Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Plan - Coordination, Responsibilities, and Accountability

Proposal

To clarify in the Guide to Florida Regional Service (GFRS) the coordination of responsibilities and accountability related to the preparation, response, and recovery in the event of a disaster. This should be considered housekeeping for implementing Proposal #01-05-14 in which the coordination structure should be well-defined per Concept 1, responsibilities and a single point of accountability should be clearly delineated per Concept 5 along with the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned as per Concept 3. Additionally, the Disaster Plan is provided as a source of experience, strength, and hope to Areas, Groups, and individual NA members.

Rationale

The Disaster Plan Workgroup was tasked with developing a Disaster Plan that would provide guidance in event of a disaster and continuity in Regional operations for collaboration, support, and problem resolution to the Areas.

The workgroup submitted Proposal #01-05-14 which outlines the structure of coordination of responsibilities and accountability relating to Regional preparation and continuity of operations in the event of a disaster.

Current established Region, Administration Workgroup, and Fellowship Development Group purpose, responsibilities, and accountability are outlined as follows:

GFRS, Page 8, “The purpose of regional services is to support the Areas and Groups in their primary purpose…”

GFRS, Page 8, The Vision Statement reads, “To better serve Areas, their member groups and individual addicts; to allow more widespread participation by more individual members; and to more fully utilize available human resources.”

GFRS, Page 14, clearly identifies the members of Administration Workgroup and notes the Workgroup as the point of accountability for administrative processes, “This Group consists of the following: RSC Facilitator, RSC Co-Facilitator, RSC Secretary, RSC Alternate Secretary, RSC Treasurer, RSC Alternate Treasurer, Regional Delegate, Alternate Delegate, HRP Leader, Fellowship Development Leader and Co-Leader and Archivist. This body serves as a workgroup in addition to the member’s other duties to: Serve the administrative needs of the Region…”

GFRS Page 36, The Fellowship Development Group’s purpose, “The aim of the group is to further our primary purpose by developing and creating specific projects that will enable the region, its member areas and groups to better carry the NA message of recovery as well as enhance the growth and development of our fellowship.”

GUIDE TO FLORIDA REGIONAL SERVICE

Add the following bullet item to Duties of the Administration Workgroup - Page 14

- Executes the Disaster Preparedness, Response & Recovery Plan to ensure pre-disaster Regional resources are organized, accessible in the event of a natural or human caused
disaster, and available during any required post-disaster recovery process.

Add the following bullet item to Duties of the FD Leader and Co-Leader - Page 33

• The FD Leader/Co-Leader update the Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Plan on an annual basis to incorporate new technologies, procedures, contact information, and any other changes.

Duties: See attached Disaster Preparedness, Response & Recovery Plan

Accountability: The Administration Workgroup is accountable to the Florida Region, primarily through the Facilitator and secondarily via the Fellowship Development Leader.
Disaster Preparedness, Response & Recovery Plan

SERENITY PRAYER

God, grant us the serenity
To accept the things we cannot change,
the courage to change the things we can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

November 2013
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Duties: See attached Disaster Preparedness, Response & Recovery Plan 2

Accountability: The Administration Workgroup is accountable to the Florida Region, primarily through the Facilitator and secondarily via the Fellowship Development Leader. 2
1. BACKGROUND

From 1953 through 2012, there were 65 major declared disasters in the state of Florida, which is among the top five impacted states in the nation. Common disasters include hurricanes, tropical storms, flooding, tornados, and other severe weather including heavy rain, high winds, fires, explosions, and toxic chemicals. The frequency and variety of natural and human made disasters in Florida make disaster preparedness, response, and recovery very important aspects of Florida Region of Narcotics Anonymous (NA) service.

Before a disaster, the Region prepares its members by providing information including this disaster plan. During a disaster, the Region’s priorities are the safety of the NA community and on potential and actual impacts as they develop. After a disaster, focus shifts to assessing the operational capacity of the Region and assisting the Areas and Home Groups as they recover from the disaster.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of a Regional Service Committee is to be supportive of its Areas and Groups and their primary purpose by linking together the Areas and Groups within its Region, helping Areas and Groups with their basic situations and needs, and encouraging the growth of the fellowship.

This plan is intended for use by NA Groups, Areas, and our Regional Service Committee to aid our fellowship in serving our primary purpose as we recover as quickly as possible after a natural or human-caused disaster. This plan includes the following:

• Suggestions and guidance to the Areas and Home Groups on recommended tasks and timelines.

• A local resource guide

• DISASTER Roles and responsibilities of the Florida Region.

• Regional resources available pre- and post-disaster.

3. RESPONSE

Upon notification of an emergency or declaration of a disaster, the Administration Workgroup is the single point of accountability for execution of the disaster plan. The Administration Workgroup can be reached by telephone at _______________ and by email through the link on the Regional website at http://naflorida.org/contact/.

The following Regional trusted servants can also be reached through this link: http://naflorida.org/contact/
Your Administration Workgroup is committed to supporting NA communities affected by disaster. The Administration Workgroup will make every effort to contact Regional Committee Members (RCMs) in affected Areas and determine their status. Toward this end, the Administration Workgroup has established and maintains an emergency/disaster communication plan that includes every known way of getting in touch with each RCM (home, work, and cell phones; email; physical address; etc.).

The Region maintains a phone line for voice and facsimile at the Florida Regional Service Office (RSO). The RSO location and contact information is shown below:

Florida Regional Service Office
2222 South Combee Road, Suite 6
Lakeland FL 33801
Phone 1.863.683.8224 or 1.866.NAFLRSO (623.5776)
Fax 1.863.683.8184
Email: flarso@floridarso.org

In the event of a disaster that impacts the RSO, literature sales—an important function of the RSO—will resume at the usual location or, if need be, an alternative location to be determined and announced as soon as possible.

4. REGIONAL PRE-DISASTER PLANNING

a. Financial Information: The authorized check signers are the Treasurer, Facilitator, Co-Facilitator, and Secretary. The alternate Treasurer is not an authorized check signer. Financial Statements are regularly backed-up and stored at ________________. The Region holds a box of blank checks and deposit slips at a secondary location and all check signers are aware of the bank name, account number, and bank emergency contact information:

b. Computers & Technology: Ensure the Technology Resource Coordinator has provided the Administration Workgroup a current hardware inventory, any software documentation; all user ID/password information; and appropriate information regarding the hosting of the website and
email services, Regional Meeting Lists, RCM Contact Information, and the list of emergency volunteers (name, contact information, skills, willingness to help, area availability). Regular backups of HRP databases and other computer records are accomplished monthly. The FD Leader should be prepared to perform all IT activities in the event of the incapacitation of the Technology Resource Coordinator.

c. RSC Meetings: If the location of the next regularly scheduled RSC meeting place is undamaged, assume that the usual agenda will continue as planned. In the event of a disaster that prohibits the Regional Service Committee (RSC) from meeting, both the primary and alternate emergency contacts, as shown below, will serve as the single point of accountability for decision making during the emergency period.

d. Appointment and Extent of Decision Making Authority During a Disaster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Position</th>
<th>Telephone Number</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary RSC Facilitator</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternate FD Leader</td>
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The emergency contacts are delegated authority by the Region to make decisions regarding the following for an initial sixty-day period immediately following a disaster:
- Relocating the RSC meeting
- Procurement
- Financial and banking transactions
- Regional response to requests from the Areas
- Other _________________________________

e. Plan Maintenance: Emergency preparedness is built into the culture of the organization through testing and training the plan.

• Testing: Using facilitated tabletop exercises (“what if” discussions) annually at the GSR Assembly and Service Symposium, NA members and trusted servants inform the RSC of their concerns.

• Training: Orientation sessions will include an overview of the contents and a copy of the Disaster Plan.

• Revisions: The Fellowship Development Group Leader and Co-Leader will update the plan on an annual basis to incorporate new technologies, procedures, contact information, etc.
f. Collaboration: The Administration Workgroup will collaborate with other Regions in the Southeast Zonal Forum to share resources in an emergency, to maintain operations, and ensure the care of NA members we serve. The Administration Workgroup will maintain a list of emergency contacts and contact information for our bordering Regions.

5. REGIONAL POST-DISASTER

Lessons Learned: The Administration Workgroup will document and integrate lessons learned in the annual update process.

6. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE AREA SERVICE COMMITTEES

a. Areas Service Committee (ASC) Communication Plan: Establish which member(s) of your team would be the point person for home group check-ins, other ASC members, and for communication with the Region. The point person should have home and/or office email and a phone with voice mail. In the event of an emergency Area members can phone or email him/her and relay their status and whereabouts, and he/she can in turn inform other Area members when they check in.

b. The RCM/Alternate RCM should contact the Region using one or more of the following methods within 72 hours. Be sure to give them detailed information of where your meetings are being held and the correct times.

   Email _______________________________
   Telephone ___________________________
   Mailing Address __________________________________________
   Other ___________________________________________________

   c. Keep current contact information for all ASC members, the RSC, and the RSO in hard copy. Your current meeting directory, state and local maps, and a copy of this booklet should be readily available. Check to see if you have any ham radio operators in your local fellowship and maintain their contact information. Please keep the Regional FD team leaders informed of your status and how they can help.

d. PR: Some major national disasters have long-range problems. Getting meetings started again is the beginning. When radio and television stations and newspapers are back in working order it is essential to provide as many Narcotics Anonymous Public Service Announcements (PSAs) as
possible. Areas should consider thorough public relation efforts to last four to six months after the disaster. Refer to the Public Information Handbook and do not hesitate to contact the Regional PR Coordinator for any assistance. A template for PSAs is provided below. Contact the local radio stations with changes to NA meeting times and locations with the following format:

NA Emergency Action Public Service Announcement
Radio station: Phone#: 
Address: 
Organization: Area of Narcotics Anonymous
Due to reasons beyond our control, the regular meeting of the group of Narcotics Anonymous has changed the meeting time and/or location _____________________________.

Recovery is what happens at NA meetings. It is possible to stop using drugs! Call your local helpline 24/7 at ____________________

e. H&I Subcommittees/Fellowship Development teams: The Area will want to put a post-disaster H&I plan in place to resume services as soon as possible following a disaster. NA members who are in hospitals and institutions are particularly vulnerable during a disaster. Remember they are away from their loved ones, frightened, and unsure of what will happen next. They may also have little clean time.

• Be sure to keep printed records of the facilities your committee serves, their addresses, and emergency contact information. Decide who will be responsible for making contact. Some facilities such as treatment centers may be evacuated, however, others may be in lockdown or housed in damaged buildings. Contacting these facilities should be a priority.

• If you can meet, do so. If you are not allowed to meet, leave your phone number and address so the facility can contact you. If your Area H&I members are unable to conduct meetings immediately after a disaster, most facilities will still accept literature.

• Check back with the facility to verify their status. Remind your Area H&I participants to follow all agency and NA guidelines. Do not carry notes or letters in or out of a facility. Do not give yours or another person’s address or phone number or make phone calls on their behalf.

f. Activities: Areas might also consider holding social events such as special speaker meetings, dances, potluck dinners, and outdoor activities to keep up morale. With effort, the fellowship will return to normalcy more quickly.
7. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE HOME GROUP

a. Group Communication Plan: Establish one home group member to be the contact person for all other home group members. The contact person should have home and/or office email and a phone with voice mail. In the event of an emergency, group members can phone or email him/her and relay their status and whereabouts, and he/she can in turn inform other group members when they check in.

b. NA Meeting Time and Location: Check the location of your meeting place. If your regular meeting place has been damaged or destroyed or you cannot reach it, set up a new location. NA meetings can be held anywhere during an emergency. NA members who may be housed in a shelter are having their physical needs met but they could probably use emotional and spiritual support. Try to get them to a meeting or hold one in the shelter.

c. Area Service Committee Update: Contact the member of your Area Service Committee leadership team that has been designated as the emergency point of contact, usually the RCM or Co-Facilitator, within 72 hours. Be sure to give them detailed information of where your meetings are being held and the correct times.

d. Disaster Supply Kit: A current Regional Directory; state and local maps; up-to-date addresses and phone numbers for each home group member; extra copy of meeting format, the Little White Book, the Basic Text; note pad and pens (to leave notes on doors); and candles and matches or one working flashlight with spare batteries? It is important that one set of these materials be kept in the group meeting place and one set kept in a separate location in case the meeting place cannot be reached or has been damaged.

8. SUGGESTIONS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL MEMBER

Emotional upset is a normal reaction to a national disaster. We hope that by addressing some common feelings and issues that your healing process can begin. Whatever events we may undergo or feelings we may experience, working the Twelve Steps and living our spiritual principles of recovery will work in every situation. We are never alone.

Those affected by an emergency or disaster report a wide range of feelings and behaviors that include a sense of life being out of balance, disbelief, flashbacks, sleep disturbances and nightmares, sadness, a desire to use, a tendency to minimize the critical event, anger and irritability, forgetfulness, survivors guilt, social withdrawal, emotional numbing, feelings of being out of control, fears of going crazy, loss
and insecurity, diminished sex drive, and self-doubt. Disaster survivors will typically go through the following stages of grief familiar to recovering addicts. A disaster is a very frightening and disturbing event. Our reactions are bound to vary widely from one day to the next. The re-emergence of these and other feelings are common after days, weeks, or months after the actual event. We may go through this process many times.

- **Denial:** The first stage is denial, shock, disbelief, panic, and an overall refusal to accept or acknowledge what has happened. We experience anxiety and fear and we screen out information that we do not want to see, hear, or think.

- **Anger:** When we can no longer suppress the events and strong feelings that are beginning to emerge, we feel angry and distressed. Our anger can take many different inward and outward forms. We can be angry with ourselves, angry with other people, and angry with the God of Our Understanding.

- **Bargaining:** When the anger we feel begins to subside and the reality of the drastic changes in our day-to-day life becomes more evident, we may attempt to bargain with life, other people, or with our Higher Power. Remember, our feelings are not good or bad, they are just our feelings.

- **Depression:** When attempts to change our situations have failed, the sense of powerlessness can leave us sad and exhausted. We begin to realize the full impact of the shock. We may experience profound grief over our losses and sorrow for the losses of others around us. Recovery is a painful process.

- **Acceptance:** Working through denial, anger, bargaining, and depression leads us finally to surrender and acceptance. We surrender to the fact that the situation is what it is and we accept whatever we have to do to pick up the pieces of our lives and go on. The only thing permanent in life is change.

It is important to remember that grieving for our losses is a natural human response and that all of us accept changes at different times and on different terms and different things are important to people. Sharing our feelings, one addict helping another, is the fastest way to recovery. A natural disaster and the changes that come with it are no different. By not using, going to meetings whenever and wherever possible, contacting our sponsor regularly, and by working the Twelve Steps, together we can and do recover.

There are a number of ways to prepare for and cope with emergencies.

a. **Family Communication Plan:** One family member should be a contact person for all other family members. Ideally, he or she should not be in the immediate vicinity. This relative should be a close relative that family members are in regular contact with who has home and/or office email and a phone with voice mail. In the event of an emergency, family members can phone or email him/her and relay their status and whereabouts, and he/she can in turn inform other family members when they check in.
b. Meeting Place (Rally Point): Have one meeting place near your home and one outside the immediate vicinity. Be specific as to the location (the park bench on the corner of High and Dry streets).

c. Disaster Supply Kit: Create one kit for home, in the event that you are trapped there and can’t leave, and create another kit to carry, the Go Kit, in the event that you have to vacate your home. Employers or employees may want to create go-kits for the office.

- Home Kit Contents: At least one working flashlight with spare batteries; a battery or a crank operated radio; one gallon of water per person, per day; three days of food supplies for both humans and pets.

- Go Kit Contents: Working flashlight; rain poncho; water supply; banking and credit card information; copies of identification records including driver’s license, birth and marriage certificates, and social security cards; glow stick; Mylar blanket; mask for breathing; walking shoes; gloves; toiletries and medications; vehicle and house keys. Many of these supplies are available at camping supply stores. The Go Kit bag should be as light as possible.

d. Children and School Plans: Know the emergency plans for your children’s school or other routine location. Specifically, where they will take them in the event of an emergency? Keep your contact information current with the school files and know what you need to have your children released into your or another designated person’s care. For example, if you or your spouse is not able to pick your child up, whom will they release the child to?

e. Emergency Equipment: Know the location of the following items: portable radio and extra batteries, emergency first aid supplies, flashlights and spare batteries, fire extinguishers, generator and gasoline, and other items such as extension cords and your camping equipment.

f. Neighborhood Information: Know the location of the closest emergency shelter that meets your needs and the nearest public health clinic and emergency organization. Know the emergency evacuation routes for your location.

g. Hurricane/Disaster Warnings: Prepare all furniture, appliances, and other free standing objects so that they are adequately secured. Move heavy items to lower shelves in closets and cabinets. Check cabinet doors to be sure they can be closed securely. Remove or isolate flammable
materials. Know the location and how to operate gas and water shut-off valves. Maintain a conveniently located set of tools (including pipe and crescent wrenches) to facilitate prompt gas shut-off.

h. **Emergency Response:** Remain calm. Be aware of your surroundings. Locate all of the exits, not just the one closest to you. If you get blocked, go to the next exit. Look around and take note of where the emergency exits are at work and when visiting other locations.

- **Hurricane/Tornado:** Pick an interior room away from windows and exterior walls in response to hurricanes.

- **Chemical Attack:** Do not go underground, as most chemicals are designed to sink. Seal off vents with duct tape and plastic.

- **Fire:** In the event of a fire, feel the door high up to see if it is cool or hot. If it doesn’t feel hot, slowly crack the door to make sure there’s not smoke, and after exiting, close the door behind you to stop the spread of the fire. A person on fire should stop, drop and roll and then be covered with a blanket.

i. **Evacuation:** If you have to evacuate wear long pants and long sleeve shirts to accommodate both low temperature weather situations and walking through debris. Wear comfortable walking shoes and gloves. Don’t forget to lock your doors when leaving your home.

j. **Hi-Rise Property Information:** If you live in a high-rise, know the evacuation plans and where all the stairwells and exits are. Know the location of fire-alarm boxes. Be as specific as possible in relaying the location when calling 911.

9. **DISASTER RESOURCES**

NA is not affiliated with any of these agencies or their facilities.

**American Red Cross:** [http://www.redcross.org/](http://www.redcross.org/)

**American Red Cross Disaster Services:** [http://www.redcross.org/portal/site/en/menuitem.d8aacef214c576bf971e4cfe43181aa0/?vgnextoid=9b18d966d6c5a210VgnVCM10000089f0870aRCRD&vgnextfmt=default](http://www.redcross.org/portal/site/en/menuitem.d8aacef214c576bf971e4cfe43181aa0/?vgnextoid=9b18d966d6c5a210VgnVCM10000089f0870aRCRD&vgnextfmt=default)
American Red Cross Local Chapters: http://www.redcross.org/en/where


FEMA brochure: http://www.fema.gov/pdf/about/brochure.pdf

Florida County Emergency Management Directors: http://www.floridadisaster.org/County_EM getCounty_list.htm

Florida Division of Emergency Management Disaster Information: http://www.floridadisaster.org/index.asp

National Referral System - Dial 2-1-1 for help with food, housing, employment, health care, counseling an