



The Episcopal Church

IN SOUTHEAST FLORIDA

A Guide for Creating a Crisis Management Plan

Crisis Response Task Force

THE DIOCESE OF SOUTHEAST FLORIDA | 555 NE 15 Street - Suite 934B - Miami, FL 33132
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A Guide for Creating a Crisis Management Plan

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A Guide for Creating a Crisis Management Plan

Introduction

This guide serves as a general roadmap for diocesan communities to develop a response plan for potential crises. This guide contains ten tasks that communities should evaluate when developing a plan. Under each task is a checklist of subtasks that should be reviewed and considered when developing a plan. Not all tasks/subtasks will be suitable for every community. Thus, this is not intended to be a blanket approach but rather a thought-provoking guide. As such, communities are urged to use this as a starting point by identifying which tasks and subtasks are best suited based on size, location, and physical plant design. Communities should also work collaboratively with stakeholders to identify tasks not noted in this document but necessary for their specific space. There is also information on establishing a post-crisis behavioral health recovery and intervention plan. This is a critical component for care and wellness.

The Plan:

After reviewing this guide, communities should begin to write or modify their existing plans. When developing or modifying your plan, keep it simple. At most, a plan should be realistic, practiced, and communicated. The overarching goal of a plan is to guide communities on how to respond, organize, and recover from hazards and threats (natural, technological, and human-caused). The goal is to minimize the impacts of emergencies and disasters and ensure that people and property are well-protected.

This document will be reviewed and updated at least annually.

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Task 1:

Establish a crisis response **point of contact person/team** and assign roles and responsibilities.

Priority – High Complexity - Medium

Description

This task involves establishing a crisis response contact person/team and assigning roles and responsibilities as part of the Crisis Management Plan. The crisis response contact person/team will coordinate and execute the necessary actions during a crisis or emergency.

- Identify key individuals within the community (church, school, Diocesan office, etc.) who will be part of the crisis response team.
- Consider the necessary skills, expertise, and availability of potential team members when assigning roles.
- Define specific roles and responsibilities for each team member based on their skills and expertise.
- Ensure that the assigned roles and responsibilities align with the overall objectives of the Crisis Management Plan.
- Communicate the assigned roles and responsibilities to the team members and provide them with any necessary training or resources.
- Regularly review and update the crisis response team roles and responsibilities as needed.
- Document the established crisis response team and the assigned roles and responsibilities for future reference.

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Task 2:

Develop a **communication plan** for employees, members, and students.

Priority – High Complexity - Medium

Description

This task involves developing a communication plan for stakeholders (church members, employees, students, faculty, etc.), as part of the Crisis Management Plan. The communication plan will outline how information will be shared during a crisis, including what channels will be used, who will be responsible for communication, and what key messages will be conveyed.

- Identify the key stakeholders who need to be included in the communication plan.
- Determine the appropriate communication channels for each stakeholder group (e.g., email, phone, website, social media).
- Assign responsibility for communication to specific individuals or teams.
- Develop a template for crisis communication messages that can be customized as needed.
- Outline the key messages that need to be communicated during a crisis.
- Establish procedures for escalating communication as needed (e.g., daily, twice daily, hourly, etc.)
- Test the communication plan through simulations or drills to ensure effectiveness.
- Review and update the communication plan regularly to reflect changes in stakeholders, communication channels, or key messages.

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Task 3:

Create an **emergency response plan** that includes evacuation procedures, shelter-in-place protocols, and first aid instructions.

Priority – High Complexity - Medium

Description

This task involves creating an emergency response plan for crisis management. The plan should include evacuation procedures, shelter-in-place protocols, and first aid instructions. The purpose of this plan is to ensure the safety and well-being of individuals during a crisis.

- Gather information about the physical plant including its layout, potential hazards, and resources available for crisis management.
- Identify potential crisis scenarios that may require an emergency response plan. (e.g., active shooter, severe weather, etc.).
- Determine evacuation procedures, including designated evacuation routes, assembly areas, and procedures for assisting individuals with disabilities or special needs.
- Develop shelter-in-place protocols, specifying locations within the facility where individuals should seek shelter during a crisis.
- Include first aid instructions, such as basic life-saving techniques and protocols for providing medical assistance.
- Ensure the emergency response plan is easily accessible to all individuals who may need to reference it during a crisis.
- Review and update the emergency response plan regularly to reflect changes in the physical plant or leadership, as well as lessons learned from drills or actual crisis situations.

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Task 4:

Conduct regular **training and drills** to prepare for potential crises.

Priority – Medium Complexity - Medium

Description

This task involves conducting regular training and drills to prepare stakeholders (church members, employees, students, faculty, etc.), for potential crises. It is important to ensure that everyone is equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to respond to and manage crises effectively. Regular training and drills help to familiarize stakeholders with crisis management procedures, test their readiness, and identify areas for improvement.

- Develop a training plan that outlines the training sessions' objectives, topics, and schedules.
- Identify the appropriate training methods and resources to effectively convey the necessary information to employees.
- Include Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR) Training (see pages 13-14).
- Schedule regular training sessions and drills, ensuring that all stakeholders can participate.
- Conduct training sessions and drills covering various crisis scenarios and response procedures.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the training sessions and drills, gather participant feedback, and identify improvement areas.
- Update the crisis management plan based on the insights gained from the training sessions and drills.

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Task 5:

Identify potential **risks and vulnerabilities** to your community and develop strategies to mitigate them.

Priority – High Complexity - Medium

Description

This task involves identifying potential risks and vulnerabilities to your operations and developing strategies to mitigate them. It is an important step in creating a crisis management plan. By identifying risks and vulnerabilities, the community can proactively implement measures to minimize their impact and develop strategies to address them.

- Review all operations and identify potential risks and vulnerabilities that could impact the community during a crisis.
- Consider internal and external factors that could pose risks, such as natural disasters, cyber-attacks, supply chain disruptions, economic downturns, etc. (think about the impacts of COVID-19).
- Conduct risk assessments and vulnerability assessments to identify specific areas of concern.
- Prioritize the identified risks and vulnerabilities based on their potential impact and likelihood of occurrence.
- Develop strategies and action plans to mitigate each identified risk and vulnerability.
- Assign responsibilities to relevant individuals or teams to implement the strategies.
- Regularly review and update the risk and vulnerability assessment as new risks emerge or operations change.
- Communicate the identified risks, vulnerabilities, and mitigation strategies to staff, members, students, etc.
- Train stakeholders on crisis management procedures and their roles in implementing the strategies.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented strategies and make necessary adjustments as needed.

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Task 6:

Establish a process for **monitoring and assessing** the situation during a crisis.

Priority – Medium Complexity - Medium

Description

This task involves establishing a process for monitoring and assessing the situation during a crisis. It is important to have a system in place to gather information, track developments, and evaluate the impact of the crisis. This process helps make informed decisions and take appropriate actions to manage the crisis effectively.

- Review the organization's existing crisis management plan, if any, to understand the current process for monitoring and assessing the situation during a crisis.
- Identify the key stakeholders who need to be involved in the monitoring and assessment process.
- Develop a communication plan to ensure timely and accurate information flow during a crisis.
- Establish a system for gathering information from various sources, such as news channels, social media, internal reports, and external partners.
- Define the criteria for assessing the severity and impact of the crisis, considering factors like safety risks, operational disruptions, reputational damage, and financial implications.
- Document the monitoring and assessment process, including each stakeholder's role and responsibilities, communication channels, and reporting mechanisms.
- Train relevant personnel on the established process and provide them with the necessary tools and resources.
- Review and update the monitoring and assessment process regularly to incorporate lessons learned from past crises and adapt to changing circumstances.

Task 7:

Develop contingency **plans for continuity and recovery.**

Priority – High Complexity - Medium

Description

This task involves developing contingency plans for operational continuity and recovery in a crisis management plan. Contingency plans are designed to ensure that essential operations can continue during and after a crisis and to facilitate a swift recovery. These plans should address various scenarios and outline the necessary steps to minimize disruption and ensure the organization can continue to operate effectively.

- Identify potential crisis scenarios that could impact the community.
- Assess the potential impact of each scenario on your operations.
- Develop strategies and actions to mitigate the impact of each scenario.
- Identify key personnel and their roles and responsibilities in implementing the contingency plans.
- Document the contingency plans, including clear instructions and procedures.
- Establish communication channels and protocols for crisis management.
- Test the contingency plans through simulations or drills.
- Review and update the contingency plans regularly to ensure their effectiveness.

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Task 8:

Establish **relationships with local first responders** (law enforcement and fire).

Priority – High

Complexity - Medium

Description

This task involves establishing relationships with local emergency agencies (law enforcement and fire) as part of the crisis management plan. Having these relationships in place is important to ensure effective communication and coordination during a crisis. Building these relationships can involve reaching out to the relevant emergency response organizations and government agencies in your area, introducing yourself and your community, and discussing the potential support needed in case of a crisis. It is important to establish clear lines of communication, exchange contact information, and understand the roles and responsibilities of each party involved. Regular meetings and updates with these stakeholders can help maintain and strengthen the relationships over time.

- Identify the local emergency responders (agencies) in your area.
- Research their roles and responsibilities in crisis management.
- Reach out to the identified organizations via phone or email to introduce yourself and your community.
- Schedule meetings or discussions to further establish relationships and discuss potential collaboration.
- Exchange contact information and ensure clear lines of communication.
- Document the established relationships and contact information for future reference.

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Task 9:

Establish a **media response plan** and designate a spokesperson for the community.

Priority – High Complexity - Medium

Description

This task involves establishing a media response plan and designating a spokesperson as part of the crisis management plan. A well-defined plan is important to effectively handle media inquiries and communicate with the public during a crisis.

- Gather a team of key stakeholders, the vestry, wardens, school administrators, etc., and other relevant persons.
- Identify potential crisis scenarios that may require media response.
- Develop key messages that align with the community and diocesan values and goals.
- Designate a spokesperson and a backup who are well-prepared and trained to handle media inquiries.
- Create a media response plan that includes protocols for media inquiries, statements, interviews, and social media engagement.
- Ensure the plan includes contact information for the designated spokesperson and other relevant team members.
- Regularly review and update the media response plan to ensure its effectiveness and relevance.
- Conduct training sessions and mock exercises to prepare the designated spokesperson(s) and other team members for media interactions during a crisis.
- In all scenarios, the plan must include the need to notify your Dean (for churches) and the Diocese (Canon to the Ordinary) for guidance before engaging the media. Canon to the Ordinary Phone Number - 305-373-0881 x123

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Task 10:

Conduct **periodic reviews and updates** to the plan to ensure it remains relevant and effective.

This task involves conducting periodic reviews and updates to the crisis management plan to ensure it remains relevant and effective. It is important to regularly assess the plan and make necessary adjustments to address any changes in the community or potential crisis scenarios. By reviewing and updating the plan, you can ensure that it aligns with current best practices and incorporates lessons learned from previous incidents.

- Gather the current crisis management plan and any relevant documentation.
- Review the plan in detail, paying attention to its content and structure.
- Consider any changes in the community or potential crisis scenarios that may require updates to the plan.
- Identify any gaps, weaknesses, or areas for improvement in the current plan.
- Research best practices for crisis management planning.
- Consult with relevant stakeholders and subject matter experts to gather their input and insights.
- Develop a list of recommended updates and revisions to the plan.
- Prioritize the identified updates based on their potential impact and feasibility of implementation.
- Revise the crisis management plan, incorporating the recommended updates and revisions.
- Ensure the revised plan is communicated to all relevant stakeholders and that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities in implementing the plan.
- Establish a schedule for future periodic reviews and updates to the crisis management plan.

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Post-crisis Behavioral Health Recovery and Intervention Plan

Training

- Psychological First Aid (PFA) and Skills for Psychological Recovery (SPR), developed by the National Center for PTSD and the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN), are evidenced-informed practices for disaster behavioral health response and recovery.
- NCTSN offers both training courses online for free as part of the organization's Learning Center. <https://learn.nctsn.org/course/index.php?categoryid=11>
The trainings, composed of self-paced modules, are available in English and Spanish.
- PFA "is a 5-hour interactive online course that helps participants learn the core actions of PFA and describes ways to apply them in different post-disaster scenarios and with different survivor needs. This course also covers provider well-being before, during, and after disasters. This course is relevant for new providers who are wanting to be oriented to PFA, as well as for seasoned practitioners who want a review of the PFA concepts. This 5-hour interactive online training offers a certificate of completion with 5 CEs upon completion."
- SPR "is a 5-hour interactive course designed for providers to help survivors gain skills to manage distress and cope with post-disaster stress and adversity. This course is for individuals who want to learn about using SPR, learning the goals and rationale of each core skill, delivering SPR, and supporting survivors in the aftermath of a disaster or traumatic event. This 5-hour interactive online training offers a certificate of completion with 5 CEs upon completion."
- The resources include manuals, handouts, and an app for IOS and Android phones that "lets responders review PFA guidelines and assess their readiness to deliver PFA in the field. The app provides additional support when the responder is in the field by providing tips on different survivor groups (infant/toddler, preschool, school-age, adolescent, adult) and keeping track of survivor concerns and referral needs. Resource links are included to facilitate referrals. PFA Mobile™ supplements other resources that trained individuals utilize before, during, and after a disaster response."

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Post-crisis Behavioral Health Recovery and Intervention Plan

The Team

- It is recommended that each Crisis Response Team includes:
 - the clergy/leaders at each church, school and ministry who will be tasked with leading the disaster response at their location.
 - licensed mental health clinicians (psychologists, mental health counselors, social workers, marriage and family therapists, psychiatrists, psychiatric nurse practitioners) who are willing to serve at their home location (or other locations if necessary) in the event of a disaster,
 - medical personnel (doctors, nurses) who are willing to serve at their home location (or other locations if necessary) in the event of a disaster.
- The identified individuals will be asked to complete the PFA followed by the SPR and will download the app onto their phones. Their certificates of completion will be maintained by the Crisis Response Team leader for recordkeeping.
- The identified mental health clinicians will take the lead in identifying survivors' psychological trauma response needs and coordinating support in accordance with the PFA/SPR format. It is recommended that a Zoom meeting be scheduled with all identified/certified clinicians following the training to discuss coordination strategies and concerns.
- The complete list of mental health clinicians and medical personnel should be shared with all churches, schools and ministries and with each Deanery so that resources can be easily identified across the diocese.
- Additional coordinated behavioral health trauma response support for the providers and survivors can be provided in each location by organizations that can offer meals, spaces for group prayer, clothes or blankets, transportation, etc.

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RESOURCES

Primary Law Enforcement Agencies in Southeast Florida - Contact List

Agency	Phone Number	Point of Contact (subject to change)
Broward County Sheriff's Office	954-383-7363	Captain Brian Montgomery
Martin County Sheriff's Office	772-320-4737	Trisha Kukuvka
Miami-Dade Police Department	305-794-3926	Detective Delvin Brooks
Monroe County Sheriff's Office	305-289-2413	Lieutenant Paul Bean
Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office	561-688-4853	Threat Assessment Unit

Training materials (handouts and videos)

https://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/active_shooter_booklet.pdf

https://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/active_shooter_booklet.pdf

https://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/active_shooter_pocket_card.pdf

https://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/active_shooter_poster.pdf

<https://www.fbi.gov/how-we-can-help-you/active-shooter-safety-resources>

<https://youtu.be/i3QBktsRKVY>

BIOGRAPHY/ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<https://www.cisa.gov/houses-worship-security-self-assessment>

<https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/2023-12/physical-security-performance-goals-faith-based-communities-508c.pdf>

<https://www.ready.gov/business/emergency-plans/emergency-response-plan>

<https://www.osha.gov/emergency-preparedness/getting-started>

<https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/osha3088.pdf>

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Crisis Response Task Force Members

The Reverend Canon Licia Affer, Bishop's Staff

The Reverend Carol Barron, St. Mark's, Palm Beach Gardens

The Reverend Montgomery Fletcher, Bishop's Staff

The Venerable Hal Hurley, Bishop's Staff

The Reverend Canon Eddie Lopez, Bishop's staff

The Very Reverend Jason Roberson, Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Miami, Provost

Vincent Adderly, Church of the Transfiguration, Miami Gardens, Certified in Community Emergency Response Team

Lisa Davenport, Ph.D., St. Anne's, Hallandale, Clinical Psychologist

Lynn Kirkpatrick, St. Andrew's, Palmetto Bay, Attorney

Ms. Julia Grygorenko, Bishop's Staff, Administrative Support

E. Keith Neely, St. Anne's, Hallandale, Law Enforcement Community

Emily Wilken, Palmer Trinity Episcopal School, Miami, Academic Dean

Phyllis Tynes-Saunders, Ascension, Miami, Supervisor for Public Housing and Community Development