

WRITING YOUR EVENT EMERGENCY PLAN

Producing an Event Emergency Plan (EEP) has a number of benefits that will help your organization deliver a safe and successful event such as:

1. Determine risks or potential risks that could affect the event along with any action plans related.
2. Identify measures that need to be put in place for the protection and well-being of the public and participants who will be attending your event.
3. Reduce the risk of an emergency occurring that may result in loss of life and property damage.
4. Identify each individual/groups/organizations roles and responsibilities in preparation and during the event.

Elements of an Event Emergency Contingency Plan

An Event Emergency Contingency Plan should include the following elements:

1. **Introduction** – describe the type of event including;
 - Date
 - Start time
 - End time
2. **Command and Control**
 - Identify the Event Manager (Person who has overall responsibility). Include:
 - Name
 - Where they will be located during the even
 - How they can be contacted.
 - Identify other key personnel (i.e. Safety Officer, Medical / First Aid Coordinator, Traffic manager, Communications Manager, etc. Include:
 - Name
 - Where they will be located during the even
 - How they can be contacted.
3. **Responsibility of Individual Agencies/Groups**
 - List the agencies/groups participating in the event and briefly list their responsibilities and major tasks.
 - The plan must specify the person(s) responsible for declaring an emergency (under various circumstances) and for initiating emergency actions.
4. **Resources**

List any equipment to be used for public safety during the event or in the event of an Incident e.g. hand held radios, fire extinguishers etc.

5. Communications

The following must be included to ensure proper communications protocols are in place for your event:

- How the event control/organizers will communicate with the event staff/marshals and vice/versa.
- How the event control/organizers will communicate with the public.
- A list of persons who will have radios and what channel or frequency they can be contacted on.
- A list of persons who will have access to a phone and their contact telephone numbers.
- Communications systems can include portable radios, telephones, cellular telephones, public address systems, etc.

Note:

Consider using loud audible signals to notify the public and staff of specific emergencies, e.g. shelter in place, evacuation, etc. For example, a number of blasts on an air horn to inform staff and public of issues has proven effective.

6. Event Signage

Event signage includes:

- Clear identification of Emergency vehicle access points
- Location of exits
- First aid posts
- Lost/found

7. Contingency Plans

It is important to identify the risks or potential risks that could affect the event. Risks could include such factors as weather, crowd composition/crowd behavior, criminal activity, bomb threats, fire, environment, nearby or adjacent infrastructure, situations requiring evacuation or shelter in place, etc.

Definitions:

Hazard – a potentially damaging physical event, phenomenon or human activity that may cause the loss of life or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation.

Risk – A measure of the probability and severity of adverse effects that result from an exposure to a hazard.

Threat – the presence of a hazard and an exposure pathway; threats may be natural or human-induced, either accidental or intentional.

Where the risk cannot be eliminated entirely identify the most appropriate action(s) to be taken, and by what organization, should that situation arise. While these will vary for each event and event site it is suggested that the following should be considered. Note: event risks and hazards are specific to each event and location – some or all of the following may be appropriate to your event:

Weather

- Identify what seasonal weather conditions will be prevalent at the time and make appropriate plans.
- Identify any severe weather conditions (i.e. thunderstorms, high winds, extreme cold, blizzards, etc.) that could arise at the time of your event, and under what weather conditions you would be required to:
 - Modify or cancel your event?
 - Evacuate or Shelter in Place persons attending your event?
 - What is your 'wet weather' plan?

Note:

Consider making a weather call (go or no-go) in advance of the event where appropriate and identify the time that this will be made, by who, and how the decision will be communicated to event staff and participants.

Lost/Found Persons / Property

- Identify what steps will be taken for re-uniting people who get separated.
- Identify where lost property will be taken and if it is not reclaimed, what will happen to it?

Event organizers should exercise special care to provide well identified signs, announcement by public address systems or pre-event handouts that clearly designate such services. In setting up a lost and found service, it is important for event organizers to assign individuals who will remain at the lost and found area until the event is fully terminated.

Crowd Control

Does your event require that you plan for crowd control throughout or are there situations that could arise that would require you to take steps to provide for crowd control / security? If so, adequate training of event personnel and the use of fencing equipment are measures to consider in the management of crowds.

Consider that for large crowds, it is essential that staging be of sufficient height and visibility to project the activities to the crowd adequately. Security for the stage should be carefully planned:

Consider providing for a separation of the stage from the crowd, i.e. use of snow fencing could be considered.

When setting up the stage, always leave a well identified emergency access route. Such a route is especially important when emergency medical care is needed by participants near the front of the crowd.

Shelter In Place

Describe the actions to be taken and the shelter location in the event of a decision to have event participants and staff shelter in place. Ensure in advance that the shelter infrastructure selected is appropriate in terms of robustness when compared with the anticipated risk and ensure the capacity to house persons from a fire safety perspective.

Negotiate the use of this 'shelter in place' infrastructure and how it can be accessed in advance of the event.

In advance of the event have pre-scripted public information messaging available for shelter in place and coordinate who will be responsible for passing on the information to the public.

Evacuation Plan

Describe the actions to be taken if the event location had to be partially or fully evacuated.

Estimate time required to conduct the evacuation (how long it will take from the time a decision to evacuate is made, to when all evacuees can be moved to safety. This will help to identify the lead time required and your decision point to order an evacuation. Your plan should ensure that everyone can be evacuated to safety in the time available and identify the resources required.

Identify:

- Who will make the decision to evacuate the public from the event location?
- Who will co-ordinate the evacuation (be in charge)?
- How will the event staff/marshals and participants be informed and briefed of the situation?
- Do the event staff/marshals have specific tasks in the event of an evacuation?
- Which exits will the public be directed to?
- To where will the public be evacuated?
- Who will inform the emergency services (Police, Fire, Ambulance, etc.)?
- How will the persons evacuated be accounted for? (this is particularly important should persons be evacuated to more than one location)

Note: If your event is a linear type event i.e. sponsored walk, bike ride, etc. you will also need to consider:

- How do you stop the event?
- How do you inform the safety staff?
- How do you collect and account for the participants?
- To where do you evacuate the participants?

In advance have pre-scripted public information messaging available for evacuation and coordinate who will be responsible for passing on the information to the public.

Traffic Management

Ensure the emergency services have unobstructed access into the event location at all times.

First Aid Services

- Who is providing the Medical / First Aid services?
- Where is the first aid located?
- Are communications in place to enable calls to 911 for EMS/ambulance support?
- Is it accessible to ambulances?

Consider communications links to the event control/organizers for their situational awareness and/or action?