Agency Emergency Plan
A Simplified Version for Community-Based Organizations

In a major emergency, such as a catastrophic earthquake, response systems such as police, fire and hospitals will be overwhelmed. Officials from all levels of government and the Red Cross tell us we should be prepared to be on our own for the first 72-hours.

Please perform a quick review of this plan every 6 months to ensure it stays current.

A. Disaster Mission Statement
Make sure you know what role you are planning to play in a disaster

- *Who are you going to be for your clients and community when disaster strikes?*

- *Does your current mission statement encompass how you see your agency functioning in a disaster?*

- *Think about your commitments and your resource limitations and create a disaster mission statement.*

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

B. Preparing Staff for Emergencies
Make sure your staff is mentally, physically and emotionally prepared to respond

In an emergency, the first concern of staff will be the safety and welfare of family members.

1. Have all staff and key volunteers trained in basic emergency preparedness on a regular basis.

2. Encourage and support staff and key volunteers to have a family or home emergency plan (see note below). This increases the likelihood that staff and their families can cope with the disaster without outside help.

3. Your agency will want to ensure that all staff members have an opportunity to check on their homes and family members as soon as possible following a disaster.

Note: CARD offers an interactive personal preparedness class, and organizations like the American Red Cross offer other helpful trainings such as First Aid and CPR.

C. Personnel
Make sure you have enough people to do what needs doing for a response

Determine your staffing requirements for post-disaster response.

1. Realistically, how many staff will continue working after a disaster if it strikes during work? _____

2. …If a disaster strikes on a weekday, but before the workday begins? _____

3. …If a disaster strikes on a weekend? _____

4. Which staff should automatically report to work in the event of a disaster? _____

5. Develop a list of home telephone numbers for staff for emergency use. (Update at least every 6-months.)

6. To support the work staff in an emergency, we will use volunteers as follows:

    a. _____

    b. _____

    c. _____

    d. _____

    e. _____

D. Volunteers
Make sure you know the best ways to use / work with volunteers in a disaster

Know how you will appropriately recruit, task and manage volunteers.

1. Are your current volunteers appropriate for disaster related work?

2. Do your current practices of recruiting or accepting volunteers include your disaster preparedness and response needs?

3. What important activities (that keep your agency able to provide services) can be assigned to spontaneous volunteers? What activities **should not** be assigned to spontaneous volunteers

4. What safety and/or legal considerations should you include in your plan? Consider: do you have proper insurance for volunteers, do you need background checks on volunteers, is any specialized training or knowledge required for working with your agency or clients, etc.?

5. Do you have someone in charge of volunteers? Who (else) might take that role for new volunteers?

E. Meeting the Needs of the People You Serve
Make sure you can address the basic needs of staff, clients and volunteers

1. How many total clients would most likely be at your site in a disaster? (Look at both maximum client load and minimum staff availability for day, for evening and for weekends.) _____

   _____

2. How will you find out about the condition of people you serve who are off site? _____

   _____

3. In an emergency, who else needs information about the status of people you serve? Off site staff? Families of clients? List the most critical contacts that need to be made. Be sure to have all necessary phone, cellular phone and pager numbers for each contact.

   _____   _____

   _____   _____

4. What else will be needed (e.g., bedding, medicine, special equipment, etc.)? Where can you get these items:

   a.   Item: _____   Location: _____

   b.   Item: _____   Location: _____

   c.   Item: _____   Location: _____

5. What are the special needs of the people you serve? Are these needs of the group or of individuals?

   _____   _____

   _____   _____

   _____   _____

Also consider: What skills can you instill in your clients to let them take part in

your preparedness and response efforts as full partners and helpers?

F. On-Site Supplies Cache
Make sure you have preparedness supplies available

Create and maintain an onsite cache of emergency preparedness supplies. The exact contents will depend on the size and diversity of your staff, volunteers, clients and potential visitors. Remember to consider special needs additions such as medication.

Store these supplies in multiple locations so if one cache becomes unusable or unreachable, you will still have options. The supply cache complements your agency go-kit. Some basic contents of an on-site supply cache are:

• Food and water	• Whistles	• Necessary medicines*
• First aid supplies	• Blankets	• Alcohol hand cleaner*
• Lights/Flashlights	• Garbage bags	• Thermometer*
• Radio(s)	• Duct tape	• Personal hygiene supplies*
• Batteries	• Extra cash	•

Perishable supplies, such as food, water and medicine, need to be replaced regularly.   One way to do this is by "cycling" the food and water – eat supplies while they are still good, and put new ones in the cache. "Non-perishable" have a much longer shelf life before they glo bad.

* Especially recommended for Pan Flu preparedness.

G. Agency Go-Kit
Make sure you can operate even if you evacuate

If you need to evacuate your facility, an Agency Go-Kit will allow you to continue providing your most vital services wherever you go. This small, portable container should hold copies of every vital document as well as some basic supplies such as pen and paper.

Some basic contents of an Agency Go-Kit are:

- Your disaster plan
- Insurance documentation
- The deed or lease for your facilities
- Legal identification, such as your taxpayer ID number and evidence of exemption status
- Bank information, including all of your account numbers, including personnel contacts
- Documentation for your emergency line of credit
- Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)
- Contact and Emergency Contact information for your staff and key contacts
- Some cash, including coins for phones

You may wish to maintain more than one kit. Creating two is no harder than creating one, and an off-site backup may be what ensures that you have needed records.

H. Facility Preparation
Make sure your physical environment supports your safety

	ASSIGNED TO	DATE DONE
☐ Bolt heavy cabinets, bookshelves or other furniture to wall studs		
☐ Strap computers, fax, equipment to desk or tables		
☐ Secure pictures and other wall hangings by using safety hooks		
☐ Clear exits, pathways and earthquake-safe spaces		
☐ Fasten breakables to walls or shelves with museum wax		
☐ Lower heavy items to bottom shelves		
☐ Remove fire and chemical hazards		
☐ Install smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, cabinet latches		
☐ Label fire exits and safety supplies		
☐ Clearly mark your gas and water shut-off valves. Post clear simple instructions for shutting off each one (in all languages needed).		
☐ Keep a conveniently located set of tools to facilitate prompt gas shut-off. Tools should include both pipe and crescent wrenches.		

Earthquake Putty (also called **Museum Wax**) holds delicate items in place

Straps brace heavy furniture and large items in place

Safety hooks stop pictures, clocks and mirrors from falling

Cabinet latches keep fingers and toes away from broken glass

Sketch your facility and note vital emergency resources including:

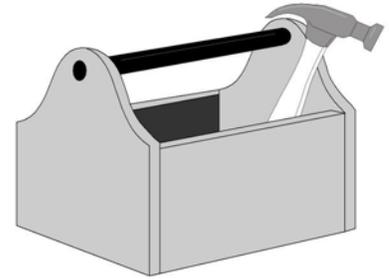|		
❑ Fire extinguishers	❑ First Aid Supplies	❑ Escape routes
❑ Go kits	❑ Water shutoff	❑ Generator(s)
❑ Tool kits	❑ Gas shutoff	❑ Documents safe
❑ Supply Cache	❑ _____	❑ _____
❑ _____	❑ _____	❑ _____

I. Signage
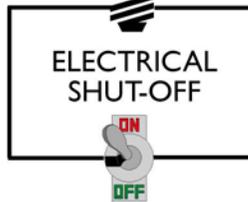## Make sure your safety and preparedness tools are well-marked

Make preparedness visible! Clear and visible signs indicating safety tools, exits and emergency instructions will help people to keep themselves safe while at your agency.

If there is no fire extinguisher covering this outline, contact your safety officer to have a valid, charged fire extinguisher put in immediately!

Tool Box Lives Here

First Aid Kit Belongs Here

WATER SHUT-OFF

ELECTRICAL SHUT-OFF

ON
OFF

IN CASE OF GAS LEAK

GAS LINE SHUT-OFF

ON   OFF

RALLY POINT

FIRE ALARM

FIRE EXTINGUISHER

CAUTION

DANGER

EXIT
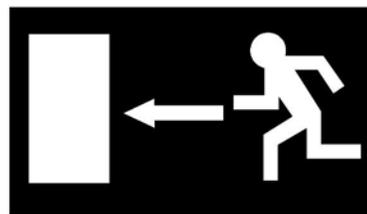
These and other preparedness signs are available at www.FirstVictims.org/tools

J. Neighborhood Resources
Make sure you know the local resources - they may be your only source

1. If you do not have a back-up generator, in an extended power outage, where can you rent or borrow a generator? Create a written agreement with this supplier. _____

2. If the phones at your agency are not working, where are the nearest pay phones? _____

3. Where is the nearest public health clinic?

   Clinic Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone: _____

4. Where is the nearest place to go for help if phones are not working?

   Place Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone: _____

5. Where is the nearest fire station and do they know about you?

   Station Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone: _____

6. Where is the nearest police station and do they know about you?

   Station Name: _____ Address: _____ Phone: _____

Make sure preparedness resources in your neighborhood are clear. Post a large, clear map of your neighborhood. Note these potentially valuable resources, and highlight:

key resource framework
- ❑ OES
- ❑ City Hall
- ❑ other government offices
- ❑ Fire Station
- ❑ Police Station
- ❑ Red Cross
- ❑ CARD
- ❑ Public library
- ❑ _____

liaison /connections
- ❑ CARD
- ❑ funders
- ❑ partner agencies
- ❑ _____

medical
- ❑ hospital
- ❑ clinic
- ❑ veterinary offices
- ❑ pharmacy
- ❑ _____

possible gathering points
- ❑ church, mosque, synagogue, etc.
- ❑ school
- ❑ gym
- ❑ shelters
- ❑ open space
- ❑ _____

food/ water
- ❑ restaurants
- ❑ soup kitchens
- ❑ grocery stores
- ❑ corner stores
- ❑ _____

supplies
- ❑ hardware stores
- ❑ disaster stores
- ❑ drugstores
- ❑ sports/camping stores
- ❑ "big box" stores
- ❑ dollar stores
- ❑ _____

K. Evacuation/Transportation
Make sure you can get people safely from your location to a safe alternative site

Fire, hazardous material spills or structural damage may require you to evacuate your building.

1. Are there program participants who will need assistance evacuating your facility?
   Remember to assign staff and volunteers to help these participants and have assistive aids/devises available to help with their evacuation.

2. If your facility must be evacuated, assign a staff person the responsibility of taking a head count to ensure all staff, volunteers and program participants have exited.

3. Practice your evacuation plan.

4. Keep an "Agency Go-Kit". Include copies of your emergency plan, action checklists, phone rosters, copies of vital documents, credit cards, etc.

5. Post a notice indicating where you have gone.

The following suggestions anticipate that you must evacuate your building and that you are responsible for the care and shelter of the people you serve.

6. Locate and secure a temporary shelter to be used (consider churches, nearby community centers, schools, other residential facilities). You may want to develop mutual aid agreements with these sites.

   Temporary Shelter Name: _____

   Address: _____

   Contact Name: _____   Phone: _____

7. Create a phone list and a system for letting the authorities, family and friends know where you are sheltering your program participants. "Date created" should appear on this and all lists and documents.

8. Designate and identify alternative transportation for moving your program participants to your temporary shelter, or to clients' homes, if necessary.

   Alternative Transportation: _____

   Contact Name: _____   Phone: _____

9. Assign responsibility for the care of your clients at the alternate site(s). Identify this person or persons.

   a. _____

   b. _____

10. If evacuated, what will your clients need that may not be available in the temporary shelter?

   a. _____

   b. _____

L. Communication (Part 1)
Make sure you can communicate with staff, clients, funders and your community

Communications will make or break a disaster response. From a simple note on the door identifying your new location to a Public Information Officer correcting news reports about your agency, communication is the key to letting people make the right decisions.

WHAT should you communicate?
- ❑ Agency Operational Status reports
- ❑ Damage assessment
- ❑ Services offered or changed
- ❑ Funds needed
- ❑ Volunteers needed
- ❑ Other needs
- ❑

TO WHOM are you communicating?
- ❑ Disaster services partners
- ❑ Staff & volunteers
- ❑ Clients
- ❑ Funders
- ❑ Media
- ❑ General public
- ❑

WHO should communicate the message?
- ❑ Ensure they have proper training
- ❑ Ensure they have proper authority
- ❑ Ensure they share consistent message
- ❑

HOW should you communicate?
- ❑ Electronic
- ❑ Paper
- ❑ Verbal
- ❑ Combination
- ❑

WHAT can you do or prepare in advance?
- ❑ Agency talking points/key messages
- ❑ Disaster/Emergency response press release
- ❑ Emergency related funding solicitation
- ❑ Email, phone, pager, cell phone and fax lists
- ❑ Take crisis / risk communication training

L. Communication (Part 2)
Make sure you know all the communication tools available to you

Mastering how you send and receive information will help you in both crisis and opportunity. A variety of options is the key to maintaining communications.

Disaster Communication Tools

There are many communication tools we don't normally consider that may become useful if a disaster cuts off your normal channels.

- ❑ Bulletin Board/White Board
- ❑ Carbon Paper / NCR paper
- ❑ CB Radios
- ❑ Cell Phones
- ❑ Digital Telephones
- ❑ Drums
- ❑ Flag Pole
- ❑ Ham Radios
- ❑
- ❑

- ❑ Megaphones / Bullhorns
- ❑ Pagers
- ❑ Palm Pilots / Blackberries
- ❑ POTS Telephones
- ❑ Public Signage
- ❑ Runners
- ❑ Walkie-Talkies
- ❑ Whistles
- ❑
- ❑

Community Outreach Options

What are all the different ways you can speak to your community? Different method have different advantages, and may help you reach people you had not reached before.

- ❑ American Sign Language (ASL)
- ❑ Computers : DSL or dial-up
- ❑ Door-to-door canvassing or home visits
- ❑ E-mail and listserves
- ❑ Fact Sheets or FAQs
- ❑ Fax Machines/WinFax
- ❑ Information Phone lines (such as 800 numbers)
- ❑
- ❑

- ❑ In-person events, workshops or classes
- ❑ Language Translators
- ❑ Mailing lists: brochures, fliers
- ❑ Radio
- ❑ Television
- ❑ Video / cassette tape / CD-ROM / DVD
- ❑ Websites
- ❑
- ❑

M. ICS (Part 1)
Make sure you know the nation's universal response system

The National Incident Management System is the Federal standard for responding to disasters. Understanding the Incident Command System that is the core of NIMS will allow you to organize for managing any situation, coordinate with your community partners, and "speak the language" of the professional responders – which makes you that much easier to help.

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                        ┌─────────────────────┐
                        │    Management       │
                        │ Incident Commander  │
                        │ 1. _____  │
                        │ 2. (Alt)_____  │
                        └─────────────────────┘
              ┌──────────────────────┴──────────────────────┐
   ┌─────────────────────────┐              ┌─────────────────────────┐
   │ Public Information Officer│              │    Safety Officer       │
   │ 1. _____ │              │ 1. _____ │
   │ 2. (Alt)_____  │              │ 2. (Alt)_____   │
   └─────────────────────────┘              └─────────────────────────┘
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Operations	Planning	Logistics	Finance
Operations Team Chief	Planning Team Chief	Logistics Team Chief	Finance Team Chief
1. _____	1. _____	1. _____	1. _____
2. (Alt)_____	2. (Alt)_____	2. (Alt)_____	2. (Alt)_____
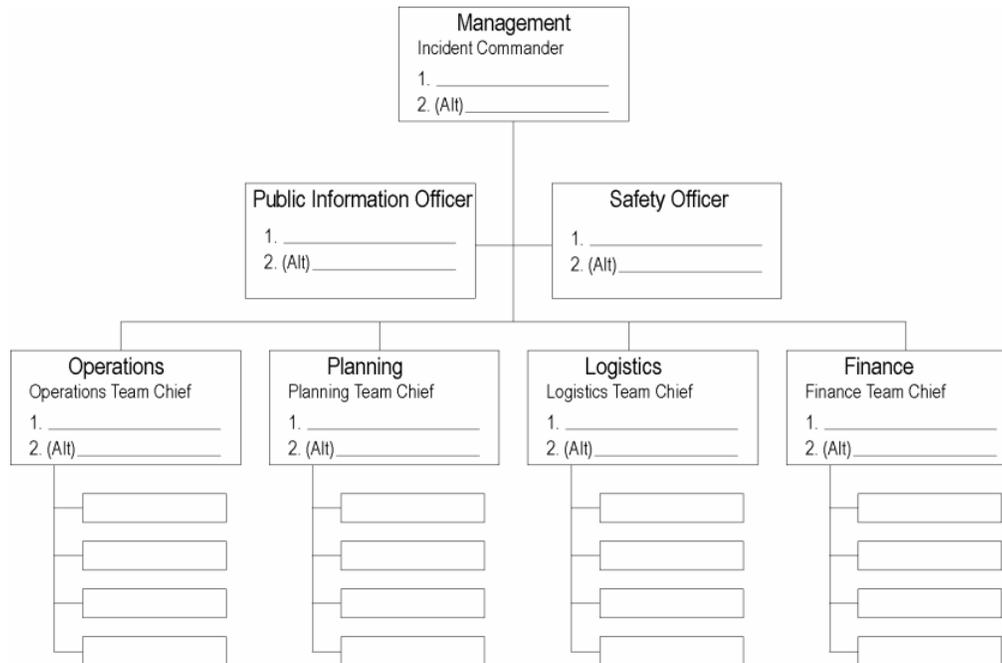
Incident Command: Leads the response; appoints and empowers team leaders; sets tone and standards for response. Encourages teamwork and communications.

> **Safety and Security Officer:** Focuses on the safety of all people responding to the incident.

> **Public Information Officer:** Works with the media and distributes messages to the public and local community.

Operation Team: Handles key actions including first aid, search and rescue, fire suppression and securing the site.

Planning Team: Gathers information, thinks ahead and keeps all team members informed and communicating.

Logistics Team: Finds, distributes, and stores all necessary resources (supplies and people) to respond appropriately.

Finance/ Administration Team: Tracks all expenses, claims and activities and is the record keeper for the incident.

M. ICS (Part 2)
Make sure you know the nation's universal response system

Considering who might do well at certain functions is an excellent tool for understanding NIMS and getting people used to the idea. Be careful, though: you never know who will be part of your disaster response team, so be prepared to assign roles when they are needed.

Primary Functions	
Incident Commander	
Name:_____	Name:_____
Phone:_____	Phone:_____
Alt. Phone:_____	Alt. Phone:_____
Operations Officer	
Name:_____	Name:_____
Phone:_____	Phone:_____
Alt. Phone:_____	Alt. Phone:_____
Planning Officer	
Name:_____	Name:_____
Phone:_____	Phone:_____
Alt. Phone:_____	Alt. Phone:_____
Logistics Officer	
Name:_____	Name:_____
Phone:_____	Phone:_____
Alt. Phone:_____	Alt. Phone:_____
Finance / Admin Officer	
Name:_____	Name:_____
Phone:_____	Phone:_____
Alt. Phone:_____	Alt. Phone:_____
Support Functions	
Safety and Security Officer	
Name:_____	Name:_____
Phone:_____	Phone:_____
Alt. Phone:_____	Alt. Phone:_____
Public Information Officer	
Name:_____	Name:_____
Phone:_____	Phone:_____
Alt. Phone:_____	Alt. Phone:_____

N. Financial Resources
Make sure you know your financial assets, limitations and commitments

It is a good idea for your organization to be aware of its cost of normal operations; estimate cost increases that might arise from emergencies and be familiar with eligibility and other prerequisites for aid and reimbursements from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other agencies.

Some topics to explore include the following:

1. Copies of Financial Support Documentation to have ready
   - Insurance policies
   - The deed or lease for your facilities
   - Bank information, including all of your account numbers, including personnel contacts
   - Legal identification, such as your taxpayer ID number and evidence of exemption status
   - Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs)

2. Liquid Assets
   - How much cash do you keep in "petty cash?"
   - Do you have $15 - $20 in coins for pay phones?

3. Credit Cards / Lines of Credit
   - What credit cards does your agency own?
   - Where are they?
   - What are the limits of each?
   - Who can sign on each?
   - Do they have emergency credit extensions?
   - Do you have a line of credit immediately available?
   - Who can access the money?

<u>*Reminder:*</u> *Keep this information updated;*
be sure it reflects any staff or policy changes!

O. Ensuring Service Continuation
Make sure you are clear on your service priorities

What is needed to continue essential providing services after a disaster?

1. List the primary services you will continue to provide following an emergency?

    c. _____

    d. _____

    e. _____

2. What are the critical material resources necessary to maintain these operations?

    a. _____

    b. _____

    c. _____

3. What neighboring agencies or businesses can you form a connection with in order to share resources in an emergency, to maintain operations and to ensure the care of people you serve?

    a. Name: _____   Phone: _____

    b. Name: _____   Phone: _____

    c. Name: _____   Phone: _____

    d. Name: _____   Phone: _____

    e. Name: _____   Phone: _____

Your organization should clarify what its mission and priorities will be in the aftermath of a major disaster. It is important for agencies working with at-risk clients on a daily basis to know their client's needs and how to support their recovery following a disaster.

4. Some questions to ask include:

    - What are the predictable needs of the people you serve in emergencies?

    - Will the needs of the people you serve require you to expand services in a disaster's aftermath?

    - Will you need to consider providing new or different services?

> *__Remember__: Knowing your priorities as an agency makes everything else fall into place. In crisis or opportunity, if you are clear on your priorities you can make the best decisions for your agency.*