



NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY GOVERNMENT CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN — EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1. Internal notification of critical incidents:**
 - Create a plan to notify all personnel of crises and public safety incidents.
 - Develop an incident notification phone tree and a dedicated email inbox.
 - Make staff aware of the chain of notification for critical incidents, from personnel to supervisors to elected officials, and to the greater public.
- 2. Incidents that must be reported to a manager as soon as an employee is made aware of them:**
 - These include incidents of high public interest, reputational risk, or legal implications.
 - Examples include natural disasters, the death or critical injury of a county employee, mass casualty events, catastrophic infrastructure failures, or the arrest of a county employee.
- 3. Incidents that must be reported to the community/media as soon as possible:**
 - Incidents that must be communicated on Reverse 911 or on social media include: severe weather threats; public safety events with ongoing impact (active shooter, missing person, chemical spill); traffic or other collisions with significant impact; emergency response at schools or high-profile locations; and homicides.
- 4. All public safety messaging should be conversational and avoid jargon (specialized language used by a particular profession).**
- 5. Prepare to release updates on social media, as soon as possible.**
 - Review the social media template emergency alerts included in this plan (located in Appendix C).
- 6. Follow guidelines to prepare to hold a news conference.**
 - News releases should only be written in the final stages of information-gathering — after social media messaging has begun and a news conference has taken place — and must be fact-checked by the PIO.
- 7. Assign roles for a crisis management team that will be activated in a crisis.**
 - Follow the crisis event response timeline to guide internal and external messaging.
 - Use news conference and emergency alert templates for public safety communications to media and to the public.
- 8. Consider designating locations to post paper flyers of emergency communications, during a power/internet outage.**
- 9. Use radio to reach residents and follow script-writing guidelines found in the Crisis Communications Plan (Appendix E).**
- 10. Create a missing persons protocol and database:**
 - Coordinate with law enforcement on a plan to keep track of welfare checks.
- 11. Post-Crisis Review and Documentation:**
 - After the crisis event has passed, it's crucial to bring the county crisis communications team together to assess the response and identify areas for improvement.