

Opportunity Partners

OP-ISS-07: POLICY AND PROCEDURE ON EMERGENCIES

New 1/1/14, Updates: 2018

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines on preparing for, reporting, and responding to emergencies to ensure the safety and well-being of persons served and staff.

II. POLICY

The company will be prepared to respond to emergencies as defined in MN Statutes, section 245D.02, subdivision 8 (“Event that affects the ordinary daily operation of the program . . .”), that occur while providing services, to protect the health and safety of and minimize risk of harm to employees and the people being supported by Opportunity Partners. Emergency situations will be dealt with in a responsible manner by all staff involved. The following procedures are guidelines for actions to be taken in the event of an emergency. In emergency situations, staff on duty must first act to promote safety for the people they are supporting and themselves. Then, at first opportunity notify, the Designated Coordinator and/or Designated Manager. Staff will address all emergencies according to the specific procedure outlined in this policy and act immediately to promote the safety of the people they are supporting and themselves.

The procedures in this policy will be followed during the provision of services at service locations. For emergencies that occur in the community or at an employment site with a community employer, the site’s specific emergency procedures will be followed. If there are no clear guidelines at the site for the specific emergency, staff are to follow the best practices from this policy to the best of their ability. Opportunity Partners uses an emergency response system that is designed to ensure that staff facing emergencies can always receive direction, consultation, and support in managing those situations. For protocols on managing emergencies through the emergency system, staff will follow specific procedures for their service locations. The site specific information can be found on each site’s *Program Emergency Response Plan (PERP)*.

After the situation has been resolved and/or the person(s) involved are no longer in immediate danger, staff will complete the necessary documentation in order to comply with licensing requirements on reporting and to assist in developing preventative measures, if applicable. For incident (“Occurrence which involves a person and requires the program to make a response that is not part of the program’s ordinary provision of services to that person.”) response procedures, staff will refer to the *Policy and Procedure on Responding to and Reporting Incidents*. The Designated Coordinator and/or Designated Manager will ensure that the person’s legal representative, case manager, and other licensed caregivers (if applicable) are notified within 24 hours. A copy of all *Incident* and/or *Emergency Reports* will be sent to the person’s legal representative and case manager within 5 days, or as directed in the person’s *Coordinated Service and Support Plan* and/or *Coordinated Service and Support Plan Addendum*.

All staff will be trained on this policy and the safe and appropriate response to and reporting of emergencies. Program sites will have contact information of a source of emergency medical care and transportation readily available for quick and easy access. In addition, a list of emergency phone numbers will be posted in a prominent location and emergency contact information for persons served at the facility including each person’s representative, physician, and dentist.

III. PROCEDURE

Defining emergencies

- A. Emergency is defined as any event that affects the ordinary daily operation of the program including, but not limited to:
 1. Fires or Explosions.
 2. Severe weather.
 3. Natural disasters.

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4. Power failures.
5. Active Shooter Events.
6. Bomb Threats.
7. Emergency evacuation or moving to an emergency shelter.
8. Temporary closure or relocation of the program to another facility or service site for more than 24 hours.
9. Other events that threaten the immediate health and safety and that require calling “911.”

Preparing for emergencies

- A. To be prepared for emergencies, a staff person trained in first aid will be available on site in a day services facility, in a community residential setting, and when required in a person’s *Coordinated Service and Support Plan* and/or *Coordinated Service and Support Plan Addendum*, be able to provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), whenever persons are present and staff are required to be at the site to provide direct services. CPR training will include in-person instruction, hands-on practice, and an observed skills assessment under the direct supervision of a CPR instructor.
- B. Each day services facility and community residential setting will have a first aid kit readily available for use by, and that meet the needs, of persons served and staff. The first aid kit will contain, at a minimum, bandages, sterile compresses, scissors, and ice bag or cold pack, an oral or surface thermometer, mild liquid soap, adhesive tape, and a first aid manual.
- C. Day service facilities and community residential settings will have:
 1. A floor plan available that identifies the locations of:
 - a. Fire extinguishers and audible or visual alarm systems (residential homes need to have CO₂ detectors 10’ from each bedroom. Response to a CO₂ emergency is the same as for a fire.)
 - b. Exits, primary and secondary evacuation routes, and accessible egress routes, if any
 - c. An emergency shelter within the facility
 2. A site plan that identifies:
 - a. Designated assembly points outside the facility
 - b. Locations of fire hydrants
 - c. Routes of fire department access
 3. An emergency escape plan for each person receiving services at the location.
 4. For community residential settings with three (3) or more dwelling units, a floor plan indicating the location of enclosed exit stairs.
- D. Fire and severe weather drills will be conducted. Fire drills will be conducted quarterly on various days of the week and times of the day (or night, as applicable to hours of program operation). Staff and persons receiving services in the facility will not be notified prior to the drill, if possible, to ensure correct implementation of staff responsibilities for response. The Designated Coordinator and/or Designated Manager or designee will be responsible for the initiation of the emergency drill and will record the date, day, and time of the drill in the emergency plan records.
- E. As part of the emergency plan records kept at the facility site, the following information will be maintained:
 1. The log of quarterly fire and severe weather drills.
 2. The readily available emergency response plan.
 3. Emergency contact information for persons receiving services at the facility including each person’s representative, physician, and dentist.
 4. Information on the emergency shelter within the facility and the designated assembly points outside the facility.
 5. Emergency phone numbers that are posted in a prominent location.
- F. If persons receiving services require the use of adaptive procedures or equipment to assist them with safe evacuation, staff will receive specific instruction on these procedures and equipment.

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G. The Designated Coordinator and/or Designated Manager will ensure that during all hours of operation, emergency contact/response is available to all staff. In the case of an emergency, staff will follow the emergency contact calling list according to their applicable service location's *Program Emergency Response Plan (PERP)*. The Designated Manager or designee will also ensure:

1. Availability to staff via telephone contact or in person and will respond to emergency situations ensuring the health and safety of persons receiving services.
2. They will not leave the geographical area covered, without notifying and transferring the responsibility to another approved coverage person.
3. Staff will follow applicable policies and procedures for responding to incidents and emergencies.
4. Emergency information is available for reference.
5. That they maintain their ability to make sound decisions or will refer the caller to the alternative emergency contact.

Responding to emergencies

- A. Staff will call "911" based upon the emergency situation as provided in each individual response procedure as stated below.
- B. For more detailed instruction, refer to the program's *Program Emergency Response Plan (PERP)*.
- C. **Fire or Explosion**
 1. Staff will be trained on and will follow evacuation plans at each program site.
 2. Staff will respond immediately to all fire and smoke detector alarms or signs of fire by activating the alarms system.
 3. All persons will be evacuated from the building, with staff assistance as needed, and assembled at the established designated assembly point outside the facility. Staff will:
 - a. Assist, as needed, persons receiving services to assemble at the designated safe location outside the facility.
 - b. Ensure that the entire service location has been evacuated.
 4. "911" will be immediately called from a neighbor's telephone or a cell phone in order to report the fire or explosion.
 5. For fires, staff will contain the area of the fire, if feasible, by closing doors. If it is possible to put out the fire with a fire extinguisher, staff will attempt to do so.
 6. Staff will notify the Designated Manager or designee.
 7. Staff will, to the best of their ability, prevent people from reentering the program site until the police or fire department issue instructions that the area is safe.
 8. If the program site is not habitable and relocation to a designated safe area such as an emergency shelter is necessary, staff will:
 - a. Follow the procedures in Letter E of the **Responding to Emergencies** section of this policy
 - b. Transport persons receiving services to the designated safe location as established by the Designated Manager in the *Program Emergency Response Plan (PERP)*.
- D. **Severe weather conditions and natural disasters**
 1. At the first sign of severe weather or a natural disaster, including but not limited to high winds, heavy snow or rain, or extreme temperatures, staff will ~~confirm~~ identify the location and safety of all persons receiving services.
 2. Staff will listen to the radio or watch television for current weather conditions.
 3. Upon hearing sirens or a take cover warning, staff will:
 - a. Notify all persons that they need to seek shelter
 - b. Guide all persons to the designated safe area in the facility
 - c. Bring a battery operated radio or television set, first aid kit, and flashlight.
 4. If feasible, persons receiving services but not scheduled for supervision will be called and warned.
 5. Staff will assist all persons in staying in the safe area until an all clear is issued through the radio or by other means.

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6. If injury or damage occurs, staff will notify the Designated Manager or designee and follow directions given.
7. If relocation to a designated safe area such as an emergency shelter is necessary, staff will follow the procedures in Letter E of the **Responding to Emergencies** section.
8. If Injury or damage occurs, staff will complete an Incident and Emergency Report. For care of injuries, staff will refer to the Policy on Responding to and Reporting Incidents.

D. Power failure (electricity outage or gas leak)

1. During a power failure, all staff will remain with persons receiving services. If persons are not in the immediate area at the program site, staff will locate them and bring them to the central program area or designated safe area outside the facility.
2. Staff will contact the Designated Manager.
3. The power company will be contacted by cell phone to determine estimated length of the power outage. If estimated to last less than two hours, the Designated Manager or designee will be contacted to determine what actions will be taken. If the power outage is to last more than two hours, staff will coordinate the transportation of the persons receiving services to a safe area or service location as previously established by the Designated Manager in the *Program Emergency Response Plan (PERP)*.
4. If gas is smelled or a gas leak is suspected, staff will act to promote the safety of staff and persons receiving services and assist as needed to evacuate people to the designated safe area outside the facility.
5. The gas company will be immediately notified and instructions followed.
6. No one will be permitted to use lighters, matches, or any open flame during this time. All electrical and battery-operated appliances and machinery will be turned off and not restarted until the all clear has been given.
7. The Designated Manager or designee will be notified of the gas leak. Staff will call from a safe area away from the suspected gas leak using a cell phone or from a neighbor's phone.
8. If the service location cannot be reoccupied due to the gas leak, staff will coordinate relocation of persons receiving services to a designated safe area or service location, such as an emergency shelter. Staff will follow the procedures in Letter E of the **Responding to Emergencies** section of this policy.

E. Emergency evacuation, moving to an emergency shelter, and temporary closure or relocation of the program to another facility or service site for more than 24 hours

1. Staff will ensure that everyone leaves the building and will assist all persons in gathering at the designated safe location outside the facility.
2. Staff will immediately notify the Designated Manager or designee of the conditions that may require emergency evacuation, moving to an emergency shelter, temporary closure, or the relocation of program to another site.
3. The Designated Manager or designee will coordinate relocation of services in a way that promotes continuity of care of persons receiving services.
4. The Designated Manager or designee will coordinate and assist staff as necessary in transporting persons to the designated location.
5. If access to the program site/service location is permitted, staff will transfer persons' program files, clothing, necessary personal belongings, current medications, medication administration records, and other essential items to the designated location in order to provide services and to promote the health and safety of persons receiving services.
6. The Designated Manager will notify the legal representative or designated emergency contact, and case manager, and other licensed caregiver (if applicable) of the new location of the program if necessary. Staff will coordinate and communicate with the expanded support team (EST) members for continued service provision and coordination of care for persons receiving services.

F. Other events that threaten the immediate health and safety of persons served and that require calling “911”

1. Pandemic event: Upon request, staff will cooperate with state and local government disaster planning agencies working to prepare for or react to emergencies presented by a pandemic outbreak.

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2. Bomb threat
 - a. Upon receiving a bomb threat or notice of a suspicious package, staff will immediately call “911” from a land line, not a cell phone, and will stay on the line until instructed to hang up. Staff will follow the guidance of the 911 operator.
 - b. Staff at the program site will also immediately contact the emergency contact person as designated in their *Program Emergency Response Plan (PERP)* and follow their instructions in coordination with the 911 operator guidance.
 - c. If it is a suspicious package, staff will not go near or touch the package and do their best to prevent others from going near or touching the package. Staff will attempt to move all persons away from the package to another location in the building until an evacuation decision has been made.
 - d. If it is a threat in writing; paper letter or note, email, text or other written notice, staff will not delete or discard the communication. They will not touch notes unless necessary and as little as possible. They will also do their best to prevent others from touching the note.
 - e. If the threat is over the phone staff will ask questions to obtain as much information as possible about the caller and the potential bomb. They will not hang up the phone even if the caller hangs up.
 - f. If the threat is a voice message, staff will not delete the message.
 - g. If directed to evacuate by the 911 operator, the emergency contact person, or police, staff will coordinate the evacuation as directed by officials (this may involve all or only part of the facility).
 - h. Staff and persons receiving services will remain outside the building until further instructions are received from the police or fire department.
 - i. If unable to re-occupy the building, staff will follow the procedures in Letter E of the **Responding to emergencies** section of this policy.
3. Repeated and unwanted or threatening phone calls or visits from unauthorized persons
 - a. Upon receiving repeated and unwanted or threatening phone calls, staff will hang up the phone immediately or encourage the person served to hang up the phone. For repeated or unwanted or threatening visits, staff will help to relocate persons served to a safe area and instruct the visitor to leave the premises.
 - b. Staff will lock all doors and windows and check the security of the service location/program site.
 - c. Staff will monitor the frequency of disruptive phone calls. Staff will inform the Designated Manager when the calls continue to a point where the safety of persons served is in question or when the calls are personally threatening or environmentally threatening to a program site or property.
 - d. For visits from unauthorized persons, staff will follow the specific location procedures.
 - e. Staff will call “911” if at any point they feel threatened.
 - f. The Designated Manager will determine when and if the telephone number will be changed due to the harassing or threatening telephone calls.

G. Service location violence/person with a dangerous weapon

1. No weapons are permitted during service provision or on any property or service location of the company.
2. If staff encounter a person who is armed with a gun and threatening to or actively is shooting (Active Shooter), staff will follow the Run, Hide or Fight protocol..
 - a. **Run:** If it is safe to do so, such as, shots being fired are far away, you can see a clear path to exit, or can see the shooter/armed person is moving away from you, run and evacuate the facility. Staff will support persons receiving services to also evacuate the facility.
 1. Once outside the facility staff will move people as far away from the facility as possible and find a place to hide out of sight of the Active Shooter.
 - b. **Hide:** If there isn't an obvious way to escape, find a place to hide.
 1. Find a room with a door that locks, if possible. Barricade the door with furniture and heavy objects, whether the door locks or not.
 2. If you cannot find a room, find large objects or furniture to hide behind or under.
 3. Do not cluster people together. Have people spread out around the room or space and find things to hide under or behind.
 4. Turn off lights, close blinds or cover windows, and hide out of sight of the doors and windows.
 5. Turn off cell phones and stay as quiet as possible.

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- c. **Fight:** If you cannot run, and you cannot hide, and are directly confronted by the Active Shooter, staff will do their best to disarm the shooter by throwing things, attacking the shooter, and using force.
- d. Staff will call 911 as soon as it is safe to do so.
- 3. If the person is not carrying a gun or shooting, but is communicating in a dangerous way, such as, with threats of harm, waving another type of weapon (knife, object), hitting others, regardless of who they are, staff will not attempt to challenge or disarm the person, but will remain calm and use the Positive Support Strategies they have been taught to talk to the person or to use the permitted physical interventions.
- 4. If the person is someone who receives services from Opportunity Partners, and has a *Positive Support Transition Plan* or *Positive Actions Support Plan* in place, staff will follow the plan. If the person does not have a plan for dangerous communication, staff will follow current Positive Support Strategies and service location protocols in their *Program Emergency Response Plan (PERP)*.
- 5. Whether a shooter or another person communicating in a dangerous way, staff will attempt to keep ~~other~~ persons ~~served~~ receiving services out of the area where the aggressor is located.
- 6. As soon as possible, the Designated Manager will be notified.
- 7. If the situation warrants it, staff will call “911” and follow instructions given. Always call 911 for an Active Shooter.

Reporting emergencies

- A. Staff will immediately notify the Designated Manager or designee that an emergency has occurred and follow direction issued to them and will document the emergency on an *Emergency Report* any related program or health documentation. Each *Emergency Report* will contain the required information as stated in the *Policy and Procedure on Reviewing Incidents and Emergencies*.
- B. Emergencies directly involving persons receiving services where they were required to relocate, were directly exposed to in an Active Shooter event, or active violence with a weapon event, whether injured or not, will be reported to the person’s legal representative, case manager, and residential provider or home, if there is one.
- C. If an incident resulted from the emergency situation (situation affected persons receiving services directly, such as, if they were a target, injured, or the perpetrator), the Designated Coordinator and/or Designated Manager will follow procedures found in the *Policy and Procedure on Responding to and Reporting Incidents* and will maintain information about and report incidents to the legal representative or designated emergency contact and case manager within 24 hours of an incident occurring while services are being provided, within 24 hours of discovery or receipt of information that an incident occurred, unless the company has reason to know that the incident has already been reported, or as otherwise directed in the person’s *Coordinated Service and Support Plan* and/or *Coordinated Service and Support Plan Addendum*.
- C. When the incident or emergency involves more than person served, the company and staff will not disclose personally identifiable information about any other person served when making the report to each person and/or legal representative and case manager unless the company has the consent of the person and/or legal representative.
- D. If a serious injury or death were to occur as a result of the emergency situation, staff will follow the response and reporting procedures as stated in the *Policy and Procedures on Responding to and Reporting Incidents* and, if needed, the *Policy and Procedure on Death of a Person Served*.