DISASTER PLANNING IN RCF’S

Disaster planning in RCFs is guided in rules by OAC 3701-16-13 (J) and by providers’ desire and responsibility to keep residents and staff safe. Additionally, you want to minimize your liability as a business. Each RCF must develop a written disaster preparedness plan. The rule also requires transfer agreements with an appropriate facility (or facilities), should an emergency require evacuation of the RCF, and a plan for transporting residents to those destinations. The transportation plan might incorporate families, or sister or neighboring facilities, or other available transportation:

- Ask families at admission if they would be willing to transport and/or take their family member to their home during an emergency
- Ask sister or neighboring facilities if they would help you transport residents in their community vans
- Memorandum of Understanding with other available local transportation resources.

Different Levels of Emergencies. Emergencies can be of varying severity. It can be a disaster for part of your building, your whole building, and/or part or all of your town. Your Plan should be appropriate to the Disaster, some instances may require relocation to a different part of the community, while other more serious situations could require total evacuation.

...Good preparedness requires planning for different levels of emergencies.

The first All Disasters Planning Guide highlights overall issues you should be thinking about and planning for in all emergencies. For example, ...

- How will you handle communication with residents, families and staff?
- How will resident information be sent to transfer locations?
- What about medications? Supplies? Staffing?

Following the first overall disaster preparedness guide, there are other guides highlighting issues in specific emergency situations.

DISASTER PLANNING OVERVIEW

Develop written procedures for evacuation (including provisions for transporting residents and transfer agreements with appropriate locations), fire control and evacuation (including fire watch), locating missing residents, severe weather (tornadoes, floods), and for any location-specific disaster risks (highway, chemical plant, railroad, etc....). The written plan should be based on RCF rule OAC 3701-16-13, the Ohio Fire Code; and the Life Safety Code (if applicable).
Consider the different types of emergencies that are probable and the response for each. What is the potential human, property, and business impact? Determine local resource organizations and their ability to help in an emergency. Contact your local emergency first responders, so that they are aware of your community and your special needs during any emergency or widespread disaster situation. Ohio has a system of county-based emergency management agencies listed here: https://ema.ohio.gov/CountyEMA.aspx

Work with local/regional emergency management personnel to develop a coordinated emergency plan.

- Identify staff by position responsible for executing plan. Define responsibilities.
- Identify and maintain sufficient supplies and equipment to deliver care/services.
  - Memorandum of Understanding with vendors
  - Storage of essential items/supplies for easy access by anyone during disaster
    Requirement is to meet the RCF rule OAC 3701-16-10 (C)(H)(1,2)
- Identify procedures to receive emergency warning/alerts, for contacting emergency responders, and for communication with staff, residents, families
  - Designated risk/crisis communicator. Who should handle the media ...& how
  - Alternate methods of communication (i.e. cell phones, walkie-talkies)
- Methods of identifying residents/staff
  - Specific information about the characteristics and needs of residents (i.e., binder with face sheets)
  - If electronic medical records – a system for record retrieval and printing in emergencies
- Building information (HVAC, sprinkler and fire alarm systems, generator if applicable, etc...)
- Consider the conditions that would require evacuation. (see Evacuation Planning Guide)
  - Analyze the needs and risks of special populations (i.e. location in facility relative to ability to evacuate); Handling of pets
- Staff TRAINING:
  - Emergency/Disaster policies & procedures
  - By local fire department, state fire marshal and other local disaster agencies

Risk analysis of business interruption. Inventories of possessions. Review of insurance coverage - consider evacuation expense, gap in business income, relocation expense, cost of clean-up/repair, personal property of others
DURING THE EMERGENCY

Implement plan
- Contact emergency services (call 911)
- Contact manager and lead staff (Establish a phone tree)
- Determine the priority of evacuation of residents. Maintain list of where residents are being relocated (if different locations)
- Secure equipment, medications, records, etc

Communication:
- Families - Establish means of communication
- Reroute phone services. Update facility website. Send out e-mail notice to contact list.
- Contact vendors (pharmacy, food, supplies).
- Implement Media Policy

AFTER THE EMERGENCY

Continue Fire Watch (if fire system not functional) or other system monitoring, security vendor, as applicable.

Reporting
- State Fire Marshal*
- ODH * (ODH Regional Office)
- ALW residents case managers
- Local Ombudsman office – Not required, but may be a helpful resource

Notification
- Families
- Vendors
- Insurance carrier, attorney, as appropriate

Crisis counseling, as needed (Residents, Families, Staff)
Recovery
- Work with insurance company to determine coverage, extent of damage/loss, and nature and extent of clean-up/repair
- Work with architect and contractors for repairs
- Adjust staffing as needed, replenish supplies

Disaster Risk Analysis & Planning Tools
- Kaiser Permanente Hazard Vulnerability Assessment (HVA) Tool, an Excel spreadsheet, can be downloaded at: [http://www.calhospitalprepare.org/hazard-vulnerability-analysis](http://www.calhospitalprepare.org/hazard-vulnerability-analysis)
- Ohio Emergency Management Agency - Hazard Identification Risk Assessment information available for each Ohio County (SHARPP Report): [https://sharpp.dps.ohio.gov/OhioSHARPP/Hazards.aspx#overview](https://sharpp.dps.ohio.gov/OhioSHARPP/Hazards.aspx#overview)