

PREPLAN FOR CRISIS RESPONSE

Understanding the Need for Victim Services:

Local Emergency Management assigns key responders Emergency Support Functions (“ESF”). Every Emergency Management plan should include an ESF for responding to the needs of citizens affected by the event. These needs could include shelter services, medical needs, mental health, financial resources...

Clearly, Victim Services cannot address all the needs of all victims. An appropriate function victim advocates can address is mental health. Check with your local emergency management leaders to ensure there is an entity assigned to an ESF that addresses the mental health, behavioral health or psychological needs of residents affected by the crisis.

Work with your emergency management staff to determine if victim services in the jurisdiction of the event should be the lead agency for mental health services. If there are other agencies that could also fit into this need, work with them to determine which agency would be the better fit for a lead. Regardless of who takes lead, victim advocates need a place within this ESF. This is where Memorandums of Understanding or Inter-Agency Agreements become critical.

Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) and Inter Governmental Agreements (IGAs) must be signed off by the heads of each agency and clearly understood prior to an event.

This is where preplanning is necessary. Issues to consider when developing these agreements:

- Confidentiality requirements of responders (including how this may impact criminal based events).
- Legal Requirements of each entity
- The ability of each entity to take the lead of an ESF.

Sample Forms:

- MOU from the Jefferson and Gilpin Community Crisis Response Team.
- Confidentiality Agreement for the Jefferson and Gilpin Counties Community Crisis Response Team
- Confidentiality Statement from the Jefferson and Gilpin Counties Community Crisis Response Team