Crisis Planning Checklist

During crisis situations, simple and clear guidelines for directing our decisions and actions work best. Therefore, CPI offers the following checklist to assist organizations in designing simple and clear crisis response procedures.

☐ Anticipate possibilities and plan for vulnerabilities specific to your organization’s sites and related work contexts.

☐ Ensure that plans are flexible enough to accommodate unanticipated events and circumstances.

☐ Design a comprehensive diagram or map of every zone (room, building, division, or section) involved with any of your organization’s worksites or related work contexts that could potentially be affected by a crisis situation. Maps and diagrams should:
  ✓ Be comprehensive, yet simple to read.
  ✓ Be posted wherever relevant and necessary.
  ✓ Include the locations of elevators, primary and secondary stairways, and other forms of egress.
  ✓ Note the locations of telephones, radios, emergency-alarm activation stations, and other communications systems.
  ✓ Include directions for initiating calls or requests for assistance.
  ✓ Include any necessary access codes.
  ✓ Indicate the location of emergency resources such as flashlights, fire extinguishers, first-aid kits, automated external defibrillators (AEDs), and utility shutoff points.

☐ Choose at least two emergency meeting areas:
  1) A place near the affected zone.
  2) A place safely outside the affected zone.
  ✓ Prominently mark or designate exit routes within each zone so that they are easy to refer to during an emergency.
  ✓ If possible, direct people away from affected zones. As an alternative, shelter in place if necessary and safe to do so.

☐ Plan for the diversity of your organization’s internal and external customers. Plans may include the need for language or cultural specificity in crisis communications.
  ✓ Consider any special communications with and arrangements for individuals who have mobility, sensory, learning, developmental, or cognitive disabilities.
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☐ Test communications systems and equipment on a regular basis.

☐ Provide ongoing training for all involved stakeholders. This includes internal and external customers, supervisors, managers, directors, board members, contracted servicers, volunteers, and anyone else who is involved with the organization and could be affected by a crisis.

☐ Conduct realistic drills involving all stakeholders within all potentially affected zones and related contexts.

☐ Involve local emergency services and law enforcement in policy planning, training, drills, reviews, and debriefings.

Crisis response planning is a comprehensive process. It should address the prevention, intervention, and Postvention phases of a wide variety of potential crisis situations. We hope that you find the above checklist helpful in beginning this important process.