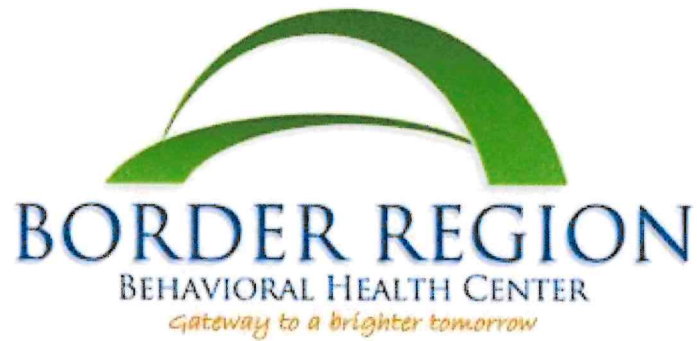




DISASTER BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

INTERNAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

FY24-25

EMERGENCY RESPONSE & MANAGEMENT PLAN

Emergency Management is the process of preparing for, responding to and recovering from an emergency. By planning ahead, the Center will be better able to respond to and recover from any size emergency with minimum impact on our operations. This process:

- Enables us to fulfill our responsibility to protect our staff, consumers & the community
- Facilitates compliance with federal, state and local regulatory requirements
- Fulfills the Center's contract requirements with the State;
- Enhances our ability to recover following a major emergency or disaster
- Reduces our exposure to civil and criminal liability
- Enhances the agency's image and credibility;
- May reduce the agency's insurance premiums

This plan seeks to accomplish four main goals:

- PREPARATION through training, drills, and hazard identification
- MITIGATION to reduce the effects of an emergency situation
- RESPONSE to an actual emergency or disaster scenario
- RECOVERY back to normal operations

Definitions

Emergency – Any unplanned event that can cause significant injuries or death, disrupt operations, shut down business, cause substantial physical or environmental damage, or can significantly threaten the Center's financial standing or public image. An emergency is generally local in nature, disrupting activities only in a single facility or particular community, and can be handled using local resources.

Disaster – Any event that causes sufficient damage to physical, social, psychological, or economic structures or functioning that requires extraordinary assistance to survive and recover. A disaster is generally larger in scope and impact, affecting all activities in a large geographic area, and requiring outside resources to overcome the disaster.

Internal Alert – Method of alerting staff to an emergency situation from within the unit itself. Examples include fire alarm activation, intercom broadcast, verbal alert, etc.

External Alert – Method of alerting staff of an emergency situation that comes from outside the facility. Examples include an Emergency Alert System broadcast over public airways, rescue personnel going door to door, or an outside request for assistance by TDMHMR, the Red Cross or an on-scene incident commander.

Emergency Alert System (EAS) – Nationwide external alert method used by the National Weather Service and the city's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to broadcast a community-wide disaster alert to the general public. This broadcast is usually made over local TV and radio stations, as well as NOAA weather radio frequency.

NOAA Weather Radio – Emergency alert radio equipped to broadcast on National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) frequency. When activated, the public is given instructions to either shelter-in-place or evacuate, and the location of designated evacuation sites. The public is then directed to tune-in to local radio and television stations for continuously updated information. The National Weather Service station in Santa Teresa, New Mexico broadcasts a weekly test of the Emergency Alert System.

Emergency Response Team (ERT) – Team of unit employees trained to respond and rapidly handle all of the technical aspects of an incident, such as medical response, shutdown procedures, evacuation assistance, etc. The composition and size of the ERT may vary depending on the size of the unit, available resources, required tasks and the nature of each incident. Each Program Supervisor must maintain a current list of ERT members, their expected role in an emergency, and emergency contact information. Job titles may be identified instead of names for certain tasks, thereby assuring that key responsibilities are accomplished by anyone present with that title.

Incident Commander (IC) – The individual in charge of coordinating the incident response and directing ERT response efforts. The person filling this role may change as the severity of the incident increases. At the unit level, the Program Supervisor is the designated IC and the Unit Safety Officer (or other designee) is the assistant/alternate.

If both of these individuals are absent, the highest-ranking staff member available is in charge until outside help arrives. In catastrophic events, the Risk Manager or Center Safety Officer generally assumes this role, although the Executive Director may designate any Emergency Management Team (EMT) Member.

Emergency Command Post (ECP) – A temporary location set up by the IC to run communications and direct resources until the incident is over. The ECP should be in an area nearby but not involved in the incident (supervisor's office, conference room, etc.) If the unit has been evacuated, it may be set up at the Safe Relocation Area or a nearby BRBHC. The ECP remains in place throughout the incident, but an alternate location should be identified in case the primary area becomes unsafe or impractical.

Short-term Evacuation: An evacuation lasting from a few minutes to an hour - usually triggered by a localized emergency, such as a gas leak, bomb threat, or minor structure fire. It may turn into a prolonged evacuation scenario if the emergency situation escalates or is difficult to resolve.

Prolonged Evacuation: An evacuation lasting longer than one hour or past normal operating hours for the unit - usually triggered by a community-wide emergency such as a flood, major crime scene, plane crash, etc. It may have started as a short-term evacuation.

Safe Relocation Area: A safe area within walking distance of the facility where building occupants can wait out the emergency. It is far enough away and out of the flow of traffic so evacuees will not interfere with responding rescue units. It serves as a common meeting place where building occupants can be accounted for, and may serve as a temporary command post to coordinate further actions. If possible, evacuees should not have to cross a major traffic thoroughfare to reach this relocation area. The site should not be directly in front of windows where an explosion or collapse could send glass and other debris onto evacuees.

Primary Evacuation Site: A sheltered, protected area that is far enough away from the emergency site as to be reasonably safe. If local authorities ordered the evacuation, they will also designate the location of evacuation sites (usually a school gymnasium or cafeteria) and may assign city buses to assist with transportation if a large portion of the community is being evacuated. Depending on the nature of the emergency, this site may be three or more miles from the scene. However, if a BRBHC unit is evacuating a large number of consumers, it may be difficult to care for them in such a chaotic setting. The acting Incident Commander should consider evacuating to another Center facility instead, where a more controlled environment can be provided to care for our consumer's needs and ensure the availability of additional trained staff.

Alternate Evacuation Site: This is a back-up location when the primary evacuation site is unavailable or becomes unsafe.

Emergency Management Team Liaison – Serves as the on-call point of contact between the Incident Commander and the Disaster Management Team (DMT) Chairperson. If the IC determines that the emergency cannot be successfully handled with available resources, or otherwise determines the need to involve the EMT, the IC notifies the EMT Liaison, who then establishes contact with the Executive Director and activates the EMT. The person assigned to this liaison duty is usually the Center Safety Officer or Risk Manager, although the Executive Director may appoint anyone, including other members of the EMT to be on call.

Disaster Management Team (DMT) – A team of management-level staff rapidly convened by the Executive Director, who is the team chairperson. The team is usually activated by a phone call from the DMT Liaison at the request of the Incident Commander on the scene of an incident larger than the unit can handle with available resources. Team members include:

- Chairperson –Executive Director
- Incident Commander – Clients Rights Officer
- Finance Support – Chief Financial Officer
- Human Resources Support – Human Resources Director
- Information Technology Support – IT Director
- Legal Support – Legal counsel
- Clinical/Medical Support - Medical Director; UM Manager;
- Public Relations Support – Director of Special Programs
- Building Management Support – Maintenance Supervisor
- Records Management Support – Medical Records Director
- Risk Management Support –Safety Officer
- Consumer Services Support – ABHU Director; CAPS Director; MCOT Supervisors; IDD Director
- Others as decided by the ED.

This administrative team supports the Incident Commander on the scene by:

- Authorizing additional resources and determining short & long-term effects of the emergency
- Interfacing with outside/regulatory agencies and the media
- Prioritizing and facilitating a smooth return to normal operations.

The relationship between the IC, ERT & EMT is on the Emergency Response Flowchart.

Emergency Operations Center (EOC) – A location designated by the DMT from which response and recovery activities, such as initial assessment, evaluation, coordination and decision-making, take place. The EOC is equipped with communication equipment, reference materials, activity logs and all the tools necessary to respond quickly and appropriately to an emergency. The EOC location may be on or off-premises, but an alternate location will be identified in case the primary area becomes impractical or unsafe.

Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) – Team of BRBHC staff trained in Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM), ready to respond with crisis counseling and intervention services for internal emergencies or for anyone in our community affected by a local or state disaster. This team is led by the Medical Director, and will usually be called to respond only after local CISM response teams have been overwhelmed, the situation is declared a state or federal level emergency, or at the request of HHSC. The existence of this response team is required to meet the Center's performance contract with HHSC/DSHS/DADS/DARS.

Preparation / Mitigation

The Center must identify and assess the potential impact of emergency scenarios that can be reasonably expected to occur at a particular worksite, and then develop a plan of action to reduce that potential impact and promote a smoother return to normal operations.

Executive Director

1. Appoints an Emergency Management Team (EMT) with the knowledge and authority capable of carrying out the duties described below.
2. Ensures adequate funding for preparation, mitigation and response efforts as recommended by the team.

Emergency Management Team (EMT)

3. Conducts a Center-wide Emergency/Disaster Risk Assessment:
 - a. Determines the potential human, property and business impact of any given emergency scenario at each physical worksite, identifying those events most likely to occur and involving the greatest magnitude of loss should they occur. Losses may be defined in terms of human life, property, reputation, finances, personnel shortages, etc.
 - b. Anticipates the potential for one incident to lead to a chain of secondary events and develops contingency plans.
 - c. Meets with outside agencies, community organizations and utilities to secure Memorandums of Agreement (MOA) as necessary.

- d. Reviews applicable internal plans and policies and contract measures affecting both minimum targets and contract measures.
 - e. Identifies applicable codes and regulations.
 - f. Identifies critical services and operations.
 - g. Identifies internal and external resources / capabilities.
 - h. Reviews insurance coverage and makes a thorough inventory of Center property.
4. Makes recommendations based on this vulnerability analysis for preparation, mitigation and response, to include:
- a. Media Relations Policy and Procedures, addressing release of information to the news media and public.
 - b. Emergency Medical Response Procedures for injuries sustained by staff, consumers or visitors to the Center.
 - c. Security Response Procedures covering property, vehicle and building security and control; personnel; and search procedures.
 - d. Emergency Alerting/Communication Procedures covering notification procedures for facility-wide emergency situations.
 - e. Internal Evacuation and Personnel Accountability procedures for Incident Commander, consumers, supervisors, employees, required signage, primary and alternate safe relocation areas, and primary and alternate evacuation sites.
 - f. External Evacuation and Personnel Accountability procedures for the Emergency Management Team (EMT), Incident Commander, staff, evacuation transportation, alternate housing sites, critical services and resource availability.
 - g. Receiving Refugees from Other Facilities, addressing responsibilities for the Emergency Management Team (EMT), IC, staff, supervisors, housing, critical services and resource availability.
 - h. Memorandum of Agreements (MOA) with other MHMR facilities, including procedures for utilizing and providing services, MOA with external agencies, facilities or organization, including procedures for utilizing services.
 - i. Crisis Management procedures, including training and activation of the Crisis Intervention Team, familiarity with options and procedures for obtaining outside assistance for response and recovery efforts, reporting procedures following an officially declared State and/or Federal emergency, and procedures to ensure that consumers and staff are offered debriefing following a critical incident.
5. Reviews the assessment and plan annually and anytime changes in risk occur, such as when programs are moved, new programs are implemented, or new properties are acquired.

Program Supervisor

- 6. Works with the Emergency Management Team (EMT) in conducting a Unit-Specific Emergency/Disaster Risk Assessment, specifically addressing scenarios likely to affect that particular unit. This assessment is updated annually and anytime changes in risk occur.
- 7. Takes reasonable steps, based on this risk assessment, to anticipate and reduce the potential impact of potential emergency scenarios by implementing the applicable Specific Emergency Preparation and Response Procedures at the end of this section.
- 8. Develops unit-specific procedures based on this risk assessment, addressing the following issues:
 - a. Identify an alternate to assume the role of Incident Commander in the supervisor's absence;
 - b. Identify procedures for isolating and securing the incident scene to prevent additional injury and preserve evidence, if necessary;
 - c. Identify key personnel and procedures for critical shutdown procedures, such as turning off gas mains, water lines and electrical power, if necessary;
 - d. Identify criteria for response escalation, Emergency Management Team (EMT) activation and procedures for summoning additional resources and outside assistance;

- e. Identify primary and alternate Safe Relocation Areas in the event of a short-term evacuation, as well as procedures for accounting for staff and consumers;
 - f. Identify primary and alternate Evacuation Sites in case of long-term evacuation, as well as procedures for transporting and accounting for personnel and consumers;
 - g. Identify procedures for protecting and transporting vital records and medications in an evacuation;
 - h. Identify procedures and methods of communication;
 - i. Identify procedures for notification of next of kin for consumers and staff;
 - j. Identify procedures for returning to normal operations;
 - k. Identify procedures for other challenges to an effective response as they are presented.
9. Forms an Emergency Response Team (ERT) of unit employees trained to respond and rapidly handle all of the technical aspects of an incident.
 10. Ensures ERT members, as well as all unit staff, are adequately prepared following established training guidelines.
 11. Maintains a current list of unit response team members, their expected role in an emergency, and emergency contact information. Job titles may be identified instead of names for certain tasks, thereby assuring that key responsibilities are accomplished by anyone present with that title.
 12. Ensures that a current copy of this emergency contact list is always available to the Crisis Line, the Center Safety Officer and the Executive Director.
 13. Works with the Center Safety Officer to prepare a site map of the facility for the Centers local Fire Department(s) indicating:
 - a. Utility shut offs and mains (water, gas, electricity)
 - b. Storm drains and sewer lines
 - c. Floor plans of each facility with exits and stairwells
 - d. Security and fire alarm panels and enunciators
 - e. Fire extinguishers and suppression systems
 - f. Designated escape routes
 - g. Location of restricted areas and chemical supply storage
 - h. Location of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)
 - i. Location of first aid and disaster kits
 - j. Location of an internal Safe Assembly Area
 - k. Location of and route to the primary Safe Relocation Area
 - l. Location of and route to the alternate Safe Relocation Area

Emergency Response Team (ERT) Member(s)

14. Maintain a high level of professionalism and readiness.
15. Participate in training exercises and become familiar with all aspects of the Emergency Management Plan, as well as unit-specific procedures.
16. Provide feedback when concerns are identified or problems with response are encountered.

Crisis Intervention Team

17. Fulfill the Center's contract obligations to HHSC as stated:
 - a. Provide to HHSC the names and contact method of two professional staff members, with qualifications acceptable to HHSC, to serve as disaster contacts,
 - b. Provide additional staff at a ratio of one professional staff for each quarter of a million population in the LSA,
 - c. Provide professional staff to be trained, as needed, by HHSC in disaster counseling and federal grant procedures;
 - d. Provide disaster services (as defined in attachments) to eligible consumers in the event of a state or federally declared emergency and upon notification from HHSC
18. Maintain a constant state of readiness by keeping current in Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Basic and Peer-to-Peer training certification.
19. Provide current phone, e-mail, cell phone and other emergency contact numbers to the Crisis Intervention Team leader, who then forwards this list to the Crisis Line, Executive Director and Human Resources Department.
20. Respond safely to the emergency when activated by the Crisis Intervention Team leader, following established guidelines

Responding to Accidents and Other Unusual Events

Whenever an accident or other unusual event occurs, how we respond determines how well we manage the situation and minimize its impact. It would be impossible to establish written procedures for every situation requiring immediate action or attention, so what constitutes an "appropriate" response may vary depending on the circumstances of each event. Where a situation is not covered by an existing procedure, good judgment and common sense may dictate an appropriate response, but staff will be expected to justify their actions. It is every employee's responsibility to be familiar with Center policies and procedures, and to abide by their spirit and intent when responding to emergencies.

However, the following should serve as a guideline:

A. General Response Guidelines

1. **PRIORITY:** If the situation warrants, ensure your safety and the safety of others in the immediate area. If necessary, isolate and secure the scene to preserve evidence, reduce risk to others and prevent unauthorized access. This may involve separating a perpetrator from a victim of abuse or other crime if able to do so safely, or calling 911 to involve police assistance. This may also require following established alarm and evacuation procedures if called for.
2. If injuries are present, quickly initiate the appropriate level of medical response, if trained and able to do so. Call 911 if the situation requires or if ever in doubt. Take steps to protect injured persons from further harm, and never move a seriously injured person unless absolutely necessary to correct a life-threatening situation.
3. Immediately notify the supervisor or the highest-ranking staff member present to advise of the situation. If no supervisor or higher-ranking staff member is available, **YOU ARE IN CHARGE until someone else meeting those criteria arrives!** If it is after-hours and/or a supervisor is unavailable, and the situation warrants, call the Crisis Helpline at 1-800-643-1102. Crisis Helpline staff will gather pertinent data and initiate an appropriate response from Center management.
4. The supervisor, or highest-ranking staff member present, will then take charge of the incident, assess staff actions up to this point, and decide whether additional response or resources are needed, activating the unit emergency response plan if necessary (*see Section 2 - "Emergency Response & Management Plan"*).
5. If other agencies must be notified, such as HHSC or DFPS, the supervisor ensures this is accomplished if responding staff have not already done so.

6. Once the situation is under control and critical response items have been completed, the supervisor immediately initiates an investigation and ensures proper documentation of the event following procedures outlined in the next section below.

B. Facility Consolidation

Purpose: Strategies to increase efficiencies and to cope with additional Crisis Intake and Emergency Services needs:

1. Facilities Primary Consolidation:

- A. Establish additional Intake/short term stabilization units. Assess Psychiatric hospitalization needs. There is an increased potential for BRBHC to be filled to capacity and unavailable for additional intakes. Under disaster situations there will be an increased crisis intake need. In order to address the combination of these two challenges utilizing additional CIS sites.
- B. Central Administration (CA) located at 1500 Pappas Laredo, Tx will be designated as the Emergency Operation Center for BRBHC activity and the primary hub for Crisis Intake Operations as well.
- C. An established telemedicine link will be utilized with as many consumer related services as possible (i.e. the Homeless shelters, affected areas). Telemedicine lines will allow Auth/Provider staff as well as Clinicians to continue treatment.

2. Facilities Secondary Consolidation:

- A. Should Central Administration not be available due to disaster situation, the Zapata clinic- 101 US Hwy 83 Zapata, Tx will be designated as the Emergency Operation Center for BRBHC activity and the primary hub for Crisis Intake Operations as well.
- B. Overflow for Administrative operations will be designated at Project Redirect offices.

3. Facilities Tertiary Consolidation:

- A. Should CA/Secondary not be available due to the disaster situation, the Rio Grande Clinic- 2751 Pharmacy Rd Rio Grande City, Tx will be designated as the Emergency Operation Center for BRBHC and the primary hub for Crisis Intake Operations as well.
- B. Overflow for Administrative operations will be designated at Project Redirect offices.

C. Medication Monitoring

- A. Master List of medication monitor will be updated and kept by Director of Nursing (DON) on a Monthly Basis.
- B. Medication Monitoring will be coordinated by the Medical Director and the DON to ensure that BRBHC consumers receive their medication.
- C. Medication Monitoring will be conducted through designated Operations location should facilities be compromised.

D. First Aid Kits

Supervisors must ensure that staff has the tools and training needed to handle minor emergencies. To do this, each unit must maintain a well-stocked first aid kit accessible to employees at all times, but protected from access to non-employees, both in the office and in each Center vehicle under its control.

If a unit conducts field trips, picnics, hikes or other outdoor activities where a vehicle first aid kit will not be available, then the unit must make available a “field” first aid kit that can be carried along, under the control of an assigned employee.

1. **Contents:** First Aid kits will stay continually stocked with a minimum number of supplies as approved by the Medical Director.
2. **Inspection:** The unit safety officer will inspect all first aid kits as part of the Monthly Unit Safety Inspection Checklist and will ensure that kits are re-stocked immediately after use.
3. **Storage:** All kits should be stored in such a way as to allow access to staff at all times, but which discourages tampering or unsupervised access to non-employees.
 - a. **Unit first aid kits** must be in a portable, lockable, waterproof container that can be quickly transported for use out in the field in case of an evacuation.
 - b. **Vehicle first aid kits** should be quickly accessible, but in a secure location to prevent consumer access without supervision.
 - c. **Field first aid kits** used in picnics, hikes, or other outdoor activities must always be under a staff member’s supervision and control, and should never be given to a consumer to carry. A fanny pack design is ideal for this type of kit, but a vehicle first aid kit can also be used.

Training / Drills

Regular training is essential for an effective emergency response plan, both to measure the plan’s effectiveness and the readiness of staff to carry it out successfully. All staff must understand and have an opportunity to practice their role in order to minimize confusion and ensure the best possible outcome.

There are four types of training exercises:

- Table-top drill: “Brainstorming” session to identify response team responsibilities and explore potential problems the team might face when responding to a given scenario.
- Specific-function drill: Practice exercise that serves to test a specific part of the plan (communications, warning systems, transportation, etc.)
- Actual-response drill: Complete scenario exercise conducted at the unit, involving Emergency Response Team members and building occupants (for example, a fire drill). Evacuation for actual emergency situations may be counted as a drill if the evacuation is properly documented.
- Full-Scale Mock Disaster Drill: Full response exercise involving a coordinated effort between two or more Emergency Response Teams and the Emergency Management Team. An invitation may be extended to other community agencies who would normally respond, such as the Fire Department, Police Department, American Red Cross, etc. The Center Safety Officer and Emergency Management Team (EMT) will coordinate this mock exercise annually on any one of several potential disaster scenarios.

Staff Development Coordinator

1. Ensures all new employees are trained on the Center's Emergency Response Plan (ERP) and general response concepts at New Employee Orientation (or within 30 days of employment) and annual refresher training. Maintains training documentation on each employee.

Program Supervisor / Unit Safety Officer

2. Orients all new employees and volunteers to unit-specific emergency procedures within one week of arrival at the unit. The orientation must include a briefing on their expected role in the unit Emergency Response Plan (ERP).
3. Coordinates periodic Emergency Preparedness Drills to test staff and Emergency Response Team readiness, as outlined in the Emergency Response Training Schedule.
4. Completes an Emergency Response/Drill Report after each drill (or actual response) and forwards a copy to the Center Safety Officer within 24 hours.
5. Retrains staff anytime response procedures are altered or updated, or when deficiencies are discovered during a drill or actual response. Forwards documentation of each training session to the HR department and keeps a copy on-site.
6. Participates in annual full-scale exercises with the Emergency Management Team (EMT).

Center Safety Officer

7. Reviews after-action reports and other unit documentation of drills; makes recommendations as needed and provide assistance towards improvement.
8. Coordinates annual full-scale mock disaster drill in cooperation with the Emergency Management Team and local emergency response authorities, striving for full relocation simulation and focusing on unit evacuation capabilities and management response.

Emergency Response & Management Plan Evaluation
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This plan must be evaluated at least annually, and after every drill or actual emergency response, to evaluate the effectiveness and adequacy of staff response and to affect any necessary changes in the plan at all levels.

Program Supervisor / Unit Safety Officer

1. Ensures that all emergency drills and actual events are reviewed at monthly unit safety meetings, addressing the following questions:
 - Does the plan reflect lessons learned from drills and actual events?
 - Do ERT members understand their respective responsibilities?
 - Have new members been trained?
 - Are names, titles and telephone numbers of ERT members current?
 - Has the physical layout of the facility changed?
 - Have work processes changed?
 - Are photographic and other records of facility assets up to date?
 - Is the facility meeting its training objectives?
 - Have identified hazards in the facility changed?
 - Are steps being taken to incorporate emergency management into other facility processes?
2. Trains all staff on any modifications made to the unit Emergency Response Plan (ERP), incorporating those changes into the next emergency drill.
3. Seeks guidance from Center Safety Officer and other Emergency Management Team (EMT) members in improving and implementing the unit Emergency Response Plan (ERP).

Executive Director / Disaster Management Team (DMT)

4. Ensures that all disaster incidents, mock disaster drills and other events requiring the activation of the Center Emergency Management Team (DMT) go through a post-incident review process to

- evaluate the effectiveness and adequacy of the Emergency Response Plan (ERP) and the Emergency Management Plan (EMP).
- 5. Ensures all applicable staff are trained on any modifications made to the Emergency Response Plan (ERP) or the Emergency Management Plan (EMP), incorporating those changes into the next mock disaster drill.
- 6. Ensures that steps are taken to incorporate emergency management into other facility processes.
- 7. Ensures responding community agencies have been briefed on the plan and are involved in evaluating the plan.

Incident Alert / Notification / Communication

An emergency response will not happen until there is awareness that an incident has taken place. This procedure addresses available alert methods, the preferred means for reporting emergencies, and methods for notifying and involving other key personnel to respond to a situation once it has taken place.

Emergency Management Team (EMT)

- 1. Reviews center-wide alert and communication capabilities and determines the preferred method(s) for center-wide response (Crisis Line, messengers, telephones, cellular phones, pagers, e-mail, portable microwave, amateur radios, point-to-point private lines, satellite, high-frequency radios/phones, FAX machine, hand signals, hand-held personal radios, etc.)
- 2. Establish Crisis Line redundancy for MRA, ECI, ChAMHPs, and EVOP sites.
- 3. Considers the impact of and develops contingency plans for a disruption in communication during normal operations and during emergency response.
- 4. Develops procedures for keeping families of employees and consumers informed during and after a serious emergency.
- 5. Continually evaluates communications capabilities and contingency plans, especially following an actual emergency event or scheduled training exercise, and makes recommendations for improvement.
- 6. BRBHC Director of Special Programs will coordinate updated BRBHC operations information with the Webb, Starr, Jim Hogg, Zapata County Office of Emergency Management, 211, and 911.
- 7. Signage will be placed at all non-functional facilities to communicate through the crisis line and 211 operators to received current and updated BRBHC operations locations.

Program Supervisor

- 8. Identifies and communicates to staff the preferred method(s) to be used at that particular facility for internal alert in the event of an emergency.
- 9. Cooperates with BRBHC clinics in outlying counties to ensure mutual alert and communication during an emergency.
- 10. Plans for contingencies in case normal lines of communications are disrupted.
- 11. Purchases and constantly maintains a NOAA weather alert radio, ensuring a fresh supply of spare batteries at all times.
- 12. Purchases and constantly maintains a portable backup AM/FM radio, either self-powered or battery operated in case of power failure. A fresh supply of spare batteries will be available at all times.
- 13. Maintains a current emergency contact list of all staff under his/her supervision, especially members of the Emergency Response Team (ERT).
- 14. Ensures that a current copy of this emergency contact list is always available to the Crisis Line, Executive Director, Human Resources Department, Center Safety Officer and specific Program Directors as required.

Emergency Response Team (ERT) Member(s)

15. Immediately informs supervisor and the Human Resources department of any change to name, address, phone number or other information vital to communicating in an emergency.
16. Immediately advises supervisor if no longer able to fulfill assigned response duties so that a replacement can be identified and trained.

Unit Safety Officer

17. Ensures constant alert capability by documenting dates and times of weekly test activations and actual alert activations on a NOAA Weather Radio Activity Log. Forwards completed logs to Center Safety Officer.
18. Inspects the NOAA radio and back-up AM/FM radio as part of a Monthly Facility Safety Inspection to ensure working function and a fresh supply of back-up batteries. Forwards copy of facility safety inspection to Center Safety Officer.
19. Follows the Emergency Response Training Schedule to ensure emergency alert and communication capability, under the guidance and direction of the Center Safety Officer and Program Supervisor. Completes the Emergency Response/Drill Report after each practice drill or actual emergency and forwards to the Center Safety Officer.

Center Safety Officer

20. Guides and assists the Program Supervisor and Safety Officer in developing and implementing effective unit policies and procedures.
21. Reviews facility checklists, NOAA radio logs and drill after-action reports to ensure constant alert and communication capability. Makes recommendations to overcome deficiencies.

Incident Response

An organized and well-rehearsed emergency response will ensure a positive outcome and quicker return to normal operations. A chain-of-command must be clearly established to minimize confusion, and responsible individuals must be identified to perform certain tasks. Refer to the Emergency Response Flowchart at the end of this section for a summary of these procedures.

All Staff

1. Immediately notify your chain of command once alerted to an emergency; if you are the highest ranking staff member present, **you are in charge** until they arrive!
2. Follow the appropriate Emergency Response Plan procedure for the type of incident encountered, being mindful of unit-specific procedures that must also be followed.

Incident Commander

3. Assume command and activate the Emergency Response Plan (ERP) following established emergency response procedures. Establish a command post and implement Shelter-in-Place or Evacuation procedures, if called for.
4. Contact the Emergency Management Team (EMT) Liaison immediately:
 - a. If the incident cannot be handled with available unit resources,
 - b. Anytime the unit must be evacuated,
 - c. Anytime significant property damage is present, and
 - d. Anytime significant injuries are present requiring medical attention beyond 1st aid.
5. Ensure that all staff, especially ERT members, are given the opportunity to be debriefed following any emergency response, to allow for identification of signs and symptoms requiring crisis intervention and to allow an opportunity for feedback and identification of any problems encountered during the response.

Emergency Response Team (ERT)

6. Respond rapidly but safely once alerted to an incident under the guidance of the Incident Commander, following established emergency response procedures and with due regard for the safety of co-workers, consumers and visitors in the area.
7. Isolate the scene and provide for the protection of others in the area, following established emergency response guidelines
8. Use appropriate personal protective equipment as provided in first aid and disaster kits.
9. Be vigilant as the incident unfolds, notifying the Incident Commander of any rapidly changing situations that may require an immediate change in response efforts.

Emergency Management Team (EMT) Liaison

10. Ensure availability as the emergency point-of-contact and provides Crisis Line and the Executive Director with current home, pager and cell phone number. Make sure an alternate is appointed during vacations or other periods of unavailability.
11. Respond to the scene of any unit emergency as appropriate, make an assessment and assist the Incident Commander in implementing the Emergency Response Plan. Assume the role of Incident Commander as appropriate.
12. Establish and maintain constant communication with the Emergency Management Team (EMT) Chairperson, report progress or problems and advise Emergency Management Team (EMT) if situation requires additional resources or response.

Emergency Management Team (EMT) Chairperson

13. Rapidly assemble the Emergency Management Team (EMT) to the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) site at the request of the acting incident commander or as otherwise deemed necessary.
14. Establish communication with the acting Incident Commander (IC) and dispatch other Emergency Management Team (EMT) members to the site as necessary.
15. Direct Emergency Management Team (EMT) throughout the incident response and ensuing recovery efforts until normal business operations have resumed

Emergency Management Team (EMT)

16. Support the IC and ERT efforts, with team members accomplishing individual responsibilities as outlined on the Emergency Response Flowchart at the end of this section.
17. Authorize and order additional resources and support based on anticipated short-term and long-term effects of the emergency, such as ordering Center-wide shut-down, activation of off-duty personnel, etc.
18. Interface with outside organizations, regulatory agencies and the media; follow procedures for requesting state or federal aid as necessary
19. Prioritize and facilitate a smooth return to normal operations
20. Activate the Crisis Intervention Team as needed to allow for identification of signs and symptoms requiring crisis intervention.

Recovery / Resuming Operations

Once the emergency response is over, the affected unit(s) and perhaps the entire agency will go through a recovery process to return to normal operations. Proper planning and preparation in advance of a disaster will make this process smoother and less traumatic for all involved.

Supervisor / Unit Coordinator

1. Establish priorities for resuming operations.
2. Coordinate clean-up operations
3. Investigate the incident thoroughly using the techniques discussed in Section 1 of this manual.
4. Document the incident on the Event Report form and submit to the Center Safety Officer within 24 hours.

Emergency Management Team (EMT)

1. Coordinate with the Program Supervisor(s) to establish priorities for resuming operations, determining which operations are critical and which systems must be brought back on-line first. This may involve equipment repair or replacement, relocation of operations to an alternate location, or temporarily contracting out certain operations.
2. Ensure continuity of management. Key staff may not be available after an emergency, but recovery and operations decisions will still need to be made without undue delay. Assure chain of command is maintained along with lines of communication. If necessary, move staff to alternate worksites and relocate headquarters.
3. Implement investigation procedures and conduct a Post-Incident Review to evaluate incident response, improve the Emergency Response Plan and revise Policies and Procedures if necessary.
4. Assign responsibilities for Post-Incident Activities, as summarized on the Emergency Response Flowchart.
5. Ensure a Post-Incident Review with all Emergency Management Team (EMT) members, Incident Commanders, and ERT members to evaluate the adequacy of all response efforts and to make recommendations for Emergency Response Plan improvement.

Emergency Management Team (EMT) Support Responsibilities**Medical Support**

1. Coordinate triage activities, medical supplies and infection control efforts
2. In cooperation with Consumer Services Support, assess extent of injuries and fatalities involving persons served and provide for the continuation of consumer care

Consumer Services Support

1. In cooperation with Medical Services Support, assess extent of injuries and fatalities involving persons served and provide for the continuation of consumer care.
2. Notify consumers' families about the status of services and coordinate with Legal Support regarding next of kin notification.
3. Coordinate activation of Crisis Intervention Team in cooperation with other CISM-trained community crisis response teams at the request of the American Red Cross. Ensure that all staff, especially ERT members, are given the opportunity for debriefing following any emergency response, to allow for identification of signs and symptoms requiring crisis intervention

Finance Support

1. Review, verify and approve all short-term incident-related expenditures and capital expenditures.
2. Implement any necessary short-term financial tracking controls; review and implement appropriate alternate policies for business resumption purposes.
3. If deemed appropriate, authorize the use of verbal purchase orders for key vendors in support of the resumption efforts.
4. Manage the movement of funds to ensure that expenditures are debited to the appropriate accounts. Ensure the establishment and use of a Disaster Recovery Cost Center to record all recovery related expenditures.

Information Technology Support

1. Provide damage assessment on a affected computer and electronic equipment, as well as the subsequent replacement of such equipment (destruction, short-term restoration, and immediate suitability of use). Determine which are needed for recovery activities and could be operationally restored and retrieved quickly.
2. Coordinate electronic data reclamation/restoration efforts with Records Management Support team member. Immediately contact equipment vendors to obtain on-site support for damage assessment and restoration activities.
3. Assist affected departments in the recovery of PC/LAN data, and access to LAN and mainframe computing environments.
4. Arrange for electronic communications at any alternate worksites in cooperation with Building Management Support and the affected Program Supervisor.

Records Management Support

1. Coordinate damage assessment activities with Building Management Support to evaluate the extent of damage to records and files. Determine which vital records (files, manuals, documentation, etc.) are needed for recovery activities, or those which have the greatest potential adverse effect on the Center.
2. Coordinate records reclamation efforts and retrieval of off-site back-up records with Information Technology Support team member (*NOTE: Archival and recovery data should be separately stored and clearly marked according to unit/program. Recovery materials should be easily identifiable and assessable*).
3. Retrieve storage boxes coded for recovery from the off-site storage location.
4. Contact affected Site Managers and Supervisors to determine their record requirements.
5. As requests for archived data are received, coordinate with Information Technology Support to reload the most current version of personal computer software (*NOTE: there should be a method of tracking off-site inventory of data*).
6. Develop a strategy for the timely reconstruction of destroyed records from other media. Prioritize reconstruction based on Program need.

Legal Support

1. Provide legal counsel for response / recovery process.
2. Review the “disruption” to limit facility liability. Consider the following:
 - a. Contractual commitments to customers;
 - b. Current contractual negotiations;
 - c. Current litigation;
 - d. Contractual commitments to vendors;
 - e. Regulatory compliance;
 - f. Possible litigation from visitors to the facility resulting from injury or death.
3. Interface with Public Relations Support and other Emergency Management Team (EMT) members regarding “public relation” type activities, providing advice and counsel during the crisis situation.
4. Review new contracts acquired as a result of the event occurrence before they are approved to ensure the best interests of the agency are being met.
5. Examine any process changes made by the departments during the recovery effort to mitigate agency liability.

Risk Management Support

1. Initiate and coordinate an onsite inspection of affected areas (building access permitting) in coordination with Building Management Support and Legal Support to determine the extent of damages and ensure the safety of personnel on the affected property.

2. Assess the nature and extent of injuries involving staff, volunteers and visitors. Coordinate treatment and Worker's Compensation insurance claims for injured staff, as well as liability insurance claims for volunteers and affected third-parties.
3. Assess all remaining hazards at the incident site, including physical structure integrity, environmental conditions, etc. Interface with regulatory agencies (FEMA, EPA, Health Department, Fire Marshal, etc.) regarding the physical condition of the building.
4. Arrange to close up building openings, physically secure the property and protect undamaged property. Establish access-control and other security measures as appropriate at the primary site and at any alternate worksites. Utilize external security agencies as needed for security personnel. Consider the following:
 - a. Verify the identity of all persons entering the building;
 - b. Control the number of personnel permitted in the building at any one time;
 - c. Provide a time limit for performing impact assessments;
 - d. Ensure that temporary security badges are distributed and worn by all vendors and visitors;
 - e. Ensure that personal protective and safety equipment, such as hardhats, flashlights, etc., are work and used by all vendors and visitors;
 - f. Preserve information and data. Ensure that PC's are not turned on and that only personal items are removed. Ensure that all items removed from the building are logged by security personnel.

Human Resources Support

1. Ensure continued employee support, including emergency support measures as approved, such as cash advances, salary continuation, flexible or reduced work hours, care packages, day care assistance, etc.
2. Coordinate employer notifications for visitors who were affected.
3. Coordinate with Legal Support regarding next-of-kin notifications and assistance to dependents of injured employees.
4. Obtain a copy of revised employee work locations, work assignments, or work schedules from the responsible Manager/Supervisor.
 - a. Notify employees' families of the status of personnel still on the property.
 - b. Notify off-duty staff about their work status
5. Coordinate additional or temporary staffing requirements as needed by affected departments:
 - a. Determine availability of idle personnel who could temporarily fill department staff requirements;
 - b. Determine positions that should be filled because employees cannot return to work.
 - c. Consider temporary internal personnel transfers, temporary external facility personnel transfers, and external temporary personnel agencies.
6. Provide necessary training and background checks of replacement personnel, as required.
7. Ensure that rotation of personnel required to work overtime occurs throughout the recovery effort.
8. Coordinate with the Emergency Management Team (EMT) in distributing notices, or conducting employee meetings to provide assurance of facility survival and job security.
9. Report to Emergency Management Team (EMT) during Post-Incident Review with the following information:
 - a. Status of all persons seriously affected;
 - b. Status of next-of-kin and employer notifications;
 - c. Statements and reactions of local civil authorities;
 - d. Potential employee relations exposures resulting from the event or business recovery strategies;
 - e. Recommendations for temporary changes in personnel policy as required to support business recovery activities, to include such issues as:
 - Dependent care and support;

- Deferment of vacations, raises, promotions, etc.

Building Management Support

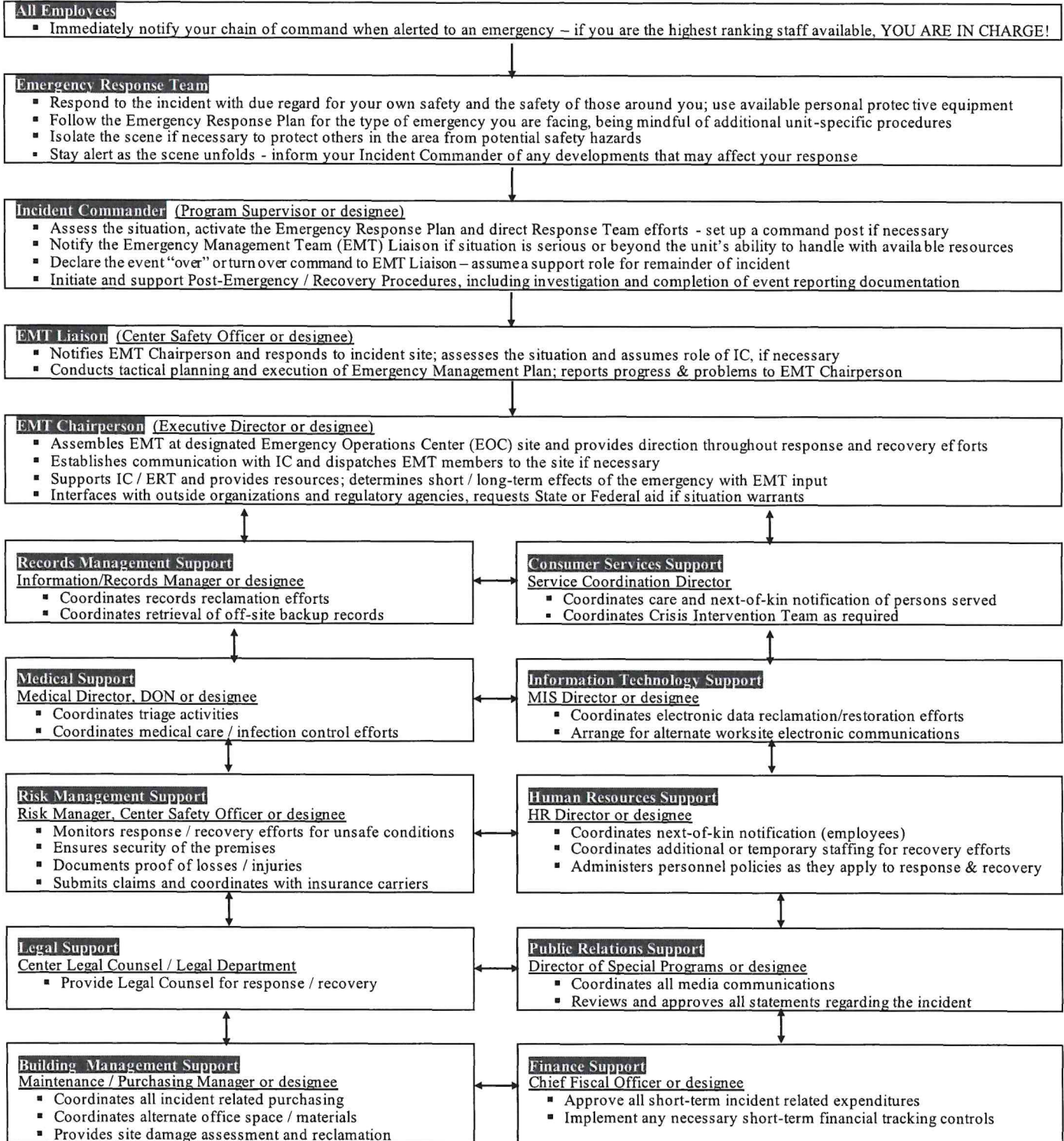
1. Coordinate site damage assessment and reclamation with Risk Management and determine salvage priorities of contents. Organize a damage assessment and restoration area at the EOC.
2. Before conducting damage assessment activities, obtain the following:
 - a. Facility maps, diagrams and blueprints showing:
 - Transformers and electrical switchboxes;
 - Utility cut-offs, control panels or monitoring stations;
 - Chemical supply storage locations;
 - Mechanical rooms / boilers / furnaces;
 - Fire hydrants, sprinkler valves and other fire-fighting equipment;
 - Medical and first-aid equipment;
 - Underground and above ground storage tanks and septic systems
 - Compressed gases / oxygen tank storage;
 - b. Flashlights;
 - c. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as hard-hats and protective outer gear / clothing;
 - d. Communication devices, such as telephones and two-way radios;
 - e. Recording equipment, such as a camera / camcorder and tape recorder;
3. Evaluate the extent of damage to the building
 - a. Structural (external and internal);
 - b. Accessibility within the structure;
 - c. Status of telecommunications and the switch;
 - d. Status of cabling, terminal connections;
 - e. Status of all utilities and electrical service;
 - f. Status of plumbing, HVAC, etc.
 - g. Potential environmental safety exposures.
4. Establish contact with local authorities, emergency services and contractors to coordinate assessment, clean-up and restoration.
5. Coordinate all incident-related purchasing. Consider the need to establish special job order numbers for purchases and repair work.
6. Work with the Emergency Management Team (EMT) and contractors to develop an estimated time to reconstruct the facility, and work with affected site Supervisors and Managers to assess the impact on their operations.
7. Coordinate alternate office space and materials as needed. Coordinate temporary voice, data, utilities and other essential services until a permanent solution is approved and carried out.
8. Review new contracts acquired as a result of the event occurrence with Legal Support before they are approved to ensure the best interests of the agency are being met.

Public Relations Support

1. Coordinate all media communications; serve as the control point for all statements, comments and information disseminated to the news media, customers and all external entities.
2. Depending on the nature of the crisis, determine the following:
 - a. If a “technical expert” is required to provide clarity to the situation and/or disseminate information to the media;
 - b. If the Executive Director will be required to address the media;
 - c. If anyone other than trained public relations personnel will communicate with the media, provide the following:
 - i. Spokesperson guidelines
 - ii. List of potential questions
 - iii. Appropriate statements and responses
3. Select and acquire a “Media Briefing Center” large enough for one-on-one interviews.
4. Acquire updates regarding the event occurrence and disposition of injured employees from the Emergency Management Team (EMT) Chairperson.

5. Develop a “media strategy”:
 - a. Contact the news desk editor at each major newspaper, television and radio station using available list of trade press contacts;
 - b. Provide each with a telephone number where a Public Relations representative can be reached - inform each of the existence and location of the “Media Briefing Center”;
 - c. Produce “media kits” containing the following information for distribution to various newspaper, television stations and radio stations:
 - i. Location of the event;
 - ii. General description of the event (stated positively);
 - iii. Presence or absence of injuries;
 - iv. Date Emergency Management Plan first created;
 - v. Date of the last Emergency Management Plan exercise;
 - vi. Corrective measures being taken;
 - vii. Description of impacts (non-monetary and stated positively);
6. Coordinate information dissemination in the following manner:
 - a. Prepare and distribute statements to employees that can be used as acceptable response(s) presented to persons who are not members of management staff. Coordinate this activity with Human Resources.
 - b. Communicate with state and/or city officials to notify them of the crisis situation. If deemed appropriate, provide anticipated recovery strategies.
 - c. Prepare written and oral communications detailing the situation and corporate plan of action. Coordinate efforts with the Emergency Management Team (EMT) in disseminating information to various external entities.
7. Monitor the use of a photographer for insurance purposes, as required.
8. Ensure that the following information is recorded and documented for the duration of the recovery effort:
 - a. Media responses;
 - b. Internal responses
 - i. Recovery activities;
 - ii. Response timing;
 - iii. Activity duration;
 - iv. Issues of concern
9. Enlist the aid of external public relations and advertising firms, as required
10. Upon completion of the recovery effort, evaluate media and internal responses during the Post-Incident Review process with the other Emergency Management Team (EMT) members.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE FLOWCHART – ALL EMERGENCIES



*For detailed support roles and responsibilities please refer to page 14 "Emergency Management Team Support Responsibilities"

Specific Emergency Preparation & Response Procedures

Chemical / Biological Emergency – “SHELTER-IN-PLACE”

With certain types of disasters it may be too dangerous to evacuate until the outside air is safe, such as with a chemical release (from a train derailment, manufacturing incident or freeway accident) or release of biological agents (such as with an act of terrorism). Instead, be prepared to shelter-in-place.

PREPARATION / HAZARD AVOIDANCE

- Designate a Shelter Room where occupants can gather during a shelter-in-place emergency, having as few windows, vents and doors as possible and protected from flying glass, falling objects or other potential hazards. If no single room is large enough, try adjoining rooms.
- Maintain well-stocked first aid and disaster kits equipped with enough supplies to sustain occupants for as long as 72 hours. Refer to the Center Safety Manual for the most current contents list. Inspect these kits monthly as part of a regular facility safety inspection checklist.
- Assign responsibilities and train all staff on shelter-in-place procedures, which may include shutting down air handling and ventilation units, sealing windows, vents, doorjams and any other areas where contaminated air could penetrate inside.
- Be prepared to evacuate at any moment. In residential units, consider preparing consumers in advance with personal backpacks equipped with spare clothes, food, water, and sanitation items in case the unit must be evacuated for several days.

GENERAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

IF YOU ARE OUTSIDE

- Immediately cover your mouth and nose with a cloth and seek shelter indoors (airborne toxins will travel with the wind, so don't walk into it or with it. Stay crosswind and keep the wind at your side.)
- If you are inside a vehicle, never drive through a gas cloud. Close all doors, windows and vents and turn off the heater or air conditioner; tune your radio to a local channel to listen for further instructions and updates.

IF YOU ARE INSIDE

Supervisor

- Announce “SHELTER-IN-PLACE” alert and notify the Center Safety Officer by phone. If after-hours, call the Crisis Helpline at 1-800-643-1102.
- Locate assigned communication devices, first aid kit and disaster kit, and then proceed to the shelter room (unless these items are stored there).
- Once inside the shelter room, account for all employees, consumers and visitors.
- Tune a radio or TV to a local channel to listen for further instructions and updates; use the back-up radio if the power goes off.
- If consumers or visitors are involved, brief them on the situation and explain what is expected of them.
- Instruct occupants NOT to leave until local authorities declare the situation safe – the outside air may be too dangerous and they risk spreading contamination to children and other family members. Local schools are trained and will take special care of children on school grounds.
- Watch occupants for signs of developing emergencies, such as untreated psychiatric or medical conditions, dehydration, heat illness, etc.
- Avoid using the phone to prevent jamming phone lines, unless a serious emergency arises.
- When cleared to evacuate, escort all occupants outside to the safe relocation area.
- Once the building has been ventilated and emergency crews give the “all clear”, return to the building and replace the communication devices.

All Employees

- Upon hearing the “Shelter-in-Place” announcement, close and lock all windows and doors in your area and quickly proceed to the shelter room, escorting consumers and visitors as you go.
- When cleared to evacuate, escort occupants outside the building to the designated safe relocation area.
- Once cleared to return, escort occupants back to the building.

Employee(s) Having Maintenance Responsibilities

- Immediately proceed to any mechanical rooms and turn off all air handling equipment, then go to the designated shelter room.
- When cleared to evacuate, turn all ventilation equipment back on and evacuate to the safe relocation area.

Employee(s) Having External Door Monitor Responsibilities

- Place “SHELTER-IN-PLACE IN EFFECT – NO ENTRY” signs on exterior doors, lock them and proceed to shelter room.
- When cleared to evacuate, unlock & prop open all doors, remove the signs and evacuate.
- Once cleared to return, put the “NO ENTRY” signs back in storage and close all doors.

Employee(s) Having Floor Monitor Responsibilities

- Check that windows, office doors and fire doors in all offices and common areas are closed and locked, then proceed to shelter room.
- When cleared to evacuate, open all operable windows and office doors, prop open all external and fire doors, then evacuate.
- Once cleared to return, close all doors and windows in the common areas.

Employee(s) Having Window Sealing Responsibilities

- Place plastic sheeting over windows and vents in the shelter room and use duct tape to securely overlap and seal all edges of the plastic.
- When cleared to evacuate, remove the plastic, open the windows (if operable) and evacuate.
- Once cleared to return, go back to the shelter room & return all supplies to the disaster kit.

Employee(s) Having Door Sealing Responsibilities

- Once all building occupants have entered the shelter room, lock the door and seal edges with duct tape, overlapping all edges of the door. Place wet towels at the bottom of all doors, covering all openings.
- When cleared to evacuate, remove the tape and towels from all doors and evacuate.
- Once cleared to return, go back to the shelter room & return all supplies to the disaster kit.

Tornado / Microburst – “CODE TORNADO”

The National Weather Service reports that the Border Region catchman areas have experienced one confirmed tornado per year since 1955, including more common microburst touchdowns with property damage and potential for injuries.

PREPARATION / HAZARD AVOIDANCE

- Designate an area in the facility as a shelter and practice assembling there in drills
- Have a well-stocked disaster kit on hand. Do NOT use candles as a lighting source, due to the high risk for fires.
- Develop an emergency communication plan
- If a tornado watch is sounded, turn on a radio or TV to stay alert for developing storms

GENERAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

- If a tornado warning is sounded, decisions must be made quickly. Broadcast a “**CODE TORNADO**” alert to warn others in the building.
- If indoors, go immediately to a windowless, interior room or to the lowest level of the building.
- If there is no such room, go to the center of the room and stay away from the windows, or go to an inner hallway or a smaller inner room such as a bathroom or closet. Stay away from wide-span roofs such as auditoriums, gymnasiums, cafeterias, etc.
- Get under a sturdy piece of furniture such as a desk or workbench and hold on to it - use your arms to protect head and neck.
- If outdoors, get inside a building. If shelter is not available or there is no time to get indoors, lie in a ditch or low-lying area or crouch near a strong building. Be aware of the potential for flooding.
- If in a vehicle, don't try to outrun a tornado. Get out of the vehicle and into a building. If no shelter is available or there is no time, get into a ditch or low-lying area, lie down and cover your head & neck.
- After it passes, help the injured. Never move a seriously injured person unless in immediate danger.
- Turn on a radio or TV, or use a self-powered radio to hear developments.
- Stay out of damaged buildings until declared safe by authorities.
- Use the telephone only for emergency calls to avoid jamming phone lines.
- Open a window immediately if you smell gas or hear a hissing noise and leave the building.
- Be prepared to shut off gas, electricity and water if necessary. If you have to step in water to turn off the electrical breaker, just leave the building and call an electrician for advice.
- Take pictures of damage for insurance purposes

Severe Thunderstorm / Lightning

BRBHC's catchman areas are listed with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as having between 20-30 severe thunderstorm days per year. The National Weather Service issues a severe thunderstorm watch whenever winds of greater than 58 miles per hour or hail greater than ¾ of an inch in diameter are likely to develop. This is often accompanied by flash flooding and tornado watches.

PREPARATION / HAZARD AVOIDANCE

- Have a well-stocked disaster kit on hand. Do NOT use candles as a lighting source, due to the high risk for fires.
- Have dead or rotting trees and branches removed regularly to prevent them from falling and causing injury or damage
- Learn and practice how to turn off utilities to the unit if it becomes necessary

GENERAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

- If indoors, secure outdoor objects that can be blown around and cause injury
- Shutter windows, close blinds and securely brace outside doors
- Unplug sensitive electrical devices such as TV's and computers
- Stay off the phone and do not handle electrical devices, as lightning can follow wires
- Avoid bathtubs, water faucets, and sinks because metal pipes can transmit electricity
- If outdoors, attempt to get inside a building or vehicle. Avoid tall structures such as towers, single large trees out in the open, telephone or power lines, and fences. Stay away from rivers, lakes or other bodies of water.
- If no structure is available, avoid lightning strikes by getting to an open space and squatting as low to the ground as possible with hands on knees. Be aware of flooding potential in low-lying areas.
- If you feel your hair stand on end (indicating an imminent lightning strike) drop to your knees, bend forward and put your hands on your knees. Do not lie flat on the ground.
- If in a car, pull safely off the road and away from any trees or power lines that could fall on the vehicle. Stay in the vehicle, turn on the emergency flashers and wait until the heavy rains subside.
- Avoid flooded roadways and never get out of the vehicle if there are downed power lines.
- Be prepared to provide first aid for someone struck by lightning.

Bomb Threat – “CODE BOMB THREAT”

Bomb threats are often no more than harassing hoaxes, pranks, or appearing for many businesses and institutions during times of layoff or other difficult management process. But with emerging threats of domestic terrorism in recent years, we must consider any such threat as serious until proven otherwise.

PREPARATION / HAZARD AVOIDANCE

- Understand that an explosive device gets into a facility one of three ways – it is carried in, mailed in, or built on site
- Pay attention to visitors, delivery persons, etc. Stay alert to what is going on around you at all times.
- Report unattended packages, briefcases, bags or anything that seems out of the “ordinary”
- Be cautious with unexpected deliveries (flowers with no card, unexpected packages, etc.)
- Understand and follow procedures for handling Suspicious Mail
- Conduct thorough background checks on all job applicants, and ensure that contracted employees (janitorial, security, office temps, etc.) are thoroughly screened prior to assignment.
- When making operational decisions, carefully ensure that convenience does not compromise security
- Keep flammable products and other chemical supplies locked - limit access to only authorized personnel.
- Review the unit’s designated **Safe Relocation Area**. To be effective in this type of scenario, Safe Relocation Areas should be at least 300 feet away and at an angle to the building (not directly in front of windows, to avoid potential injuries caused by flying glass and debris in case of an actual explosion). If possible, the area should be behind concrete or other fortified structure to serve as cover. Avoid parking lots whenever possible (several bombings have occurred where a perpetrator rigged secondary devices meant to harm evacuating personnel and responding emergency crews).

GENERAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

- PAY ATTENTION to the caller – capture as much identifying information as possible (accent, background noises, etc.)
- Staff receiving a phone threat should alert a supervisor immediately – during the call if able and as discreetly as possible.
- Call 911 if the threat is credible or if in doubt (a threat is more credible if the caller gives details, such as where the device is located, or describes the container and the type of explosive).
- Broadcast “**CODE BOMB THREAT**” as soon as possible. Upon hearing “code orange”, all staff should:
 - Quietly and discreetly conduct a covert search for anything out of the ordinary. Public access areas should be searched first, then private areas in case of a possible internal perpetrator. Do this quickly but try not to draw attention to the search.
 - **DO NOT TOUCH ANYTHING THAT SEEMS OUT OF PLACE!** Just note its location and continue the search, then report all suspicious items to the supervisor.
 - If what appears to be an obvious explosive device is found, back out of the area in the same direction you came from and immediately report its location to the supervisor.
- Evacuate the building if the threat is credible, if a suspected device is found, if detonation time is imminent (within 30 minutes of the time given by the caller) or if in doubt. All staff **must take with them what they brought in that morning** (backpacks, purses, briefcases, etc.)
- The first persons to arrive at the designated Relocation Area should immediately conduct a quick search of the area to look for secondary devices meant to harm evacuating personnel and responding emergency crews. If anything suspicious is found, order all evacuees to another relocation area a safe distance from the first.
- The supervisor must account for all personnel at the Safe Relocation Area, and staff may not leave until given permission to leave.
- Responding police officers will want to talk to the person in charge (with keys and access codes), the person who received the call and the person who found a suspicious item (if applicable). They may also need to talk to other key personnel with information about disgruntled employees, personnel conflicts, corporate problems, etc. They may want to speak with maintenance and cleaning personnel who are often most familiar with where everything is normally kept and can spot unusual items.
- Officers will likely ask for knowledgeable staff to accompany them on an overt search of our facility, since they do not know our business as well as we do and may not be able to spot something “out of the ordinary”. Anything we identify as suspicious will be treated as potentially explosive and the Bomb Squad will be called in.
- Once evacuated, no one may re-enter the building until cleared by police or other responding emergency personnel (at least 30 minutes after a stated detonation time if given by the caller).

Earthquake

Although BRBHC catchman areas are considered to be in a geographic area at low risk for earthquakes, there is enough historical seismic activity that this scenario is considered a potential threat. Most injuries and deaths in an earthquake come from falling objects, flying glass and collapsing debris.

PREPARATION / HAZARD AVOIDANCE

- Inspect the facility for any item that could fall, spill, break or move during a quake; store breakable items such as bottled foods and glasses in low, closed cabinets with latches
- Fasten shelves securely to walls and place large or heavy objects on lower shelves; brace overhead light fixtures
- Hang heavy items such as pictures & mirrors away from beds, couches and anywhere people sit or work
- Repair defective electrical wiring and leaky gas connections (these are potential fire risks) w
- Secure a water heater by strapping it to the wall studs and bolting it to the floor
- Repair any deep cracks in ceilings and foundations. Get expert advice on structural defects
- Store weed killers, pesticides, and flammables in latched, closed cabinets on the bottom shelf
- Have a well-stocked disaster kit on hand. Do NOT consider candles as an emergency lighting source, due to the high risk for fires. Instead, use battery-powered devices and stock extra batteries.
- Train and drill on how to shut off gas, water and electricity if necessary
- Develop an emergency communication plan in case of separation w
- Locate safe places outdoors, such as out in the open, away from buildings, trees, telephone and electrical lines, overpasses, or elevated expressways
- Identify safe places in each room:
 - Against an inside wall
 - Under sturdy furniture such as a heavy desk or table
 - Away from where glass could shatter (near windows, mirrors, pictures) or where bookcases or other heavy furniture could fall over

GENERAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

- If indoors, stay indoors: drop and take cover under heavy furniture or against inside wall
- If outdoors, move into the open, away from buildings, street lights and utility wires
- If in a vehicle, stay in the vehicle – move to a clear area away from power lines, buildings, overpasses, etc.
- After the quake, be prepared for aftershocks that can bring down weakened structures. Stay away from windows, skylights and anything that could fall
- Shut off gas, water and electricity to the unit if pipes are damaged or leaks are detected. If you have to step in water to turn off the electrical breaker, leave the building and call an electrician for advice.
- Assist others in evacuating - do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger
- Open a window immediately if you smell gas or hear a hissing noise and leave the building.
- Turn on a radio or television for the latest emergency information
- Stay out of damaged buildings – return only when authorities say it is safe
- Use the telephone only for emergencies to avoid jamming phone lines
- Take pictures of damaged property for insurance purposes.

Floods / Flash Floods

BRBHC catchman areas are considered to be in an area at risk for sudden flash flooding following heavy rains, with some portions of the city also susceptible to flooding of the Rio Grande River.

PREPARATION / HAZARD AVOIDANCE

- Units in flood-prone areas should install check valves in building sewer traps to prevent flood waters from backing up in sewer drains
- Have emergency water stored in case water supplies become contaminated
- Have a well-stocked disaster kit on hand containing flashlights and spare batteries. Do NOT use candles as a lighting source, due to the high risk for fires.
- Practice evacuating to areas of higher ground and areas less susceptible to flooding
- Develop an emergency communication plan in case of separation
- Practice shutting off gas, water and electricity

GENERAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

- Turn on a radio for evacuation instructions and updates
- Fill bathtubs, sinks and jugs with extra water in case the water supply becomes contaminated
- If time permits, move valuables and critical information to higher ground or upper floors
- Be prepared to shut off gas, electricity and water if necessary. If you have to step in water to turn off the electrical breaker, leave the building and call an electrician for advice.
- If outdoors, climb to high ground and stay there
- Avoid walking through floodwaters. Six inches of swiftly moving water can sweep you off your feet
- Be prepared to evacuate BEFORE the water gets too deep for vehicles to pass and before escape routes are cut off. Listen to the radio for recommended escape routes - shortcuts may be impassable
- DO NOT ATTEMPT TO DRIVE THROUGH FLOODWATERS! If you come to a flooded area turn around and go another way!
- If the vehicle stalls, abandon it and get to high ground immediately
- Do not return until told to do so by authorities
- Use extreme caution when returning to flood-damaged buildings - structural damage may have occurred and there may be a danger of collapse
- Be careful of potential fire hazards, such as broken or leaking gas lines, flooded electrical circuits, submerged furnaces or electrical appliances, or flammable liquids floating from upstream
- Throw away any food that has been in contact with flood waters, including canned goods – they are a health hazard
- Have the water supply checked for damage to pipes and sewer lines before using it – it may be contaminated

Suspicious Mail / Anthrax

The events of 9/11/01 and following months pushed previously obscure terms into the vocabulary of our everyday lives. Worries over our vulnerability to "bioterrorism" and "anthrax" prompted authorities to develop procedures for dealing with such previously unthinkable events.

PREPARATION / HAZARD AVOIDANCE

Consider suspicious and carefully handle any mail which:

- Has no return address or one that can't be confirmed, or from someone you don't recognize
- Has a restrictive marking such as "PERSONAL", "CONFIDENTIAL" or "FOR ___ EYES ONLY!"
- Has excessive postage, or sealed with excessive amounts of tape
- Badly typed or written, misspelled words or names
- Addressed to title only or incorrect title, or to someone no longer at your address
- Appears to have been opened or tampered with prior to arrival
- Appears lopsided or lumpy, may have visible powder or other residue Has oily stains or exposed wires

GENERAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

For all suspicious mail:

- Don't shake, bump or smell it
- Isolate the mail and the area – notify local law enforcement immediately (911)
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water

Unopened letter or letter that appears empty:

1. Place envelope in a plastic bag or glassine envelope.
2. Wash hands with SOAP and WATER.
3. NOTIFY your supervisor and police (911)

Envelope with powder and powder spills out onto surface:

1. DO NOT clean powder up. Keep others away.
2. WASH hands with soap and water - DO NOT brush off your clothes.
3. NOTIFY your supervisor and police (911)
4. REMOVE clothing and place in plastic bag, as soon as possible.
5. SHOWER with SOAP and WATER as soon as possible and put on fresh clothing.
6. MAKE list of all people who had contact with the powder and give to local public health authorities. They may be instructed to watch for fever or other symptoms over the next couple of days.

Package marked with threatening message, such as "ANTHRAX":

1. DO NOT OPEN.
2. LEAVE it and EVACUATE the room.
3. KEEP others from entering.
4. NOTIFY your supervisor and police (911)

Aerosolization, small explosion, or letter stating, "ANTHRAX IN HEATING SYSTEM":

1. LEAVE room immediately.
2. SECURE entry.
3. SHUT down air handling system.
4. NOTIFY your supervisor, police, and the FBI.
5. REMAIN on premises until responders arrive.
6. MAKE list of all people who were in the building at the time and give to local public health authorities.

Fire Emergency – “CODE FIRE”

Workplace fires can be fast and deadly. Superheated air and toxic smoke can quickly spread beyond the fire's point of origin, disorienting and suffocating occupants before they can escape. All employees must understand how to respond quickly and efficiently to have the best possible outcome.

PREPARATION / HAZARD AVOIDANCE

- Make sure that annual fire marshal and fire extinguisher inspections are up to date.
- Have fire alarm systems tested at least annually if the facility is so equipped.
- Conduct periodic fire evacuation drills as required. Practice alternate evacuation routes.
- Inspect fire doors and shutters to be sure they are in good operating condition, if applicable.
- Automatic sprinkler system water control valves, air and water pressure should be checked weekly, and the system inspected by a licensed contractor at least twice a year. Interior stand pipes and valves must also be inspected regularly.
- Maintain proper clearance below sprinkler heads, and protect them with metal guards when exposed to physical damage.
- No smoking is allowed in any Center building or vehicle. Lit candles and other open flame devices are also prohibited.
- Report damaged electrical equipment, electrical cords and outlets to your supervisor or Unit Safety Officer immediately.
- Avoid overloading electrical outlets; use strip outlets that are “UL” listed and equipped with surge protectors.
- Avoid running electrical cords under rugs, pinched behind furniture or across a path of travel; tape cords if temporarily across a path of travel.
- Periodically inspect furnaces, hot water heaters, stoves, clothes dryers and other sources of heat or ignition; keep them free from lint, rags, mops, cleaners, or other materials that could contribute to a fire.
- Portable space-heating devices are prohibited except for models in good condition and equipped with safety devices, such as tip-over switches. Those that are allowed will never be left unsupervised and a three-foot clear radius will be maintained around the device.
- Keep storage closets neat and orderly. Throw out unnecessary combustible materials.
- Store only enough cleaning supplies and chemicals to meet the current month plus 30 days.
- Store flammable liquids/materials in a well ventilated area, away from sparks, heat, flame or other potential ignition source.
- Keep exterior landscaping maintained and free of a buildup of combustible materials, such as trash, dead leaves & grass.
- Do not smoke or use open flames where flammable materials or compressed gases are stored, transported, handled & used.
- When welding or soldering, take precautions to prevent sparks or smoldering metal from causing a fire; keep a fire extinguisher nearby.
- Keep fire extinguishers securely mounted at their assigned station, clearly visible and always accessible.
- All staff will be trained to properly operate a fire extinguisher, but are never expected to place themselves in danger to protect property.
- If a fire of any size is discovered, quickly follow established fire response and evacuation procedures.

GENERAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| R = Rescue | Rescue persons in immediate danger and move them to a safer location. If a person cannot be fully evacuated, move them to the safest place as far away from the fire as possible and notify responding emergency crews of their location. |
| A = Alert | Alert building occupants so they can begin evacuation and then call 911. Use a fire alarm pull station, if the unit is equipped with a fire alarm system, or announce a “CODE FIRE” over the intercom, or other means as established by your worksite. |
| C = Contain | Contain flames and smoke by closing doors and windows and shutting off air handling units, if appropriate. Fight the fire only if it can be done safely and only if evacuation is already in progress. |
| E = Evacuate | Evacuate all building occupants to the designated Safe Relocation Area, escorting visitors and assisting persons with mobility disabilities. Make a sweep of the area to be sure no one is left behind. Once at the Safe Relocation Area, account for all evacuees. DO NOT RE-ENTER THE BUILDING! Report missing persons to the responding emergency crew. |

Remember the P.A.S.S. method for using a fire extinguisher:

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| P = Pull | Pull the ring pin, breaking the plastic tamper seal |
| A = Aim | Aim at the <u>base</u> of the fire |
| S = Squeeze | Squeeze the handle (operating lever) |
| S = Sweep | Sweep side to side, moving in as the fire diminishes |

If the smoke is too heavy, or the situation becomes too dangerous, just get out! Life is more important than property!

Armed Individual / Hostage Situation – “CODE LOCKDOWN”

With an armed individual or hostage situation, staff must assist law enforcement to save as many lives as possible, but there is no foolproof way or guaranteed outcome.

The first 15-45 minutes are the most dangerous. The suspect is initially in control, so allow negotiations to take place and avoid escalation. If injuries start, law enforcement tactics will change rapidly. Be ready!

PREPARATION / HAZARD AVOIDANCE

Unit Preparation:

- Consider installing strategic security measures, such as Plexiglas counter windows or buzzer doors to prevent uncontrolled access.
- Train staff to respond to the phrase “**Code LOCKDOWN**” to warn of impending danger involving an individual with a weapon. The desired response is very different from a “Dr. Armstrong” type of situation, since responding staff may become potential targets or hostages.

Field Preparation:

- Leave a schedule of destinations - be sure your supervisor knows your planned itinerary each day. Be specific – indicate where you plan to be in ¼-hour increments. If it changes, inform your supervisor at once.
- Prepare materials in advance so that you are not distracted. Secure planners, notebooks and other items so that things won't fall out or otherwise distract your attention away from your client. For example, use a pen that needs only one hand to operate.
- Stay alert to potential dangers & weapons. Watch your client's hands and body language. Keep your strong hand unoccupied in case you have to fend off an attack.
- Do not allow the house door to be locked behind you. Stay alert for escape routes and things that may hinder an escape, such as dead-bolt locks
- Remain standing. If you must sit, position yourself near the door so you can see the entire room and other entrances. Avoid furniture that hinders your ability to stand and run, like an old couch where you sink below your knees. Keep both feet firmly on the floor and do not cross your legs.
- Avoid restrictive or provocative clothing or shoes – wear comfortable clothing and flat shoes that will allow you to move quickly if necessary.
- Avoid visits after dark, if possible. Take advantage of all available lighting. You should be able to see clearly. Also, be cautious of back lighting.
- If visiting a client out in the county, consider stopping by the sheriff's office to ask them to patrol the neighborhood periodically to check up on you.
- Have a cell phone easily accessible and turned on. It may be appropriate to call a police dispatcher just prior to your visit to advise them of your cell phone number and location, then pre-program your phone for 911 so you can activate it with just one touch.
- During home visits, be alert in highly emotional situations - always have a plan of escape. If things escalate out of control, and verbal interventions are no longer working, know when to back out and extract yourself quickly from the situation.

GENERAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

If you are in an adjacent room or office when the situation begins:

- **STAY CALM!** Stay in the room and **QUIETLY** lock the door or wedge it shut. Turn out the lights & cover windows if possible.
- If able, **CALMLY** broadcast a warning to others by repeating “**CODE LOCKDOWN**”. Then call 911.
- If on the ground level, have one staff watch as others **QUIETLY AND CALMLY** evacuate out another exit or window.
- Once out, go towards officers NOT engaged with the suspect – keep hands up and obey all commands.
- If no police units are visible, move away from the building and find safe cover behind a fortified structure.
- Do not leave the area – police may need help with information about the layout of the building, condition and number of others still inside, description or identity of the suspect, etc.

If you are in a hallway when the situation begins:

- If you are near an exit – **GET OUT QUIETLY!** If not, get into a room that you can secure as described above.
- Avoid running down long hallways and try not to hide in restrooms or closets where there is no way out.

If you are trapped with the subject:

- Cooperate and do exactly as you are told, making no sudden moves. Avoid confrontation.
- Try not to stand out. Get rid of anything on your person that may antagonize your hostage taker or which may identify you as a threat.
- Pay attention to your captor(s) and your conditions. If released, your information will be valuable to law enforcement.
- Be prepared to talk to authorities on behalf of the hostage taker. Expect to be humiliated, uncomfortable and ill-treated.
- If the person starts shooting, there are only three options which only you can decide upon:
 - Stay down and hope he misses you or doesn't target you
 - Run for an exit in a zigzag pattern to reduce likelihood of being hit
 - Attack the shooter, who may not be expecting an unarmed attack

Recognize rescue – it will be fast, violent and potentially deadly.

- Tactical teams and marksmen will make entry – they will be moving rapidly and may not have time to assess you
- Stay away from windows. Realize that everyone is a suspect & obey commands without hesitation!
- If you are next to the suspect when tactical teams make entry, they may confuse you with the suspect. Drop to the floor and follow commands. When told to move, keep hands visible. **DO NOT RUN TOWARDS OFFICERS!**
- Drop anything in your hands that could be mistaken for a weapon. Do NOT pick up any dropped weapons - you may be confused for a suspect!
- Police will not stay with you or assist with the injured until the danger is over – only then will rescue teams enter

Natural Gas Leak / Pipeline Emergency

Natural gas is widely used for its efficiency and convenience but it can be dangerous. It is typically colorless and odorless in its natural state, but an odorant called mercaptan (rotten egg smell) is added as a safety measure to allow individuals to detect the presence of natural gas.

PREPARATION / HAZARD AVOIDANCE

- Have a certified professional perform annual maintenance on all natural gas appliances in the unit. Make sure all pilot lights function properly.
- Ensure combustible materials, such as paper, curtains, and cleaning fluids, are not stored near heating appliances. Do not store extra filters in closets or confined areas with heating appliances.
- Keep flammables such as gasoline and some cleaning products stored away from all appliances; vapors from these products could ignite.
- Ensure heating appliances are regularly cleaned of settling dust and any other debris that could catch on fire.
- Know where the gas meter and shut-off valves are located and how to shut off the flow of gas into the building in case of emergency.
- Call (800) 344-8377 before digging anywhere on the property. You could damage a buried gas line and create a hazardous situation.
- Purchase a natural gas detector.

GENERAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

If there is a strong smell of gas inside the building:

- **Leave the building immediately and prop open doors to ventilate the building.** Gather at the designated Safe Relocation Area and account for all building occupants.
- **Do not attempt to place calls from within the building.** Using any type of telephone, even a cell phone, could ignite leaking gas.
- **Do not turn any light switches or other switches on or off.** Anything electrical could cause a spark and ignite leaking gas.
- **Do not try to re-light a pilot light or strike a match.** Leave gas furnaces, water heaters and other gas appliances alone!
- **Do not start vehicles around gas leaks in outdoor locations.**
- **Contact Centerpoint Energy** (from a cell phone outside or borrow a neighboring phone)
Gas Leak Emergency Line: **888-876-5786**
Fire Department: **911**
- **Remain outside the building until emergency personnel clear the facility.** Do not re-enter the facility for any reason until it is safe.

Power Failure / Blackout

Blackouts and power outages may occur for several reasons, often following other disaster scenarios but also during periods of high electrical use, such as unusually hot summer days.

PREPARATION / HAZARD AVOIDANCE

- To avoid a blackout, conserve energy. Set thermostats no higher than 68 degrees in winter and no lower than 78 degrees in summer
- Turn off lights and computers when not in use.
- Close windows when heating / cooling systems are on
- Clean or replace furnace and air conditioner filters regularly
- Wrap water heaters in insulation jackets
- Replace incandescent bulbs with fluorescent bulbs
- Have a well-stocked disaster kit on hand, equipped with flashlights and spare batteries. Do NOT use candles as a lighting source, due to the high risk for fires.
- Store extra water and food that does not require preparation
- Ensure refrigerators have well maintained door seals
- If you have space in a refrigerator or freezer, keep plastic containers filled with frozen water to help keep foods cold in the event of outage
- If there are medications requiring refrigeration, they will usually keep for several hours as long as the refrigerator is kept closed. Check with a pharmacist if unsure.
- Regularly back-up computer data and consider a high quality surge protector
- Plan for alternate forms of communication
- Keep vehicle fuel tanks at least half full at all times, since gas station fuel pumps need electricity to run their pumps
- Keep emergency cash available since ATM machines and cash registers may not work

GENERAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

- During a blackout, turn off or disconnect any appliances, equipment or electronics that were on when the power went out. A sudden surge can damage computers, electric motors, etc.
- Leave one light turned on so you will know when power is restored
- Leave refrigerator doors closed to keep foods as long as possible. After power is restored, check for signs of spoilage
- Use the phone only for emergency calls to avoid overloading phone circuits
- Avoid travel unless absolutely necessary
- Be prepared to use stairs since elevators and escalators may not work
- If it occurs in summer, follow guidelines for "Extreme Heat" scenarios
- If it occurs in winter, keep warm with extra layers of clothing. DO NOT use candles, charcoal or oven burners as heat sources – they produce deadly carbon monoxide, which is odorless and tasteless. Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning may include headache, dizziness, vomiting, sleepiness, unconsciousness and death

Extreme Heat / Heat Wave

BRBHC catchment areas are considered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to be in a high-risk area for extreme heat, which is defined as

temperatures that hover 10 degrees or more above the average high for any region for several weeks. Heat and dehydration combined can lead to progressively worsening heat-related illness and even death:

- Heat Cramps:** Muscle cramping brought on by exertion, fluid loss and salt imbalance. First aid Includes gently stretching the cramping muscle and re-hydrating with sports drinks or other fluids containing small amounts of essential electrolytes (sodium, potassium, etc.) (Check with a physician if on a fluid or salt-restricted diet, or with conditions such as heart, liver or kidney disease, or persons with epilepsy)
- Heat Exhaustion:** Form of shock brought on by excessive loss of body fluid, principally through sweating and insufficient fluid replacement. Warning signs of heat exhaustion include paleness, muscle cramps, fatigue, weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea, vomiting and fainting. The skin may be cool and moist; sweating is usually profuse but may or may not occur. The pulse rate will be fast and weak, and breathing will be fast and shallow. If heat exhaustion is not treated, it may progress to heat stroke. First aid includes rest in a cool environment and fluid replacement as with heat cramps (encourage the person to drink small sips to prevent nausea and vomiting)
- Heat Stroke:** Life threatening increase in core body temperature. Warning signs of heat stroke vary but may include extremely high body temperature (above 103°F); red, hot, and dry skin (often with no sweating); rapid, strong pulse; throbbing headache; dizziness; nausea; confusion; unconsciousness and possibly seizures. Risk increases with high humidity, since sweating will not help cool the body with so much moisture in the air. See first aid treatment below.

PREPARATION / HAZARD AVOIDANCE

- Evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of facility air conditioning systems before the start of summer
- Check air conditioning ducts for proper insulation
- Consider the use of supplemental air conditioners and/or adding fans to circulate cool air
- Consider installing storm windows for better energy efficiency and consider installing reflective film on windows
- Install weather-stripping on doors and windows to prevent cool air loss
- Protect windows by hanging shades, draperies or awnings on any windows that receive direct sunlight. Outdoor awnings can reduce heat entering a window by as much as 80%.
- Know the symptoms and first aid treatment for heat-related illnesses, such as sunburn, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and especially heat stroke, which is life-threatening.

GENERAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

- Drink plenty of water regularly to prevent heat-related illness. Do not depend on thirst – if you are thirsty you are already dehydrated!
- Eat light, well-balanced meals; avoid alcoholic and caffeinated beverages, which contribute to dehydration
- Stay indoors as much as possible. If air conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor out of the sunshine
- Dress in loose-fitting, lightweight and light-colored clothing and protect the head and face by wearing a wide-brimmed hat
- Allow your body to get acclimated to the heat for the first two to three days of a heat wave
- Avoid exposure - sunburn reduces the body's ability to cool itself. Use sunscreen with a high SPF rating
- Reduce, eliminate or reschedule strenuous activities, especially outdoors. Get plenty of rest.
- Conserve electricity to prevent community-wide power shortages.
- Conserve water to prevent community-wide water shortage. Whenever possible, re-use water.
- Check frequently on those more likely to be affected – elderly, small children, persons having mentally illness or chronic health problems, etc. Be aware that certain medications, such as anti-psychotics and anti-depressants, can contribute to heat illness by impairing the body's ability to regulate its temperature, contributing to heat-related illnesses.
- If you observe signs of heat-stroke, which can be fatal, call 911 immediately and take the following steps:
 - Get the person indoors, or at least into a shaded area, and locate a first aid kit
 - If unconscious, check airway, breathing and circulation – be prepared to provide rescue breathing and CPR, if necessary.
 - Loosen any restrictive clothing and begin cooling the person down immediately – use fans or whatever means are available
 - Place wet towels on the person's head, neck and extremities, especially armpits and groin area where large arteries are closer to the surface. If no towels are available, simply soak their clothing and extremities. Be careful not to cause choking.
 - If the person is conscious, offer small sips of water if they can tolerate it. Drinking too much, too rapidly may cause vomiting.
 - Continue to monitor airway, breathing and circulation until an ambulance arrives.

Short-Term & Prolonged Evacuation

Some emergencies will require building occupants to safely and rapidly evacuate to a safe location until the incident is resolved and it is safe to return. This could take from as little as a few minutes to as long as several hours or days, depending on the severity of the situation. If the evacuation order is given by public authorities, instructions will follow identifying the location of designated evacuation shelters. This designation is not made until the emergency happens to prevent people from accidentally evacuating into an area affected by the disaster.

PREPARATION / HAZARD AVOIDANCE

- Determine the preferred method of protecting and transporting vital records/documents in an evacuation, such as important financial records, legal documents or vital consumer information. Make sure computer records and other transactions are backed-up frequently and stored off-site.
- Have emergency information cards prepared for all consumers. Consider having such a system for staff, as well, including lists of relatives and other contacts to be notified in case of emergency.
- Determine the preferred method of protecting and transporting consumer medications, if applicable, during an evacuation. Consider keeping all medications stored in labeled, gallon-sized zip-lock bags that can be quickly sealed and transported in the disaster kit or some other means approved by each unit. Make sure that all medications are properly stored and labeled to prevent accidental mix-up at an evacuation site.
- Equip and maintain a unit disaster kit that is portable and easily moved by one person (see Center Safety Manual for a list of essential items). In residential units, consider having an emergency backpack stored away for each consumer containing spare clothes, non-perishable food, bottled water, and personal sanitation items in case you cannot return back to the unit for some time.
- Maintain constant evacuation capability by ensuring that Center vehicles are maintained in good operating condition, and with a fuel tank that is never less than half-full. Anticipate any special needs of consumers with disabilities.

GENERAL RESPONSE PROCEDURES

SHORT TERM EVACUATION

Program Supervisor / Incident Commander

1. Follow the Emergency Response Plan for the type of emergency taking place. Call the Center Safety Officer to advise of the situation. If unable to make contact, call the Crisis Line for assistance.
2. Ensure that all building occupants are escorted safely to the unit's designated Safe Relocation Area. Once there, take a roll call to be sure everyone is accounted for. If someone is missing, notify responding emergency crews - **DO NOT GO BACK INTO THE BUILDING!**
3. Make contact with the Incident Commander of the responding emergency crew and cooperate fully.
4. If the area becomes unsafe or impractical, follow procedures for a "Prolonged Evacuation" and notify the Center Safety Officer.
5. Once over, complete the **Emergency Response/Drill Report** and forward to the Center Safety Officer within 48 hours of the event.

All Staff / Emergency Response Team

6. Respond quickly and safely when ordered to evacuate, following the Emergency Response Plan for the type of emergency taking place. Unit Supervisor will evacuate the unit first aid kit, disaster kit, consumer medications and vital records as assigned.
7. Make a quick sweep of the area to be sure no one is left behind. Escort occupants and provide assistance as needed. If someone is unable to evacuate, assist that person to the safest area possible and report their location to responding rescue personnel.
8. Upon reaching the Safe Relocation Area, account for all building occupants. Do not leave the area until cleared by the supervisor or incident commander. When the "all-clear" signal is given, escort building occupants safely inside.

PROLONGED EVACUATION

1. If the Safe Relocation Area becomes unsafe or impractical, or if a short-term evacuation progresses into a long-term scenario, arrange to move occupants to the Primary Evacuation Site. Communicate this change in location to the Center Safety Officer.
2. If permitted to do so by the on-scene incident commander, arrange transportation of those occupants who are able to leave the area. Use the emergency contact list to advise family and friends of the situation.
3. Once at the Evacuation Site, be prepared to provide food, water, warmth and other basic needs while waiting for the situation to play out. The unit first aid kit and disaster kit should be transported by the Unit Supervisor to any relocation area, but other items, such as blankets, jackets, supplemental food, consumer medications, etc., will need to be anticipated and provided until local relief services become available.
4. If your location is somewhere other than the evacuation site designated by local authorities, contact local authorities to make them aware of your evacuation site. This will help them better assess the scope of the disaster and decide if additional resources are required.
5. Coordinate with the Emergency Management Team for such items as the need for staff rotation, activating off-duty personnel and coordination of additional resources.
6. When authorities give the "all clear", initiate an organized and safe return to the facility. Do not return to the facility if unresolved safety hazards exist, such as structural damage, standing water, contamination, etc.
7. Assist in post-incident / recovery operations, to include incident investigation and proper documentation of the event.

Approved by:
Executive Director

Date:

8/13/24

Attachment A

Disaster Vulnerability Analysis

If more than one program occupies a physical address, this should be a combined effort involving representation from each program.

The process begins with a brainstorming session, listing all potential emergencies that could affect the unit, its staff and consumers, whether within the facility or in the surrounding community. The basic idea is try and cover every conceivable “What if...?” scenario, taking into consideration as many contributing factors as possible, such as:

Geographic Factors

- Facility proximity to flood plains, seismic faults and dams
- Proximity to companies that produce, store, use or transport hazardous materials
- Proximity to major transportation routes and airports
- Proximity to power plants and refineries

Technological Factors

- Power failure
- Telecommunications failure
- Computer systems failure
- Heating/cooling system failure
- Emergency notification system failure

Human Factors resulting from:

- Poor training ? Misconduct
- Poor maintenance ? Substance abuse
- Carelessness ? Consumer behavior / aggression
- Fatigue ? Weapons

Physical Factors

- Physical construction of the building
- Storage of combustible, flammable or other hazardous materials
- Equipment layout
- Lighting – interior, exterior and emergency back-up
- Evacuation routes / exits
- Proximity of primary, secondary and tertiary shelter areas

Each potential scenario should be analyzed and played out from beginning to end, anticipating potential problems with staff response to the disaster and problems that might be encountered as a result of the disaster:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| • Lack of staff access to facility | ? Water, smoke or structural damage |
| • Lack of transportation | ? Air / water contamination or chemical release |
| • Loss of electric power | ? Explosion |
| • Loss of communications | ? Building collapse |
| • First aid and survival supplies | ? Trapped persons |
| • Ruptured gas mains | ? Hostage / barricade / active shooter situations |

Once this process has been completed, the unit must take all reasonable steps to prepare for mitigating each disaster scenario until outside resources arrive and take over, such as police, fire, EMS.