



# Pager Rotation in DevOps

## Industry Best Practices

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# What is Pager Rotation?

- It is when team members take turns being on-call to handle alerts and outages.
- According to *The DevOps Handbook* (Kim et al., 2021), this is not just a task. It is feedback.
- When developers are on-call, they learn directly from what breaks in production.
- It creates responsibility and encourages better code.



# How Pager Rotation Fits the DevOps Model

- First and foremost, DevOps is built on fast feedback, continuous improvement, cross-team collaboration, and shared responsibility.
- Pager rotation supports the DevOps principles by connecting developers with real-time issues, forming a feedback loop that drives faster fixes and continuous learning.
  - Additionally, Kim et al. (2021) note that short feedback loops encourage accountability and lead to stronger, more resilient systems.
- Pager rotation also helps developers (and others in the team) experience operational challenges firsthand, building empathy for the operations team. This leads to better code, stronger collaboration, and a shared goal of delivering software.



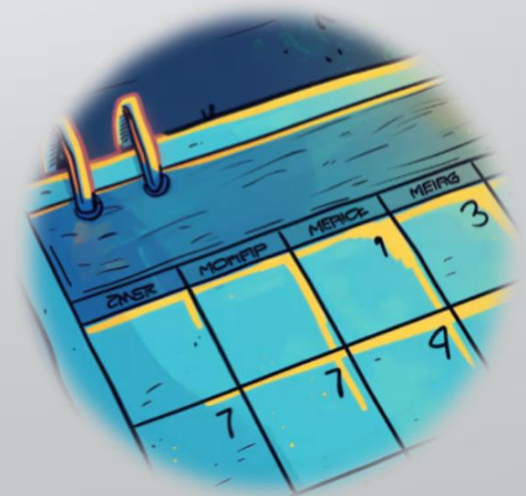
# Best Practice 1: Make Rotations Fair

- No one person should carry the on-call burden.
- According to Cortex (2021), rotating duties evenly prevents burnout.
- Everyone gains insight, and the whole team becomes more reliable.
- Google SRE (Cook et al., 2016) also emphasizes having backup responders for balance.



## Best Practice 2: Create Clear Schedules

- Consistent rotation builds trust.
- According to PagerDuty (2025), plan schedules ahead of time and make them visible.
- Everyone should know when they are on-call and how to escalate if needed.
- Clarity avoids confusion during high-stress moments.



# Best Practice 3: Provide Good Tools and Training

- Developers need good tools to manage incidents.
- AlertOps (Yogesh, 2019) suggests auto-assigning incidents and using smart notifications.
- According to Google SRE (2016), provide clear runbooks and documentation.
- Ultimately, being on-call should not feel like guessing.



# Best Practice 4: Debrief After Incidents

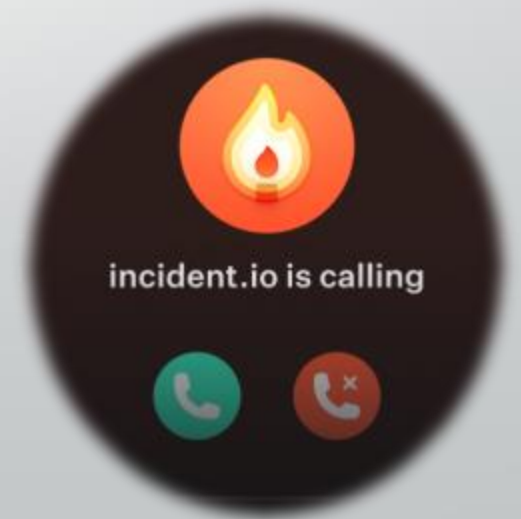
- Talk about what happened and how to avoid it next time.
- According to Cortex (2021), post-incident reviews help teams learn.
- No blame, just improvement.
- DevOps encourages openness and using failure as fuel.





# Best Practice 5: Use Alert as Feedback, Not Just Noise

- Not every alert needs a wake-up call.
- According to AlertOps (2019), alerts should be meaningful and actionable.
- Too much noise causes fatigue and people stop caring.
- Developers need smart alerts that teach and guide.





# Best Practice 6: Respect Life Outside Work

- On-call should not ruin someone's health or personal time.
- According to PagerDuty (2025), use time-off and rotation limits.
- Make sure people feel supported, not punished.
- Sustainable teams are long-lasting teams.



# Conclusion: Pager Duty Builds Better Developers

- Pager rotation is not just about fixing things fast.
- According to Kim et al. (2021), it is real-time feedback that helps developers improve.
- When done right, it makes teams stronger, systems safer, and people more engaged.
- Respect, balance, and reflection are what makes on-call work.



# References

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