

## 15 Minute Manager

### Emergency Preparedness

A number of organizations have policies in place that direct staff to action during an emergency. For those providing transportation services in a closed environment (clients only), this policy often centers around removing clients to safe locations. For public transit programs, priorities may be tied to emergency responders including public safety agencies, disaster responders like the Red Cross, other transit agencies, and local governments' emergency managers.

Policies are often developed in a coordinated manner that relies on input from various departments or partners and results in an action plan that is reviewed then shelved in hopes it is never needed. It is recommended that you include drivers/dispatchers and others who will be called on to participate in the planning process. Their buy-in is critical and their knowledge of realistic response ability will be invaluable to the process.

Because transportation can impact the very survival of potential victims, it is imperative that transit managers, dispatchers, drivers, and maintenance personnel understand what protocols are in place, where they are to report, and to whom they are to answer during various emergency scenarios. It may be too, that the extent of your policy is to turn over vehicles to the first responders. In either case, you will need to know how you will alert riders or other users of the vehicles that they may be unavailable throughout the emergency response.

Routine reviews and even drills may be useful in training staff. Testing their knowledge in unscheduled Q&A sessions can help you determine how often formal training is needed. You also may wish to volunteer to participate in larger city or county-wide drills of first responders (active shooter, natural disaster, etc.)

Having your staff prepare emergency response packs that includes emergency supplies (water, blanket(s), first-aid supplies, etc.) can be made ahead and stored in a designated location to be placed on board a vehicle when responding.

You will want to inform new employees of emergency policies as soon as they are hired. Handing out a laminated card or "call-out" sheet with important information can serve as a reminder that keeps staff focused and directed during actual emergencies. Information to make available may include:

- What are staff's obligations to respond in an emergency when off duty;
- How are agency vehicles accessed and fueled (keys & fueling stations);
- What communications equipment will be utilized and how is it accessed and used;
- Where do they report;
- What agencies will direct their activities and what is a central contact number;
- What data must they collect during their "call-out" (mileage, number of passengers boarded, locations where passengers were taken, start-time and end-time for vehicle and for driver, fuel consumption);
- Policy on allowing non-employees to drive the vehicle;
- What communications must be made with the transit manager; and

- What inspection, maintenance, and cleaning is expected after an emergency?

Answers to these questions may depend on the emergency and the policy of your agency in responding to emergencies outside your agency. Memorandums of Understanding often are developed between agencies and approved by stakeholders (lien holders, insurers, board members, and partnering agencies) to provide clear guidance with regard to obligations and use of equipment, payments (fuel, insurance riders, unscheduled maintenance/repairs, mileage, etc.), and authority. Sample MOUs can be found online or your partnering agency(s) may have a standard MOU they use for this purpose.

Because emergency response ability varies widely among transit/transportation providers, this 15 minute manager module focuses on the key information every staff member must know. You will need to provide this information in the context of your agency's policies.

Copies of these policies should be handed out to all employees. A cover sheet shall act as a receipt that the information has been received and will be read. Employees should sign the receipts which are then collected and copies added to training and personnel files.

Resources:

[Emergency and Disaster Response Planning](#)

## 15 Minute Manager – Emergency Preparedness and Response

Our agency has entered into an agreement with (name agencies) to assist in responding to emergencies that require evacuation of persons at risk or who need non-medical transport to shelters, hospitals and other locations.

**Hand out MOU or Emergency Preparedness and Response policy and laminated information card to everyone in the training. This policy should include a cover sheet that acts as a receipt. Each employee should sign and return the receipt that confirms they have received and will read the policy.**

**Go over your policy or review the following:**

Our emergency policy covers a number of requirements for staff that are listed on the information card. You will need to become very familiar with these protocols so that we can respond quickly and efficiently in an emergency.

- Staff obligations to respond in an emergency when off duty;
  - Enter your policy with regard to voluntary or required participation
  - Is this a 24-hour, 7-day a week, obligation? Are staff able to turn down a request to participate?
- Access to agency vehicles and fuel
  - Vehicles will be assigned by (name of agency person in charge during emergency). Keys for vehicles are located in (location) and can be accessed using (method for gaining access to keys). If the emergency is during off-duty or non-service hours, keys may be accessed at (off site location – police department, sheriff’s office?)
  - Vehicles should already be fueled after previous use, however if fuel is needed before or during your response, you may utilize (City or County fuel stations?) located at (location address). Be sure and indicate how much fuel is in the tank at start and at finish of duty as well as the number of gallons pumped during service. If you must pay for fuel, keep all receipts for reimbursement.
- Communications equipment which will be utilized and how is it accessed and used;
  - Explain if radios or other communications equipment will be provided;
  - Determine if personal or agency cell phones will be utilized;
  - Will your dispatcher act as the point of contact between drivers and emergency authorities?
- Where do they report;
  - Depending on the emergency or who the local emergency authority is, how will drivers know where to report?
  - Who do they notify that they are on their way or that they have arrived?
- What agencies will direct their activities and what is a central contact number;
  - How do staff know who will be the authority in charge of their assignments?
  - What communications lines will be available to them?
- What data must they collect during their “call-out” (mileage, number of passengers boarded, locations where passengers were taken, start-time and end-time for vehicle and for driver, fuel consumption);

- o Are there forms to use for emergency activities? (If so, hand them out)
  - o Who do they turn this information into when the emergency has passed and they are relieved of further duty?
- Policy on allowing others to drive the vehicle;
  - o What is your policy and how can it be overridden?
- What communications must be made with the transit manager;
  - o How and how often must drivers check in with transit managers? Who is the backup person?
- What inspection, maintenance, and cleaning is expected after an emergency; and
- How will your staff be compensated for responding in an emergency?

It is expected that staff will become familiar with these policies and be prepared to implement them should they be called upon.