

# **WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS TEXOMA POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

## **CHAPTER 13 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT POLICY**

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### **13.1 INTRODUCTION**

The Workforce Solutions Texoma (WST) service area is home to many diverse weather conditions. Tornadoes, rainstorms, windstorms, and ice storms pose the most common threat to the area. Manmade disaster emergencies such as hazardous material spills and terrorism can also pose a risk. In addition to natural disasters and disruption to services due to severe weather conditions, there is also the threat of to service delivery by potential health-related issues that could strike staff, such as the Pandemic Flu. The potential of a disaster emergency arising make it incumbent on WST to implement disaster emergency and business recovery/continuity of business functions, computer resources, networks and facilities in the event of a disaster and/or unexpected interruption of services. In addition, WST staff may be called upon to provide needed support and assistance to others in the event of an emergency at another location. This policy is intended to provide guidance to WST staff, workforce center site managers and partners on actions to be taken in case of an emergency in compliance with Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) Emergency Management and Business Recovery/Continuity of Operations Plan and the State of Texas Emergency Management Plan.

### **13.2 PLAN DISTRIBUTION**

This policy is intended to be distributed to WST staff as well as workforce centers' contractor staff including site managers, and partners housed in each workforce center. It is the responsibility for each site manager and partner agency to:

- Provide all employees with a copy of this policy;
- Ensure employees understand the actions to be taken;
- Publish and maintain a current emergency call roster of their employees; and
- Provide the WST Executive Director and all Board staff with a current and updated copies of these rosters.

### **13.3 BUSINESS RECOVERY AND CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS**

A disaster emergency may strike anywhere in the state leaving WST's operations unaffected, or WST may experience the impact of a disaster on its own operations and facilities. Should a disaster emergency occur, WST will comply with TWC's Emergency Management and Business Recovery/Continuity of Operations Plan as described below:

- **Tier One – Emergency Management:** In accordance with the Agency Board Agreement, the WST will:
  - a. Cooperate and coordinate the implementation of post-disaster emergency recovery activities, processing requests for disaster emergency assistance, and implementing state-administered disaster emergency assistance programs when authorized.
  - b. Assist in recruiting, screening, and hiring manpower needed for resource support to support disaster response and recovery operations.
  - c. When needed, WST Executive Director will select an individual to assist donations management system agencies in the temporary employment of

- personnel to work in the donations management program. Such individual shall screen and identify personnel who may be qualified to work in the various facilities and functions of the donations management program.
- d. Coordinate activities to ensure the continuity of services in the event of a Pandemic Influenza, as declared through local health authorities and the state of Texas Department of Health Services. The Board will make its Pandemic Response Plan available for agency review upon request.
- **Tier Two – Business Recovery/Continuity of Operations:** WST will assume the immediate responsibility of recovering from any disaster-related business interruption and continue operations as soon as possible. The Board will make the Business Recovery/Continuity of Operations Plan available for agency review upon request.

### **13.3.1 RESPONSE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

When WST is affected by a disaster, a response management committee will convene as soon as possible at the board offices in Sherman. This committee will consist of the Board Executive Director, available board staff, and the workforce center director. The purpose of this committee is to provide support to staff who are responding to emergency taskings, evaluate the impact of the disaster on local operations, direct the implementation of this emergency plan, and make those decisions necessary to maintain continuity of operations.

### **13.3.2 COMMUNICATION DIRECTORY**

Communicating with staff is a key element of emergency preparedness and response. WST, the workforce center operator, each site manager, and partner housed within each workforce center will establish and maintain a communication directory of its employees and provide a copy to the Board Executive Director. This communication directory will be used as an emergency call roster and should include both home and cellular telephone numbers of employees, if available. A copy of this call roster will be provided to the WST Executive Director and the workforce center site manager in each center. The nature and location of a disaster will dictate who is notified and what actions will be required.

### **13.3.3 ALTERNATE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION**

Telephone service disruption may occur when disasters such as tornadoes, high winds, and ice storms strike. Workforce center staff must look to other resources such as radio and television for information regarding the disaster and any travel restrictions imposed by civil authorities that would preclude staff from reporting for work. Every reasonable attempt should be made to establish contact with supervisors, workforce center management, or the management response committee at the board offices for further information and reporting instructions.

## **13.4 NOTIFICATION OF CENTER CLOSURE**

In the event of a tornado, ice storm, or other disaster, WST Executive Director, or designee, will make a determination as to whether or not weather conditions are severe enough to close each local workforce center.

### **13.4.1 Workforce Center Closure During Working Hours**

WST will contact the Workforce Center Director and/or center site managers once a decision is made to close an office early as severe weather intensifies. This decision will be based on the type of severe weather, forecasts for continuation, and emergency management actions and suggestions being broadcasted by the local media.

### **13.4.2 Workforce Center Closure During Non-Working Hours**

During non-working hours, The WST Executive Director, or designee, will contact each local radio and television station to relay sufficient information about workforce centers that need to open late or close due to emergency situations. WST, workforce center and partner staff are directed to monitor local radio and television stations for a determination as to whether or not to report to work. Any decision to close will be relayed to media for announcement by 7:00 a.m., if possible, to avoid placing employees "on the road" in hazardous conditions.

### **13.4.3 Staff Residing Outside Assigned Work Station**

Staff who reside in an area not affected by the weather closure or other adverse conditions but who work in an area that is affected will report to the nearest open workforce center in their area for work. For example, a WST employee who lives in Bonham who can not get into their assigned work station at the Board offices due to severe or adverse conditions may report to the Bonham workforce center for work.

### **13.4.4 Workforce Center Closure Notification**

Once a workforce center is closed, the facility will not be open to the public during that time. If employees must be at the center for whatever reason, a sign will be printed and posted in the front door announcing the closure due to inclement weather or other adverse conditions. Employees may work in their individual areas but should avoid turning on lights in public use areas such as the lobby and resource room to eliminate the perception that the center is open for business. For safety and security reasons, the public will not be allowed access to the center once it is declared closed.

## **13.5 INCIDENT RESPONSES**

### **13.5.1 FIRE**

Should a fire occur at WST or one of the workforce centers, the following procedures will be implemented:

- (1) If the fire can be extinguished by an employee with a fire extinguisher, the site manager will assess the degree of damage and in most cases, notify the fire department so the facility can be checked. Site manager is also responsible for notifying the Workforce Center Director and WST Executive Director of any fire and subsequent damage to a workforce center.
- (2) If the fire requires immediate emergency services:
  - Emergency services will be notified by making a 911 call.
  - The building will be evacuated with all persons assembling in the pre-assigned employee assembly areas as designated by evacuation diagrams located throughout the center pursuant to this Policy's Attachment 2 WST Building Evacuation Plan, and Attachments 3 Bonham; 4 Gainesville; and 5 Denison Workforce Centers Building Evacuation Plans. Upon reaching the pre-designated assembly areas, all employees are to report to their supervisor for a headcount to ensure evacuation of the building is complete.
  - Customers arriving at the affected center will be directed to one of the other workforce centers to receive services as necessary.
  - The site manager will be available to emergency services personnel to provide building information.
  - The site manager will contact the Workforce Center Director and WST Executive Director to determine whether or not to close the facility and release staff. This decision will be made based on the degree of damage and safety concerns. The Workforce Center Director, site managers, and/or designees will communicate any closure decisions to their staff.

Each site manager will publish and post fire evacuation routes at visible points throughout the centers.

If the facility must be closed due to fire damage, staff will report to the nearest workforce center to continue center operations.

### **13.5.2 POWER OUTAGE**

Power outages present a unique problem for workforce centers. A power outage, which occurs at the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) state office, can affect computer operations statewide. Local power outages also affect

computer operations and create additional concerns such as facility lighting and lack of heating or air conditioning.

When notice of 24 hours or more is provided to prepare for a local power interruption that affects WST or workforce center operations, staff will make preparations to continue business using paper documents, if at all possible.

If the power interruption is significant, the WST Executive Director or designee must be contacted to make a determination of center closure until power is restored. The safety and health of staff and clients, and the power company's projection for the length of outage will be considered in any decision to close the facility.

If the facility is closed, a sign will be placed on the entrance door notifying the public the facility is closed due to power outage. Telephone numbers of the other workforce centers will be printed on the sign for clients to contact. Management will release staff for the remainder of the business day or instruct them to report to one of the operational centers.

### **13.5.3       TERRORISM / CIVIL UNREST**

Acts of terrorism and civil unrest historically have not been a problem for residents of Texoma. However, with political turmoil around the world, employees need to be aware of their responsibilities to protect themselves and their co-workers. Staff are advised to be observant of changes in the working environment. If you notice anything out of the ordinary or notice anyone acting in an unusual manner, notify management immediately. The most important action any employee can take if they witness an act of terrorism/civil unrest is to contact the Police at 911 and report the incident. Then, immediately notify the site manager, the Workforce Center Director and the WST Executive Director of the actions taken. If necessary, follow police advice in an emergency evacuation of the building. TWC will notify the WST Executive Director if closure of all workforce centers is warranted statewide due to acts of terrorism. WST's Executive Director will immediately disseminate this information to the Workforce Center Director and site managers. Site managers are responsible for staff notification.

### **13.5.4       THREAT PROTOCOL**

The majority of threats that are called in to targets are made with the intent of disrupting normal business. **However, every threat must be considered real until investigated to ensure the safety of building occupants.** Normally, the call will be very brief, but if you do get a threatening call, attempt to keep the caller on the line and follow these procedures:

- A. Try to get as much information as possible. Use the Threat Checklist (Attachment 1) which is attached to this policy to assist in documenting information about any bomb threat or other imminent threat.
- B. Upon hanging up, immediately call **911** and give specific details. If possible, use a confidential manner of communication to reduce the possibility of panic.
- C. Notify the Site Manager that a bomb or other imminent threat to the center has been received.
- D. If the Site Manager is not available, contact the Workforce Systems Director or the WST Executive Director.
- E. The Site Manager or designee, in consultation with the individuals above, will make the decision about whether to evacuate the building.
- F. An announcement is made over the public address system in this manner: **"May I have your attention please? An emergency has been reported. Please evacuate the building by proceeding to the nearest exit."**
- G. Make a quick visual sweep of your area for any unusual items and proceed to the same designated gathering area identified in your Building Evacuation plan.
- H. As soon as possible, notify the WST Executive Director, or designee, of any threat to the WST or any of its workforce centers as soon as possible.

### **13.5.5 PANDEMIC INFLUENZA PROTOCOL**

In the event of an outbreak of Pandemic Flu in the Texoma area, it is necessary to create a Continuity of Operations (COO) plan to ensure the continuity of Texoma's employment and training-related services. It is estimated that as much as 30-50% of the state's workforce could be affected by such an event that could last as long as a year. In a proactive approach to an event of this type, WST has created a Pandemic Influenza Plan that can be seen as Attachment

### **13.5.6 BUILDING EVACUATION PROTOCOL**

Continuous sounding of the fire alarm and the flashing of the fire alarm strobe lights shall be the signal for **immediate evacuation** from the building. Staff will follow these procedures for immediate building evacuation:

- A. Evacuate the building immediately according to your evacuation route.

- B. Stop what you are doing and walk, do not run, to the exit. Close all doors behind you.
- C. Once evacuated, proceed to your designated gathering area.
- D. Report to your supervisor for a headcount. Visitors must report to the receptionist for a headcount.
- E. Do not re-enter the building until the all clear announcement is given by the emergency coordinator who is the WST Executive Director, site manager or Workforce Systems Director.
- F. All management staff will act as Fire wardens to assist in the evacuation process, and:
  - Ensure work areas are evacuated and doors are closed, not locked.
  - Ensure rest rooms are evacuated.
  - Coordinate assistance for injured or incapacitated personnel.
  - Report to the emergency coordinator on evacuation status and employees requiring assistance.
  - Fire wardens will confirm evacuation status of all employees.

### **13.6 RELOCATION SITES**

Relocation sites have been designated to provide an alternate site in instances where a local center is inoperable due to a disaster. The following guidelines will be used to assist staff in reporting to an alternate site:

#### **13.6.1 WST Relocation Site**

In the event the Workforce Board offices are inoperable, staff will report to the Denison Workforce Center, 2415 S. Austin Ave., Denison, Texas, (903) 463-9997.

#### **13.6.2 Denison Workforce Center Relocation Site**

In the event the Denison Workforce Center is inoperable, staff will report to the WST offices, 5904 Texoma Parkway, Sherman, Texas, (903) 957-7408. In most cases, staff will be dispersed from the board offices to perform regular duties at remaining operational centers in Texoma until such time as the Denison Center begins normal operations again or temporary office space can be acquired in the Sherman-Denison area.

#### **13.6.3 Bonham Workforce Center Relocation Site**

In the event the Bonham Workforce Center is inoperable, staff will report to the Denison Workforce Center, 2415 S. Austin Ave., Denison, Texas, (903) 463-9997. Staff will perform duties in Denison until such time as the Bonham Center is operational again.

#### **13.6.4 Gainesville Workforce Center Relocation Site**

In the event the Gainesville Workforce Center is inoperable, staff will report to the Denison Workforce Center, 2415 S. Austin Ave., Denison, Texas, (903) 463-9997. Staff will perform duties at the Denison center until such time as the Gainesville Center is operational again.

Under the guidance of WST's Executive Director, WST's Response Management Committee will make the decision for staff disbursement to other centers as outlined above. This information will be broadcast via media outlets as described in 13.3.3 above.

### **13.7 AUTOMATION DISASTER RECOVERY PROCEDURES**

The WST Disaster Recovery procedures are to be enacted in the event of a disaster to the Board's automated information systems. Data and software essential to the continued operation of critical agency functions is backed up. See WST Policy Information Security Systems, Chapter 9, Section 7 for backup details. The security controls over the backup resources will be as stringent as the protection required of the primary resources.

WST Computer Users must determine the criticality of data stored on the system and based upon its criticality rating, take appropriate measures to ensure its protection through backup procedures. LAN servers will be backed up on a scheduled basis, but this will not provide for a backup of data contained on users' hard drives. All data that has been saved to floppy disks will not be protected in the event of a disaster. If the data is critical to everyday operations, adequate backup should be scheduled as a routine part of operations. Backups are automatic for information stored on LAN Servers. Any information contained on users hard drives or on disks must be transferred nightly to the shared drive in order for back-up operation to function.

WST IT Manager will ensure Programmatic and Fiscal hard drives are backed up on a nightly basis and stored in a secure fire-proof safe. Protocols will be followed for rotation of data on a five-day back-up cycle with tapes being archived off-site as described in the Information Security Systems Policy 9.7. In the event of an emergency or disaster requiring evacuation of a facility, if at all possible, the IT Manager will ensure back-ups are transported to the designated evacuation site for staff access. If possible, laptops will be borrowed from the Center for Workplace Learning or from the Board to provide staff continuity of working environment. However, unless the evacuation site is either at WST or one of its workforce centers, staff will be unable to access TWC's automation systems, such as TWIST, JSMS, and the HHSC SAVERR and TIERS systems. If laptops can be procured for staff use that have available wireless or other Internet access capability, the *WorkInTexas* system can still be accessed to assist both employer and job seeker customers with their employment needs.

### **REFERENCES:**

TWC Program Grant/Cooperative Agreement 2507ABA000, 9/1/2006-8/31/2011

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1, Threat Checklist

Attachment 2, WST Building Evacuation Plan

Attachment 3, Bonham Workforce Center Building Evacuation Plan

Attachment 4, Gainesville Workforce Center Building Evacuation Plan

Attachment 5, Denison Workforce Center Building Evacuation Plan

Attachment 5, Pandemic Influenza Plan