistance
- If you know CPR, perform it until help arrives
- Remove any dangers but don't move the victim

Lockdown

Incidents at SkillsUSA Conference

- All students stay in place with a teacher or staff
- Stay in meeting rooms, lock doors, turn off lights, shut blinds, block door, hide and remain quiet
- If using a cellphone to text, use silent mode.
- No one should enter or exit the building without instruction to do so, except officials
- If in a contest area, get low and out of sight
- If you are outside and can leave safely, then run

- Leave the facility through the nearest exit.
- Do not take the time to gather up personal property.
- Do not use the elevators, instead take the stairs.
- Assist disabled or elderly persons who need help.
- Do not re-enter building until instructed to do so.

Medical Emergency

Getting help is never wrong in a potential emergency. Assess the situation and remove any hazards. Identify yourself and provide medical help if you can. Minimize or avoid contact with body fluids (wear gloves and wash with soap after exposure). Place blood-soaked bandages, gloves and clothing in a plastic bag.

- If you see an injured person, get medical help
- If in doubt, call 911 for emergency assistance
- Know your location and the nearest entrance
- Be able to calmly describe the emergency
- Perform CPR IF you have Red Cross training
- Ask victims if you can provide help and identify yourself
- If illness escalates quickly, take individual to hospital
- Do not move the injured, unless there is nearby danger
- Stay with injured people until emergency help arrives
- If someone is mentally distressed, distraught, highly emotional or appears unwell, stay with them and seek medical help

Bomb Threats or Other Threats to Persons

- Threats made on social media to people or places should be captured with a screenshot and reported.
- For threats made by phone, save the phone number.

- Take notes or record the conversation, if possible.
- Listen for background noise and take notes.
- Have someone call 911 while you are on the phone.
- Follow the instructions of emergency responders.

Suspicious Packages

- Alert authorities/conference personnel to the package.
- Do not touch or move a suspicious package.
- Note the location and description of the package.
- Follow instructions of authorities/conference personnel.

Lockdown or Lock In Procedures

A lockdown or lock in is a precautionary measure in response to a threat to a school or student activity, or in the surrounding community. In a lockdown, all activities are moved indoors. In a lock in, people remain inside the building and exterior doors to a building may be locked. In some circumstances, it is safer for those already in a room to remain inside. In a lockdown, the main goal is to protect students and yourself:

- Remain calm, quiet and follow instructions
- Go to an interior room with few windows
- Close the door and remain quiet; stay low or hidden
- Turn out the lights and hide from danger, if necessary
- Barricade the door with a chair or desk if possible
- Listen for “all clear” sign before leaving the building

Severe Weather Events Or Natural Disasters

Severe weather events such as storms, earthquakes or tornadoes can have warning or can occur quickly. Be alert to weather warnings and announcements. Follow these guidelines for severe weather events.

Earthquake

- Stay where you are, get low and take cover
- Do not run outside
- Drop to the ground so you will not be knocked down
- Cover your head and neck with your arms
- Protect yourself from falling debris
- If there are falling objects, take cover
- Stay away from windows, outside doors and walls

- Move away from buildings, streetlights or utility wires
- If driving, stop your vehicle and stay inside it
- Avoid driving on damaged roads, bridges or ramps

Tornado

- Go the lowest level of building; don't open windows
- If there is no basement, go to a small interior room
- Stay away from windows, doors or outside walls
- Get under a table; use your arms to protect your head

Thunderstorms and Lightning

- Avoid driving or walking outside during bad weather
- If you are driving, exit the roadway and stay in vehicle
- Take shelter in hotel, convention center or other building
- Stay away from windows, doors and balconies
- Use your cellphone for current weather updates
- Locate flashlights if the power may go out
- Avoid contact with metal, cords and electrical items
- Cellphones not plugged into chargers are fine to use
- Do not use sink or take a shower
- Do not lie on concrete floors or lean on concrete walls
- Avoid standing under tall trees in an open area
- Avoid hilltops, open fields, beaches or open water
- Avoid small structures in open areas

Weather Emergency Definitions

Watch: Atmospheric conditions are unstable. Severe weather is predicted. SkillsUSA staff monitors local weather and traffic and receives alerts 24 hours a day. Continue normal activities with no alert or announcement to the students. Monitor conditions and weather channels for deteriorating conditions.

Warning: Severe and dangerous weather approaching. The SkillsUSA conference team will engage a severe weather action plan. Quickly move students to designated areas, shelters or hallways without windows or wide overhead spans. Check to see that all students are in designated areas. Remove students from damaged areas and report injuries. Monitor until the danger passes and all-clear signal is given.

Activities at Outside Venues

If conference participants are at an outside venue and the weather gets dangerous (heavy rain, lightning or hail) or is scheduled to do so, check radar and relocate your members.

Command Center

The command center will be located in SkillsUSA Headquarters or the Media Room at the convention center, or another location as determined by the executive director. Command Center should have access to:

- Conference registration lists
- Contact lists for national staff and key volunteers
- Contact list for SkillsUSA state directors
- Contact information for local police and fire
- Contact information for contracted venues
- Individual hotel reservation list from housing system
- Contact information for suppliers and contractors
- Local maps and facility diagrams
- Contact information for local news media
- Copy of the current crisis plan for reference
- Cellphones, phone chargers and two-way radios
- Computers with internet access
- Data backups and data protection systems in place
- Printer and reams of white and colored paper
- Office supplies (pads, pens, pencils, tape, stapler)
- Water and food
- First aid supplies
- Megaphone
- Emergency radio



Those assigned to monitor conditions will use a weather app on mobile devices or computers. If cellular service is not available, they will monitor weather through observation and reporting from various areas.

Emergency Codes

Most school systems have established emergency status codes for use inside school buildings and these can also relate to student conferences. Because SkillsUSA is an education association, the codes are listed here as an additional reference point for SkillsUSA state directors.

Code Red

Code Red indicates an incident has occurred or a high level of threat has been detected. This includes (but is not limited to) threats to others, hostage situations, intruders, student unrest or large fight, a shooting, a stabbing, a suicidal person or a person with a weapon. Responses for a Code Red Alert are dictated by the type of incident. Groups should seek shelter in a meeting room, block the door, turn off lights, remain quiet and follow instructions. The appropriate emergency personnel and law enforcement officials will be notified, and communication with emergency dispatch will be maintained until emergency responders reach the scene. State staff and teachers should supervise students and ensure that they remain together and in secure areas.

Code Yellow

Code Yellow indicates that conditions exist for the occurrence of a major incident and that a heightened state of security is appropriate but no immediate danger is detected. This is a report of a potential incident or impending crisis. Be careful. Lock doors. Take students to a sheltered area until further notified. Staff may conduct an inspection of the entire facility and check all entrances. Law enforcement and site security are notified when there is suspicious activity.

Code Blue

Code Blue indicates a medical emergency. Call for medical assistance and provide the nature of the emergency and the location of the student(s) or others. All others should continue with their scheduled activities.

Code Green

Code Green is an "all clear" authorized by the conference management. An announcement may be made to inform

members and to reduce rumors. A written statement may be distributed to attendees to explain what occurred and what was done to maintain safety.

Hotel Safety Tips

Staying in a hotel can be exciting for students who haven't traveled before. However, be sure to review hotel etiquette and safety at your state orientation and reinforce it through the week.

Hotel Safety Plans

When you meet with hotel staff, request information on their emergency procedures. Ask the location of the hotel security staff, and get the phone number for security. Add these to your cellphone and crisis notebook.

Here are general safety tips and emergency procedures:

Hotel Safety

- Read the emergency information on the hotel room door
- Familiarize yourself with the hotel's fire escape route
- Do not leave your hotel room door propped open
- Always use the dead bolt when inside the room
- Do not open the hotel door to anyone you don't know
- Keep your room key with you at all times
- Do not say your hotel or room number out in public
- Do not leave valuables in hotel room (use room safe)
- Always let someone else know where you are going

Hotel Parking Safety

- Always lock your vehicle doors
- Do not leave valuables in view inside a vehicle
- Remove school signs from vehicles, if magnetic
- Do not store an extra key under the car fender
- Hide any valuables before you park in a parking garage

Safety Tips for Public Transportation

- If you ride the bus or train, know the cost and routes
- Do not wear a name badge on public transportation
- Have a system to account for all of your group members
- Don't fall asleep on public transportation
- Check for belongings as you exit an Uber, bus or train
- Don't have overly familiar conversations with strangers
- Share cellphone numbers (create buddy system)

- Have your cellphone charged and with you
- Be aware of emergency exits
- Follow the instructions of drivers or conductors

Hotel Evacuation

If evacuation is announced when students are sleeping:

- Call, text and knock on hotel room doors to alert students
- Avoid elevators and take the stairs to exit the building
- Meet in a predetermined safe area outside the hotel
- Advisors should account for all of their students
- Report any missing or injured students right away
- Advisors and students should stay together
- Following evacuation, conduct room checks
- Help students know what to convey to family at home

If evacuation is announced during day meetings:

- Staff should help students to the nearest hotel exits
- Students and advisors should stay together
- Advisors should account for all students
- Report any missing or injured students

Conference Hotel Major Issues and Cancellations

The conference manager negotiates all of the conference hotels and convention space. If something happens just prior to NLSC that affects the conference as a whole or your assigned hotel, always talk to the SkillsUSA conference manager *before* contacting the hotel directly. The conference manager will know the status of your hotel block, the conference cancellation policy and what happens due to the inability of hotels to provide rooms and will assist you.

Data Protection

SkillsUSA protects against critical data loss by backing up all computer data including conference registration lists and scoring documents.

SkillsUSA state directors should back up and have access to all state registration lists, delegation cellphone lists, home contact information, winners lists or other data that is considered critical to their state operations.

Communicating In a Crisis

The main purpose of a crisis communications plan is to protect an organization's integrity and reputation by managing public relations during and after an emergency.

The crisis management team is responsible for securing accurate information as quickly as possible. Timeliness is important, but statements must be accurate to the best of the spokesperson's ability.

One or more crisis team members will be assigned to work with the communications team to coordinate data, research or statements from primary sources (those involved), eyewitnesses, conference or hotel staff, security officers, authorities or others involved in the event.

Anticipate that police, fire department or health officials may have their own spokesperson. Meet such individuals as early as possible so official statements can be coordinated between the organizations and you can discuss who is speaking on what topics.

Staff, volunteers and others in areas of responsibility should defer to the official spokesperson rather than commenting upon a critical incident themselves. This is true when contacted by the news media but also when speaking with other students and teachers, staff, parents, partners, etc.

The crisis team will do everything in its power to be well-informed of the facts of what has happened and what actions are being taken.

Comments by those who are less informed may cause uncertainty, anxiety or confusion among conference attendees, the news media and the public. Once a statement is made, it is difficult to correct. Make it accurate the first time.

Communications Objectives

1. The goal is for the critical incident to be resolved quickly, efficiently and fully.
2. Any damaging charges against SkillsUSA that are not true should be countered and put into proper perspective.
3. Members, the news media, sponsors and other key

publics should view the SkillsUSA organization as responsive and responsible in carrying out the mission and in protecting our members.

4. SkillsUSA will carry out its mission and be minimally affected by the crisis.

Ways to Communicate

Public: Share announcements via the SkillsUSA NLSC app. Post official statements, press releases or news alerts on the SkillsUSA website or social media accounts. Facebook, Twitter and Instagram can be used to share major bulletins and to receive comments from members and the public. A voicemail message can help answer questions during non-business hours. If needed, set up a hotline with operators in a large-scale situation.

Stakeholders and staff: Call, email or group text the board of directors, SkillsUSA state directors and staff. Ask staff to place a message on their office phone and cellphone (provide a script of what to say). Share a prepared statement to staff so the message is consistent. Hold a staff meeting.

Positioning the Story

To decide on a position, the team has to step out of its role in the association and view the crisis from the eye of the public. The most pressing audience is the news media. Keep in mind that the association speaker knows more about the subject (the event and SkillsUSA) than they do. Plan carefully, but information must flow as soon as possible. We cannot control news coverage. We can control what we say. The sooner we speak to the media, the better.

Four Essential Ground Rules

Provide accurate information as soon as you can. This sets up a cooperative relationship with the news media and gives you control. Refusing to speak to the news media may cause problems later.

1. Never try to lie, deny or hide involvement.
2. Do not ignore situations that may only get worse.
3. Don't let lawyers make all the decisions; use common sense. A lawyer's role is to protect by limiting exposure.
4. People tend to remember what they hear first and last. In crisis communications, saying as much as you can (honestly and truthfully) is the most important thing.

Categories to Consider for Positioning

When considering the position, it is important to consider the wide range of consequences that may result from the position (eg. legal, financial, public relations, effects on administration, effects on operations). This is a good time to speak to the association attorney who is on retainer.

Categories that might need to be addressed:

- Human error or clerical error, errors in judgment
- Unauthorized procedures or inadequate supervision
- Inadequate quality control or operating procedures
- Misuse of confidential information

Message Guidelines

The following information should be made available:

- Nature of the critical incident; number hurt/involved.
- Steps taken by SkillsUSA to resolve the situation.
- Impact on SkillsUSA and its ability to deliver services.
- How and where to reach the crisis team.
- If safety precautions were taken, point those out.
- Emphasize the excellent safety record of SkillsUSA.
- Correct inaccuracies in any news reports.
- Turn the crisis into a “safety tip” story by reporters.
- Do not discuss monetary estimates of damage.
- Do not discuss insurance coverage or retribution.
- Do not speculate about cause(s) of incident.
- Do not speculate about injuries, or allocate blame.

Spokesperson Guidelines

Inform staff of the incident through the crisis management team. Advise staff not to comment to ensure consistency of message. All statements should be made by the official spokesperson. Avoid saying, “I’m not supposed to speak about it.” This sounds as though something is being hidden. Instead say, “The spokesperson has the most up-to-date information and facts. Let’s connect you to him/her.”

Have all facts available, and verify all facts. Anticipate possible questions and answers. Be sure to express compassion and sympathy.

Speak with authority. Although anxiety is likely in any critical incident, try to speak slowly with a calming effect.

Close the communications loop quickly. Respond to the media fully and truthfully.

Avoid escalating issues. Avoid overreacting, speculating or volunteering too much information. Only answer what is asked directly.

Don’t be defensive. If you don’t know the answer to a question, don’t give one. Answers are hard to retrieve.

Avoid responding with “no comment.” Instead say, “I don’t have enough information, let me get back to you on that.” Then be sure to do so.

Be proactive. Don’t wait for the news media to call. Think before you speak. Respect deadlines.

Practice the Tough Questions

A crisis situation raises tough questions from the news media and stakeholders. It’s important, therefore, for the spokesperson to prepare with the communications team the kinds of questions that will be asked and that key audiences will want answered. At the onset of a critical incident, the spokesperson, backup and advisors should spend time rehearsing prepared statements and answers to possible tough questions. If possible, a rehearsal should be conducted prior to each media briefing or news conference. It is also important to anticipate and practice new questions as the story evolves. It is better to be prepared than surprised.

The communications team may prepare potential questions and answers for internal use only. Don’t volunteer information unless it is a point SkillsUSA wants to make and the question hasn’t been asked.

Don’t speak off the record. There is no such thing. Here are some examples of the kinds of questions that may be asked:

- *“Who’s to blame?”*
- *“Was this caused by bad management or by someone’s incompetence?”*
- *“This was preventable. How did this get out of hand?”*

Handling Tough Questions

Remember first and foremost, the news media is your friend. Media exposure allows us to set the record straight. By answering tough questions, SkillsUSA is recognized as a responsible association. Sample answers to questions:

“We don’t have reliable information at this time. We’re working to gather it. If you want further information, please give us time to get it and verify it.”

“The public wants information; that’s what we’re after.”

“I understand your concern and I share it. Please give us a chance to get that information.”

Press Releases and Prepared Statements

In some cases, a press release or prepared statement makes sense. Only give facts that have been gathered from reliable sources and confirmed. Don’t speculate or guess what happened out loud.

- A short prepared statement should be used when making an initial general response to the media.
- If not much is known, the spokesperson can express concern for SkillsUSA members, our sponsors or employees and volunteers involved in the critical incident.
- Expressing concern and generating goodwill among members and sponsors secures their loyalty. Take the initiative to share information with them. If employees, members and sponsors don’t feel that they are informed, they will act like outsiders and the crisis becomes larger.
- As the crisis progresses and new information and facts are available, new prepared statements should be made by the spokesperson at the beginning of any media interview, briefing or news conference.
- A short statement can be posted to the website or on social media or emailed to stakeholders and reporters.

Media Inquiries

It is essential to answer calls from the news media promptly. A record should be kept of who called, who they represent, what questions were asked, their contact information and deadlines.

As soon as possible after the initial report of the critical incident, a prepared statement should be given to communications support staff and/or all staff.

The statement should be simple:

“Facts are still being gathered. There will be a press conference at [time]. Please give me your name and number, and I will call you back to let you know where and when.” Or, “Facts are still being gathered. We will have a statement prepared by [time]. Please give me your name, number and email. I will contact you when the statement is ready.”

Keep Communications Confidential

This is simple but important: Be sure to take steps to keep information and communications confidential. When speaking to staff, remind them to hold information in confidence at the beginning of each meeting. Do not discuss critical incidents in a public place where you can be overheard. **Do not state names or the specifics of what happened without considering each individual’s right to privacy.** Lack of confidentiality can make a crisis worse.

Social Media Posts and Responses

Individuals in crisis situations can use social media in several different ways. While status updates are often jokingly associated with daily life updates, in the wake of a terror attack or natural disaster, taking a second to write “I’m OK” on social media is a quick way to relieve your friends and family from worry. Facebook has taken this to the next level by releasing Facebook Safety Check, an update that allows Facebook to ask if you’re OK when a natural disaster occurs in your city. If you are OK, it sends out a status update that says, “I’m safe.”

In some major situations, the police and FBI use social media to recruit the public’s help to find suspects by releasing photos, video or other information. The general public can crowdsource information and provide clues, tips or bits of information. Social media can also be used effectively to spread health and safety information during crisis, a power outage, a weather event or a contagious outbreak.

Social media can also have a negative impact during a crisis. Sometimes, people on social media say things that are not true. There is no truth filter, so if you rely on a stream of opinions and misinformation as your news source, it’s not always reliable. Despite this, studies have shown that while social media does spread both true and false information during a crisis, social media then quashes the false information and promotes the truth. It often rectifies itself.

SkillsUSA has a social media specialist and a webmaster. They will post messages to social media and monitor responses and provide feedback on all sites.

Sample Statements

Reporters may call before all the facts have been gathered. In such an instance, a short statement acknowledging the situation can be prepared. The statement acknowledges that SkillsUSA recognizes the need to cooperate with the media and inform the public. This statement will be the basis for all future communications. By following a few basic principles when writing the statement, SkillsUSA can meet the news media's needs.

1. Tell the important information in the lead paragraph.
2. Answer four of the five W's: who, what, where and when. Explain **What** the incident is. Identify **Who** is involved in the incident as well as the resources and equipment involved. Tell **Where** and **When** the incident occurred. Explain **What** action SkillsUSA is taking to mitigate or respond to the incident. (Do not explain **Why** the event occurred unless complete information is available and has been approved. Attempting to explain the Why without complete information is speculation.)
3. Write remaining information in descending order of importance. Explain technical points in simple language. A direct quote can add the human element to otherwise technical information and help explain a situation or event in layman's terms. Tell the real story. Avoid using language that is overly bureaucratic. Be concise.

Sample Statement

Incident at SkillsUSA Conference

An incident occurred [**when and where**] during a SkillsUSA event that in turn activated a comprehensive emergency response.

The incident was contained within one facility, although investigations and related follow-up activities will continue for several days or weeks. SkillsUSA's top priority is the safety and security of our members, partners and employees.

We know of the following fatalities/injuries: [**insert names**]. State and federal privacy laws limit our ability to provide any additional information.

The following programs and conference events were affected or cancelled [**insert program names, facility or event**].

Other information: [**insert additional information as appropriate**].

Crisis Evaluation

No matter how well a crisis team performs, there is always room for improvement. Following a crisis, take time to evaluate all systems and actions to improve the plan for the next time.

Questions to ask crisis team

- Did we restore and preserve the safety of members?
- Were critical incidents handled effectively?
- Was the crisis resolved?
- Does the news media view SkillsUSA as responsive?
- Will SkillsUSA continue to carry out its mission?
- Did the crisis team carry out its responsibilities?
- Did SkillsUSA speak with one voice during the crisis?
- Did SkillsUSA follow the crisis plan?
- Were all staff members prepared to participate?

- Did we recognize a potential crisis before it escalated?
- Did we restore normal operations quickly?
- Did we provide services as promised to members?
- Did we restore confidence of members, partners and stakeholders?
- Did we correct any problems in our systems?

After the crisis

- Send thank-you letters to staff, families, volunteers
- Communicate follow-up message to key audiences
- Distribute a summary news release, if appropriate
- Hold a meeting to debrief the crisis team or staff
- Critique the crisis plan and update it as needed

Appendix

Contact Lists

One of the key aspects of a crisis plan is knowing ahead of time how to reach people in an emergency. Take the time to gather phone numbers and add them to your phone, clearly identified. Staff phone lists are distributed prior to conference and should be added to this crisis plan. We suggest saving contact lists as you receive them to your devices or print them and place in a binder.

Internal Contact Lists

- SkillsUSA staff cellphone numbers
- SkillsUSA state director cellphone numbers
- Convention Center staff and security contacts
- Board of Directors (cellphones, emails and hotel list)
- SkillsUSA Partners (cellphones, emails and hotel list)
- List of SkillsUSA Championships technical committees
- Key volunteers
- Vendors and suppliers

Service Suppliers

- Hotels, including front desk and security
- Conference Center facility managers
- Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Caterers or restaurants being used for events
- Contracted facilities management, center decorator
- Insurance agent
- Travel agent
- Banking or financial services

Emergency Services

- Police (emergency and non emergency numbers)
- Fire departments, hospitals and ambulance services
- On-site security (contracted by SkillsUSA)
- On-site EMT services (contracted by SkillsUSA)

SkillsUSA Code of Conduct for NLSC

The NLSC Personal and Liability Release Form and Code of Conduct Agreement states certain expectations about conduct of all conference registrants, as well as how information that is provided may be used.

Be sure to keep a current copy in your crisis plan notebook.

Incident Reporting Forms

SkillsUSA Incident Reporting Form

Missing Person

Bus/Car/Ground Transportation Accident

Fire Emergency

Intruder, Trespasser or Active Shooter

Bomb Threat or Suspicious Package



CONFERENCE REGISTRATION, PERSONAL AND LIABILITY RELEASE FORM

Please read over this entire form. Then, complete the *entire* form. Type or print clearly.

- Participants must wear their name badge *at all times* during the conference.
- They should also carry a copy of their medical insurance card at all times.

1 Complete this entire section.

Participant's HOME address is required. Do not use the school address as a home address.

Email address is required. Conference information will be sent electronically.

SkillsUSA State Association:			Parents' /Guardians' Names (if participant is under age 18):		
Check one:	<input type="checkbox"/> High School Division (Secondary)	<input type="checkbox"/> Middle School Division	Parents' Telephone Number (area code required): ()		
<input type="checkbox"/> College/Postsecondary Division					
Participant's Name (First, Last) as it should appear on name badge:			Name of SkillsUSA Advisor for participant's occupational area:		
Participant's HOME Address:			School where participant's occupational training/trade area is taught:		
City:	State:	ZIP Code:	Mailing Address of above school:		
HOME Telephone (area code required): ()	CELL Phone (area code required): ()	City:	State:	ZIP Code:	
Age:	Date of Birth (MM/DD/YY):	Check one: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	School Telephone Number (area code required): ()		
EMAIL address (to receive important instructions/contest updates before conference):			Participant's T-shirt Size: <input type="checkbox"/> Small <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Large <input type="checkbox"/> 1X <input type="checkbox"/> 2X <input type="checkbox"/> 3X <input type="checkbox"/> 4X <input type="checkbox"/> 5X		

2 Contestants *only*, complete this section.

All others, complete this section.

Check: <input type="checkbox"/> Contestant	Contest in which competing:
Graduation Year:	Occupational Training/Trade Area in which contestant is enrolled:
Check one: <input type="checkbox"/> Advisor (Teacher) <input type="checkbox"/> State Association Director <input type="checkbox"/> Observer (Student, Family, Child, Other, Etc.) _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Voting Delegate <input type="checkbox"/> State Office	

3 Complete this on-site emergency contact/ADA information.

Name of Teacher/Adult chaperoning participant at conference:	Check YES if participant has a disability that meets criteria specified in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): <input type="checkbox"/> YES Describe: _____
ON-SITE Telephone Number of teacher/adult chaperone (area code required): ()	Check YES if participant has dietary restrictions: <input type="checkbox"/> YES Describe: _____

4 Complete the signature to signify the participant's agreement to ALL statements on both sides of this registration form.

I have read and completely understand the Personal Liability and Medical Release Form, the Code of Conduct, the Release of Personal Information Through Lead Retrieval System statement, and the Photography and Sound Release agreement, and, by signing below, do hereby agree to abide by these in their entirety, accept the conditions of the agreements, and completely release SkillsUSA's national and state associations. I have provided all necessary medical information to the adult chaperon at this event so that this person may act on my behalf in case of a medical emergency.

PARTICIPANTS — PLEASE SIGN BELOW IF YOU ARE OVER AGE 18 AND ATTEST:

Signature

Date

Full Name (Please Print)

PARENT / GUARDIAN / CHAPERONE — SIGN BELOW TO ATTEST (MANDATORY IF PARTICIPANT IS UNDER AGE 18):

Signature

Date

Full Name (Please Print)

SkillsUSA Personal Liability and Medical Release Form

I hereby release SkillsUSA Inc., its representatives, agents and employees from liability for any injury to the named person, resulting from any cause whatsoever occurring to the named person at any time while attending this SkillsUSA conference, including travel to and from the conference, excepting only such injury or damage resulting from willful acts of SkillsUSA representatives, agents or employees. I voluntarily assume all risk and danger relating to the conference, whether occurring prior to, during or after the event.

I voluntarily authorize the SkillsUSA conference medical services coordinator or designees to administer and/or obtain routine or emergency diagnostic procedures and/or routine or emergency medical treatment for the named person as deemed necessary in medical judgment. Parents/guardians of participant will allow emergency medical treatment to be administered as needed. Any further treatment will require parental/guardian consultation.

I agree to indemnify and hold harmless SkillsUSA Inc. and its medical services coordinator and/or designees for any and all claims, demands, actions, rights of action, and/or judgments by or on behalf of the named person arising from medical procedures or treatment rendered in good faith and according to accepted medical standards.

I understand that SkillsUSA has implemented preventative health and safety measures at this conference to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. I understand SkillsUSA cannot guarantee that conference attendees will not be exposed to or infected by COVID-19. As a conference participant, I acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19. By attending this conference, I voluntarily assume the risk and responsibility for any possible exposure or infection.

I have read and understand the SkillsUSA Code of Conduct. I agree to follow all policies, procedures and practices as stated. I understand that this is an educational activity and I will apply myself for the purpose of learning at all times and uphold the finest qualities of SkillsUSA members.

SkillsUSA is not responsible or liable for any issues related to my participation in any in-person, hybrid or virtual SkillsUSA contest including: technology issues or interruptions, malfunctions or failures; personal injury; illness; or damage to school property or individual property.

Adult supervision of student competitors is required at all times when operating power or hand tools; using cutting devices and knives; or handling sharp objects. SkillsUSA is not responsible or liable for any injuries or issues.

If you are age 18 or over, please check the box on the first page of this form to indicate that. Anyone under 18 must have a parent or guardian review this form and check the box on the first page. If a box is not checked, this form will be returned. All participants must submit this form to participate.

Release of Personal Information Through Lead Retrieval System

Participant name badges at any SkillsUSA national or state conference may include a barcode that includes personal information. I understand that by giving my verbal permission to vendors and staff associated with the conference, my information may be used for follow-up after the conference. Personal information may include my name, email address, mailing address, training program or contest area. By checking the box on the other side, I acknowledge my understanding of this statement and give consent for contact.

SkillsUSA Conference Code of Conduct Agreement

This SkillsUSA national or state conference is designed to be an educational function, and all plans are made with that objective in mind. SkillsUSA wants every participant to have an enjoyable experience with careful attention paid to both inclusion and safety. All conference participants are expected to conduct themselves in a manner best representing SkillsUSA. For everyone to receive the maximum benefits from participation, SkillsUSA's "Code of Conduct," as established by its national board of directors, must be followed at all times. Note that attendance is not mandatory. By voluntarily participating, you agree to follow the official conference rules and regulations or forfeit your personal rights to participate. SkillsUSA is proud of its students and knows that by signing this "Code of Conduct" you are simply reaffirming your dedication to be the best possible representative of your state.

1. I will, at all times, respect all public and private property, including the hotel/motel in which I am housed.
2. I will spend each night in the room of the hotel/motel to which I am assigned.
3. I will strictly abide by the curfew established and shall respect the rights of others by being as quiet as possible after curfew.
4. I will not enter any hotel room other than the one to which I am assigned. I understand that I am assigned a hotel room for the sole purpose of overnight accommodation.
5. I will not leave the hotel/motel without the express permission of my advisor or state SkillsUSA director. Should I receive permission, I will leave a written notice of where I will be.
6. I will not use alcoholic beverages. I will not use drugs unless I have been ordered to take certain prescription medications by a licensed physician. If I am required to take medication, I will, at all times, have the orders of the physician on my person.
7. I will not have in my possession any firearms, dangerous weapons, explosive compound, or an object that can reasonably be considered and/or used as a weapon.
8. I will respect SkillsUSA attire and will not inhale or smoke cigarettes, e-cigarettes, use a vape pen or any other substances while wearing clothing bearing the name or logo of SkillsUSA, including outdoor venues.
9. I will not engage in bullying, harassment or acts of bias against others including threatening words or behavior; menacing, hazing, taunting or intimidation; the use of lewd, profane or vulgar language; verbal or physical abuse of others; or other unwelcome behavior against others related to one's identity.
10. I will not engage in any behavior that might be deemed sexual harassment which includes, but is not limited to, verbal, written or physical statements or actions to or about others.
11. I will keep my advisor or state SkillsUSA director informed of my whereabouts at all times.
12. I will, as required, wear my official conference identification badge and not misrepresent myself by wearing the badge of another participant.
13. I will attend, and be on time for, all general sessions and activities that I am assigned to and registered for.
14. I will adhere to the specified conference dress code at all required times.
15. My conduct shall be exemplary at all times.
16. **Virtual Events:** I will be respectful and professional when attending any SkillsUSA virtual conference and will share only appropriate information. I will use the chat feature for questions and comments that are relevant to the event and will not use the chat feature for posting comments that distract from the conference activities. I will use my full first name and last name as listed on my conference registration when signing on to the virtual conference.

Reporting

Any individual who believes that they have experienced bias or harassment while participating in a SkillsUSA event may report the incident online using the SkillsUSA Report Form, or directly to a SkillsUSA national staff member. All reports will be addressed in accordance with SkillsUSA's related procedures.

Violations and Penalties

I agree that if, for any reason, I am in violation of any of the rules of the conference, I may be brought before the appropriate disciplinary committee for an analysis of the violation. I also agree to accept the penalty imposed on me. I understand that any penalty and reasons for it will be explained to me before it is carried out. I further realize that the severity of the penalty may increase with the severity of the violation, even to the extent of being immediately sent home at my own expense.

1. Violations of Items 1 through 11 of the "Code of Conduct" may be grounds for immediate removal from an elected office and possible relinquishment of awards and recognition. In addition, the violator will be sent home at his or her own expense. Notification of the violation and the action taken will be sent to the participant's state department of education and parents or guardians. The participant's misconduct or infraction could result in the disqualifying of his or her state delegation as well.
2. Violations of Items 12 through 14 will result in a warning and reprimand. Notification of the violation and the action taken will be sent to the participant's state department of education and parents or guardians. Repeated violations of Items 12 through 14 may result in the participant being sent home at his/her own expense.

I agree to all conference rules of conduct and releases as stated on this form. My consent is affirmed when I complete and submit this registration form to SkillsUSA as a participant of this conference.

Photography and Sound Release

By attending this conference, I grant SkillsUSA and its production companies permission to photograph me, videotape me or make audio recordings of my voice, separately or in combination, and give permission to SkillsUSA to use these photos, videos or sound recordings without seeking further permission. I understand that my name may not appear with my photo, video or sound recording when used. Further, I relinquish to SkillsUSA all rights, title and interest in any photographs, videos or sound recordings of me and I grant

SkillsUSA the exclusive right to exhibit, publish, give or transfer photographs, videotape or audio recordings to any individual, business and industry partner, publication, media outlet or governmental agency, or their assignees, without payment or other consideration to me. My agreement to participate or perform under camera, lighting and stated conditions is voluntary. I waive all personal claims, causes of action or damages against SkillsUSA and its employees or volunteers arising from such a performance or appearance. **NOTE:** I understand that audio or videotaping of conference speakers by conference participants is not permitted.



SkillsUSA Incident/Illness Reporting Form

This form should be completed by a SkillsUSA state director or staff member for any critical incident or widespread illness. Use additional forms if necessary. Completed forms should be delivered to the SkillsUSA Executive Director or Conference Manager. Follow up to ensure forms were received and to determine what actions were taken. Keep a copy of completed forms and any incident notes that were taken, witnesses, etc.

Type of Incident: _____

Address of Incident: _____

How many Students/Advisors were involved? _____ How many were injured? _____

☐ Medical Emergency ☐ Weather Emergency ☐ Missing Person ☐ Bus/Car Accident ☐ Fire ☐ Intruder
☐ Trespasser ☐ Bomb Threat/Suspicious Package ☐ Psychological Crisis ☐ Other _____

Date/Time of Incident: _____ Name of Event: _____

Location of Event: _____

Address of Event Site: _____

City, State, ZIP Code: _____

Event Manager: _____

Local Hosts: _____

Summary of Incident:

Contact or Witness to the event: _____

Contact or Witness to the event: _____

Contact or Witness to the event: _____

Who was on-site to assist in managing the incident (staff, convention center management, hotel staff, state or national SkillsUSA staff, fire/rescue, police, emergency services, etc.):

Report submitted by (name and phone number): _____

Missing Person

First, determine that the student is in fact missing by using accountability procedures. If a person is missing:

- Notify SkillsUSA executive director or conference manager, building security at GWCC or hotel, as well as law enforcement.
- Designate a command area for crisis management, if the incident occurs away from GWCC or the hotel
- Obtain a full description of the missing person and obtain recent photos from cell phones or social media
- Coordinate search; use all contact methods including voice, text and email to missing person and his or her known friends

When the missing student is found, notify all parties: SkillsUSA, security, law enforcement and the search team.

Determine if the student is lost, was abducted or instead left the conference intentionally without permission or giving anyone notification. If abduction is suspected or confirmed, contact law enforcement and provide a description of the abductor, if seen with the student. Security cameras may have footage from hotels, elevators, stores, parking lots or shopping centers, etc.

The SkillsUSA state director will work SkillsUSA Crisis Team and police to contact parents of underage missing persons.

Full name of student: _____

Home address: _____

School name: _____

Hotel while in Atlanta: _____

Participating in (contest): _____

Parents or guardians: _____

Advisor or chaperone: _____

Student's cellphone number: _____

Parent cellphone number: _____

Advisor cellphone number: _____

Information to help describe and locate the missing person:

Gender _____ Age: _____ Height: ____Ft. ____In. Approximate Weight: _____

Skin color: _____ Hair: length/color and style _____

Clothing: Top _____ Pants _____ Shoes _____ Backpack, purse or other bags _____

Any distinguishing features of individual: _____

Last seen (location and time): _____

Report submitted by (name and phone number): _____



Bus/Car/Ground Transportation Accident

When calling for help, look around and note your location so it can be shared with authorities.

Call 911 to reach the police/fire/rescue or other emergency services first (stay on the line until help arrives).

Do not attempt to move injured persons unless there is immediate danger.

After police and EMS have been contacted, notify the SkillsUSA executive director or conference manager.

After police and EMS have been contacted, call the SkillsUSA state director or school administrator.

Remain on scene; make note of any witnesses and obtain contact info for these individuals.

Obtain driver license, insurance information and cellphone numbers for any drivers involved.

Supply updated information to the SkillsUSA crisis team.

Be prepared to state the following information when contacting emergency services or SkillsUSA:

1. What happened?
2. Where did it happen?
3. What type of vehicle was it?
4. How many people were involved or injured?
5. What is the current status of the accident victims?
6. Where were injured taken, if transported to a hospital or elsewhere?

Summary of Incident (date, time, location, persons involved, etc.)

Report submitted by (name and phone number): _____



Intruder, Trespasser or Active Shooter

Determine the location and description of the intruder

Notify SkillsUSA executive director or conference manager as well as building security.

Isolate the intruder from students. Maintain safe visual contact with the intruder, if possible.

The individual may pose no threat and not realize his/her presence is a violation of policy.

Keep notes throughout the incident. They will be needed by the authorities and crisis team.

Call 911 if appropriate.

Move students to secure areas or rooms and turn off the lights, lock the doors, hide, be quiet and stay in place.

On the SkillsUSA Championships floor, get down low, hide if possible, be quiet and stay in place.

Use a low voice when speaking on cellphone, or turn off sound if texting, in case the intruder is nearby.

Collect information to help describe the intruder to the authorities:

Age: _____ Height: ____Ft.____In. Approximate Weight: _____ Lbs.

Race/Ethnicity: _____ Hair: Length _____ Color/Style _____

Clothing: Shirt/Sweater _____ Pants _____ Shoes _____

Distinguishing Marks or Features _____

Carried Items _____

Summary of Incident (date, time, location, persons involved, etc.)

Report submitted by (name and phone number): _____

Bomb Threat or Suspicious Package

Bomb Threat:

If someone calls in a bomb threat, keep the caller on the line and notify 911 from another phone.

Notify SkillsUSA executive director or conference manager as well as building security.

Try to take notes or record the phone call.

Ask the caller when the bomb is set to go off, where it is located and the reason for placing the explosive.

Write down the exact wording of the threatening message.

Pay attention to the caller in order to determine his/her tone of voice, age or other clues to identity.

Note any background noises heard during the call.

If evacuation is made, students should only carry the personal items they have with them.

Suspicious Package:

A suspicious package is anything left unattended for a period of time; that seems unusual, makes noise, smells or is leaking or otherwise seems out of the ordinary. This could be a box, backpack, luggage, etc.

Do not open or handle a suspicious package.

Isolate the area where the package is located, and evacuate students from the general area.

Notify law enforcement, building security, the conference manager or other SkillsUSA staff.

Summary of Incident (date, time, location, persons involved, etc.)

Report submitted by (name and phone number): _____



Getting Help and Reporting Suspicious Activity

Emergencies of any nature can be reported to the **GWCC Department of Public Safety at 404-223-4911** and they will coordinate any required response from outside law enforcement and emergency response agencies. The GWCC Department of Public Safety is open 24 hours a day and routinely patrols all building perimeters, parking decks, exterior grounds and interior public areas.

If you are at the hotel, report your concerns to the hotel security team or the front desk staff.

What is Suspicious Activity and How do I Report It?

Suspicious activity is an observed behavior that could indicate that a crime or act of terrorism is taking place or may take place. This includes observing unusual situations or items (a car parked in an odd location for a long period of time, unattended large bags or luggage in the convention center, someone asking unusual questions about the building's security procedures, someone carrying weapons or making threats to others. If you see suspicious activity, report it to the the convention center or the nearest uniformed law enforcement or a person of authority. Describe what you observed, when and where you saw it and why it is suspicious.

Emergency Assistance: 911

City of Atlanta Police: 404-614-6544

Fire: 404-546-7000

GWCC Department of Public Safety: 402-223-4911 or dial #4911 within building on red phones.

State Farm Arena: If medical assistance is needed, notify any State Farm Arena staff member or text a message and your location to (404)-878-3030. First Aid is located on the lower level of State Farm Arena next to the Guest Service Center and on the upper level of the arena across from Section 220/221.

MARTA See Something Say Something viaText: 404-334-5355

MARTA Police: 404-848-4911





SkillsUSA®

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