

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING AN I&R EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN USING THE AIRS TEMPLATE

These instructions are for completing the AIRS template for an emergency operations plan. The plan is available on the web, as well as on diskette. It is formatted in a text file for easy use.

The pages noted on the left should coincide with the pages in the manual. Please read the instruction manual completely. I&R agencies are encouraged to attend training in Developing an Emergency Operations Plan or a Business Contingency Plan for Disasters. AIRS offers these trainings at the annual conference and at state affiliate conferences upon request.

For additional information in preparing for emergencies, disasters and/or crises please refer to documents on the website.

Instructions

The manual contains five Sections and four appendices. The manual is written in the format of an Incident Command System. This is the disaster response system generally used by local, state and federal municipalities, as well as the American Red Cross. Working through each step of the manual will assist in providing the I&R with insight into the emergency response system that exists in many communities and should help to clarify how the I&R can fit into that system.

- Section 1 is specifically for responding to a crisis, emergency or disaster that is immediate and during business hours. This section prepares the agency to assess building damage and safety, employee safety and on-going operational abilities.
- Section 2 helps the agency to clearly articulate to the staff the role it intends to play in a disaster or emergency and the expectations of the agency in the response.
- Section 3 assists the agency in setting up a structure for business management during the acute phase of a disaster, generally lasting for one week up to a month. This section helps to identify key activities that will need to occur to insure sufficient staffing, record keeping and employee well being.
- Section 4 allows for the agency to smoothly transition to the long-term recovery phase, making sure that necessary services remain in place until the community has returned to normal.
- Section 5 outlines assignments that can be taken to better prepare the agency to respond, including development of a pre-disaster database, the use of the disaster taxonomy and preparing staff for disaster related assignments. This section also includes building safety and evacuation plans.

The appendices include the following:

- Temporary relocation of operations – I&Rs, especially 2-1-1 call centers should make arrangements for relocation of operations if the agency building is significantly impacted by a disaster.
- Bomb Threat Protocol – in a similar manner to managing client in crisis, a bomb threat must be handled professionally. Bomb threats are a federal offense and should be treated with all seriousness.
- Revision history, distribution and acknowledgements – this section is to assist the agency in tracking any changes or updates made to the manual, to track that has received the manual and to acknowledge contributors to the manual.
- Glossary of terms
- Disaster Keywords
- AIRS INFOLINE Taxonomy

SECTION 1 - Activating the Emergency Plan – the emergency plan is activated when a disaster occurs that is significant enough to cause widespread damage or impact the agency’s services or client population.

Page 4	Clearly communicate in the manual who is authorized on staff to activate the emergency plan. Remember it can be any staff person or only one or two. Think who is most likely to be in the building and knowledgeable of the overall process.
Page 5	Safety checklist is to assist the agency in assessing building safety. Each agency should add or delete items specific to the disaster risks in their geographic area.
Page 6	Evacuation checklist should have a clearly designated site near the building for staff to gather and wait. Staff should ALL be accounted for before anyone is allowed to leave the site. Specify the location of utility cut-offs for the building and make sure multiple persons know those locations and how to cut-off utilities.
Page 7	Evacuation map is generally approved by the local fire marshal. The agency should have a drill annually to ensure all staff knows how to evacuate the building.
Page 8 & 9	List of immediate actions to be taken and an assignment guide. Have back-ups assigned for each task. Smaller organizations will need to assign multiple tasks to each staff person.
Page 10	The organization should update the internal contact list at least twice annually.
Page 11	The external contact list should be updated annually at the community disaster preparedness test.
Page 12	Develop the staff check-in procedures and then immediately train all staff in utilizing it. All new staff should have this information conveyed to them during orientation.
Page 13	Job descriptions and checklist for emergency manager. The emergency manager does not necessarily need to be the

	executive director, but could be. In many instances the executive director will be needed to conduct the business of the organization and so it would benefit the agency to assign another staff as manager.
Page 15-18	Describes the activities of the team leaders during an emergency.

SECTION 2 – Introduction to staff, statement of the disaster mission of the agency and agency assumptions about disaster/emergency response

Page 19	Sample memo to staff regarding the emergency plan and manual
Page 20	Sample disaster mission statement
Page 21-22	Explains the levels of disasters and the anticipated impact on the agency

SECTION 3 – THE ACUTE PHASE - Describes the agency response during the acute phase of the disaster/emergency. Generally this period of time lasts approximately one week, but can stretch into a month or more.

Page 23	Defines the acute phase.
Page 24	Defines the Incident Command System (ICS).
Pages 25-35	Describes the possible roles and responsibilities of staff during the acute phase. Again, this model uses the ICS and the titles correspond to activities conducted by the emergency response agencies.

SECTION 4. – Transition to Long-term Recovery.

Pages 36-37	Describes the activities and reporting that should take place in transitioning from acute phase to long-term recovery.
	The roles and responsibilities of staff will change and they will begin to assume more of their normal roles, however, there will be a need to track and document data and services.
Page 38	Development and design of training and orientation for staff

SECTION 5 – Planning and Mitigation. These are the steps that can be taken to help the agency prepare for disasters/emergencies, as well as ways to mitigate damage to the building and to internal operations.

Page 39	The most important thing an I&R can do to prepare for a
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	disaster is to have a standing pre-disaster database. Using the AIRS Info line taxonomy as well as the list of disaster keywords – the I&R agency can locate the agency that would provide the service listed and insert it into the database. Some resources will only emerge following a disaster, but many can be captured and put in ahead of time.
Page 39	Staff well-being should be a priority for the agency. However, it is critical the agency prepare to strike a balance between the needs of individuals and the needs of the agency to respond to the community following a disaster. This should be reviewed in detail with staff so they understand the implications of the commitment of the agency and the impact on their families.
Page 39-40	Staff should also be encouraged to prepare their homes for disaster. The American red Cross offers excellent training and pamphlets on home preparedness.
Page 41-43	Building safety and evacuation plans should be spelled out in detail and reviewed with staff annually.

APPENDIX I – Temporary relocation of Operations

Page 44	All I&R and 2-1-1 Centers should have arrangements for continuation of operations if their building is damaged or destroyed. Having these plans in place ahead of time allows for the least disruption of services for the community. The plans should be reviewed with staff at least one time per year.
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APPENDIX II – Bomb Threat Protocol

Page 45	This is a step-by-step approach to handling a bomb threat. Bomb threats are federal offenses and should be reported immediately.
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APPENDIX III – Revision History, Distribution and Acknowledgements