

Policy

Policy Title:	Workplace Incident Response Policy				
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Approved for DHS by Jim Scherzinger, COO

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Approved for OHA by Suzanne Hoffman, COO

April 14th, 2012

Overview

Description: This policy outlines the strategy for the preparation and response to a realized threat or hazard in order to ensure for the safety and well being of all employees.

Purpose/Rationale: The Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) are committed to providing places of employment which are safe and healthful for employees, contractors and volunteers. This includes implementing operations and processes that are necessary to protect the life, safety and health of all personnel in the event of a realized threat or hazard.

This policy provides overall direction and coordination of the response structure and processes to be used by all department facilities in preparation for and response to a realized threat or hazard. The purpose of this policy is to prevent or mitigate the effects of a threat or hazard.

Applicability: This policy applies to all employees, contractors and volunteers for DHS and OHA at all Department controlled facilities and worksites.

Failure to Comply: Failure by an employee to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from state service. Contractors and volunteers may have their service terminated.

Policy

General

DHS and OHA have established a Workplace Incident Response System to minimize the impact of a realized threat or hazard on employees, contractors and volunteers at each of our facilities and worksites. This system will provide policies, procedures and assign roles and responsibilities necessary to effectively assess and coordinate a response adequate for the severity of the realized threat or hazard. The Workplace Incident Response System guides the response of personnel and resources at all facilities and is based on the following assumptions:

- A realized threat or hazard may occur at any time of the day with little or no warning.

- A realized threat or hazard occurring at a DHS or OHA facility will be assessed and evaluated by a manager and member of the Workplace Incident Response Team to determine the level of service required to appropriately respond to the event.
- All employees, contractors, and volunteers have a personal responsibility to be familiar with the procedures to follow during an event to protect their safety, health and well being.

A workplace incident response system must be developed and implemented at each facility and worksite. This response system must include site specific incident response plans and preparation activities in order to protect employees, contractors, volunteers and all other building occupants from any realized threat or hazard.

Managers are responsible for ensuring their work locations have current incident response documents and incident response systems. This includes tailoring the incident response procedures to accommodate specific facility situations and resources in order to comply with all applicable laws and regulations. It is strongly advised that each facility receive input from their local emergency responders when developing site specific procedures for an office. Managers must also ensure that all employees, contractors and volunteers at their work locations are provided adequate instruction and training to ensure they are prepared to respond to a realized threat or hazard.

Managers are responsible to ensure that all assigned employees are accounted for following a building evacuation.

Workplace Incident Response Documents

All DHS and OHA work locations must implement and maintain workplace incident response documents that have been developed for the specific conditions of their work environment. These documents should detail basic strategies and procedures to account for the safety and health of all employees, contractors and volunteers in the event of a realized threat or hazard. These documents should also include information regarding the workplace incident response system for a work location and the preparation activities that will be conducted to ensure an effective response by all occupants.

At a minimum, the following incident response documents must be developed, implemented and maintained for all DHS and OHA work locations:

- Workplace Incident Response Plan – Procedures for responding to a realized threat or hazard in the workplace such as but not limited to a workplace power outage, gas leak, fire, earthquake, etc.
- Workplace Security Plan – Strategies for responding to potential threatening or violent behaviors in the workplace.
- Maps with designated emergency exit routes and assignments for each floor and area within your facility.

Managers at each office should ensure that all workplace incident response documents are reviewed at least annually and updated as frequently as necessary to ensure an effective response to a realized threat or hazard.

Workplace Incident Response System

The workplace incident response system provides direction to effectively respond to a realized threat or hazard and to communicate procedures that will account for the safety of all employees, contractors and volunteers at each facility. This system uses four levels to classify a realized threat or hazard in order to determine the appropriate response. Under all

circumstances, managers are to assume responsibility for assessing the realized threat or hazard and for activating the Workplace Incident Response Team who will assist to communicate and coordinate the response for all affected employees, contractors and volunteers.

Reporting

An employee, upon discovering a realized threat or hazard, should immediately notify a manager within the area. In all emergency situations, 911 should be called first.

Notification and Assessment

All employees, contractors and volunteers who encounter a crisis or potential crisis should immediately notify a manager within the area. The manager will immediately assess the realized threat or hazard to gather as much accurate information as possible and activate the Workplace Incident Response Team as deemed to be appropriate. An appropriate response for the realized threat or hazard will be determined according to the Life, Health and Safety Hazard Classification level.

Life, Health and Safety (LHS) Hazard Classification

The following hazard levels are a supplement to the overarching Business Continuity Management, Incident classification system. These levels assist with the determination of an initial response (first 20-30 minutes of an incident) to secure life, health and safety. Long term response is determined based on collaboration on a wider scale and will involve management and decisions based on the larger Incident Classification Levels. The LHS Hazard classification levels are intended as a means for communicating the severity of a realized threat or level in order to expedite the necessary immediate response for the event.

Level 1 An assessment confirms a potential significant hazard that may have widespread impact to employee, contractor and volunteer safety and/or property and requires a coordinated response effort from personnel within the facility and from others outside agency. An appropriate response may include a partial or total building evacuation and/or sheltering-in-place until the threat has been mitigated or deemed to be safe. Example: Confirmed fire alarm, bomb threat, confirmed gas leak, confirmed hazardous chemical spill within the interior of the building, workplace security threats where an assessment confirms a person acting suspiciously or who is inappropriately present in an area that is not accessible to the general public or who is exhibiting threatening or violent behavior.

Level 2 An assessment confirms a potential significant hazard (other than workplace security threats) to persons and/or property. An initial, immediate response may require employees to shelter-in-place. After the immediate threat of the incident has concluded a building evacuation may be necessary and assistance from an outside agency may be required. Example: Earthquake, tornado alert or confirmed tornado strike.

Level 3 An assessment confirms the potential of a minimal hazard to persons and/or property. A partial evacuation of a floor or work area to another part of the building may be necessary until the potential hazard can be mitigated or the affected area is determined to be safe. Example: an other than first-aid injury/illness, an interior water leak, an unconfirmed odor within the interior of a building, HVAC malfunctions during extreme weather conditions where building temperature cannot be maintained.

Level 4 An assessment confirms there is no potential hazard to persons and/or property and a total building evacuation is deemed to be unnecessary. Example: minor injury/illness (first-aid only), short duration power outage.

Notification

Level 1 or 2 Workplace incident response team members and managers in the area will be notified of the realized threat or hazard and an appropriate response will be communicated immediately throughout the facility. Communication of the event and the response will be conducted in an appropriate manner especially for security related events to ensure the realized threat or violent act does not escalate. Throughout the duration of the response, effective communication will be maintained with all employees, contractors and volunteers to ensure they are aware of any restrictions or precautions that have been implemented and to ensure for their safety, health and well being.

Program administration will be notified once the initial threat or hazard has been assessed and appropriate response procedures have been implemented. A decision to activate the business continuity plan for the affected area will be made by management as deemed appropriate for the nature of the event.

Level 3 or 4 Workplace incident response team members and managers in the area will be notified of the realized threat or hazard and an appropriate response will occur at the impacted area. Affected employees, contractors and volunteers may be notified to preclude exposure to the potential hazard and to ensure communication of any restrictions or precautions implemented for safety and health reasons. Program administration, facility administration, and DHS and OHA safety and health will be notified as deemed appropriate for the nature of the event.

Workplace Incident Response Team

Each facility will either solicit volunteers or designate individuals who are willing to serve on the Workplace Incident Response Team for a specific location. At a minimum, each team will have an Incident Commander, an appropriate number of Lead Emergency Coordinators and an appropriate number of Area Emergency Coordinators (EC) who will be responsible for coordinating activities during a realized threat or hazard. The Incident Commander must be a manager or an executive with the authority to implement decisions that may impact an entire office and business continuity plans. The coordination of activities will include the initial assessment, initiating an appropriate response and notifying all affected areas and personnel of any restrictions and precautions that have been implemented. The workplace incident response team should receive instruction and training sufficient to ensure an effective and efficient coordinated response to a realized threat or hazard.

Information for All Employees, Contractors and Volunteers

Information will be provided to all employees, contractors and volunteers regarding the types of threats or hazards that may occur at their facility and the immediate response required for these events. All employees, contractors and volunteers will also receive information that will enhance their understanding of the function and elements of incident response planning, including:

- An overview of the Workplace Incident Response System
- Types of potential threats or hazards
- Reporting procedures and alarm systems
- Safe Rooms and Shelter in Place plans
- Evacuation plans, and
- Any hazards unique to a specific facility or environment.

At the time of initial hire and at least annually thereafter, managers will ensure that all employees, contractors and volunteers receive a copy of the Workplace Incident Response Policy and Desk Manual and all other information required in accordance with this policy.

Training for Members of the Workplace Incident Response Team

General training for employees who participate on the workplace incident response team should, at a minimum, address the following:

- Workplace incident response systems
- Individual roles and responsibilities
- Threats, hazards, and emergency events
- Communications procedures
- Workplace incident response procedures
- Evacuation, shelter-in-place, and accountability procedures, and
- Location and use of common emergency equipment

Practice drills will be held at each facility as often as necessary to ensure employees, contractors and volunteers are prepared for a realized threat, hazard, or emergency event and to minimize confusion during the response. These drills will also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the response procedures and to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the workplace incident response system. At a minimum, a fire drill and earthquake drill will be held annually at each facility.

Procedures that apply

- [080-013-01](#) Workplace Incident Response Desk Manual

Forms that apply

- Fire Alarm and Fire Drill Report (DHS 0059) [WORD](#) [PDF](#)
- Earthquake and Earthquake Drill Report

References

- Business Continuity Incident Communication Plan, Levels of Emergencies and Corresponding Responses

Definitions

- See [Common Terms](#) for all department-wide support services policies

Contacts

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Policy History

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