


CHAPTER: <b>8</b>	SECTION: <b>12</b>	SUBJECT: <b>Environment of Care</b>
TITLE: <b>Emergency Preparedness</b>		
EFFECTIVE DATE: <b>12-15-95</b>	REVISED DATE: <b>1-13-99, 2-22-02, 3-15-05, 02-28-06, 9-5-06, 2-28-08, 2/14/11, 1/26/12, 3/25/13, 3/17/14, 3/18/15, 4/21/16, 5/1/17, 7/13/18; 10/01/2020</b>	
ISSUED AND APPROVED BY:   EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR		

**I. PURPOSE:**

To mandate the development of procedures to reduce the risk of injury and illness during emergencies for consumers, visitors, and staff in Community Mental Health of Ottawa County (CMHOC) facilities.

**II. APPLICATION:**

To all CMHOC operated sites as specified by contract.

**III. DEFINITIONS:**

**Natural Disaster** – A disaster such as: winter storms, tornado, severe rain, flooding, etc.

**Technical Disaster** - When hazardous chemicals are released such as Bromine, Chlorine, Ammonia gases, etc.

**Violent/ Threatening Situations** – Unanticipated emergency which place the safety of persons in grave danger such as enemy attack, terrorism, hostage situations, explosions, aggressive behavior, and/or use of a weapon.

**Bomb Threat** - A bomb threat is legally defined as the communication through the use of mail, telephone, telegram, or other instrument of commerce; the willful making of any threat; or the malicious conveyance of false information knowing the same to be false which concerns an attempt being made, or to be made; to kill, injure, intimidate any individual; or unlawfully to damage or destroy any building, vehicle, or other real or personal property by means of an explosive.

**Utility Failure** – When there is a loss of electrical power, heating, ventilation and air conditions, plumbing systems, boiler and/or steam systems.

**Medical Emergency** – When an individual suffers an acute physical and/or medical problem for which they require and/or request emergency response by qualified responders.

**IV. POLICY:**

It is the policy of Community Mental Health of Ottawa County to provide resources and guidance to staff, visitors, and consumers in the event of emergencies aimed at protecting their health and safety.

**V. PROCEDURE:**

A. **TORNADO PROCEDURES:**

1. When the weather appears to be threatening, staff will turn on a radio capable of broadcasting emergency information (e.g. a NOAA, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, weather radio or car radio). Staff may ask a colleague to monitor weather conditions on their behalf. Individual staff (or their designees) will listen for several weather announcements and, in particular, for tornado WARNING alerts.
2. If a tornado watch has been issued for Ottawa County, recreational and/or optional activities scheduled for outdoors will be canceled or moved indoors.
3. If a tornado WARNING is issued for Ottawa County, the designated individual will inform the supervisor(s) in the building of the announcement. The supervisor(s) will authorize the immediate relocation of all persons to the designated area(s). All staff and consumers will be informed and directed to the appropriate location (via air horn and/or voice as appropriate). The designated “safe” areas for each building will be posted on maps near each exit and may include:
  - 12263 James Street – inside hallways around gym
  - 12265 James Street – interior rooms and as indicated on evacuation maps
  - Fulton Street – restrooms
4. All staff will immediately proceed to the designated location and will assist consumers and visitors as needed.
5. Once in the designated area sit, if possible, next to a wall, using a table, arms, books, folders, blankets, or pillows to protect the upper body and head.
6. Wait for storm effects to subside before leaving the shelter.
7. One person (the supervisor(s)) should be the only one to leave initially in order to evaluate building hazards or damage. All others stay in the shelter area. Treat/assist the injured.
8. If the building appears safe, allow others to leave or go back to their work areas assuming there is no hazard (e.g. live electric wires, smoke or fire in building) or damage. If there is a hazard or damage, evacuate the building by the most expedient means.
9. If the building is evacuated, account for all personnel and visitors once outside before releasing anyone to leave the area.
10. Report all damage to local and county officials by calling 911 immediately and then calling CMHOC administration as soon as practicable.
11. Responsibilities:
  - a. All staff and Building Designees
    1. Turn on radio (or designate a colleague to do so) during threatening weather
    2. Inform on site supervisor(s) of WATCH (if outdoor activity scheduled) and WARNING (in all other cases).

IF WARNING:

1. Notify everyone in the building using manual marine horn or voice as appropriate.
  2. Guide consumers and visitors to appropriate location (if you are in the community, seek shelter and follow the guidance of public safety officers).
  3. Bring radio to designated appropriate location.
  4. Inform everyone when ALL CLEAR is announced.
  5. In the event of injury, assist in making the injured comfortable until help arrives.
  6. Close all available doors.
  7. If available, take blankets and flashlights to the designated area,
- b. Supervisor(s) or Ranking Administrator
    1. Authorize marine horn sounding (or voice) if WARNING is issued.
    2. Direct consumers, visitors, and staff to designated location
    3. Follows public service instruction if tornado actually hits and/or authorized all clear announcements.
    4. Document the event and forward to the Health and Safety Coordinator.
  - c. Therapist/All Staff

1. Follow instructions and procedures immediately upon issuance of tornado WARNING announcement.
  2. Direct or take consumers and visitors to designated area.
  3. In the event of injury, assist in making the injured comfortable until help arrives.
  4. Close all doors.
12. Tests of these procedures will be regularly held according to the schedule developed and monitored by the Health and Safety Coordinator. Each site will practice at least annually.
- a. Each time this procedure is implemented, the Building Manager or Building Designee will complete a written report to the Health and Safety Coordinator indicating date, time, length, and results of the event as soon as practical after the event utilizing the Emergency Plan Test form.
- B. LIGHTNING
1. In the event of a lightning storm which appears to threaten the lives or safety of individuals within the facility, the following procedures are to be implemented immediately by the Health and Safety Coordinator or ranking staff member.
  2. Move all persons away from doors, windows, and electrical appliances.
  3. Consider unplugging any electrical appliances and turn off computers.
  4. Do not use the telephone unless absolutely necessary.
  5. In the event that lightning should strike the building and cause a fire, the Fire Emergency procedures are to be implemented.
  6. If an individual is struck by lightning, immediately recruit medically-trained staff, if available.
- C. SNOW/BLIZZARD/ICE  
In the event that a winter weather emergency is declared or dangerous snow/ice accumulations are present, Ottawa County Administration will contact the Executive Director of Community Mental Health or designee, if closing is decided.
- D. TECHNICAL DISASTER – When hazardous chemicals are released such as Bromine, Chlorine, Ammonia gases, etc.:
1. In the event that hazardous chemicals are released in a CMH building, the building is to be evacuated immediately and the authorities called for assistance.
  2. If it is learned that hazardous chemicals have been released outside of CMH building, authorities should be called for instruction PRIOR to leaving the building. In the interim, close all doors and ventilation systems to minimize the intake of outside air.
- E. UTILITY FAILURE – When there is a loss of electrical power, heating, ventilation and air conditioning, plumbing systems, boiler and/or steam systems that are not likely to be repaired in a reasonable time frame, safety, and comfort are serious considerations:
1. The Building Manager or Designee shall notify the Executive Director with information on the situation.
  2. The Executive Director shall contact County Administration to determine if the building should be closed. The Executive Director shall notify the Building Manager or Designee of the County's decision. For non-County maintained buildings, the Executive Director will make an independent decision and notify accordingly.
- F. MEDICAL EMERGENCY – When a medical emergency exists 911 is to be notified immediately. Staff are to stay on the phone until the dispatcher asks them to disconnect the call. Other available personnel are to secure the area, comfort and provide aid to the victim, and wait outside the facility to direct the responders. These procedures should be evaluated regularly.

**VI. ATTACHMENT:**  
Emergency Plan Test Evaluation

**VII. REFERENCE:**

MDHHS Administrative Rules, Life Safety Code, National Fire Protection Association, CMHOC Security Management Plan, CMHOC Fire Safety Plan and CARF Behavioral Health Care Standards.