



BAHÁ'Í CENTER ASSISTANCE

Emergency Operations Planning Manual for Local Spiritual Assemblies

Prepared and Distributed by the Bahá'í Center Assistance Corporation
An Agency of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States of America

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Acknowledgements

This manual has been prepared by the Bahá'í Center Assistance (BCA) to provide Local Spiritual Assemblies (LSAs) with Bahá'í centers or facilities with detailed information regarding emergency operations planning for the spectrum of threats and hazards they may face. This document has been prepared using recommendations and guidelines from the several federal agencies including Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Department of Education, Department of Justice and the FBI:



The information presented in this document generally constitutes informal guidance and provides examples that may be helpful. The Departments that issued the guidance used for this manual have provided examples of good practices and matters to consider for planning and implementation purposes. The guidance does not create any requirements beyond those included in applicable local, state and federal law and regulations, or create any additional rights for any person, entity, or organization. The guidelines used for this manual include the FEMA guide: “Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101,” version 2.0 and the FEMA guide: “Developing Emergency Operations Plans for Houses of Worship”. These guidelines are consistent with national preparedness efforts, and planning, which are informed by Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) 8, signed by President Obama in March of 2011. This document has not been reviewed or endorsed by any federal, state or local agency.

The manual also includes a recommended template for an emergency operations plan which has been reviewed by the Bahá'í Center Assistance with consideration for the unique demographics within each Bahá'í community. Other resources may be equally helpful; however, the guidelines provide no endorsement of any documents, products, or approaches.

It is recommended that planning teams responsible for developing and revising an emergency operations plan use this manual to document their efforts. To gain the most from this manual, users should read the entire document prior to initiating their planning efforts and refer back to it throughout the planning process.

Promulgations and Signatures

The preparedness mission is to protect the safety and security of the community, and building inhabitants, as well as the facilities and community assets.

To accomplish the mission, these guidelines and the resulting emergency operations plan strive to provide a safe and secure place of worship for all members and guests, as well as a safe environment for others participating in activities that occur within the jurisdiction of the Local Spiritual Assembly (LSA). The Emergency Operations Planning Manual and the templates to be customized by each Local Spiritual Assembly provide an overview of how to address a disaster or emergency that may interrupt the community.

The Emergency Operations Planning Manual has been developed in accordance with guidance provided in:

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) guide: “Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101,” version 2.0
- FEMA guide: “Developing Emergency Operations Plans for Houses of Worship”

Each community is advised to consult the Local Emergency Operations Plan for their Jurisdiction.

This Emergency Operations Planning Manual will be reviewed and updated as necessary by the Bahá'í Center Assistance.

Bahá'í Center Assistance (BCA) / [Date]

Frequently Used Terms

Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

The EOP documents and describes how a LSA will respond to and recover from all hazards. It includes six critical elements within the Joint Commission's Emergency Management Standard, which entails Communications, Resources and assets, Safety and security, Staff responsibilities, Utilities and clinical, and Support activities.

Emergency Operations Planning Manual (EOPM)

A manual which includes the guidelines for use by Local Spiritual Assemblies for the development of customized EOP

Emergency Response Team (ERT)

The ERT is a group of people who prepare for and respond to an emergency or threat, such as a natural disaster or an interruption of business operations. Emergency response teams are common in corporations as well as in public service organizations.

House of Worship

These are facilities that are owned or leased by LSAs or other faith-based organization. Specifically for the Bahá'í community, the facilities covered in the 2017 version of the EOPM include Centers and facilities used by LSAs. Each LSA will need to consider and develop additional guidelines for schools and LSA sponsored activities and events in private homes.

Public Information Officer (PIO)

The PIO is the person appointed by the LSA to provide clear and accurate information to the news media, social media, and other interfaces with the non-facility community.

Threat Assessment Team (TAT)

The TAT is a team that evaluates the risks posed by one person or another, typically as a response to an actual or perceived threat or concerning behavior.

Incident Command System (ICS)

The Incident Command System provides a standardized approach for incident management, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity. By using ICS during an incident, LSAs will be able to work more effectively with the responders in their community. Once developed the system is maintained by the LSA and its designated emergency response representatives.

Introduction and Purpose

Each Bahá'í facility provides invaluable assets, care services, spiritual, and human resources to its members and the communities they serve. LSAs and their Bahá'í Centers and facilities are distinct settings that are critical to the community and spiritual wellbeing of their communities.

Many people think of a Bahá'í Center or facility as a safe area where violence and emergencies cannot affect them. However, violence in houses of worship is not a new phenomenon. In addition to violent acts, natural disasters, and arson also affect houses of worship. With many incidents occurring with little to no warning, many faith-based organizations are developing and updating plans and procedures to ensure the safety and security of their communities, volunteers, staff, and facilities.

This manual for developing an emergency operations plan includes information on assessing facility safety, developing plan of action, and exercising the plan. Becoming more prepared in case of an emergency is easier than you might think, however it will take some thoughtful work. .

These guidelines review actions that may be taken before, during, and after an incident in order to reduce the impact on property and any loss of life. While this manual provides the basics for getting started, the process of creating a plan will require LSAs to spend time thinking about the impact of emergencies on their properties and customize plans that will provide directions on how to respond in the event of an emergency.

It is also important to understand and accept that all major emergencies will involve some degree of confusion and panic. Therefore, it is crucial that all members of the community including Bahá'í Center staff, volunteers and employees who will have key roles in an emergency familiarize themselves with the plan. By collaboration with community partners (i.e., other houses of worship and governmental entities that have a responsibility in the plan, including first responders, public health officials, and mental health officials), LSAs will have a more effective emergency operations plan.

The Bahá'í Center Assistance fully understands that each LSA may approach some of these issues differently than other government and community organizations. At the same time, the Bahá'í Center Assistance would like to assist LSAs that are interested in emergency operations planning, and this manual is offered in that spirit.

The manual is organized in four sections:

- ♣ Principles of emergency operations planning
- ♣ Process for developing, implementing, and refining an emergency operations plan
- ♣ A closer look at active shooter situations
- ♣ An emergency operations plan template

This manual is designed to be scalable for use by small to large-sized communities in order to help navigate the planning process. Please note that specific planning for schools are not addressed in this document; however the federal government has additional guidance.¹

Emergency planning efforts work best when they are aligned with emergency planning practices at the local, state, and national levels where recent developments have put a new emphasis on the process for developing EOPs. As mentioned earlier, national preparedness efforts are informed by Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) 8, defines preparedness around five mission areas: **Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery.**²

♣ **Prevention**, for the purposes of this manual, means the capabilities necessary to avoid, deter, or stop an imminent crime or threatened or actual mass casualty incident. Prevention is also the action LSAs take to prevent a threatened or actual incident from occurring.

♣ **Protection** means the capabilities to secure houses of worship against acts of terrorism and manmade or natural disasters. Protection focuses on ongoing actions that protect people, networks, and property from a threat or hazard.

♣ **Mitigation** means the capabilities necessary to eliminate or reduce the loss of life and property damage by lessening the impact of an incident. In this manual, mitigation also means reducing the likelihood that threats and hazards will happen.

♣ **Response** means the capabilities necessary to stabilize an incident once it has already happened or is certain to happen in an unpreventable way; establish a safe and secure environment; save lives and property; and facilitate the transition to recovery.

♣ **Recovery** means the capabilities necessary to assist houses of worship affected by an incident in restoring their environment.

In general, emergency management officials and emergency responders are familiar with this terminology. These mission areas generally align with the three timeframes associated with an incident: before, during, and after.

The majority of Prevention, Protection, and Mitigation activities generally occur **before** an incident, although these three mission areas do have ongoing activities that can

¹ See the Manual for Developing High-quality School Emergency Operations Plans for planning considerations specific to the school environment.

² National preparedness efforts, including planning, are informed by Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) 8, which was signed by the President Obama in March of 2011 and describes the Nation's approach to preparedness. This Directive represents an evolution in our collective understanding of national preparedness, based on the lessons learned from criminal activities, hurricanes, incidents, and other experiences. PPD-8 defines preparedness around five mission areas: Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery.

occur throughout the incident. Response activities occur **during** an incident and Recovery activities can begin during an incident and occur **after** an incident.

To help avoid confusion over terms and allow for ease of reference, this manual uses the terms before, during, and after. As the LSAs plan for and execute response and recovery activities, they should consider using the concepts and principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

NIMS provides all those involved with a common understanding of roles and responsibilities during response to incidents. LSAs may also find NIMS suitable for managing other large-scale non-emergency events, such as public events, celebrations, or conferences and schools. One component of NIMS is the Incident Command System (ICS), which provides a standardized approach for incident management, regardless of cause, size, location, or complexity. By using ICS during an incident, LSAs will be able to work more effectively with the responders in their community.³

While some of the vocabulary, processes and approaches discussed in this manual may be new to LSAs, they are critical to the creation of emergency management practices and plans that are integrated with the efforts of first responders (e.g., fire, law enforcement, emergency medical services (EMS)) and other key stakeholders.

If a LSA has an existing plan, revising and adapting that plan using the principles and process described in this manual will help ensure alignment with the terminology and approaches used across the nation, including the first responders with whom the LSAs will need to collaborate before, during, and after an incident.

The Challenge

Many Bahá'í Centers communities do not have enough capacity to manage a large number of additional volunteers. This manual is designed to help LSAs organize a team and be a positive addition to the whole community, or, to have a well-organized team that fills a gap in the community.

One of the first steps by the LSA is to designate a team that will work to develop an emergency operations plan.

Once the team is identified, the team will begin its work by identifying local partners.

The team should identify organizations and service groups have assessed community needs and have built the expertise to provide solutions. A few phone calls or scanning a few websites can produce all the information needed to know about the available options in the community.

- Citizen Corps Councils, USAonWatch (Neighborhood Watch) teams, Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), Fire Corps units, Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) units, and Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) units. These

³ For more information on NIMS and ICS, please see <http://www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system>.

organizations may have resources to assist the LSAs in preparing and training for disasters.

- Local fire department, police department, paramedics, or emergency management agency that can be available to discuss ways to prepare and improve the community's capacity to respond to and recover from disaster.
- Local chapters of Citizen Corps Affiliates, such as the American Red Cross and National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster for local disaster preparedness and response service opportunities.

Principles of Emergency Operations Planning

The following principles are key to developing an EOP that addresses a range of threats and hazards.

- ♣ **Planning should be supported by leadership.** The LSA should initiate and support planning efforts to ensure engagement from the community and outreach to the entire community. Regardless of the size of the community, one or more persons should lead emergency planning efforts.
- ♣ **Planning considers all threats and hazards.** The planning process should take into account a wide range of possible threats and hazards that may affect the community and address safety needs before, during, and after an incident.
- ♣ **Planning considers all setting and all times.** It is important to remember that threats and hazards can affect the properties at non-standard times (e.g., when facilities are being used by others), as well as off-site (e.g., an activity or event sponsored somewhere other than the grounds of the property).
- ♣ **Planning provides for the access and functional needs of the whole community.** The whole community includes regular attendees, guests, volunteers and staff, including those with disabilities and others with access and functional needs; those from racially and ethnically diverse backgrounds; and people with limited English proficiency.
- ♣ **A model EOP is created by following a collaborative process.** This manual provides a process, plan format, and content guidance that is flexible enough for use by all emergency planning teams. As the planning team uses the templates and forms, they should first evaluate their usefulness to ensure the tools enhance collaboration. It is noted that the team may find that there are some jurisdictions that provide templates that reflect local and state mandates, as applicable. If available, such template will be helpful as the team customizes their plan.

Process for Developing, Implementing, Refining an Emergency Operations Plan

The planning process discussed in this section is flexible and can be adapted to accommodate any unique characteristics and situations. Effective emergency operations planning is not done in isolation. It is critical that the planning team and the LSA work with their local emergency management agency, community partners, and first responders, during the planning process, as an effective EOP is integrated with community, regional, and state plans. This collaboration makes more resources available and helps to ensure the seamless integration of all responders.

This manual outlines six steps in the planning process.⁴ At each step in the planning process, LSAs should consider the impact of their decisions on ongoing activities such as training and exercises, as well as on equipment and resources.



⁴ For more information, please see Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plans (Comprehensive Preparedness Manual [CPG] 101), Version 2.0 (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2011, <http://www.fema.gov/plan>).

Step 1: Form a Collaborative Planning Team

Experience and lessons learned indicate that operational planning is best performed by a team. Close collaboration between the LSA and the planning team, other houses of worship, community partners, and first responders, ensures the coordination of efforts and the integration of plans. The LSA may consider joining or collaborating with other nearby houses of worship to form joint emergency planning teams. In addition, first responders and emergency managers may want to work with multiple faith-based organizations to address common goals and objectives.

Identify Core Planning Team

The core planning team should include representatives from the LSAs, as well as first responders and others who may have roles and responsibilities in emergency management before, during, and after an incident. Many communities may have first responders or others with special emergency planning expertise. Their expertise will inform the development, implementation, and refinement of the Plan. Where possible, consider including diverse representation on the planning team, including individuals with disabilities and the elderly. The planning team should be small enough to permit close collaboration, yet large enough to be representative of the community and its partners.

The planning team should also be large enough as to not place an undue burden on any single person.

Form a Common Framework

All team members should consider taking time to learn each other's vocabulary, command structure, and culture in order to facilitate effective planning.

Define and Assign Roles and Responsibilities

Each person involved in the development and refinement of the plan should know his or her role and responsibility in the planning process, as well as generally understand others' roles so that they know with whom to speak regarding particular issues and questions that might arise during the planning process.

Determine a Regular Schedule of Meetings

Regularly scheduled planning meetings reinforce the ongoing planning effort. Establishing a flexible but regular schedule of meeting times will facilitate greater collaboration, coordination, and communication among team members and will help solidify crucial relationships.

Establish a Timeline

In addition to a meeting schedule, it will be important for the team to report to the LSAs on the process of their planning efforts. A timeline would include goals for the completion of the work and plans for reporting to the LSA.

Step 1 Outcome

After completing Step 1, the LSA will have formed a planning team with representation from all necessary stakeholders. The planning team will have taken initial steps to form a common framework; define and assign roles and responsibilities in the planning process; set a schedule of planning meetings and a timeline for reporting to the LSA and completing the plan.

Step 2: Understand the Situation

In Step 2, the planning team identifies possible threats and hazards and assesses the risk and vulnerabilities posed by those threats and hazards. Effective emergency planning depends on an analysis and comparison of the threats and hazards a particular faith-based community faces. This is typically performed through a threat and hazard identification and risk assessment process that collects information about threats and hazards and assigns values to risk for the purposes of deciding which threats and hazards the plan should prioritize and subsequently address.

Identify Threats and Hazards

The planning team first needs to understand the threats and hazards faced by the community. The planning team can draw upon a wealth of existing information to identify the range of threats and hazards that may be faced by the community. First, the planning team members should share their own knowledge of threats and hazards the community has faced in the past or may face in the future. The LSA and the planning team should obtain a copy of the state or local risk assessment. This assessment contains information regarding the potential threats and hazards in the community.

Assess the Risk Posed by Identified Threats and Hazards

Once an initial set of threats and hazards has been identified through the process described above, the planning team should select suitable assessment tools to evaluate the risk posed by the identified threats and hazards.

Evaluating risk involves understanding the probability that the specific threat or hazard will occur; the effects the threat or hazard will likely have, including the severity of the risk; the time the LSAs will have to warn occupants about the threat or hazard, and how long the threat or hazard may last. A local emergency management agency should be able to provide information on the threats and hazards that have been identified for the community. This enables the planning team to focus its assessment efforts on threats and hazards unique to the community and focus its efforts on prioritized threats and hazards. A site assessment will examine the safety, accessibility, and emergency preparedness of the community's buildings and grounds. This assessment includes, but is not limited to, a review of building access; visibility around the exterior of buildings; structural integrity of buildings; compliance with applicable architectural standards for individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs; and emergency vehicle access.

After conducting threat and hazard identification, the planning team should organize the information into a format that is useful for comparison of the risks posed by the identified threats and hazards. This information will then be used to assess and compare the threats and hazards and their likely consequences, commonly referred to as a risk assessment.

One effective method for organizing information is create a table with information about each possible threat and hazard, including any new threats or hazards identified through the assessment process. The table should include:

- ✓ Probability or frequency of occurrence (i.e., how often it may occur)
- ✓ Magnitude (i.e., the extent of expected damage)
- ✓ Time available to warn occupants
- ✓ Duration (i.e., how long the threat or hazard will be occurring)
- ✓ Follow-on effects

Prioritize Threats and Hazards

The planning team should use the information it has organized to compare and prioritize risks posed by the threats and hazards. This will allow the team to decide which threats or hazards should be considered first. The team should consider multiple factors in order to develop an indicator of risk.

One option assigns index numbers (e.g., 1- to-4 scale) for different categories of information used in the ranking scheme. Using this approach, the planning team can categorize threats and hazards as posing a relatively high, medium, or low risk.

Step 2 Outcome

After completing Step 2, the planning team will have a prioritized (e.g., high, medium, or low risk) list of threats and hazards based on the results of the threat and hazard identification and risk assessment.

Step 3: Determine Goals and Objectives

In Step 3, the planning team decides which of the threats and hazards identified in Step 2 will be addressed in the plan. The planning team may decide to address only those threats and hazards that were classified as high risk, or they may decide to address all threats and hazards classified as high risk, as well as some of the threats and hazards that were classified as medium risk. This is a critical decision point in the planning process. It is recommended that the planning team address more than one of the high-risk threats and hazards.

Develop Goals and Objectives

Once the planning team has determined the threats and hazards that will be addressed in the plan, it should develop goals and objectives for addressing each threat or hazard.

Goals are broad, general statements that indicate the desired outcome in response to a threat or hazard. Goals are what personnel and other resources are supposed to achieve. Goals also help identify when major activities are complete and what defines a successful outcome. The planning team should develop at least three goals for addressing each threat or hazard.

Those three goals should indicate the desired outcome for before, during, and after the threat or hazard. Examples of three possible goals for a Fire Hazard:

Goals for a Fire Hazard	
▪ Goal #1 (Before):	▪ Prevent a fire from occurring in the property.
▪ Goal #2 (During):	▪ Protect all persons and property from injury by the fire.
▪ Goal #3 (After):	▪ Provide necessary medical attention to those in need.

Objectives are specific, measurable actions that are necessary to achieve the goals. Often, planners will need to identify multiple objectives in support of a single goal.

Objectives related to Goals for a Fire Hazard	
<i>Goal #1 (before): Prevent a fire from occurring in the property.</i>	
❖ Objective 1.1	Provide fire prevention training to all persons that use combustible materials or equipment in or around the property.
❖ Objective 1.2	Store combustible materials in fireproof containers or rooms
<i>Goal #2 (during): Protect all persons and property from injury by the fire</i>	
❖ Objective 2.1	Evacuate all persons from the building and surrounding grounds immediately.
❖ Objective 2.2	Account for all persons known to be on site.
<i>Goal #3 (after): Provide necessary medical attention to those in need</i>	
❖ Objective 3.1	Immediately notify 911, fire, and EMS of any fire in the property.
❖ Objective 3.2	Immediately begin to provide first aid.

After the planning team has developed the objectives for each goal, it will find that certain critical functions or activities apply to more than one threat or hazard.

Examples of these crosscutting functions include evacuation, shelter-in-place, and lockdown.

For example, for an evacuation function, three possible goals and associated objectives could include:

<i>Objective 1.1 (before): Assess, identify, and communicate the location of assembly points to be used during an evacuation.</i>	
Objective 1.1 Evacuation Function (before)	Ensure all persons know their evacuation route.
<i>Objective 2.1 (during) Evacuate all persons from the building and surrounding grounds immediately.</i>	
Objective 2.1 Evacuation Function (During)	Evacuate the Center or facilities immediately.
<i>Objective 3.1: Safely sweep the building</i>	
Objective 3.1 Evacuation Function (After):	Confirm that all persons have left the building.

Step 3 Outcome

After completing Step 3, the planning team will have at least three goals for each threat or hazard and function, as well as objectives for each goal.

Step 4: Identifying Courses of Action

In Step 4, the planning team develops courses of action for accomplishing each of the objectives identified in Step 3 (for threats, hazards, and functions). Courses of action address the **what, who, when, where, why**, and **how to respond** for each threat or hazard and function.

Courses of Action

The planning team should examine each course of action to determine whether it is feasible and whether those responsible for action find the plan acceptable.

Courses of action include criteria for determining how and when each response will be implemented under a variety of circumstances. The planning team will also develop response protocols and procedures to support these efforts. Possible courses of action are typically developed using the following steps:

- **Depict the scenario.** Create a potential scenario based on the threats and hazards identified earlier in the planning process. For example, an earthquake occurs during the congregation's gathering which might include childcare or school activities. The facility may also be offered or rented for other activities, bringing many individuals to the site.
- **Determine the amount of time available to respond.** This will vary based on the type of threat or hazard and the particular scenario. For example, in the case of a hurricane, the LSA might have days or hours to respond before the storm makes landfall, while the LSA may have to respond in minutes to an active shooter.
- **Identify decision points.** Decision points indicate the place in time, as threats or hazards unfold, when leaders anticipate making decisions about a course of action. Walking through each scenario in detail will help identify the relevant decision points for each scenario, such as whether to evacuate, shelter-in-place, or lockdown.
- **Develop courses of action.** Planners develop courses of action to achieve their goals and objectives by answering the following questions:
 - ✓ What is the action?
 - ✓ Who is responsible for the action?
 - ✓ When does the action take place?
 - ✓ Where does the action take place?
 - ✓ How long should the action take and how much time is actually available?
 - ✓ What has to happen before the action?
 - ✓ What happens after the action?
 - ✓ What resources and skills are needed to perform the action?
 - ✓ How will this action affect specific populations, such as children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs?
- **Select courses of action.** After developing courses of action, the planning team will need to compare the costs and benefits of each proposed course of action against the goals and objectives. Based on this comparison, the team will select the preferred course or courses of action to move forward in the planning process.

Plans often include multiple courses of action for a given scenario to reflect the different ways it could unfold.

- **Identify The Resources** After selecting courses of action; the planning team should identify the resources necessary to accomplish each course of action without regard to resource availability. Once the planning team identifies all of the resource requirements, they begin matching available resources to the requirements. This step provides planners an opportunity to identify resource gaps or shortfalls that should be taken into account.

Step 4 Outcome

After completing Step 4, the planning team will have identified goals, objectives, and courses of action for before, during, and after threats and hazards, as well as functions. Goals, objectives, and courses of action for threats and hazards will be contained in the threat- and hazard-specific annexes in the plan. Goals, objectives, and courses of action for functions will be contained in the functional annexes of the plan.

Step 5: Plan Preparation, Review, and Approval

In Step 5, the planning team develops a draft of the Plan using the courses of action developed in Step 4. In addition, the team reviews the plan, obtains LSA approval, and shares the plan with community partners.

Format of the Plan

An effective plan is presented in a way that makes it easy for users to find the information they need and that is compatible with local and state plans. The primary audience consists of the Bahá'í community, local emergency management officials, and the whole community (as appropriate).

As mentioned in Step 4, functional annexes detail the goals, objectives, and courses of action of functions (e.g., evacuation, lockdown, and recovery) that apply across multiple threats or hazards. Functional annexes discuss how the LSA manages a function before, during, and after an incident.

Threat- and hazard-specific annexes, like the functional annexes, have goals, objective and action steps and discusses how the LSA manages a threat or hazard before, during, and after an incident.

The following functional format can be used for the functional annexes as well as for the threat and hazard-specific annexes. Using the format below and the work the planning team did in Step 4, each function, threat, and hazard will have at least three goals, with one or more objectives for each goal and a course of action for each objective.

Sample Annex Format

- **Title (Function, Threat, or Hazard)**
- **Goal(s)**
- **Objective(s)**
- **Course(s) of Action (i.e., describe the courses of action developed in Step 4 in the sequence in which they will occur)**

To review, each function, threat, or hazard will have at least three goals, with one or more objectives for each goal, and a course of action for each of the objectives. Each annex should specify the title of the annex and list the goals, objectives, and courses of action (in the sequence in which they would occur).

Write the Plan

After the initial creation of the plan using the template in Appendix A, the planning team completes the customized plan by working through successive drafts. The team members add necessary tables, charts, and other supporting graphics. The planning team prepares and circulates a final draft plan to obtain the comments of the LSAs and others that have responsibilities for implementing the plan. Successful plans are written following these simple rules:

- ♣ Use clear and simple writing in plain language. Summarize important information with checklists and visual aids, such as maps and flowcharts.
- ♣ Avoid using jargon and minimize the use of abbreviations. Be consistent with the use of titles and acronyms.
- ♣ Use short sentences and the active voice. Qualifiers and vague wording only add to confusion.
- ♣ Use a logical, consistent structure with bold lettering, bullets and indentation that makes it easy for readers to understand the rationale for the sequence of information and to find the information they need.
- ♣ Provide enough detail to convey an easily understood plan that is actionable. Organize the contents in a way that helps users quickly identify solutions and options. Plans should provide guidance for carrying out common courses of action, through the functional- and threat and hazard-specific annexes.

♣ Develop accessible tools and documents. Use appropriate auxiliary aids and services necessary for effective communication of the plan. Tools may include accessible Web sites; digital text that can be converted to audio or Braille; the use of text equivalents for images; and captioning of any audio and audio description of any video content.

Review the Plan

The planning team should check the written plan for compliance with applicable laws and for its usefulness in practice. There are commonly used criteria that can help determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the plan. The following measures can help determine if a plan is high quality.

♣ A plan is adequate if the plan identifies and addresses critical courses of action effectively; the plan can accomplish the assigned function; and the plan's assumptions are valid and reasonable.

♣ A plan is feasible if the LSA can accomplish the assigned critical courses of action by using available resources within the time contemplated by the plan.

♣ A plan is acceptable if it meets the requirements driven by a threat or hazard, meets cost and time limitations, and is consistent with the law.

♣ A plan is complete if it:

- Incorporates all courses of action to be accomplished for all selected threats and hazards and identified functions
- Integrates the needs of the whole population
- Provides a complete picture of what should happen, when, and at whose direction
- Makes time estimates for achieving objectives, with safety remaining as the utmost priority
- Identifies success criteria and a desired end-state
- Is developed with the planning principles described in this manual.

♣ The plan should comply with applicable local and state requirements, because these provide a baseline that facilitates both planning and execution. Additionally, when reviewing the plan, the planning team does not have to provide all of the resources needed to execute a course of action or meet a requirement established during the planning effort. However, the plan should explain where or how to obtain the resources to support those requirements.

Approve and Share the Plan

After finalizing the plan, the planning team should present the plan to the LSA and obtain official approval of the plan. Once approval is granted, the planning team should share the plan with local emergency management officials, community partners that have a role in the plan and organizations that may use the facilities. The planning team should maintain a record of the people and organizations that receive a copy of the plan.

Step 5 Outcome

After completing Step 5, the planning team will have a final Plan.

Step 6: Plan Implementation and Maintenance

Planning is a continuous process that does not stop when the plan is published. Step 6 includes the implementation of the Plans through training and ongoing review. The LSA will direct the ongoing evolution of the Plan as lessons are learned; new information and insights are obtained; new threats or hazards emerge; and priorities are updated.

Train the Bahá'í Community on the Plan and Their Roles

Everyone involved in the plan needs to know their roles and responsibilities before, during, and after an incident. Key training components include:

- ♣ Hold a meeting. At least once a year, hold a meeting to educate all parties on the plan. Go through the plan in order to familiarize these stakeholders with it.
- ♣ Visit evacuation sites. Show involved parties not only where evacuation sites are located, but also where specific areas, such as reunification areas, media areas, and triage areas will be located.
- ♣ Give stakeholders appropriate and relevant literature on the plan, policies, and procedures. It may also be helpful to provide them with quick reference manuals that remind them of key courses of action.
- ♣ Post key information throughout the building. It is important that everyone is familiar with and have easy access to information such as evacuation routes and shelter-in-place procedures and locations. Ensure information concerning evacuation routes and shelter-in place procedures and locations is communicated effectively to everyone with disabilities or others with access and functional needs.
- ♣ Familiarize members with the plan and community partners. Bringing law enforcement, fire, and emergency management personnel and community partners that

have a role in the plan, as well as other organizations that use the building(s), in to talk about the plan will make everyone more comfortable working with these partners.

- ♣ Train stakeholders on the skills necessary to fulfill their roles. Persons will be assigned specific roles in the plan that will require special skills, such as first aid, and the provision of personal assistance services for children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.

Exercise the Plan

The more a plan is practiced and the community members are trained on the plan, the more effectively they will be able to act before, during, and after an incident to lessen the impact on life and property. Exercises provide opportunities to practice with local emergency management officials and community partners, as well as to identify gaps and weaknesses in the plan.

The exercises below require increasing amounts of planning, time, and resources. Ideally, the LSA will create an exercise program, building from a tabletop up to a more advanced exercise, like a functional exercise.

- ♣ Tabletop exercises are small group discussions that walk through a scenario and the courses of action the LSA will need to take before, during, and after an incident. This activity helps assess the plan and resources and facilitates an understanding of emergency management and planning concepts.

- ♣ During drills, local emergency management officials, community partners, and relevant personnel use the actual grounds and buildings to practice responding to a scenario.

- ♣ Functional exercises are similar to drills, but involve multiple partners. Participants react to realistic simulated events (e.g., a bomb threat, or an intruder with a gun), and implement the plan and procedures.

- ♣ Full-scale exercises are the most time-consuming activity in the exercise continuum and are multiagency, multi-jurisdiction efforts in which resources are deployed. This type of exercise tests collaboration among the agencies and participants, public information systems, communications systems, and equipment.

Before making a decision about how many and which types of exercises to implement, the LSA should consider the costs and benefits. The LSA should also consider having representative(s) participate in larger community exercises to ensure that their efforts are synchronized with the whole community's efforts. It is up to the planning team to decide how often exercises should be conducted. While frequent exercise is important, it is imperative that exercises are high quality. To conduct an exercise effectively:

- ♣ Include local emergency management officials and community partners

- ♣ Communicate information in advance to avoid confusion and concern

- ♣ Exercise under different and non-ideal conditions (e.g., time of day, weather)
- ♣ Be consistent with common emergency management terminology
- ♣ Debrief and develop an after-action report that evaluates results; identifies gaps or shortfalls; and documents lessons learned
- ♣ Discuss how the plan and procedures will be modified, if needed, and specify who has the responsibility for modifying the plan.

Review, Revise, and Maintain the Plan

Planning teams should establish a process for reviewing and revising the plan. Many organizations review their plans on an annual basis. In no case should any part of the plan go for more than two years without being reviewed and revised. Some organizations have found it useful to review and revise portions instead of reviewing the entire plan at once. Certain events will also provide new information that will be used to inform the plan.

LSAs should consider reviewing and updating their plan after the following events:

- ♣ Actual emergencies
- ♣ Changes in policy, personnel, organizational structures, processes, facilities, equipment, or membership size
- ♣ Formal updates of planning guidance or standards
- ♣ Formal exercises
- ♣ Threats or hazards change or new threats or hazards emerge
- ♣ Changes in the community's demographics (e.g., changing language needs) or site assessment.

The planning team should ensure that all local emergency management officials and community partners have the most current version of the Plan.

Overview of the Basic Plan

This section outlines the basic plan which will provide an overview of the LSA's approach to operations before, during, and after an incident, regardless of the function, threat, or hazard.

The information in this section should not duplicate information contained in other sections of the plan. Almost all of the information contained in the basic plan should be able to come from the planning team. If the planning team finds that it has to go outside

the planning team for a significant amount of information, it may be an indication that the planning team membership needs to be expanded.

A transmittal letter should be created to distribute the plan.

Introductory Materials:

♣ **Cover Page**. The cover page has the title of the plan. It should include a date and identify the Center or facilities covered by the plan.

♣ **Promulgation Document/Signature Page**. This document/page is a signed statement formally recognizing and adopting the plan. It gives both the authority and the responsibility to the LSA and its designated representative to perform their tasks before, during, or after an incident, and therefore should be signed by the LSA.

♣ **Approval and Implementation Page**. The approval and implementation page introduces the plan, outlines its applicability, and indicates that it supersedes all previous plans. It should include the LSA's delegation of authority for modifications that can be made to the plan and by whom. It should also include a date and should be signed by the LSA.

♣ **Record of Changes**. Each update or change to the plan should be tracked. The record of changes, usually in table format, contains, at a minimum, a change number, the date of the change, the name of the person who made the change, and a summary of the change.

♣ **Record of Distribution**. The record of distribution, usually in table format, indicates the title and the name of the person receiving the plan, the organization to which the recipient belongs, the date of delivery, and the number of copies delivered. Other relevant information could be considered. The record of distribution can be used to prove that tasked individuals and organizations have acknowledged their receipt, review, and/or acceptance of the plan.

♣ **Table of Contents**. The table of contents is a logically ordered and clearly identified layout of the major sections and subsections of the plan that will make finding information within the plan easier.

Purpose and Situation Overview

This section includes the following components:

♣ **Purpose**. The purpose sets the foundation for the rest of the plan. The basic plan's purpose is a general statement of what the plan is meant to do. The statement should be supported by a brief synopsis of the basic plan and annexes.

♣ **Situation Overview**. The situation overview explains why the plan is necessary. The situation overview covers a general discussion of:

- The threats and hazards that pose a risk to the Center and facilities and would result in a need to use this plan
- Dependencies on community partners and other parties for critical resources

♣ **Concept of Operations** This section explains in broad terms the decision maker's intent with regard to an operation. This section provides an overall impression of how the LSA will protect occupants and should:

- ♣ Identify those with authority to activate the plan
- ♣ Describe the process by which the LSA coordinates with all appropriate agencies within the jurisdiction
- ♣ Describe how plans take into account the architectural, programmatic, and communication needs of children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs (including their service animals)
- ♣ Identify other response/support agency plans that directly support the implementation of the plan (e.g., city or county EOP)
- ♣ Explain that the primary purpose of actions taken before an incident is to prevent, protect from, and mitigate the impact on life or property
- ♣ Explain that the primary purpose of actions taken during an incident is to respond to the incident and minimize its impact on life or property
- ♣ Explain that the primary purpose of actions taken after an incident is to recover from its impact on life or property

Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

This section provides an overview of the broad roles and responsibilities of the Bahá'ís, local emergency management officials, and community partners and an overview of organizational functions during all incidents. This section should:

- ♣ Describe the roles and responsibilities of each individual/organization that apply during an incident (response), including, but not limited to the LSA, facility management, staff, and local departments and agencies (e.g., fire, law enforcement, emergency medical staff)
- ♣ Describe informal and formal agreements in place for the quick activation and sharing of resources during an incident (e.g., evacuation locations to a nearby business' parking lot). Agreements may be between the LSA and fire, law enforcement, emergency medical staff, other faith-based organizations, and local businesses.

Direction, Control, and Coordination

This section describes the framework for all direction, control, and coordination activities. This section should:

- ♣ Describe the authorities delegated by the LSA
- ♣ Describe the relationship between the LSA's plan and the broader community's emergency management system
- ♣ Describe who has control of equipment, resources, and supplies needed to support the plan.

Information Collection, Analysis, and Dissemination

This section addresses the role of information in the successful implementation of the activities that occur before, during, and after an incident. This section should:

- ♣ Identify the type of information that will be helpful in the successful implementation of the activities that occur before, during, and after an emergency, such as:
 - Before and during: weather reports, law enforcement alerts, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration radio alerts, and crime reports
 - After: Web sites and hotlines for mental health agencies, emergency management agencies, and relief agencies assisting in all aspects of recovery.
- ♣ Provide answers to the following questions for each of the identified types of information:
 - What is the source of the information?
 - Who analyzes and uses the information?
 - How is the information collected and shared?
 - What is the format for providing the information to those who will use it?
 - When should the information be collected and shared?

Training and Exercises

This section describes the critical training and exercise activities the LSA will use in support of the plan. This includes the core training objectives and frequency to ensure that all those involved understand roles, responsibilities, and expectations. This section also establishes the expected frequency of exercises to be conducted by the LSA.

Content may be influenced based on similar requirements at the local level (e.g., the local emergency management agency's exercise schedule). Exercises may range from basic fire and shelter-in place drills to full-scale community-wide drills.

Administration, Finance, and Logistics

This section covers general support requirements and the availability of services and support for all types of incidents, as well as general policies for managing resources. It should identify and reference policies and procedures that exist outside of the plan. This section should:

- ♣ Identify administrative controls and requirements that will be used to provide resource and expenditure accountability
- ♣ Briefly describe how the LSA will maintain accurate logs of key activities
- ♣ Briefly describe how vital records will be preserved
- ♣ Identify sources for replacement of assets
- ♣ Identify general policies for keeping financial records; tracking resource needs; tracking the source and use of resources; acquiring ownership of resources; and compensating the owners of private property used by the LSA.

Plan Development and Maintenance

This section discusses the overall approach to planning and the assignment of plan development and maintenance responsibilities. This section should:

- ♣ Describe the planning process, participants in that process, and how development and revision of different sections of the plan (i.e., basic plan, annexes) are coordinated prior to an incident
- ♣ Assign responsibility for the overall planning and coordination to a specific position or person
- ♣ Provide for a regular cycle of training, evaluating, reviewing, and updating of the plan.

Authorities and References

This section provides the legal basis for emergency operations and includes:

- ♣ Lists of laws, statutes, ordinances, executive orders, regulations, and formal agreements relevant to emergencies in the community

Provisions for the succession of decision making authority and operational control to ensure that critical emergency functions can be performed in the absence of the LSA.

Functional Annexes

Functional annexes focus on critical operational functions and the courses of action developed to carry them out. This section describes functional annexes that should develop as part of the plan. As the planning team assesses the needs, it may need to prepare additional or different annexes. Also included in this section are issues the planning team considered as it develops goals, objectives, and courses of action for these functions.

Note that functions may occur consecutively or concurrently, depending on the incident. While functions build upon one another and overlap, it is not necessary to repeat a course of action in one functional annex if it appears in a second functional annex. For example, though an evacuation may lead to reunification, it not necessary to list a course of action for reunification within the evacuation annex.

Evacuation Annex

This annex focuses on the courses of action that the LSAs will execute to evacuate buildings and grounds. The planning team should consider the following when developing their goals, objectives, and courses of action:

- ♣ How to safely move persons to designated assembly areas from buildings and outside areas
- ♣ How to evacuate when the primary route evacuation route is unusable
- ♣ How to evacuate children who are not with a parent or guardian
- ♣ How to evacuate senior citizens and individuals with disabilities (along with service animals and assistive devices) and others with access and functional needs, including language, transportation, and medical needs.

Lockdown Annex

This annex focuses on the courses of action the LSA will execute to secure buildings and grounds during incidents that pose an immediate threat of violence in or around the Center. The primary objective of a lockdown is to ensure all persons are secured quickly in the rooms away from immediate danger. The planning team should consider the following when developing their goals, objectives, and courses of action:

- ♣ How to lock all exterior doors and when it may or may not be safe to do so
- ♣ How particular building characteristics (e.g., windows, doors) affect possible lockdown courses of action
- ♣ What to do when a threat materializes

- ♣ When to use the different variations of a lockdown (e.g., when outside activities are curtailed, doors are locked, and visitors closely monitored but all other activities continue as normal).

Shelter-in-Place Annex

A shelter-in-place annex focuses on courses of action when persons are required to remain indoors, perhaps for an extended period, because it is safer inside the building or a room than outside. Depending on the threat or hazard, persons may be required to move to rooms that can be sealed (such as in the event of a chemical or biological hazard) or without windows, or to a weather shelter (such as in the event of a tornado).

The planning team should consider the following when developing their goals, objectives, and courses of action:

- ♣ What supplies will be needed to seal the room and to provide for personal needs (e.g., water)
- ♣ How shelter-in-place can affect individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, such as persons who require the regular administration of medication, durable medical equipment, and personal assistant services
- ♣ How to move persons when the primary route is unusable
- ♣ How to locate and move children who are not with a parent or guardian
- ♣ Consider the need for and integration of “safe rooms” for protection against extreme wind hazards (such as a tornado or hurricane) in order to provide immediate life-safety protection when evacuation is not an option.

Recovery Annex

This annex describes how the LSA will recover from an emergency. The four fundamental kinds of recovery are services recovery; physical recovery; fiscal recovery; and psychological and emotional recovery.

The planning team should consider the following when developing their goals, objectives, and courses of action:

♣ Services Recovery

- When and who has the authority to close and reopen the facility
- What temporary space(s) may be used if buildings cannot be immediately reopened?
- How alternate services will be provided in the event that members cannot physically reconvene.

♣ Physical Recovery

- How assets are documented, including physically accessible facilities, in case of image
- Who has expert knowledge of the assets and how and where they will access records to verify current assets after an emergency
- How the LSA will work with utility and insurance companies before an emergency to support a quicker recovery.

♣ Fiscal Recovery

- How will timely and factual information be disseminated regarding the use of the facility?
- What sources the LSA may access for emergency relief funding.

♣ Psychological and Emotional Recovery:

- Who will serve in this role and where counseling and psychological first aid will be provided
- How members will create a calm and supportive environment and share basic information about the incident, provide psychological first aid (if trained), and identify members and staff who may need immediate crisis counseling
- Who will provide trained counselors?
- How to address immediate-, short-, and long-term counseling needs of staff members and families
- How to handle commemorations, memorial activities, or permanent markers and/or memorial structures (if any will be allowed); including concerns such as when a commemoration site will be closed, what will be done with notes/tributes, and how the community will be informed in advance
- How memorial activities will strike a balance among honoring the loss; resuming routines and schedules; and maintaining hope for the future.

Security Annex

This annex focuses on the courses of action that the LSA will implement on a routine, ongoing basis to secure the Bahá'í properties from criminal threats including efforts done in conjunction with law enforcement.

This section should also address any concerns about cyber threats and the LSA should consult an addendum to “Guidelines for Local Spiritual Assemblies: Developing

Distinctive Bahá'í Communities” entitled “Computer Security for Bahá'í Institutions”, Version 5.

Threat- and Hazard-Specific Annexes

The threat- and hazard-specific annexes describe the courses of action unique to particular threats and hazards. Courses of action already outlined in a functional annex need not be repeated in a threat- or hazard-specific annex. The planning team will develop these based on the prioritized list of threats and hazards determined during the planning process.

As planning teams develop courses of action for threats and hazards, they should consider the local, state, and Federal regulations or mandates that often apply to specific hazard.

If there is a functional annex that applies to one of the threat- or hazard-specific annexes, the threat- or hazard-specific annex should reference the functional annex. For example, when developing a fire hazard annex, a course of action for a fire hazard involves evacuation and there is an evacuation functional annex, the fire hazard annex should state “see evacuation annex” rather than repeat the evacuation courses of action. (See the list of potential threats in the Template section starting on [page 59](#))

A Closer Look at Active Shooter Situations

Police officers, firefighters, and EMS (i.e., first responders) who come to the Center or facilities because of a 911 call involving gunfire face a daunting task. Though the objective—protect people—remains the same, the threat of an active shooter incident is different from responding to a natural disaster or other emergencies. Active shooter situations are defined as those where an individual is “actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area.”

Unfortunately, Bahá'í communities are not immune from this tragedy. ⁵The better first responders and those working and visiting a Center or facility are able to discern these threats and react swiftly, the more lives can be saved. This is particularly true in an active shooter situation, where law enforcement responds to a 911 call of shots fired. Many innocent lives are at risk in a concentrated area. Working with emergency management officials and community partners, LSA can develop a plan to be better prepared in prevention, reaction, and response to an active shooter incident.

⁵ For example, in 2012, six people were killed and four injured in a shooting at a Sikh temple in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, and in 2008, two people were killed and seven wounded at a Unitarian Church in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Because of this, the LSAs and individuals must be prepared to deal with an active shooter situation before law enforcement arrives on the scene.

Preparing for an Active Shooter Incident

Planning As with any threat or hazard that is included in an EOP, the planning team will establish goals, objectives, and courses of action for an active shooter annex. These plans will be affected by the assessments conducted at the outset of the planning process and updated as ongoing assessments occur.

As courses of action are developed, the planning team should consider a number of issues, including:

- ♣ How to evacuate or lockdown personnel and visitors. The team should pay attention to disability-related accessibility concerns when advising on shelter sites and evacuation routes
- ♣ How to evacuate when the primary evacuation routes are unusable
- ♣ How to select effective shelter-in-place locations (optimal locations have thick walls, solid doors with locks, minimal interior windows, first aid-emergency kits, communication devices and duress alarms)
- ♣ How those present in buildings and on the ground will be notified that there is an active shooter incident underway. This could be done using familiar terms, sounds, lights, and electronic communications, such as text messages or emails. Include in the courses of action how to communicate with those who have language barriers or need other accommodations, such as visual signals to communicate with hearing-impaired individuals. Planners should make sure this protocol is readily available and understood by those who may be responsible for sending out or broadcasting an announcement. Rapid notification of a threat can save lives by keeping people out of harm's way.
- ♣ How everyone will know when buildings and grounds are safe. The planning team may want to include functions in the active shooter annex that are also addressed in other functional annexes. For example, evacuation will be different during an active shooter situation than it would be for a fire.
- ♣ LSAs should be aware that the concealed carry of firearms is allowed in all 50 states. All LSA with any concerns about this law should contact the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States of America, Office of Assembly Development

Sharing Information with First Responders

The planning process is not complete until the Plan is shared with first responders. The planning process should include preparing and making available to first responders an up-to-date and well-documented site assessment as well as any other information that would assist them. These materials should include building schematics and photos of the buildings, both inside and out, and include information about door and window locations, as well as locks and access controls.

Emergency responders should also have advance information on where individuals with disabilities are likely to be sheltering or escaping, generally in physically accessible locations or along accessible routes. Building strong partnerships with law enforcement, fire, and EMS includes ensuring they also know the location of available public address systems, two-way communications systems, security cameras, and alarm controls.

Equally important is information on access to utility controls, medical supplies, and fire extinguishers. Providing detailed information to first responders allows them to rapidly move through buildings and the grounds during an emergency; to ensure areas are safe; and to tend to those in need. It is critically important to share this information with law enforcement and other first responders before an emergency occurs so that they have immediate access to the information.

Law enforcement agencies have secure Web sites where these items already are stored for many schools, business, public venues, and other locations. All of these can be provided to first responders and viewed in drills, exercises, and walkthroughs.

Technology and tools with the same information (e.g., a portable USB drive that is compatible with computers used by first responders) should be maintained in secured locations in the building where designated staff can immediately provide it to responding officials, or where first responders can directly access it. The locations of these materials should be known by and accessible to a number of individuals to ensure ready access in an emergency. Every LSA should have more than one individual charged with meeting first responders to provide them with the site assessment, the EOP, and any other details about facility safety or concerns.

Training Exercises

Evacuation drills for fires and protective measures for tornadoes may be part of routine activities for a Center or facilities, but far fewer facilities practice for active shooter situations. To be prepared for an active shooter incident, houses of worship should train their staff and congregation, as appropriate, in what to expect and how to react. Good planning includes conducting drills that involve first responders. Exercises with these valuable partners are one of the most effective and efficient ways to ensure that everyone knows not only their role, but also the role of others at the scene. These exercises should include walks through buildings to allow law enforcement to provide input on shelter sites as well as familiarize first responders with the location. Each person carries a responsibility that is three-fold:

1. Learn the signs of a potentially volatile situation and ways to prevent an incident.
2. Learn the best steps for survival when faced with an active shooter situation.
3. Be prepared to work with law enforcement during the response.

Preventing an Active Shooter Incident

Warning Signs

No profile exists for an active shooter; however, research indicates there may be signs or indicators. Law enforcement can assist in knowing the signs of a potentially volatile situation and help LSAs proactively seek ways to prevent an incident from escalating. By highlighting common pre-attack behaviors displayed by past offenders, federal researchers have sought to enhance the detection and prevention of tragic attacks of violence, including active shooting incidents.⁶ While checklists of various “warning signs” are often of limited use in isolation, there are some behavioral indicators that should prompt further exploration and attention from the LSA. These behaviors often include:

- ♣ Heightened focus on a personal grievance or loss. Many offenders experienced a significant real or perceived personal loss in the weeks and/or months leading up to the attack, such as an incident perceived to be disrespect, death of a loved one, breakup or divorce, or loss of a job
- ♣ Contextually inappropriate behavior and recent acquisitions of multiple weapons, escalation in target practice and weapons training
- ♣ Contextually inappropriate and intense interest or fascination with previous shootings or mass attacks
- ♣ Authorities have noted that few offenders had previous arrests for violent crimes, and are not motivated by other criminal-related concerns such as monetary gain or gang affiliation.

Violence may be prevented by identifying, assessing, and managing potential threats. Recognizing these pre-attack warning signs and indicators might help disrupt a potentially tragic event. However, no research has been conducted on individuals solely engaged in active shooting incidents at Bahá'í Centers and other houses of worship; however, the behaviors listed above may be useful in identifying individuals exhibiting some of the behaviors that might cause.⁷

⁶ Several agencies within the Federal Government continue to explore incidents of targeted violence in the effort to identify these potential “warning signs.” In 2002, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) published a monograph on workplace violence, including problematic behaviors of concern that may telegraph violent ideations and plans. Specialized units in the Federal Government (such as the FBI’s Behavioral Analysis Unit) continue to support behaviorally-based operational assessments of persons of concern in a variety of settings (e.g. schools, workplaces, houses of worship) who appear to be on a trajectory toward a catastrophic violent act. A review of current research, threat assessment literature, and active shooting incidents, combined with the extensive case experience of the Behavioral Analysis Unit, suggest that there are observable pre-attack behaviors which, if recognized, could lead to the disruption of a planned attack.

⁷ FBI. 2002. Workplace Violence: Issues in Response. Quantico, VA: FBI. <http://www.fbi.gov/statsservices/publications/workplace-violence> See Contemporary Threat Management: A Practical Manual for Identifying, Assessing, and Managing Individuals of Violent Intent (Specialized Training Services, 2003); The Handbook for Campus Threat Assessment and Management Teams (Applied Risk Management, 2008); Threat Assessment: An Approach to Prevent Targeted Violence (U.S. Department of Justice, 1995); and Rethinking Risk Assessment: The MacArthur Study of Mental Disorder and Violence (Oxford University Press, 2001). For information on warning signs of violence at schools, see The Final Report and Findings of the Safe School Initiative: Implications for the Prevention of School Attacks in the United States (U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, 2004) and Threat Assessment in Schools: A Manual to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates (U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Additionally, in 2007 the U.S. Secret Service, FBI, and U.S. Department of Education initiated an

Threat Assessment Teams

As described in the previous section, research shows that perpetrators of targeted acts of violence engage in both covert and overt behaviors preceding their attacks. They consider, plan, prepare, share, and, in some cases, move on to action. A useful tool to identify, evaluate, and address these troubling signs is the creation of a multidisciplinary Threat Assessment Team (TAT).

The TAT serves as a central convening body, so that warning signs observed by multiple people are not considered isolated incidents, slipping through the cracks, when they actually may represent escalating behavior that is a serious concern⁸. TATs should keep in mind, however, the importance of relying on facts (including observed behavior) and avoid unfair labeling or stereotyping of individuals to remain in compliance with civil rights laws, when applicable.⁹

Once the TAT identifies an individual that may pose a threat, the team will identify a course of action for addressing the situation. The appropriate course of action, whether law enforcement intervention, counseling, or other actions, will depend on the specifics of the situation. The TAT will seek guidance from the LSA and possibly law enforcement and federal resources on assessing reported threats or troubling behavior.¹⁰ Before threats occur, LSAs and the TAT should work with local law enforcement to gain an

examination of attempted committed homicidal acts of violence on American college campuses from 1900 to 2008, Campus Attacks: Targeted Violence Affecting Institutions of Higher Education (U.S. Secret Service, et al., 2010, <http://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/campus-attacks.pdf>). A second phase of the project focuses exclusively on grievance-based attacks that occurred from 1985 to 2010.

⁸ Although not as common in private industry or in religious establishments, TATs are increasingly common in college and university settings, pushed to the forefront of concern following the 2007 shooting at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia, where 32 individuals were killed. Albrecht, Steve. 2010. "Threat Assessment Teams: Workplace and School Violence Prevention." FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin (February 2010). <http://www.fbi.gov/stats-services/publications/law-enforcementbulletin/february-2010/threat-assessment-teams> For examples, please see <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+cod+23-9.2C10>. Additional information can be found in Recommended Practices for Virginia Colleges Threat Assessments (Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, 2009, http://www.threatassessment.vt.edu/resources/tat_info/VArecommended_practices.pdf)

⁹ The Departments offer the following recommendations for the creation and operation of TATs, although they fully recognize that houses of worship may differ in their approaches to certain issues. A TAT should be developed and implemented in coordination with other policy and practices of the LSA. A TAT with diverse representation often will operate most efficiently and effectively. TAT members may include the LSAs, counselors, medical and mental health professionals, who may be drawn from the community. TAT reviews troubling or threatening behavior of persons brought to the attention of the TAT and contemplates a holistic assessment and management strategy that considers the many aspects of the person's life. More than focusing on warning signs or threats alone, a TAT assessment involves a unique overall analysis of changing and relevant behaviors. The TAT takes into consideration, as appropriate, information about behaviors; communications; any threats made; security concerns; family issues; or relationship problems that might involve a troubled individual. The TAT may also identify any potential victims with whom the individual may interact.

¹⁰ The FBI's behavioral experts in its National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crimes (NCAVC) at Quantico, Virginia are available on a 24 hours per day, seven days per week basis to join in any threat assessment analysis and develop threat mitigation strategies for persons of concern. Law enforcement working with a TAT should contact the local FBI office for this behavioral analysis assistance. Each FBI field office has a NCAVC representative available to work with the TAT and coordinate access to the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit, if the congregation wishes. They focus not on how to respond tactically to an active shooter situation, but rather on how to prevent one. Early intervention can prevent a situation from escalating by identifying, assessing, and managing the threat.

understanding of the threats from outside the community that may affect the Bahá'í Center, so that appropriate security measures can be established.

Responding to an Active Shooter Incident

Law enforcement officers may not be present when a shooting begins. The EOP should include courses of action that will describe how to most effectively respond when there is a possibility of loss of life. Further the EOP should include plans to teach and train on these practices.

No single response fits all active shooter situations; however, making sure each individual knows his or her options for response and can react decisively will save valuable time. Depicting scenarios and considering response options in advance will assist individuals and groups in quickly selecting their best course of action.

Authorities agree that a survival mindset can increase the odds of surviving. As appropriate, it may be valuable to schedule a time for an open conversation regarding this topic. Though some may find the conversation uncomfortable, they may also find it reassuring to know that as a whole their community is thinking about how best to deal with this situation. Understandably, this is a sensitive topic.

During an active shooter situation, the natural human reaction, even for those who are highly trained, is to be startled; feel fear and anxiety; and even experience initial disbelief and denial. Noise from alarms, gunfire, explosions, and people shouting and screaming should be expected. Training provides the means to regain composure, recall at least some of what has been learned, and commit to action.

There are three basic response options: **run, hide, or fight**:

- ✓ Individuals can run away from the shooter;
- ✓ seek a secure place where they can hide and/or deny the shooter access;
- ✓ or incapacitate the shooter in order to survive and protect others from harm.

Individuals will rarely have all of the information they need to make a fully informed decision about which option is best. As the situation develops, more than one option may be needed. While they should follow the plan and any instructions given during an incident, they will often have to rely on their own judgment to decide which option will best protect lives. In any case it will be important respond immediately.

Respond Immediately

It is common for people confronted with a threat to first deny the possible danger rather than respond. Studies support this delayed response or denial. For example, some people report hearing firecrackers, when in fact they heard gunfire.¹¹ Train community

¹¹ An investigation by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (2005) into the collapse of the World Trade Center towers on September 11, 2001 found that people close to the affected floors waited longer to start evacuating than those on

members to skip denial and to respond immediately. In addition, training should include how to recognize the sounds of danger, act decisively, and communicate the danger and necessary action with an appropriate level of force so others will respond (e.g., “Gun! Get out!”). Repetition in training and preparedness shortens the time it takes to orient, observe, and act. Upon recognizing the danger, as soon as it is safe to do so staff or others should alert responders by contacting 911 with as clear and accurate information as possible. In addition, those closest to a communications system should communicate the danger and necessary action.

Responses to Shooter Situations
<u>Run – First Course of Action</u>
▪ run out of the building and far away until in a safe location
▪ Leave personal belongings behind
▪ Visualize possible escape routes, including physically accessible routes for individuals with disabilities
▪ Avoid escalators and elevators Take others with them, but do not stay behind because others will not go
▪ Call 911 when safe to do so
▪ Let a responsible adult know where they are
<u>Hide – Second Course of Action</u>
▪ Hide in a location where the walls might be thicker and have fewer windows
▪ Lock the doors
▪ Barricade the doors with heavy furniture
▪ Close and lock windows and close blinds or cover windows
▪ Turn off lights
▪ Silence all electronic devices
▪ Remain silent
▪ Silently communicate with first responders (for example, in rooms with exterior windows, make signs to silently signal law enforcement and emergency responders to indicate the status of the room’s occupants)
▪ Hide along the wall closest to the exit but out of the view from the hallway (allowing for possible escape if the shooter enters the room)
▪ Remain in place until given an all clear by identifiable law enforcement
<u>Fight – Last Resort</u>
▪ as a last resort when in immediate danger
▪ try to disrupt or incapacitate the shooter by using aggressive force and items in their environment, such as fire extinguishers or chairs

unaffected floors.¹⁹ Similarly, during the Virginia Tech shooting, individuals on campus responded to the shooting with varying degrees of urgency.

Interacting with First Responders

If a shooting occurs, the community should be trained to understand and expect that law enforcement's first priority must be to locate and stop the person or persons believed to be the shooter(s); all other actions are secondary.¹² Everyone should be trained to cooperate and not to interfere with first responders. They should display empty hands with open palms and anticipate that law enforcement may instruct everyone to place their hands on their heads or get on the ground.

After an Active Shooter Incident

Once the scene is secured, first responders will work with the LSA and the victims on a variety of matters. This will include transporting the injured, interviewing witnesses, and initiating the investigation.¹³ The EOP should identify trained personnel who will provide assistance to victims and their families. This should include establishing an incident response team (including community partners) that is trained to appropriately assess and triage an active shooter situation (as well as other emergencies), and provide emergency intervention services and victim assistance beginning immediately after the incident and throughout the recovery efforts. This team will integrate with local, state, and Federal resources when an emergency occurs.

Within an ongoing and/or evolving emergency, where the immediate reunification of loved ones is not possible, providing family members with timely, accurate, and relevant information is paramount.

When families are reunited, it is critical that there are child release processes in place where minors might be involved to assure that no minor is released to an unauthorized person, even if that person well meaning.¹⁴

¹² One comprehensive study found that in more than half of mass shooting incidents where a solo officer arrived on the scene (57 percent) shooting was still underway when the officer arrived. In 75 percent of those instances, that solo officer had to confront the perpetrator to end the threat. In those cases, the officer was shot one-third of the time.

¹³ Law enforcement typically takes the lead on death notifications, but all parties should understand their roles and responsibilities. This will ensure that families and loved ones receive accurate and timely information in a compassionate way. While law enforcement and medical examiner procedures must be followed, families should receive accurate information as soon as possible. Having trained personnel to talk to loved ones about death and injury on hand or immediately available can ensure the notification is provided to family members with clarity and compassion.

¹⁴ The LSA should be well-versed in the Protection of Minors Policy from the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States of America. The LSA can also practice the following essential steps that help to establish trust and provide family members with a sense of control:

- Identifying a safe location separate from distractions and/or media and the general public, but close enough to allow family members to feel connected in proximity to their children/loved ones
- Scheduling periodic updates even if no additional information is available
- being prepared to speak with family members about what to expect when reunified with their child/loved ones. Ensuring effective communication with those that have language barriers or need other accommodations, such as sign language interpreters for the hearing impaired.

When reunification is not possible because an individual is missing, injured, or killed, how and when this information is provided to families is critical. Before an emergency, the planning team should determine how, when, and by whom loved ones will be informed if their loved one is missing or has been injured or killed.

The EOP should include identified points of contact to work with and support family members (for example, victim assistance personnel, counselors, and police officers). These points of contact should be connected to families as early in the process as possible.

After an incident, it is critical to confirm that each family is getting the support it needs, including long-term support. The EOP should consider the development of printed and age-appropriate resources to help families recognize and seek help in regard to a variety of reactions that they or their loved ones can experience during and after an emergency. The EOP also should explicitly address how affected families will be supported if they prefer not to engage with the media. This includes strategies for keeping the media separate from families while the emergency is ongoing and support for families that may experience unwanted media attention at their homes.

Appendix A: Template for Emergency Operations Plan

Template Instructions

The Emergency Operations Plan template is customizable and scalable to fit the varying sizes and needs of LSAs throughout the region. The template is written to assist in documenting their intended strategic and tactical operations to respond to any type of emergency or incident, ranging from internal day-to-day emergencies that can occur at any time (fire, a power outage, medical emergencies, equipment failure, to name a few) to a large-scale incident (tornado, long-term power outage, or terrorist threats) that will require significant coordination with outside organizations and government agencies. The template should be saved in a new Microsoft WORD document.

The template is an all-inclusive document written to be concise, while providing with all the necessary components for operations during and after an emergency. Where necessary, the Plan should be customized to address specific situations within the Bahá'í Center or facility.

Where specific information is needed throughout the plan, bracketed and highlighted text such as [Title] indicates that your information should be inserted. While this prompt is colored gray to draw the attention of the Emergency Planning Committee, it is expected that the Emergency Planning Committee will finalize the document by adding specific information or approving of the information noted in gray and in brackets, then removing the gray highlighting. Content contained by brackets, such as [Position title], is used mostly for titles, names, and numbers, and is intended to contain information to be specified for completing the template. Content in parenthesis such as: (Insert maps, existing relevant policies), is used to signal to the team completing the template that additional information or references that may exist elsewhere should be attached or referenced into the section.

Each Emergency Planning Committee is encouraged to modify the content of the document as deemed necessary to better suit the needs of the LSAs. It is expected the main content, supporting forms, and reference materials contained in the Plan template will be modified.

When the Plan template is adapted to meet community's needs, it is expected that the supplemental information will be deleted from the plan, unless the planning team decides they should be kept with appropriate modifications

The template starts on the next page.

Emergency Operations Plan Template

TEMPLATE: A. COVER LETTER FOR TRANSMITTAL OF THE PLAN

To The Bahá'í Community
To Local Police and Fire Departments and All First Responders

The preparedness mission is to protect the safety and security of the community, students, and building inhabitants, as well as the facilities and community assets.

To accomplish the mission, the attached plan has been prepared by the Emergency Planning Team appointed by the Local Spiritual Assembly of [_____] to provide a safe and secure place for all members and guests, as well as a safe environment for others participating in activities that occur within the buildings. The Emergency Operations Plan provides an overview of how to address a disaster or emergency that may interrupt the community.

The Emergency Operations Plan has been developed in accordance with guidance provided in:

- ✓ Local Emergency Operations Plan for [city, state or name of County/Jurisdiction]
- ✓ Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) guide: "Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101," version 2.0
- ✓ FEMA guide: "Developing Emergency Operations Plans for Houses of Worship"

This Emergency Operations Plan will be reviewed and updated annually by the Local Spiritual Assembly of [city, state or name of County/Jurisdiction] Emergency Planning Committee.

[Local Spiritual Assembly of [_____] / [Date]

TEMPLATE: B. POMULGATION DOCUMENT/SIGNATURES DOCUMENT

The preparedness mission is to protect the safety and security of the community, and the facilities and community assets.

To accomplish the mission, these guidelines and the resulting emergency operations plan strive to provide a safe and secure place of worship for all members and guests, as well as a safe environment for others participating in activities that occur within the buildings. The Emergency Operations Plan provides an overview of how to address a disaster or emergency that may interrupt the community.

This Emergency Operations Plan has been developed in accordance with guidance provided in:

- a) Local Emergency Operations Plan for [city, state or name of County/Jurisdiction]
- b) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) guide: "Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101," version 2.0
- c) FEMA guide: "Developing Emergency Operations Plans for Houses of Worship"

This Emergency Operations Plan will be reviewed and updated annually by the Local Spiritual Assembly of [city, state or name of County/Jurisdiction] Emergency Planning Committee.

Local Spiritual Assembly of [location] / [Date]

Emergency Coordinators] / [Date]

TEMPLATE: C. APPROVAL AND IMPLEMENTATION

- a. Introduce the plan
- b. Outline applicability and use of the plan, and indicate that this version supersedes all previous plans.
- c. LSA’s delegation of authority for modifications that can be made to the plan and by whom.
- d. Include a date and should be signed by the LSA.

TEMPLATE: D. RECORD OF DISTRIBUTION

Table 1: RECORD OF DISTRIBUTION		
DATE	VERSION DISTRIBUTED	PARTIES DISTRIBUTED TO

TEMPLATE: TABLE OF CONTENTS

The template should be saved in a new Microsoft WORD document. The Table of Contents can be created within the new document using functions within WORD.

TEMPLATE: 1.0 PURPOSE AND SITUATION

a. Purpose

The Emergency Operation Plan (EOP) is intended to serve as the guide to be used by Local Spiritual Assemblies (LSAs) for managing emergencies, threats, or other incidents.

Note: It is impossible to predict and prepare for every possible emergency scenario. The EOP template should not be interpreted as rigid step-by-step procedures to follow for every situation. As such, the LSA will need to customize the template for the circumstances within their communities.

b. Scope

The EOP outlines the process for how the LSA will prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies or other incidents. Specifically, the EOP includes:

- i. Roles and responsibilities
- ii. Incident management and coordination
- iii. Incident communications and public Information
- iv. Community demographics
- v. Relevant threats and hazards
- vi. Important reference information

c. Situation

To mitigate the potential impacts of disasters and emergencies, the LSA has developed this EOP as a guide to address disaster or emergencies that may occur at the [Bahá'í Center or facility].

TEMPLATE: 2.0 OPERATIONS

The Operations section provides, in broad terms, LSA's intent for the planned emergency response. It describes how the LSA will accomplish its mission to protect community members and quickly return the Center to pre-disaster condition.

- a. Identify those with authority to activate the plan
- b. Describe the process by which the LSA coordinates with all appropriate agencies within the jurisdiction
- c. Describe how plans take into account the architectural, programmatic, and

- communication needs of children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs (including their service animals)
- d. Identify other response/support agency plans that directly support the implementation of the plan (e.g., city or county EOP)
 - e. Explain that the primary purpose of actions taken before an incident is to prevent, protect from, and mitigate the impact on life or property
 - f. Explain that the primary purpose of actions taken during an incident is to respond to the incident and minimize its impact on life or property
 - g. Explain that the primary purpose of actions taken after an incident is to recover from its impact on life or property

Emergency Coordinators

The Bahá'í Center is staffed by [#] positions during normal hours. It is critical that at least one or more staff members be appointed as the lead person for directing emergency procedures before, during, and after emergencies. When emergencies are anticipated, or in the event of sudden incidents with no notice, the Bahá'í Center will switch from normal operations (regular day-to-day activities) to emergency operations and activate procedures provided in EOP. When the plan switches from normal operations to emergency operations, it must be understood that the Department of Public Safety has authority to make decisions necessary to prepare for, manage, and recover from emergencies.

Appointment and Position Responsibilities

The primary Emergency Coordinator for the Center in [location] is [name]. The LSA appointed [name] to implement emergency procedures during all emergencies and to coordinate with the LSA.

The Emergency Coordinators are responsible for carrying out the following emergency procedures:

- ✓ Emergency Notifications
- ✓ Shelter Operations
- ✓ Building Evacuations
- ✓ Emergency Lockdowns
- ✓ Damage Reporting
- ✓ Resource Management
- ✓ Building Locations

TEMPLATE: 3.0 FACILITIES OVERVIEW

The [Bahá'í Center] is located at [_____]. It consists of ___ buildings; its normal operations include:

[Devotions, Firesides, musical events, memorials and a Welcome Center which offers film presentations, and a bookstore.]

The building has [kitchen, lavatories and facilities for celebrations and gatherings]

[Insert additional information, maps, building layouts, etc.]

Table 2 includes all buildings encompassed by the EOP. The policies and procedures provided in the EOP apply to all buildings operated by the LSA. See [Attachment D](#) for the Emergency Contacts.

[Complete one table for each building that are impacted by the procedures in the Plan. Provide the full address, hours of operation (time periods when doors are unlocked), average number of occupants during the specified hours of operation, policy for use during and primary points of contact for each building.]

Table 2. Buildings Included in the EOP

Building and Associated Number	Location	Hours of Operation	Average Number of Occupants	Primary and Alternate Point of Contact
			•	
			•	

Physical Protective Measures

Physical protective measures protect against or reduce the impact of a threat or emergency by controlling unauthorized access to and protecting critical areas of the Center. These measures describe the equipment, systems, procedures, and personnel that are in place.

Table 3 and Table 4 list external and internal physical protective measures for the relevant buildings. See [Attachment D](#) for the Emergency Contacts.

[Complete the table by listing each facility where the procedures in the EOP will apply. List security mechanisms in place, their purpose as needed, the area of the building where the mechanisms are in place, and primary points of contact for operation of the mechanisms as needed.]

Table 3. External Physical Protective Measures

Building	Security Mechanism and Purpose	Areas	Points of Contact
Center/Facility	Door Locks: All doors are locked. Doors have push bars	Exterior doors	
	Security Cameras: Security cameras available to monitor outside of the facility		
	Secure Access: Doors have push bars for exit only.	Exterior doors to the rear of the building	

Table 4. Internal Physical Protective Measures

Building	Security Mechanism and Purpose	Area	Points of Contact
Center/Facility	Security Cameras to monitor guests	Main entrance and center of Auditorium.	
	Key access	All entrances and main rooms	

Security Activities:

[Staff members] may perform specific activities to enhance the security of the Center. This subsection provides an overview of the actions to be taken, lists staff

members and their duties, and describes when and where the actions are performed.

[Insert any activities performed related to enhancing security of the facility as shown in the examples below.]

Example: The Manager is responsible for performing final lock checks of all building entrance/exit doors at the end of the day before leaving.

Example: Emergency Response Team members use radios to notify other members of suspicious or malicious activity during services and intervene appropriately by calmly greeting and escorting individuals to the foyer for further assessment.

Building Floor Plan

This section contains the floor plan for each relevant building. Shelter areas and evacuation routes are planned and designated based on building floor plans.

[Insert building floor plans, if available]

Emergency Shelter Areas

There are [#] designated shelter areas within [building title]. Each shelter area is designated based on certain criteria for selecting the safest locations to shelter during storms that may produce high winds. Each shelter location is designated with signage to visibly indicate its purpose for use as a shelter area.

Designated shelter areas along with descriptions are listed in [Table 5](#).

Table 5. Emergency Shelter Areas

Building	Description
Example: Center Basement	
Covered Parking Area	
Off-Site Location	

Shelter Operations

Emergency sheltering procedures will be taken when a thunderstorm warning (thunderstorms with capability of producing winds in excess of 60 miles per hour [mph], lightning, hail, or tornados), or a tornado warning (a tornado has been sighted) has been issued for [location]

Emergency Coordinator assesses the level of severity based on:

- ✓ Projected forecasts
- ✓ Radar readings
- ✓ Visual weather patterns
- ✓ Activation of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio
- ✓ Severe weather watches that escalate into warnings.

Initial Notification Procedures

The Emergency Coordinator will alert all the Emergency Team and everyone within the facilities of the impending emergency and initiate sheltering procedures through the notification system.

Once the Emergency Coordinator determine occupant must be evacuated, the Coordinator or the Emergency Team will lead all individuals present to shelter from their areas of responsibility within the building.

[In this section includes specific instructions for leading individuals to shelter from various areas of the Center. This responsibility may be coordinated by designated persons (the Emergency Coordinators or Emergency Response Team) from their assigned areas of the Center buildings as necessary, depending on the size and type of building. Insert any preexisting evacuation procedures in this section].

[Example: Emergency Coordinators will ensure all individuals in their assigned areas have vacated (such as the main foyer) in a line toward the (south stairwell) to take shelter in the (lower level main hall designated shelter area). Coordinators will conduct a final sweep of their assigned areas of responsibility and ensure no person is remaining.]

Access and Functional Needs Planning for Shelter Areas

If any individuals request assistance while moving to a shelter area, the Emergency Coordinator will notify other staff when possible by phone or direct nearby persons to assist individuals with access and functional needs to relocate to the shelter area.

Unless use of the elevators is dangerous, elevators are reserved for individuals with access and functional needs during evacuation and shelter operations. All other individuals will be directed to use stairs, where necessary, to access shelter areas.

Shelter Areas

Once all persons present at each relevant building have reached a shelter area **Emergency Coordinators** will continue to direct individuals to the safest possible locations of the shelter area (away from windows, overhead lights, and overhead objects). The Coordinators will make every effort to reduce stress during an emergency, continuously monitor for changes to the emergency event, and maintain necessary communication with staff and complete accountability checks to ensure all persons safely arrived to the shelter area. Coordinators should advise all persons in shelter areas to remain in shelter until the “All Clear” is ordered by local law enforcement or the LSA.

Emergency Evacuation Routes

Evacuation and alternative routes are designated for use during shelter operations or evacuations. All routes have been selected based on safety, efficiency, availability, and ease of access. Evacuation and alternative routes are provided below:

[This section should contain an evacuation route map if available, reference the location of evacuation route maps, or list routes in order from various points].

Building Evacuation

Several incident types may require evacuations of the Center or facility including but not limited to fires, active shooter or bomb threats, electrical hazards, and hazardous materials spills.

[Example: If an emergency or threat is observed in the building The Department of Public safety will be notified immediately, which in turn will notify all persons to evacuate the building immediately using the designated evacuation routes. After each area of responsibility has been evacuated, Public Safety officers will conduct a final walk-through as quickly as possible to ensure no persons are remaining on site.]

Once they are outside of the building, Public Safety officers or local law enforcement will direct all persons to the designated assembly points, which should be located a safe distance from the existing building.]

Assembly Points

Assembly Points are predetermined locations designated for safe assembly after the building has been evacuated. [Example: As soon as the threat from any incident has ceased, and the LSA or local law enforcement has confirmed the safe exit of occupants who will be escorted to the assembly point designated for family reunification.]

Access and vehicle traffic congestion points need to be considered in designating the assembly point location.

The assembly point should be served by adjacent two-way, through streets that can be accessed without driving directly past the [Center]. An Emergency Coordinator will be delegated to direct traffic to and from the assembly point. (Assistance from the local police department should be requested for directing traffic.)

An appropriate number of staff or volunteer adults should be delegated to provide supervision at the assembly point so that a manageable ratio is in place between supervisors and adults versus children. Supervisors at the assembly point should inquire of every person's access to transportation from friends and relatives to decide what methods of transportation will need to be provided. Every person at the assembly point should be accounted, to ensure that no individual has been left in danger. Individuals who arrive at the pickup point should be screened to ensure that they are legal guardians who are responsible for minors or individuals with access and functional needs.

Overall, the assembly point should be a controlled environment where individuals affected by an emergency may safely wait and have all basic needs met until they are able to leave with family members or caretakers.

The assembly points are:

Bahá'í Center: _____

Other location: _____

Emergency Lockdown Procedures

Emergency lockdown procedures are required if unauthorized persons enter the building, whether an active threat is witnessed or not. As soon as it is realized that an unauthorized person has entered the building, the Center will initiate emergency lockdown procedures.

[This section should contain coded notification procedures for alerting all staff to initiate emergency lockdown procedures. It should also note the process that the Emergency Coordinator will use to deactivate the lockdown and the coded phrase used for teachers to leave their shelter-in-place locations].

Emergency Contact for Family Members Off-Site

The LSA provides [number/telephone line name/other contact method] to family members for use during emergencies when normal means of contact are unavailable. In the event of an emergency, family members may contact the Center through [emergency line] to receive pertinent information about the incident and the status of their family member(s). In addition, the LSA will notify and update [family members, staff, and students] of emergencies and related information via the mass notification system [insert title of system].

[Reference page number that lists the notification system procedures in detail].

Family Reunification Procedures

When an emergency interrupts communication between persons at the Center and family members in another location, family reunification procedures will be implemented to ensure the best possible outcomes for safely reunifying family members affected by the emergency. Emphasis is placed on emergency planning and family reunification for unaccompanied minors and individuals with access or functional needs.

As family members or guardians arrive at the designated pickup point, the [Coordinator or members of Emergency Response Team] will check photo identification of unknown individuals and parental permission before minors are released into their custody.

Incident Management

During an emergency, it may become necessary for the LSA to come together in an organized manner to exchange information, deliberate current issues, make critical decisions, meet with response agency officials, and perform overall management functions to control the incident.

The LSA should designate a [Safety Operations Area] as the area where the Emergency Coordinator will fulfill incident management functions during emergencies as needed. It is located at: [provide address].

There may be situations when it is not advisable for persons to assemble at the [Public Safety Area] as a result of logistical or other deterrent circumstances. If

these circumstances arise, the Emergency Coordinator will designate an alternative location based on the resources necessary to manage the incident. The meeting location should be a safe distance away from any existing hazards created by the antecedent emergency, with readily available telephone and Internet access.

Description of Activities When Incident Occur

In the event of an impending emergency or possible threat, such as severe weather, primary incident command objectives are to maintain situational awareness and to increase organizational readiness. The following activities may be necessary to prepare for a possible emergency, such as:

- ✓ Accountability checks of personnel by building
- ✓ Situational awareness reporting
- ✓ Completion of initial checklist action items that will need to occur in the beginning of an incident such as accountability and communications checks
- ✓ Emergency warnings and notifications
- ✓ Completing the activities above may assist the LSA to achieve a raised state of readiness for the organization, and raised levels of confidence for employees and visitors.

In the event that an emergency, the primary incident command objective is to manage and coordinate all activities required to respond to the incident. Activities beyond those completed during the pre-emergency phase may include:

- ✓ Communication with and coordination among staff to control the incident
- ✓ Coordination and communication with the community or external agencies to control the incident
- ✓ Public information dissemination.

TEMPLATE :4.0 COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

[Insert information to provide a snapshot of your community that may assist in planning for and responding to an emergency. Fill out and attach the Community Snapshot form as needed (See [Attachment B](#)).]

TEMPLATE: 5.0 COMMUNICATIONS

This section addresses communications during and after an emergency. This communications section includes five subsections.

- ✓ It begins by providing an overview of outreach procedures to local first responders and what can be generally expected when 911 dispatch is contacted.
- ✓ Next, is information on the systems available to reach out response personnel to share information on the emergency or the threat.
- ✓ A description follows of how the systems will be used, and by whom, to communicate emergency information and direction to all members.
- ✓ an overview of the American Red Cross Safe and Well Program may be used to communicate with their families.
- ✓ Finally, the Public Information subsection has the contact information of the designated Public Information Officer (PIO).

911 Call Communications

When an emergency occurs, a staff or volunteer located at the Center will contact local law enforcement or the fire department by calling “911” on the nearest accessible communication system. 911 dispatch may inquire any of the following before providing caller instruction:

- The nature of the emergency
- The address of the emergency
- The caller name and phone number
- Description of the emergency, including specifics based on emergency type:
 - Condition of patient if a medical emergency
 - Location of fire or hazardous materials spill.

The caller should follow the guidance provided by the 911 dispatcher and forward any pertinent direction.

[Developing pre-scripted messages for emergency communications is recommended. These can be helpful to quickly providing information to staff members, parents, and others.]

Internal Communication Systems

The Emergency Coordinator may communicate through hand held radios, or phone system. Following a threat or emergency, they may communicate to the internal community (staff, students, faculty, members, and guests) the information listed in [Table 7](#).

[Emergency Coordinator] contacts in the table should have access to the communication systems listed by postings in workspaces. See [Attachment D](#) for the Emergency Contacts.

Table 1. Internal Communication Systems

Building	System Type	Contacts
Bahá'í Center	Mobile phone	
	Phone system	
	Intercom	

Notification System

The sharing of clear, accurate, and timely information to the internal community is essential to support efficient and effective response and recovery efforts

Communications within the Center will ensure a clear understanding of the issues faced and the strategy and tactics that have been identified to address them.

Communications may include regular status updates to provide greater clarity as the incident evolves, as well as provide guidance on recommended protective actions, such as evacuation or sheltering-in-place.

[Describe how the communications will occur]

Again, developing pre-scripted messages for emergency communications is recommended. These can be helpful to quickly providing information to staff members, parents, and others.

External Communication Systems

The Emergency Coordinator may need to communicate to family members or legal guardians outside of the property.

After a threat or emergency, the LSA may support the Emergency Coordinator in communicating to families or legal guardians by accessing the systems in [Table 8](#).

Table 2. External Communication Systems

Building	System Type	Contacts
Bahá'í Center	Phone	
	E-mail	•
		•
LSA		•
	Phone	•
	E-Mail	•

Collaborations

Communications outside of the Center should assure the community that actions are being taken to protect life safety first, before protecting property.

Organizations that could collaborate with the LSA include the local chapter of the American Red Cross. Depending on the size, type, and scope of the emergency, the LSA may choose to collaborate with the American Red Cross and use its programs, including the Safe and Well Program that might be available in your area.

Collaborating Organizations:

General Website:	
24/7 Duty Desk:	[XXX-XXX-XXXX]
Local Contact: E-mail	XXX-XXX-XXXX

Public Information

The LSA is responsible for communication with the news media. In all emergencies, the LSA will manage news media relations.

The [Emergency Coordinators] will be available to receive and respond to news media inquiries unless they are requested to be managed by the local Police Department. The information below lists recommended best practices for managing the news media. More information can be viewed in [Attachment F](#).

LSA contact information below can be used when the [Emergency Coordinators] request informational assistance in managing the news media, or direct assistance in managing news media relations based on the type or scope of the emergency. Contact information details can be viewed in [Attachment D](#): Emergency Contact Numbers.

When an emergency occurs, news media may also reach out to any individual associated with the Center to gather information about the situation. The [Emergency Coordinators or designated member of the LSA] is responsible for providing clear and accurate information to the news media, social media, and other interfaces with the non Bahá'í community.

All media interface should be directed through the facility spokesperson. Members are requested not to provide details to any media outlet, including on social media, as this information may impede the overall response. The Bahá'í community should be encouraged to refer any news media inquiries to the LSA or a spokesperson. Electronic and hard-copy versions of the media inquiry form on page F-2 will be available to the community members who may receive contact from the news media.

TEMPLATE: 6.0 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

This section describes the process to obtain emergency funding, identify resources available from Cook County, and procure goods and services. Protection and safety of the building inhabitants is always the first priority over the buildings and properties.

Emergency Funding Process

The [Emergency Coordinator] is the main point of contact to spend funds during an emergency. Life safety is the primary priority, followed by steps to protect the buildings from damage.

The [buildings] are insured for most emergencies. The [Emergency Coordinator or designated member] of the LSA will collaborate with the insurance company to recover from an emergency. If the insurance company is unavailable, the Emergency Coordinator or designated member of may contact the [Risk Manager].

Vendor Resources

The LSA may need to contact various contractors and suppliers during an emergency, preferably those with existing relationships. The LSA will maintain a list

of vendors with current contracts. The LSA has several stand-by contractors through insurance company agreements. [If available, a list of contractors/vendors should be included in the plan. See [Attachment E](#) provided at the end of this document].

TEMPLATE: 7.0 PLAN REVIEW AND MAINTENANCE

This section addresses various administrative functions, including development and maintenance of the EOP.

Emergency Operations Plan Development and Maintenance

The EOP was developed by LSA in collaboration with the [local community emergency response departments].

The EOP should be reviewed annually or when major changes occur to assure continuity and accuracy of the information included in the document, including contact information and changes in the Center and or in procedures.

Additionally, the EOP should be reviewed immediately after an emergency and after exercises are concluded to identify modifications that would enhance its planned response to better address needs.

Before and after an emergency, the EOP components and response should be reviewed to generate findings that can be documented and written into a revised version of the EOP.

The Plan Review and Maintenance Section is used to ensure review and update of the EOP on the following basis:

- Annually (commencing in September: National Preparedness Month)
- During and after every Plan Training
- During and after every emergency event triggering activation of the Plan

[Each time the Plan is updated, the table below should be completed by writing in the date of the update or revision, the change that was made, the name and or position title of the person making the changes, and the person's signature.]

TEMPLATE: 8.0 PLAN REVIEW AND TRAINING

An Emergency Procedures checklist specifically written for each type of emergency specified in paragraph 1 in the introduction section of the EOP may be beneficial for referencing at the onset of emergencies. This can also used to develop training materials.

The Emergency Coordinator must maintain a copy of [Emergency Procedures Checklists] for quick access during emergencies.

The LSA shall also maintain a copy of the EOP for regular review and referencing.

The Bahá'í community must receive training in each emergency procedure, first when they are appointed, and then on a reoccurring annual basis for the duration of the position.

Table 8. Plan Revisions

Revision Date	Revision Type/Page Number	Name/Position	Signature

The Planning Team may decide to move this table to the beginning of the Plan.

TEMPLATE: 9.0 EOP TRAINING

Emergency Operations Plan Training

The members of the Emergency Response Team will receive an initial training course to adequately carry out their assigned roles and responsibilities during an emergency or threat of an emergency. Training will provide an opportunity to become familiar with the EOP before an actual emergency occurs.

Members of the Emergency Response Team are recommended to complete relevant on-line emergency management courses. These courses are free of charge to the public and are accessible at <https://training.fema.gov/is/>. For additional information, contact the DHSEM Security to develop a curriculum.

TEMPLATE: 10.0 PLAN ANNEXES

The EOP is intended to provide a framework for managing all types of emergencies.

A. Functional Annexes

The following functional annexes have been included in this Plan:

- a) Evacuation
- b) Lockdown
- c) Shelter-in-Place
- d) Recovery

(Note: This is not a complete list, however, planning teams should start with the functional annexes listed above.)

B. Security Hazard-, Threat-, or Incident-Specific Annexes

Potential threats can range from natural disasters to violent attacks. Man-made threats or attacks may come from disaffected individuals, groups, or other local or international terrorist groups.

NOTE: Each of the annexes will vary based on their threat and hazard identification and risk assessment.)

The EOP also considers the indirect effects caused by an incident or disaster, in addition to the direct effects and damage to the Center.

List of Potential Threats and Hazards

Day-to-Day Disturbances	Natural	Technological	Human-Caused
Most likely to happen during regular operating hours	Resulting from acts of nature	Involves accidents or the failures of systems and structures	Caused by the intentional actions of an adversary
Fires Internal Power Outages Unintentional Equipment Failure Congregant Health Challenges	Severe Weather Severe Winter Weather Tornadoes Wildfires Wind Earthquakes Lightning Hurricanes Floods Extreme temperatures Landslides or mudslides Tsunamis Volcanic eruptions	Transportation Incidents Structural Collapse Explosions or accidental Hazardous releases Radiological releases from nuclear power stations Dam failure Power failure Water failure	Organized Terrorism Attack Civil Disturbance Cyber Attack Active Threat/Shooter Chemical Agent Attack Biological Attack Arson Active shooters Criminal or gang violence Violence related to domestic disputes Bomb

TEMPLATE 11.0: RELEVANT POLICIES

There are several policies and procedures that should be implemented as needed or on an ongoing basis, before a disturbance or emergency.

- a) **Center Closing:** In the event that the Center must be closed because of an emergency, the Public Safety Department will issue the notice of the closing to community members and staff through contact information provided, using technology systems and direct communication, as available. When appropriate, the emergency closing will appear on the LSA website.
- b) **Functions during Non-Operating Hours:** Some functions occur before or after normal operating hours of the Center. These events typically involve fewer individuals; however, the safety of the Center and the participants is still important.

All applicable safety procedures as outlined during normal operating hours are effective during non-operational hours.

[Amend, add, or remove relevant policies as needed to complete this section.]

TEMPLATE: 12.0 MAPS

[Insert maps here]

TEMPLATE: ATTACHMENT A – CENTER PROFILES

Section A: Descriptive Information

Criteria	Yes, No, or NA	Description/Comments
Names of Each Building /Building Capacity		<i>[total including all buildings]</i>
Building Type		<i>[Single building, one story building (s), multi-story, multiple building(s), etc.]</i>
Type of Building Materials		<i>[Construction materials: brick, siding, wood, etc.]</i>
Total Number of Buildings		
Approximate Total Square Footage /Number of Floors		<i>[each building=total]</i>
Year of Construction		<i>[each building]</i>
Number of Rooms of Each Building		
Number of Exits		
Type of Surrounding Community		<i>[urban, suburban, rural]</i>
Are the following pieces of equipment and locations checked on a regular basis?	Fire/Life Safety Systems (fire pump, fire panel, alarm system) & Life Systems (AED)	
	HVAC	
	Fire suppression	
	Fire extinguishers	
	Smoke/Heat Detectors	
	Generators	
	Security Alarm	
	Kitchen	
Playground		
Are mechanical, custodial and electrical rooms found to be locked?		Yes
Are all chemicals properly stored, labeled and in their original containers?		
Total Number of Members		
Number of Adult Members		
Number of Youth Members		
Number of Staff/Facility Volunteers		
Number of People with Access and Functional Needs		
Average Number of Visitors During Worship Services		
Average Number of Visitors Daily		
Names & Credentials of members who work in law enforcement and fire services		
Names & Credentials of members who work in emergency medical services		
<i>*If available, include a building map with the building Assessment.</i>		

Section B: Safety Considerations

Criteria	Yes, No, or NA	Description/Comments
What would you consider the #1 risk to members' safety?		Active Shooter
What would you consider the #1 risk to staff safety?		Active Shooter
What types of day-to-day emergencies have occurred at the building within the last 5 years?		None
What types of natural disasters have occurred within the city, county and surrounding community over the last 10, 15, 20 years?		None
What types of technological disasters have occurred within the city, county and surrounding community over the last 10, 15, 20 years?		None
What types of human-caused disasters have occurred in the city, county, state or nation over the last 10, 15, 20 years?		None

Section C: Visitor/Volunteer/Contractor Protocol

Criteria	Yes, No, or NA	Description/Comments
Is there a visitor log book or computerized visitor log-in system in the main office?		No
Describe the visitor sign-in policy and procedures.		None
Are visitors and vendors escorted onsite?		No
Do outside contractors/vendors/janitorial personnel check-in before providing services?		Yes

Section D: Emergency Procedures

Criteria	Yes, No, or NA	Description/Comments
Are safety and security plans updated annually?		
Is there an anonymous hotline number to report incidents to administrators?		
Are emergency phone number stickers attached to all telephones?		
Is there an automated voice mail system that would be able to relay any messages to members inquiring about activities or incidents going on?		
Has an emergency preparedness kit been established?		
Is there an emergency management team? How often does it meet?		
Have all members of the Emergency Management Team received a copy of the emergency procedures manual?		
Have members been notified of what to do if an emergency occurs while Center is occupied?		

Section E: Evacuation Procedures

Criteria	Yes, No, or NA	Description/Comments
How many evacuation drills are performed annually?		
Has the fire department participated in any drills?		
Have the evacuation assembly points been established, both on and off the facilities?		
Have transportation needs been addressed if all		

occupants need to be relocated to the offsite assembly point?		
How far from the Center or facilities are the primary assembly points?		
How far from the Center or facilities are the secondary assembly points?		
Does the LSA have an adequate system to track people (especially children) evacuating from the facility?		
Does the LSA have any mutual assistance agreements with other organizations?		
Other:		

Section B: Safety Considerations

Criteria	Yes, No, or NA	Description/Comments
What would you consider the #1 risk to safety?		<i>[insert applicable day-to-day risks, natural hazards and human caused hazards]</i>
What types of day-to-day emergencies have occurred at the Center within the last 5 years?		<i>[insert applicable day-to-day risks, natural hazards and human caused hazards]</i>
What types of natural disasters have occurred within the city, county and surrounding community over the last 10, 15, 20 years?		<i>[i.e. fires, power outages, calls to 911, missing children]</i>
What types of technological disasters have occurred within the city, county and surrounding community over the last 10, 15, 20 years?		
What types of human-caused disasters have occurred in the city, county, state or nation over the last 10, 15, 20 years?		

Section C: Visitor/Volunteer/Contractor Protocol

Criteria	Yes, No, or NA	Description/Comments
Is there a visitor log book or computerized visitor log-in system in the main office?		
Describe the visitor sign-in policy and procedures.		
Are visitors and vendors escorted onsite?		
Do outside contractors, vendors and janitorial personnel check-in before providing services?		

Section D: Emergency Procedures

Criteria	Yes, No, or NA	Description/Comments
Are safety and security plans updated annually?		
Is there an anonymous hotline number to report incidents to administrators?		
Are emergency phone number stickers attached to all telephones?		
Is there an automated voice mail system that would be able to relay any messages to family members inquiring about activities or incidents going on?		
Has an emergency preparedness kit been established in every classroom and staff office?		<i>[Including, but not limited to: emergency contact lists, medical considerations list, flashlights, first aid supplies, radios, etc.]</i>
Is there an Emergency Response Team? How often does it meet?		
Have all members of the Emergency Response Team received a copy of the emergency procedures manual?		
Does the LSA have a Threat Assessment Team? How often does it meet?		
Have all members of the Threat Assessment Team received a copy of the emergency procedures manual?		
Have staff been notified of what to do if an emergency occurs while the Center is occupied?		

Section E: Evacuation Procedures

Criteria	Yes, No, or NA	Description/Comments
How many evacuation drills are performed annually?		
Has the fire department participated in any drills at the Center?		
Have the evacuation assembly points been established, both on and off site?		
Have transportation needs been addressed if all occupants need to be relocated to the offsite assembly point?		
How far from the Center is the primary assembly point?		
How far from the Center are the secondary assembly points?		
Is there an adequate system to track members (especially children) evacuating from the Center?		
Are there any mutual assistance agreements with other organizations?		
Other:		

TEMPLATE: ATTACHMENT B – COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

Section A: Contact Information	
Bahá'í Center	Phone Number: Fax Number:
Emergency Coordinator:	
LSA	Website Address:
LSA Secretary:	Phone Number:

Section B: Staff/Key Volunteer Names, Positions, Contact Information		
Name:	Name:	Name:
Position:	Position:	Position:
Contact Information:	Contact Information:	Contact Information:
Name:	Name:	Name:
Position:	Position:	Position:
Contact Information:	Contact Information:	Contact Information:

Section C: Facility Information			
Size & Type Building (one for each Building)	Estimated Occupancy	Rooms	
Name of Building	# of Children/Youth	# of Interior Rooms	
# of Floors	# of Adults	# of Kitchens	
# of Exits	# of Staff	# of Bathrooms	
Type of Structure	# of Individuals with Functional Needs	# of Rooms-Total	
Approximate Square Footage	# in attendance for largest service of year	Are there any other spaces that are used for regular activities (attic or basement)	
Maximum Capacity	# of public safety personnel	# of Elevators	
Additional Information	# of members present during the week days (average)	Is there an AED machine available? If so, are there people trained to use it? List who is trained:	

Additional Considerations

1. How often is the Bahá'í Center used by the public?
2. Is the Facility accessible to people with access and functional needs?
3. How often is the Bahá'í Center used by non-Bahá'í organizations?

TEMPLATE: ATTACHMENT C – CENTER PHONE NUMBERS

[Include all necessary internal contacts such as the Threat Assessment Team/Emergency Response Team]

Emergency Response Team	Name	Contact Information
Emergency Coordinator	Name	Office: Cell: E-mail:
Emergency Coordinator (Alternate)	Name	Office: Cell: E-mail:
School Emergency Coordinator (Primary)	Name	Office: Cell: E-mail:
School Emergency Coordinator (Alternate)	Name	Office: Cell: E-mail:
Emergency Response Team Member	Name	Office: Cell: E-mail:
Emergency Response Team Member	Name	Office: Cell: E-mail:
Emergency Response Team Member	Name	Office: Cell: E-mail:
Emergency Response Team Member	Name	Office: Cell: E-mail:

TEMPLATE: ATTACHMENT D – EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

Organization	Name	Phone Number
Police Department	Jurisdiction Police Department Address	
	Jurisdiction Fire Department Address	
LSA Secretary or Media Representative		
LSA Insurance Agent/Risk Manager		
Appointed Emergency Coordinator		
Suspicious Activity Reporting		
Poison Control		
Insurance Company		
Electric Company (Emergency help line)		
Gas Company (Emergency help line)		
Water and Sewer Company		
Internet Provider		
Telephone Provider		

TEMPLATE: ATTACHMENT E – CONTRACTOR/VENDOR LIST

[Insert contact information for outside vendors or contracted services that are anticipated following an emergency such as plumber, roofer, attorney, electrician, security, etc.]

Service	Equipment/Service Provided	Company Name and Address	Emergency Contact and number #	Regular Hour Contact Info
		Name Address	Name XXX-XXX-XXXX	
		Name Address	Name XXX-XXX-XXXX	
		Name Address	Name XXX-XXX-XXXX	
		Name Address	Name XXX-XXX-XXXX	
		Name Address	Name XXX-XXX-XXXX	
		Name Address	Name XXX-XXX-XXXX	
		Name Address	Name XXX-XXX-XXXX	

TEMPLATE: ATTACHMENT F – EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA INQUIRY FORM

The following information is intended to assist the LSA, their designated Media Representative or Public Information Officer (PIO) in communicating with community members or the media following an emergency.

Be prepared to answer the following questions:

- Are the children safe and where are they?
- Who is in charge?

- What can we expect? And what else can go wrong?
- Why did this happen? And why wasn't this prevented?

Best Practices for Emergency Communications

- Message consistency is crucial. People will quickly lose trust if mixed messages are presented and question other information even if it correct.
- Express empathy and caring.
- Show your commitment and dedication to the Faith and the Bahá'í community.
- Be truthful and transparent in your responses. Information will get out eventually and trust needs to be maintained during times of crisis and emergency.
- Know and understand your Bahá'í Center operations and policies.

Common Pitfalls in Emergency Communications

- Technical jargon hinders communication and implies arrogance.
- Be cautious of humor in the wake of disaster.
- Don't assume your point has already been made.
- Avoid leading with money issues or concerns.
- Avoid clichés and one-liners that may trivialize what those impacted by the emergency have experienced and will weaken credibility.
- Discuss what is known, not your opinion.

Tips for Success

- Don't over reassure if there is uncertainty.
- Acknowledge uncertainty.
- Explain the processes and actions that are being taken.
- Acknowledge people's fears.
- Empower people by giving them tasks to complete where possible.

Communications Do's and Don'ts during Emergencies

Do place a call to the Media Relations line at [insert phone number here] should a member of the press contact you or anyone on staff.

Do call the Media Relations line at [insert phone number here] if you know in advance of a *potential* media situation. The Media Relations staff is always available to help work through the logistics regarding media relations.

Do ensure you have current photo release forms on file for all children 18 and under. Please ensure that those children without media consent forms are not included in the media coverage.

Do accompany the media if you have given permission for media to cover the situation. However, reporters and camerapersons will always need to be escorted at all times by someone approved by the LSA when they are on Bahá'í properties.

Do allow members of the press on any public property adjacent to Bahá'í center grounds. Media are permitted to interview any individual who agrees to speak to them.

Do inform your entire staff of these policies. The media will often try to speak with an administrative assistant or other staff member.

Do not speak with members of the press unless you have first spoken with someone from the Media Relations Office. The media relations staff will provide direction and help developing talking points, if necessary. A written statement will be provided if the circumstances warrant it.

Do not try to answer any media questions without preparation. Members of the press are just doing their jobs and trying to get as much information as quickly as possible. They can be quite persuasive. However, quick does not guarantee accurate. In times of crises, circumstances can change very rapidly – what was correct in the early morning may have changed by late afternoon. You are under no obligation to answer any of their questions. Be courteous, yet firm.

Do not let the media onto the grounds unless you are comfortable with the situation. Bahá'í Centers and schools are considered private property and are under no obligation to allow media full access and remember the press must be escorted at all times.

Do not treat members of the press disrespectfully. They are doing their jobs and trying to get the correct story on-line or on-air as quickly as possible. The Media Relations Office staff can assist in being the liaison between the Bahá'í Center/School and the media, especially in delicate situations.

TEMPLATE: ATTACHMENT G MEDIA RESPONSE FORM

This Form is for use by the LSA to respond to news media inquiries. Members of the Bahá'í community should contact the LSA as soon as possible.

When a member of the media contacts you, respond by stating:

“Thank you for calling. The best person for you to speak with about this is

[Public Information representative].* Let me get some information from you and I will share your contact information with [Public Information representative].”

Use the attached form to collect information from the person calling Please fill out this media inquiry form and send immediately to **[Public Information representative].***

Media	Identifying information and comments
Media Company and Type:	
Caller Title:	
Phone Number:	
E-mail Address	
Date and Time of Call:	
Nature of Inquiry:	
Story Deadline:	

An example is provided below

Media Organization and Type:	CNN, Television
Caller Title:	Anderson Cooper, News Anchor
Phone Number:	712-423-6005 x42
E-mail Address	acooper@cnnnews.com
Date and Time of Call:	March 4, 2016, 4:03PM CST
Nature of Inquiry:	Requesting interview with the PIO and Exercise Coordinator.
Story Deadline:	March 5, 2016, 10AM CST

TEMPLATE: ATTACHMENT H – JOB ACTION SHEETS

Job Action sheets are for those that are responsible for carrying out emergency functions following a threat or emergency.

These forms are created as part of the planning process to detail roles and responsibilities. The Sheets are intended to assist the LSA or the response staff in having a clear understanding of their intended roles and responsibilities following an emergency

APPENDIX B: REFERENCES

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