



GENERAL Emergency Planning Guidance

Emergency planning efforts are essential for the safety of an organization's employees, customers, and operations. They produce guidance for an organization's members by defining leadership roles and assignments, decision making processes, and communication structures. Effective emergency response plans (ERPs) can help an organization manage expectations (before and during an emergency) and clarify responsibilities making response more efficient and increasing people's safety.

DCEM has developed this document to help organizations prepare for emergencies. A well written ERP must also be complemented by trained staff and appropriate resources. Emergency preparedness requires a commitment of time and resources from organizational leadership.

Developing an ERP:

- *WHO in the organization should develop the ERP ?* – Organization personnel who have a firm understanding of the organization's operations and a position that allows them the flexibility and autonomy to interact with all divisions within the organization.
- *WHAT should be in an ERP ?* – Guidance for an organization's leadership and members intended to facilitate decision making in a timely basis, support safety measures, and quickly organize emergency communication and coordination processes. (See attached *ERP Development Checklist*).
- *WHERE should an ERP apply ?* – All processes where the organization has responsibilities for member and customer safety should be addressed in the ERP. This include operations on-site and off-site (e.g. delivery personnel).
- *WHEN should an ERP be used ?* – Immediately following the discovery of a potential emergency or onset of an actual emergency.
- *WHY develop an ERP ?* – ERPs should be designed to guide organizations through emergencies to ensure the safety of an employees, customers, and operations.
- *HOW should it be developed ?* – The same way organizational policy is developed; utilizing input from appropriate levels / divisions of an organization and developing a written document summarizing the purpose, process, and desired outcome. It should have the approval of senior management and promulgated throughout the organization through regular training and testing.

Purposeful Consideration

Development –

There are many ERP templates available on-line. While potentially useful, often they are quickly completed and reviewed with little focus or attention. Generally unsubstantiated expectations of a three ring binder develop over time. Involving the right staff in an organized, planned ERP-development-process is critical to producing a realistic ERP applicable to an organization's specific operations.

User Application –

How an ERP is organized greatly affects a user's ability to apply and implement the procedures in the ERP. The attached *ERP Development Checklist* is designed to demonstrate both plan organization and suggested content.

Policy –

An ERP should be considered official policy of the organization and approved as such. This includes defining the intent and functionality of the ERP, referencing the ERP development process, and clarifying who is responsible for training on and maintaining the ERP.

Emergency Functions –

There are four general functions organizations need to perform well to respond to an emergency:

1. Identification / learning when hazards exist.
2. Notifying persons of the emergency and when to act.
3. Maintaining clear and consistent communications with its members and outside organizations.
4. Expediting decision making and management processes.

Many situations will require additional guidance beyond the four functions listed above. These situations should be listed in a manner that makes sense for users.

All Hazards –

ERPs should be written to address all conditions the organization will face including natural (e.g. severe weather), human caused (e.g. bomb threat), and technological (e.g. cyber) during both normal and off-hour emergencies. While there is no obvious limit to the hazards that could impact an organization, prioritizing the development of hazard-specific sections of the ERP should be based on a combination of the risk posed to the organization's personnel and operations and the frequency / prevalence of the hazard.

ERP Development Checklist

I. Purpose / Function –

- Clearly define when, where, and how the plan is expected to be used.
- Document how plan was developed (e.g. by safety committee, human resources department, ???)
- Reinforce the authority of the plan by documenting who approved of and is responsible for promulgating the plan.

II. Notification –

Pre-Event:

- List all sources of information the organization will monitor /subscribe (e.g. broadcast media web pages, local emergency text alerts, weather radio, etc.) to maintain situational awareness.

Post-Event:

- List all means the organization has to provide notification (e.g. email lists, text / cell phone numbers, phone numbers, automated calling software, public address / speakerphone systems, etc.).
- List (types of) hazards / events employees will be notified for (e.g. active shooter, severe weather, violation of restraining orders, etc.)
- Identify who is responsible for providing emergency notification.
- Identify thresholds for providing emergency notification to employees / customers / off-site employees of hazards.
- Identify procedures for providing emergency notification to employees / customers / off-site employees of hazards.
- Identify procedures for providing after-hours emergency notification to management / employees.

III. Communication Procedures

- Describe and list the means the organization will use to support emergency communications:
 - Conference calls.
 - Radios (frequency / channel #s).
 - Phone numbers (cell, home, work).
- Identify an individual / team / position that is responsible for supporting and maintaining communications processes.

- Identify individuals / positions responsible for establishing and maintaining contact with agencies outside the organization (e.g. fire/ems, calling 9-1-1, local emergency management, etc.).

IV. Management / Decision Making Structure –

- List all persons responsible for making decisions for the organization in emergency situations. This can include individuals, positions, or management groups (e.g. department heads).
- List an order of succession for the organization's decision makers.
- Describe process for coordinating accurate, current, and relevant information across the organization.
- Identify a (scalable) emergency management structure that will:
 - Support the collection and analysis of information.
 - Make decisions specific to the organization taking into account current and future conditions / needs.
 - Provide direction to employees and customers.

V. Situation Specific Guidance –

There are many organization- or location-based situations that require specific action. This section should document hazard-specific procedures. There is no limit to the types of hazards that can be included in this section. Suggested hazards to be addressed include:

- Severe weather procedures.
- Sheltering-in-place (e.g. for both haz-mat releases and severe weather)..
- Active shooter.
- Cyber disruption.
- Physical threat (e.g. bomb, armed person on premises).
- Violation (potential) of Temporary Restraining Orders.

This checklist is only guidance meant to assist any local organization develop an agency-specific emergency response plan. All emergency response plans should be vetted and approved by the local organization's leadership.

Please contact Dane County's Department of Emergency Management (608 / 266-4330) if you have any questions.