

PREPLAN FOR CRISIS RESPONSE

Identifying the lead victim services provider(s). Who is in charge?

In developing your Memorandums of Understanding with your surrounding jurisdictions, identify who will take the lead in response to the emotional needs of the victims of the incident. Below is an example from the Jefferson and Gilpin Counties Community Crisis Response Team (JGCCRT) Protocol:

The Victim Services Unit associated with the law enforcement agency that is identified as the lead agency in any community disaster will coordinate the response to the emotional needs of the victims of community disaster. It will be the responsibility of this Victim Services Unit to coordinate services with any affected agency or business, as well as with agencies that traditionally respond to crises.

Victim Services will have a station at the Incident Command Center or direct access to it. Communication and coordination will originate from this point. Requests for law enforcement based victim advocates will be made as directed by the lead law enforcement agency's mutual aid policy.

The commanding law enforcement agency will establish a Victim Services staging area. All persons responding to aid/assist victims will report to the staging area. They will be screened for qualifications and then directed to the specific area of need. It is the responsibility of team members to maintain established rules of confidentiality and follow accepted team policies and procedures.

Acts of federal terrorism and aviation disasters mandate the FBI and Red Cross respectively as the lead for mental health services.

To identify the lead victim services provider, it is imperative that you work with your local emergency management prior to an incident. Together, identify who should be assigned the Emergency Support Function (ESF) addressing the mental health or psychological needs of victims of any event. See the sample **ESF from Jefferson County** which you can share with your Emergency Management Office.