

SAFETY AWARENESS

Brief Topic Safety Refresher Training For Associates

2024

Emergency Response for Schools

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), there are several phases included in the creation of an effective emergency management program. The following checklist identifies those phases along with action steps associated with each.

Mitigation: Mitigation is any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to life and property from a Hazardous event. Mitigation action steps include:

- **Know the school building.** Assess potential hazards on campus by conducting regular safety audits. Be sure to include driveways, parking lots, playgrounds, outside structures and fencing.
- **Know the community.** Work with local emergency management directors to assess surrounding hazards. This includes the identification and assessment of the probability of natural disasters (tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, etc.) and industrial and chemical incidents (water contamination or fuel spills). It is also wise to locate major transportation routes and installations, and address potential hazards related to terrorism.
- **Bring together regional, local and school leaders.** Leadership and support is necessary to ensure that the right people are at the planning table.
- **Make regular school safety and security efforts part of the mitigation process.** Identify what incidents are common within your school and district.
- **Establish clear lines of communication.** Since mitigation requires agencies and organizations to work together and share information, communication among the planning team along with families and the larger community are important to convey a visible message that schools and local governments are working together to ensure public safety.

Preparation: Good planning will facilitate a rapid, coordinated, effective response when a crisis does occur.

Preparing a crisis plan including the following action steps:

- **Set up a planning committee.** Identify those who should be involved in developing a crisis plan and include training and drills into their orientation. Delegating responsibilities and breaking the process down into manageable steps will help committee members develop a plan.
- **Identify and involve stakeholders.** Figure out the stakeholders to be involved in developing the crisis management plan (those who are concerned about the safety of the school and the people who will call to assist when a crisis occurs). Ask stakeholders to provide feedback on sections of the plan that pertain to them specifically.
 - During this process, create working relationships with emergency responders to learn how these individuals function and how you will work with them in a crisis. Take the time to learn their vocabulary, command structure and culture.
- **Consider existing efforts.** Investigate all existing plans and analyze the following: How do other agencies' plans integrate with the school's plan? Are there conflicts? Does the comprehensive school safety plan include a crisis plan? What information from the district's crisis plan can be used in the school's crisis plan?

