

What Do I Do Now?

Creating the Immediate Action Guide at the Miami University Libraries ALAO 2007

Following the events of 9/11, Miami University required all of its divisions to create a continuing operations plan. A library team created the plan using the University's template with the assistance of a consultant, but realized the plan did not provide enough guidance to library staff. The team then created a comprehensive library-specific emergency response plan, and as a result of their discussions, recognized a further need to provide abbreviated guidelines to front-line staff.

As the Libraries has expanded its hours—especially the main library which is now open 24/7—it became clear that front-line staff would be increasingly responsible for operations at times that management and Response Team members are not present. The Immediate Action Guide outlines appropriate responses for a variety of scenarios, provides contact information to library and campus personnel, and is intended to give all staff the knowledge they need to respond in a crisis, whether large or small.

Team members include three Assistant Deans, one of whom serves as the Response Team Leader (currently Elizabeth Brice), staff from the Dean's Office, the Outreach Librarian, and the Conservation Supervisor (Betty Clevenger). Betty brought the team the model for the IAG's format, having seen a similar document produced by the Cincinnati Art Museum. She and other staff members have worked hard to modify this idea to best suit our needs and create a document that is useful, convenient and clear.

The final component of our response system is an online Incident Report form (<http://www.lib.muohio.edu/admin/incident/>) to be used by any staff member who encounters a situation or a behavior outside the norm. This form is used to report the nature of the incident and any actions taken to the Continuing Operations Team and to library administration. This documentation allows us to see any patterns developing across the system that may need to be addressed.

If you would like additional information, feel free to contact one of us. Thank you.

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