

POLICY AND PROCEDURE ON RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines on preparing for, reporting, and responding to emergencies to ensure the safety and well-being of individuals served.

II. POLICY

Homeward Bound Inc. will be prepared to respond to emergencies as defined in MN Statutes, section 245D.02, subdivision 8, that occur while providing services, to protect the health and safety of and minimize risk of harm to the individual(s) served. Staff will address all emergencies according to the specific procedure outlined in this policy and act immediately to ensure the safety of individuals served. After the situation has been resolved and/or the individual(s) involved are no longer in immediate danger, staff will complete the necessary documentation in order to comply with licensing requirements on reporting and to assist in developing preventative measures, if applicable. For incident response procedures, staff will refer to the *Policy and Procedure on Responding to and Reporting Incidents*.

III. PROCEDURE

All staff will be trained on this policy and the safe and appropriate response to and reporting of emergencies. Program sites will have contact information of a source of emergency medical care and transportation readily available for quick and easy access. In addition, a list of emergency phone numbers will be posted in a prominent location and emergency contact information for individuals served at the facility including each individual's representative, physician, and dentist.

DEFINITIONS

A. EMERGENCY is defined as any event that affects the ordinary daily operation of the program including, but not limited to:

1. Fires (refer to Numbers 3-10 of this procedure for action steps).
2. Severe Weather & Natural Disasters (refer to Numbers 11-17 of this procedure for action steps).
3. Power Failures (refer to Numbers 18-31 of this procedure for action steps).
4. Emergency Evacuations, Moving to an Emergency Shelter, & Temporary Closure or Relocation of the Program to Another Service Site for More Than 24 hours (refer to Numbers 32-38 of this procedure for action steps).
5. Other events that threaten the immediate health and safety of individuals served and that require calling "911" (refer to Numbers 39-41 of this procedure for action steps).
6. Staff will refer to the section of this procedure on Reporting Emergencies, steps 50-53, for information on how to report and document them.

B. WEATHER ALERTS

1. **Warning:** is defined as severe weather is either occurring or is imminent. A warning is the most dangerous alert and staff must take immediate action to protect people by seeking immediate shelter.
2. **Watch:** is defined as severe weather is possible as conditions are favorable for the weather event. Staff should plan and prepare for the possibility of the severe weather. Staff should help people change their plans for travel and outdoor activities.
3. **Advisory:** is defined as weather conditions may cause inconvenience or difficulty when traveling or being outside. Staff should help people consider changing their plans for travel and outdoor activities or consider that additional time may be required to complete their plans.

C. FIRES

1. Staff will respond to all fire and smoke detector alarms, the smell of smoke, or signs of fire by activating the alarms system, calling 911 and evacuating the house. If the smoke detector or the automatic sprinkler system starts sprinkling, staff will call 911 and immediately even if there is no evidence of fire or smoke. There may be a fire in the electrical system or elsewhere that is not yet visible.
2. After 911 is called, staff will:
 - a. Rescue individuals in immediate danger
 - b. Contain the fire by closing doors
 - c. Evacuate the individuals and all other persons from the fire area to the designated meeting location outside of the house. If the usual exit is blocked, staff must evacuate everyone by using an alternative exit must be used. While they are evacuating all persons from the building, staff will account for all individuals, other staff, visitors and any others present in the building to ensure that everyone has exited.

Designated meeting location outside of this house is:

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3. The staff person calling “911” will give the dispatcher the following information:
 - a. The address, whether the alarms are sounding (if applicable) and the location of the fire if known.
 - b. Inform 911 that the address is a group home and whether the home is minimally staffed (night shift for example) and that individuals with

- severe disabilities must be evacuated.
- c. The person calling WILL NOT hang up until the dispatcher hangs up or directs the staff person to hang up.
4. Staff will contain the area of the fire, if feasible, by closing doors. If it is possible to put out the fire with a fire extinguisher, staff will attempt to do so. A fire extinguisher should only be used to fight a small fire or if someone is trapped by a fire and all evacuation routes are blocked.
 5. If staff use a fire extinguisher, they must be use the “PASS” procedure should be followed:
 - a. **Pull the pin.** (Some extinguishers have a lock latch that must be released, a puncture lever that must be pressed, or another first step. All staff will be aware of what type is used at their location).
 - b. **Aim low.** Point the extinguisher nozzle (or its horn or nose) at the base of the fire.
 - c. **Squeeze the handle.** This releases the extinguishing agent.
 - d. **Sweep from side to side.** Keep the extinguisher aimed at the base of the fire and sweep back and forth until the fire is out. If the fire breaks out again, repeat the process.
 6. Staff will leave the designated meeting location outside the house and escort the individuals back into the house with the approval of the fire department.
 7. Staff will notify the Program Resource Coordinator/Program Supervisor (PRC/PS) or Operations Administrator (OA) and the Nurse Case Manager On-Call (NCOM).
 8. If the program site is not habitable and relocation to a designated safe area such as an emergency shelter is necessary, staff will follow the steps from the section of this procedure entitled “Emergency Evacuations...Relocation of the Program to Another Service Site for More than 24 Hours.” Numbers 32-38.

SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS AND NATURAL DISASTERS

9. See number 2 under Definitions on page 1 for descriptions of weather warnings, watches and advisories. During a severe weather watch, staff will maintain normal routines except they must monitor the weather via radio or TV for warnings and further information At the first sign of severe weather, including but not limited to high winds, heavy snow or rain, or extreme temperatures, staff will confirm the location and safety of all the individuals

served in the house.

10. During a severe weather warning staff will close windows, drapes, doors, and keep individuals away from these area.
11. Upon hearing sirens or a take cover warning, staff will notify all individuals that they need to seek shelter and will guide all individuals to the designated safe area in the house and will also bring a battery operated radio or television set, first aid kit/disaster kit, flashlight, cordless/cell phone, and the Medication Administration Records into the safe area. .
12. Staff scheduled to go off duty during a warning must stay at the house in a safe area until the warning has expired or been canceled
13. Staff will assist all individuals in staying in the safe area until an all clear is issued through the radio or by other means. If staff and individuals are on an outing when a severe weather warning is issued, they should go to the nearest safe area (for example a shopping mall). Staff will only return to the house if that is the nearest safe area. Staff should contact the house (or NCM on – call if no one is at the house) as soon as possible to let them know what is going on.
14. After the all clear is announced on the TV or radio, staff will check for injuries to the individuals, staff, and visitors and for damage to the house, yard or vehicle. If injury or damage occurs, staff will notify the PRC/PS or OA and the NCMOC and follow directions given.
15. If the program site is not habitable and relocation to a designated safe area such as an emergency shelter is necessary, staff will follow the steps from the section entitled “Emergency Evacuations... Relocation of the Program to Another Service Site for More than 24 Hours”, steps 32-38.

POWER FAILURES (electricity outage/gas smell or leak)

16. During a power failure that is related to an electricity outage, all staff will remain with individuals served. If individuals are not in the immediate area at the program, staff will locate them and bring them to the central program area.
17. In the event of an electrical outage, staff will check the circuit, if a circuit has tripped off, staff will flip the switch that is off according to the directions in the maintenance book. If it does not work, staff will call maintenance or the maintenance on-call # and follow directions for restoring power.

18. If the source of the outage is not a tripped circuit or a blown fuse, staff will call the power company immediately by cell phone to report the outage using the number below and ask for the estimated length of the power outage. Staff will then report the outage and its estimated duration to the PRC/PS or the OA or the NCMOC. If power is estimated to be out for an extended period of time the PRC/PS and/or the OA or the NCMOC will make arrangements to relocate the individuals.

The name of the power company that provides electricity to this house and the phone number to report electric outages are:

Excel Energy 1-800-895-1999

19. Staff will turn off all major appliances and equipment, after determining the source of the outage. If trained to do so, staff will turn on any available back-up generator.

Please check:

- This Home does have a backup generator.**
 This home does not have a backup generator.

List any special instruction regarding the generator:

20. If staff and individuals remain in the home during the power outage for any length of time, staff will use resources available in the Emergency Kit (At a minimum, the kit must be equipped with accessible first aid supplies including bandages, sterile compresses, scissors, an ice bag or cold pack, an oral or surface thermometer, mild liquid soap, adhesive tape, and first aid manual. The house must have a flashlight and a portable radio or television set that do not require electricity and can be used if a power failure occurs.)
21. Staff will not open the refrigerator or freezer unless absolutely necessary and strongly urge the individuals to not open it either.

22. If the power is out for more than 3 hours, staff or individuals will not use the items in the refrigerator.
23. If the power is out for more than 6 hours, staff or individuals will not use the items in the freezer.
24. Staff and individuals served will not eat or serve freezer or fresh foods such as meats, milk products, or other leftovers if the temperature in the refrigerator is more than 45 degree F.

GAS SMELL OR LEAK

25. If gas is smelled or a gas leak is suspected, staff will immediately evacuate individuals to the established designated meeting location outside of the house:

Designated meeting location outside of this house is:

26. Once all staff, individuals, and visitors have been accounted for at the designated meeting location outside of the house, staff will call the gas company at the phone number below. **Under no circumstances will staff call from inside the house.** Staff will implement any gas company instructions.

The name of the power company that provides gas to this house and the phone number to report gas leaks are:

**CenterPoint Energy's gas leak phone number in the
Minneapolis/St. Paul Area is:**

612-372-5050

27. Staff will not permit anyone (staff, individuals or visitors) to use lighters, matches, or any open flame during this time whether in the house or at the designated meeting location at the home. If it can be safely done, staff will turn off all electrical and battery-operated appliances and machinery before evacuating and will remain off until the all clear has been provided.

28. Staff will notify the PRC/PS or OA and the NCMOC of the gas smell or leak after the gas company has been notified. This call will be made by staff from the safe area using a cell phone outside of the house or from a neighbor's phone.
29. If PRC/PS or OA or the NCMOC directs that a relocation to a designated safe area such as an emergency shelter is necessary, staff will follow the steps from the section of this procedure entitled "Emergency Evacuations... Relocation of the Program to Another Service Site for more than 24 Hours." Numbers 32-38.

EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS, MOVING TO AN EMERGENCY SHELTER AND TEMPORARY CLOSURE OR RELOCATION OF THE PROGRAM TO ANOTHER SERVICE SITE FOR MORE THAN 24 HOURS

30. Staff will ensure that everyone leaves the building and will assist everyone (individuals, staff and visitors) in gathering at the designated meeting location of this house:

Designated meeting location outside of this house is:

31. Staff will immediately notify the PRC/PS or OA and the NCMOC of the conditions that required emergency evacuation and may require moving to an emergency shelter, temporary closure, or the relocation of program to another site.
32. The PRC/PS and/or OA will coordinate relocation of services in a way that promotes continuity of care of individuals served.
33. The PRC/PS and/or OA or designee will coordinate and assist staff as necessary in transporting individuals to the designated location.
34. If access to the program site is permitted, staff will transfer individuals' program files, clothing, necessary personal belongings, current medications, and medication administration records to the designated location.
35. The PRC/PS and/or OA will notify the legal representative or designated emergency contact, and case manager of the new location of the program if

necessary. The PRC/PS and/or OA will notify the foster care licensor, if applicable.

36. **If feasible the PRC/PS and/or OA will relocate the individuals and the program according to the service site’s buddy house.**

The buddy house for this house is:

OTHER EVENTS THAT THREATEN THE IMMEDIATE HEALTH OR WELFARE OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED THAT MAY REQUIRE CALLING 911

37. Pandemic Event:

The Director of Nursing and Training (DON&T) will decide an internal epidemic event and give directions to staff. Upon the declaration of a pandemic (world-wide epidemic of a new disease that impacts Hennepin County, the DON&T will direct staff in cooperating with and following state, county or city directives.

38. Bomb Threat:

- a. Upon receiving a bomb threat, staff at the service site will pull the fire alarm, if available.
- b. Staff will ensure that everyone leaves the building and assembles at the designated meeting location outside the service site:

Designated meeting location outside of this house is:

- c. Staff will immediately call “911” from a neighbor’s telephone or a cell phone.
- d. Staff, individuals and visitors will remain outside the building until further instructions are received from the police or fire department.
- e. If unable to re-occupy the building, staff will follow the steps from the section of this procedure entitled “Emergency Evacuations... Relocation of the Program to Another Service Site for more than 24 Hours.” Numbers 32-38.

39. Repeated Unwanted or Threatening Phone Calls:
- a. Upon receiving repeated unwanted or threatening phone calls, staff will hang up the phone immediately or encourage the individual served to hang up the phone.
 - b. Staff will lock all doors and windows.
 - c. Staff will monitor the frequency of disruptive phone calls, informing the PRC/PS and/or OA when the calls continue to a point where the safety of individuals served is in question or when the calls are personally threatening or environmentally threatening to a program site or property.
 - d. Staff will call “911” if at any point they feel threatened.
 - e. The PRC/PS and/or OA will determine when and if the telephone number will be changed due to the harassing or threatening telephone calls. The PRC/PS and/or OA may report and consult with the phone provider or the local police department about the calls.

PREVENTION OF AND PREPARATION FOR EMERGENCIES

40. All HBI senior executives (Directors and OA’s) will ensure that all staff will be trained on this policy and procedure and the safe and appropriate response to and reporting of all emergencies. They will ensure that cardiopulmonary resuscitation training (CPR) includes in-person instruction, hands –on practice, and an observed skills assessment under the direct supervision of a CPR instructor.
41. The PRC/PS or OA will ensure that all service sites have contact information of a source of emergency medical care and transportation readily available for quick and easy access. In addition they will ensure that a list of emergency phone numbers will be posted in a prominent location and emergency contact information for individuals served at the service site including each individual’s representative, physician and dentist.
42. The PRC/PS or OA will ensure that a staff person trained in first aid is available at the house when required in an individual’s *Coordinated Service and Support Plan* and/or *Coordinated Service and Support Plan Addendum*.
43. The PRC/PS or OA will ensure that a staff person trained in CPR is available at the house when required in an individual’s *Coordinated Service and*

Support Plan and/or Coordinated Service and Support Plan Addendum.

44. The PRC/PS or OA will have a first aid kit readily available for use. The NCM assigned to the house will ensure that the first aid kit will contain, at a minimum, bandages, sterile compresses, scissors, and ice bag or cold pack, an oral or surface thermometer, mild liquid soap, adhesive tape, and a first aid manual.

45. The OA of each house will have:

a. A floor plan available that identifies the locations of:

- Fire extinguishers and audible or visual alarm systems
- Exits, primary and secondary evacuation routes, and accessible egress routes, if any
- An emergency shelter within the house

b. A site plan that identifies:

Designated meeting location outside of this house:

Locations of fire hydrants

Routes of fire department access

c. An emergency escape plan for each individual.

d. A floor plan that identifies the location of enclosed exit stairs for facilities that have three (3) or more dwelling units.

46. The PRC/PS will ensure that quarterly fire and severe weather drills (ICF/ID sites have monthly fire drills) will be conducted throughout the year on various days of the week and times of the day or night. Staff and individuals will not be notified prior to the drill, if possible, to ensure correct implementation of staff responsibilities for response. The PRC/PS or designee

will be responsible for the initiation of the emergency drill and will record the date, day, and time of the drill in the emergency plan files.

47. As part of the emergency plan file kept at each house, The PRC/PS will ensure that the following information will be maintained:
 - a. The log of quarterly fire and severe weather drills.
 - b. The readily available emergency response plan.
 - c. Emergency contact information for individuals served at the facility including each individual's representative, physician, and dentist.
 - d. Information on the emergency shelter/safe place within the home and the designated assembly points outside the home.
 - e. Emergency phone numbers that are posted in a prominent location.
 - f. If individuals served require the use of adaptive procedures or equipment to assist them with safe evacuation, staff will receive specific instruction on these procedures and equipment.

REPORTING EMERGENCIES

1. Staff will immediately notify the PRC/PS and/or OA/PA that an incident or emergency has occurred and follow direction issued to them and will document the incident or emergency on an *Incident and Emergency Report*. Each *Incident and Emergency Report* will contain the required information as stated in the *Policy and Procedure on Reviewing Incidents and Emergencies*.
2. If an incident resulted from the emergency situation, the PRC/PS and/or OA will maintain information about the emergency and incident. They will report to the legal representative or designated emergency contact and case manager within 24 hours of an incident occurring while services are being provided, within 24 hours of discovery or receipt of information that an incident occurred, unless HBI staff has reason to know that the incident has already been reported, or as otherwise directed in the individual's *Coordinated Service and Support Plan* and/or *Coordinated Service and Support Plan Addendum*. **ICF/ID's need to report immediately.**
3. When the incident or emergency involves more than one individual served, HBI staff will not disclose personally identifiable information about any other

individual served when making the report to each individuals and/or legal representative and case manager unless Homeward Bound has the consent of the individual and/or legal representative.

4. If a serious injury or death were to occur as a result of the emergency situation, staff will follow the response and reporting procedures as stated in the *Policy and Procedures on Responding to and Reporting Incidents* and, if needed, the *Policy and Procedure on Death of an Individual Served*.