MEMO

From the Office of the…

VP Admin & EFRT Director

TO:	Members of the Executive Board
FROM:	Mitchell German (VP Admin) & Jacob Howran (EFRT Director)
SUBJECT:	Temporary Closure of EFRT Operations
DATE:	September 30th, 2022

Dear Members of the Executive Board,

The MSU's Emergency First Response Team (EFRT) has been experiencing a very high volume of calls since the return to campus for McMaster University. According to Security Services, within a 29-day period from August 26th until September 23rd, EFRT has received 152 calls. For reference, EFRT responded to a total of 401 calls in the 2021/22 year. At the current rate, it is anticipated that EFRT will far exceed this in the current year (2022/23). This influx of calls is also paired with EFRT's upcoming FOCO response, in-person Welcome Week, and their current 6-week post-COVID hiring process. All of EFRT's Responders, aside from the Director and Assistant Director, work on a volunteer-basis to help the MSU ensure the safety of our student population. This high call volume has made it difficult for EFRT Responders to be able to balance their duties in EFRT amongst their academic responsibilities, especially in the high-stake situations they respond to. As a result, many of the EFRT Responders are feeling burnt out from their MSU-related responsibilities. Not only does this impact their ability to fulfill their academic responsibilities, but it could also compromise the quality of care that EFRT is able to provide to the McMaster community.

Annually, EFRT is taken off call during the Fall Reading Week, which will take place from **Monday, October 10th, 2022 – Sunday, October 16th, 2022,** for this year. It is being proposed that this *still happens*, in addition to EFRT continuing to stay off call until **Saturday, October 22nd at 10am**. Therefore, EFRT will be off call for a total of 12 days. It is not anticipated that this will be a recurrent situation for EFRT, but rather has resulted from the uniqueness of transitioning back to in-person programming following the COVID-19 pandemic. This has already been communicated to Security Services and they are in support. EFRT's original request was until Thursday, October 20th, but it is felt that the EB could reasonably go above and beyond to demonstrate our commitment to ensuring the wellbeing of our employees. Ultimately, this will give EFRT the time to onboard their new Responders.

To communicate this to the McMaster population, we will ensure that adequate promotional assets are made and distributed throughout out social media channels in collaboration with the MSU Communications Team. Additionally, we will confirm this closure with Security Services, so they know to direct all EFRT requests to Hamilton Paramedic Services instead. As a note, EFRT's phone number connects with Security Services directly, and they subsequently dispatch EFRT. Therefore, the McMaster community will not need to call 911 instead, which could cause confusion. Further, this closure will be communicated directly to Hamilton Paramedic Services, a close partner of EFRT's, to make them aware of a potential influx of calls to McMaster University during this time.

With this being said, we strongly urge you to approve this request to avoid burnout of the EFRT Team and to ensure they can continue to provide high-quality care to the McMaster community. Further, it would allow EFRT Responders to focus on their academic responsibilities, recognizing the impact that high call volumes have already had on this. In the future, the EFRT Director, Vice-President (Administration), and AVP Services will work closely to see how EFRT's operations could be made more efficient to reduce strain on the individual Responders and make their roles more sustainable.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out or ask during EB.

Sincerely,

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