



Dean of School's responsibilities for crisis support for employees and studen

Internal regulation No. 20/2006
Applies from 1 July 2006

These regulations are based on:

- Provisions issued by the National Board of Occupational Safety and Health concerning First Aid and Crisis Support (AFS 1999:7)
- Administrative Director's decision no. 508/2006, reg. no. V-2006-083

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1. KTH alarm instructions

(From the KTH Manual III, Section 21.1)

1. In an emergency situation where external assistance is needed in the form of ambulance, fire services or police, always ring to SOS alarm via the 112 telephone number.

2. Then, if a more serious accident or unforeseen incident has occurred, also ring the KTH internal alarm organisation via

-08-790 7700 (24/7)

-if ringing from a 790 extension, dial 7700 only

3. When raising the alarm, always give the following information to the person who answers:

-Whether this is an alarm that concerns the KTH Crisis Management Group (applies to all KTH operations)

-If this is a security matter (applies to KTH Campus Valhallavägen and KTH ICT School only)

4. If the alarm goes to the KTH Crisis Management Group, then the KTH Security Manager, or the person who is currently tasked to call in the KTH Crisis Management Group, will take a decision on who is to deal with the situation – the Crisis Management Group, KTH Security Manager or the School concerned. Feedback to the School concerned after an alarm has been raised via 08-790 7700:

-during normal working hours, within one hour

-outside normal working hours, within 24 hours

5. If the matter is to be handled at School level it is returned to the relevant Dean. The Dean then distributes the responsibility for the matter within his/her organisation and reports the name of the appointed School contact person to the KTH Security Manager.

6. The Crisis Management Group gathers when unforeseen events of a more serious nature occur that have affected, or risk affecting, KTH employees, students, property or credibility to a considerable extent and which cannot be managed within normal line operations.

This primarily applies to:

-accidents, incidents or criminal acts that have caused more serious personal injury or damage to property or that risk doing so,

-more serious threats to employees or students or property,

-crises of confidence as concerns KTH as a government agency,

-the spreading of rumours or disinformation, also if this is suspected, concerning any of the above,

-probable risk that one or any of the above will occur,

-incident reporting concerning accidents (if incidents occur after normal working hours, the report may be submitted the following working day).

The Crisis Management Group consists of:

- University Director, Chair

- KTH Security Manager, calls meetings

- Head of Information, Webmaster and Press Contacts

- Personel director

- Please also refer to KTH Crisis Management Group for crisis management

2. Responsibilities of Dean of School (equivalent)

Dean of School (equivalent) is responsible for crisis support for employees and students when the event has affected a limited part of operations. This crisis support in most cases is managed directly within the line organisation and, when necessary, with the help of the support competences described under Section 3.

Crisis support necessary for events that have affected a major part of operations must be reported to the KTH Crisis Management Group. It is the responsibility of the Dean of School to, based on the character and scope of the situation, assess how crisis support is to be designed. Crisis support designed jointly with available support competences may be activated in two ways: Dean of School (equivalent) makes direct contact with each support competence, or the Dean of School (equivalent) rings the KTH alarm number and reports the situation to the KTH Crisis Management Group. The Crisis Management Group provides the Dean of School (equivalent) with information on how the event is to be managed and how crisis support is to be set up. In cases where the Dean of School (equivalent) is uncertain as concerns the design of crisis support, he/she must contact the Crisis Management Group via the KTH alarm number.

The Dean of School (equivalent) may delegate the implementation of the crisis support to another suitable person within the School. The Dean of School (equivalent) is responsible for ensuring that there is always – even during the Dean's holidays and other absences - a person who is expressly responsible for the initiation of crisis support. This person must possess the relevant knowledge on crisis support and the authorisation to make the necessary decisions.

The Dean of School (equivalent) is responsible for ensuring that crisis support activities are documented, including information on the type of crisis support provided, to whom and at which points in time. This documentation to be filed in a suitable manner.

3. Support competences

During the entire course of the crisis, the Dean of School (equivalent) may access support competences from occupational health care and student health care, the HR Manager and HR officers at the HR Department (UF), Security Manager (UF), Head of Information (UF) and, when applicable, from the KTH Management Group.

4. The aim of crisis support

This action programme underlines the importance of managing crisis situations in the best manner possible with the aim of improving preconditions for recovery and decreasing risks of future ill health. The action programme contains both theoretical points of departure and practical instructions for crisis support, primarily at individual level, aimed at everyone working or studying at KTH schools.

5. Background

The Work Environment Act (SFS 1977:1160) states in Chapter 1, Section 1 “The aim of the Act is to prevent ill health and accidents and otherwise achieve a good work environment”. The Swedish Work Environment Authority instructions (AFS) covering various subjects provide further assistance. AFS 1999:7 deals with First Aid and Crisis Support. AFS 2001:1 and AFS 2003:4 deal with Systematic Work Environment Management and how the employer is to fulfil legal requirements by working with these issues on a continuous basis and by preventing the occurrence of risk situations.

During the last few years, Swedish society has suffered several major crises and disasters, which emphasises the necessity of extended crisis support. All places of work or study may be affected, directly or indirectly, and it is vital that employers take responsibility for the proper management of these situations.

6. Crisis theory, an overview

6.1 Definition of the concepts crisis and crisis support

A crisis is an event in which individuals’ previous experience and learned reactions are not sufficient to enable them to understand and manage the situation. All unforeseen events that affect human beings deeply may trigger crises.

Crisis support is defined as the immediate psychological and social care of a person in crisis plus any follow-up activities, including professional inputs. Crisis support is available in different forms and is provided in different forms depending on the scope and severity of the event. Crisis support consists of several different components and covers the help the individuals provide for themselves when attempting to resolve the situation, support from managers and colleagues in the processing of thoughts, feelings and reactions plus defusing sessions, debriefing, crisis therapy (see Section 9 for further definitions). All crisis support is aimed at activating individuals’ ability to help themselves i.e. help to self-help.

There are differences between development crises, life crises and traumatic crises. The following primarily covers traumatic crises.

6.2 Examples of crises at KTH

Crisis situations may be of a limited scope affecting only a few people directly or they may be more in the nature of a disaster in which many people are involved. In both cases there are people who are directly affected, people who are indirectly affected and are involved emotionally or practically, plus individuals whose task is to manage various parts of the practical crisis activities.

It may be difficult to define and delimit what exactly is a crisis situation. It may also not be suitable to define in advance exactly what a crisis consists of. There may be differences between an individual’s crisis and one in an organisation. It is important that the basic concepts of this action programme are applied when considered applicable.

Examples of crises at KTH:

- Large-scale fire or accident
- Occupational accidents and serious incidents
- Violence and threats
- Threats to IT security
- The death or serious illness of a colleague or student
- Accident, attack, disaster somewhere in the world in which KTH employees and/or students may be involved
- Work or study-related conditions which may cause severe psychological pressure (for example insulting treatment, repeated changes to work situation, job loss).

6.3 Characteristics of traumatic crises

- The event hits suddenly, unexpectedly and unpredictably. (In this the traumatic crisis differs from a life crisis or when someone dies after a long illness.)
- The event is outside our control. We often search for a cause and effect connection, in spite of the fact that there sometimes is none. It is difficult to accept that events occur on a random basis, without the individual having any possibility of influencing events.
- The event may even form a threat to our existence, identity, dignity or security. We may become conscious of our own vulnerability and may need help to regain the courage to continue living. Perhaps we cannot manage to live with the powerful feeling of insecurity that occurred in this situation. People may change considerably after experiencing a traumatic event. They regard life in a totally new manner.
- The event may cause major changes to their lives. These may include extensive human suffering and the effects sometimes range out of our control.

There are several factors that are important as concerns the effects a crisis exerts on an individual, and these are also important as concerns the type of treatment suitable in a crisis. A good method is to ask yourself questions about the individual's previous experiences, which period of their lives are they in, their social situation, how the person's surroundings will react to this event etc

6.4 Crisis phases, their characteristics and how to deal with them

This overview makes no claims to be complete. It describes symptoms and how it is suitable for people involved to behave.

Generally speaking reactions to crises follow a similar pattern; however this may vary depending on the individual and the situation, and may also vary as concerns, for example, intensity, method of expression and period.

The four phases are

- Shock phase – this varies between a few hours to up to several days. The individual may appear to be emotionally closed down, disoriented, apathetic or hyperactive. There may be physical symptoms such as shaking, vomiting, freezing, sweating. Treatment: it is vital to project security, warmth, support and concern, possible give light physical touch. Give emotional first aid. The initiative lies with the people around who should show respect for the person's feelings and accept their behaviour.

- Reaction phase – this usually lasts from one week up to several months. The person may exhibit strong reactions of different types such as aggression, desperate action, “unplanned” behaviour patterns, self contempt or guilt feelings. Sleep problems, severe nightmares, feelings of guilt, exhaustion etc. may also appear. The person may feel that he/she really does not need any help, and possesses only a limited confidence in the help that is offered. Treatment: it is vital to listen actively and patiently and to provide information. Debriefing (see wordlist for definition), defusing session (see wordlist for definition) and conversation generally are important. Debriefing and defusing sessions should perhaps be carried out by competences available at occupational or student health. It is essential to process feelings of guilt and to break the individual’s feelings of isolation. People who are upset and in despair often stimulate the will to help in many of us. However, sometimes instead we feel uneasy and want to escape the situation. Many people feel they have nothing to give on such occasions. Sometimes you hear comments such as “There is no point in talking about it” or “Don’t mess with stuff that there is nothing to be done about”. As manager and colleague it is important to listen and really deal with a person who at that point in time is unrealistic and full of demands.
- Processing phase – this varies between months and years. People show a greater willingness to understand the event and their reactions. Their reactions are similar to those in the previous phase. The individual experiences a greater need to talk and to deal with feelings. Treatment: it is vital that everyone around shows patience. Professional help and crisis therapy may be necessary. The person must be given the opportunity to process memories, impressions and their imaginings, and through them be able to put words to thoughts and feelings.
- New orientation phase – now the individuals have acknowledged what has happened and can accept their fate and their new lives. The person’s self-picture may have changed and deepening of the identity may have occurred. This phase has no conclusion but leads to new positions in various aspects of life. The individual lives on with what has happened and is not prevented from further development.

Any disturbance to these crisis phases may have far-reaching consequences. Un-processed crises may lead to vulnerability in future crisis situations and during difficult periods in people’s lives. It may, for example, lead to the person becoming stuck in the reaction phase, which in turn may lead to impaired working ability and occupational injury. Experience has shown that many people who are affected by traumatic events can become stuck in one of these phases which will bring great risks to life, health, wellbeing and productivity. The conclusion must be that crisis support and crisis processing are extremely important.

7. AFS 1999:7 on First Aid and Crisis Support

These instructions cover both first aid and crisis support. In the following, crisis support only is dealt with.

Preparedness for first aid and crisis support

“At each workplace there must be sufficient preparedness and the necessary routines for first aid and crisis support in place, taking into consideration the type of operations, their scope and special risks. /.../

Employees must be aware of how first aid and crisis support activities are organised at the work place. They must be continuously informed as concerns the routines that apply" (AFS 1999:7 §5).

The Dean of School (equivalent) is responsible for ensuring that there is sufficient preparedness and routines for crisis support. Who does what if something happens? This must be reflected in the Dean of School's allocation of tasks to managers.

Be prepared to take action, be prepared for the unexpected! It is vital that employees and students are aware of how first aid and crisis support are organised. Regular information is necessary plus possibly regular drills. It is important that staff from employment agencies are not forgotten in this context. The Health and Safety Representative must take part in the work of risk assessment, establishment of action plan and must acquire knowledge about crisis support. The Student Health and Safety Representative will also be provided with the opportunity to participate in these activities.

Risk assessment

"First aid and crisis support must be planned, organised and followed up based on an assessment of risks of ill health and accidents at work" (AFS 1999:7 §4).

The Dean of School (equivalent) is responsible for carrying out a risk assessment for ill health and accidents in places of work and study and planning first aid and crisis support based on this assessment. The employer must ensure that employees' and students' knowledge concerning their work, and the risks connected to it, are sufficient in order to prevent ill health and accidents and achieve a satisfactory working environment (AFS 2003:4, § 7).

Knowledge concerning crisis support

"Managers and supervisory staff must possess sufficient knowledge on crisis support to be able to plan and arrange these activities in a suitable manner" (AFS 1999:7 §7).

The Dean of School is responsible for ensuring that managers and supervisory staff possess sufficient knowledge in this field. Managers and supervisory staff bear responsibility for supervision of employees and consequently become the obvious leader in a situation affecting their personnel group.

8. Dean of School's responsibility for crisis support to individuals and groups

Crisis management at individual level is managed in most cases directly within the line organisation, when necessary with the help of the crisis support competences. During the entire course of the crisis, the Dean of School (equivalent) may access support competences from occupational health care and student health care, the HR Manager and HR officers at the HR Department (UF), Security Manager (UF), Head of Information (UF) and, when applicable, from the KTH Crisis Management Group.

It is the responsibility of the Dean of School to, based on the character and scope of the situation, assess how crisis support is to be designed. Crisis support designed jointly with the available support competence may be activated in two ways: the Dean of School (equivalent) makes direct contact with each support competence, or the Dean of School (equivalent) rings

the KTH alarm number and reports the situation to the KTH Crisis Management Group. The Crisis Management Group provides the Dean of School (equivalent) with information on how the event is to be managed and how crisis support is to be set up. In cases where the Dean of School (equivalent) is uncertain as concerns the design of crisis support, he/she must contact the Crisis Management Group via the KTH alarm number.

The Dean of School (equivalent) may delegate the implementation of crisis support to another suitable person within the School.

Below are some activities to be considered by the Dean of School (equivalent).

This list of activities does not claim to be exhaustive or to apply in all crisis situations. If a crime has been committed, or it is suspected that a crime has been committed, these activities must be modified accordingly. See Section 9.

8.1. Dean of School's responsibility for ensuring that the individual/s affected receive crisis support during the Shock Phase (0-24 hour interval)

It is important that the psychological and physical care of the individual/s creates security and provides support.

8.1.1. Checklist for immediate crisis support

Follow the KTH alarm instructions. Make an assessment of whether external medical competence should be called in.

Crisis support to victims. Provision of psychological and social care. The goal is to create security and provide treatment.

- Take the person to a sheltered place. Protect him/her from the public and high level sensory impressions.
- Do not leave the person alone.
- Never send a victim to the hospital alone, organise someone to keep them company.
- Do not allow anyone affected to drive home alone.
- If necessary help to contact the person's family.
- Often the individual involved is not very receptive to talking at this stage. Provide simple information. Listen more and speak less.
- Examine the strategies available to the person for the management of the next 24 hour period.
- If necessary organise a social contact network for evenings/weekends.
- • Make sure that the person has a manager or colleague to contact during the following 24 hour period.
- Establish a time and place to meet with the person the following day.
- Make sure that the person gets home safely.

Crisis support to working groups/study groups (who are indirectly affected)

1. The goal is to create structure and to give and receive information.

- Immediately after the event, gather all the colleagues/teachers and student group together.
- Tell them about what happened.
- Answer questions about the event.
- Provide brief info about common reactions to crises.
- Encourage them to pay attention to others' reactions.
- State a time and place for them to gather for an information meeting the following working day.
- If necessary organise social contact networks for the evenings/weekends. No one should have to be alone.
- Make sure everyone gets home safely.

2. The goal is that everyone is to feel that they are able to help themselves and each other in the crisis situation.

- After the information meeting, if necessary collect the relevant colleagues/student friends into smaller groups if there are many people involved. If possible maintain their normal working/study groups.
- Offer the opportunity of discussion for the working/student groups. It is not necessary to be a professional counsellor to lead such a discussion. The relevant manager or teacher is often more suitable.
- Give everyone the opportunity to express thoughts, feelings and reactions.
- Find out if anyone needs individual sessions.
- If necessary repeat the brief information previously given on crisis reactions.
- Encourage them to pay attention to others' reactions.
- If necessary arrange a follow-up group discussion the following day.

Prepare continued crisis support

The goal is to arrange support and consultations and to inform the relevant competence areas about what has occurred.

- If necessary contact the person who calls together the KTH Crisis Management Group. Use the KTH internal alarm number to find them.
- If necessary contact staff from occupational and/or student health or the HR consultant at the HR Department.
- See the KTH action programme (Section 6.2.) concerning the Dean of School's responsibility for crisis support within the 25-72 hour interval.

8.2 Dean of School's responsibility for crisis support within the 25-72 hour interval

The 25-72 hour interval may include the shock phase and/or reaction phase, but may vary for different individuals.

8.2.1 What to remember as concerns crisis support during the 25-72 hour interval

The goal is that everyone is to feel that they are able to help themselves and each other in the crisis situation.

- Dean of School (equivalent) is responsible for implementing follow-up interviews with the person/people affected. Follow-up interviews may be carried out by managers, teachers or someone else. It is not necessary to be a professional counsellor.
- It is often the manager or teacher who becomes the conversation partner of the person affected. This task may be allocated to another, suitable person. Find out in advance if the person selected feels comfortable with this role.
- If several people have been affected – find out if group discussions are helpful or whether they wish to deal with these sessions on an individual basis.
- Give the person space to express his/her experiences, thoughts, feelings, reactions and questions. Give the person space to initiate a reconstruction of the event.
- Give correct information in answer to questions.
- Assess if the individual in question is in need of hospital care, including emergency psychiatric care.
- Provide brief information on normal reactions to crises.
- Examine the strategies available to those affected to manage the following 24 hours.
- Establish how contact is to be maintained during the following days.
- The best thing is often if everyone affected is allocated their own, special contact person at the place of work or study, a person who wishes to provide special support to each individual over the necessary period.
- Sometimes the person affected needs special inputs. Dean of School will, in this case, take the necessary decision without any discussions with the individual concerned as to whether they are necessary or if they can “manage by themselves”. A person in crisis is not able to make such a decision! It is often a good thing to establish a routine that everyone affected is to participate in occupational or student health care's debriefing or defusing sessions. Consult with occupational/student health. When necessary encourage people to participate.

8.2.2 What to remember as concerns crisis support to working or study groups (those indirectly affected), 25-72 hour interval

The goal is that everyone is to feel that they are able to help themselves and each other in the crisis situation.

- Carry out follow-up discussions with the working/study group, preferably in their normal grouping.
- When the group reassembles the manager must attempt to identify thoughts, feelings, reactions and questions that remain in the air or have occurred later and continue to provide information. Give the people affected space to receive thoughts feelings and questions.
- Provide correct information.
- Repeat the previous brief information on normal crisis reactions.
- Encourage everyone to pay attention to each others' reactions.
- Find out if there is a necessity/desire for a new meeting in the group, and if so establish a time and place.
- Find out if people would like individual discussions directly after the current group meeting.
- Assess whether a group debriefing/defusing discussion would be suitable, undertaken by occupational or student health services, and if necessary take such a decision. Make the point that the best thing is if everyone participates and encourage this, but do not force anyone who is reluctant.
- Assess whether anyone appears to be in need of individual debriefing/defusing sessions, undertaken by occupational or student health services. If so encourage them to participate.
- Inform anyone who is on holiday/business travel/leave of absence about what has occurred and that a group meeting has been held.
- When necessary provide continuous information, daily or even several times a day at established times.

8.3 After the acute crisis phase

Dean of School (equivalent) will continuously ensure that employees and students receive sufficient information. At all workplaces it is important to pay attention to each others' reactions. It is common that people's behaviour patterns change and they may for example start crying, show irritation or find it difficult to concentrate. Some people show no reaction at all, or they withdraw and prefer to work on as if nothing has happened. It is important to help each other to identify this latter behaviour pattern as this may lead to long-term psychological problems in the future. The Dean of School must pay special attention if any of those affected show changes in behaviour or their performance deteriorates and must contact them for a discussion on these matters. The Dean of School is responsible for providing information on, and when necessary persuade individuals to contact, KTH support functions such as occupational and student health services and the HR Consultant. The Dean of School must encourage work or study groups to pay attention to their own and each others' behaviour and reactions, encourage joint activities (for example coffee breaks) for the group and the individual/s affected.

Symptoms such as sleep problems, attention deficit and concentration difficulties can be experienced by those affected directly or indirectly. During this period a person's performance may be poorer than usual. Their work situation may need to be adapted accordingly. This may take the form of lightening their workload for a certain period, modifying working hours or sharing (or not sharing) an office. If the Dean of School (equivalent) is uncertain about how this adaptation is to be carried out, he/she may contact occupational health services, the HR Consultant or student health or study advisers. Collect the work group together and tell them about the work modification plans. This modification will continue for a limited period of time and be followed up continuously.

The people affected may experience deterioration in their work performance for a certain period of time, and must be put on sick leave by a doctor as is normally the case. It is recommended that a doctor should assess students whose study abilities have been affected with a view to sick leave and/or treatment.

9. Gathering and providing information

The Dean of School (equivalent) bears responsibility for gathering information and for providing correct information for employees and students. The Dean of School's responsibilities also include the establishment of a schedule for when information is to be provided. This schedule will vary depending on the actual event. The Head of Information bears responsibility for all external information. The Dean of School (equivalent) is responsible for providing up-to-date contact details on all employees and students. With increased internationalisation it is especially important to ensure that the School has contact details for incoming and outgoing transfer employees and students. When consultations as concerns internal information are necessary the Dean of School (equivalent) may contact the Head of Information (UF).

Factors to consider:

- It is important that the information is factual and not contradictory, irrespective of who gives it or to whom it is given.
- It is best if information is always provided by the same person, or that the person giving the information has consulted before doing so.
- The rule is to first inform the closest working colleagues or study group, then inform the staff as a whole and the other students affected.
- Be practical! State information clearly and factually. There must be no ambiguities about what you say. Rumours and speculation only create anxiety.
- Give correct information! Poor quality information creates a lack of confidence for the organisation, and no one is helped.
- Plan what you are going to say about what you know! Prepare in writing.
- Figure out what you are going to say and say it!
- Consider what you know but cannot say. Close relatives must always be informed of fatalities by the police or by hospital personnel.
- Provide information on a continuous basis! It is vital to update employees with information that concerns them. Consequently establish a fixed time for information every day or every week. Even when there is no new information it is important to gather in an information meeting and state this. No information is also information.
- Inform everyone! Remember employees who are on leave of absence, sick leave or not in direct contact with the workplace for some other reason.
- Choose time and place carefully!
- Say who the employees can refer press and media to if they are approached!
- Decide how to deal with incoming calls from, for example, relatives.
- When necessary the Head of Information (UF) takes decisions as to whether information is to be posted on the KTH website. This may apply, for example, if a building must be evacuated and closed off due to threat, fire or dangerous smoke, that a building is closed and information on when it will be re-opened.