

Introduction

The Sauk County Community Reunification Plan is designed to facilitate an efficient process for reunifying those separated from each other as a result of a disaster. The Sauk County Community Reunification Plan has been developed to enable Sauk County (Wisconsin) first responders to efficiently and safely assist with the process of reuniting individuals after a disaster. The model is consistent with the Sauk County Emergency Operations Plan and with Incident Command System (ICS) protocols as required by the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Goal

Assure that each Sauk County Community has a plan in place to provide a safe and efficient reunification process for family and group members when they arrive to be reunified following an emergency, disaster, or other challenging incident.

Objectives

- 1) Provide for the safety of staff and citizens throughout the reunification process.
- 2) Process and catalogue citizens to ensure accountability is maintained.
- 3) Determine a safe location where reunification can take place.
- 4) Maintain accurate documentation throughout the reunification process.
- 5) Establish clear communication with the Incident Commander for timely information exchange.

Community Reunification Center (CRC) Location

The location and physical requirements of this center may vary depending on the size and scope of reunification. At least three (3) Community Reunification Center (CRC) locations should be pre-determined and identified in a community plan. The CRC should, if at all possible, be located far enough from the incident so as not to interfere with the incident operations.

List three predetermined locations for your community (contact person(s), address, etc)

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Community Reunification Center (CRC) Needs

- The CRC must be large enough to handle the amount of citizens and staff that will be present during the process.
- Security should be immediately established to maintain control and a safe environment. If the disaster incident dictates necessity, all citizens and staff will be searched for weapons before entering the reunification center.

The Community Reunification Center (CRC) will be made up of five (5) separate rooms:

Registration Room/Area – This room/space will be used to register all citizens who arrive that are in need of reunification assistance. This room should have a separate exit that discretely leads to the Counseling Room.

Waiting Room/Area – This room/space will be used to hold citizens who have already been registered and are waiting for missing people(s) from their party to be located.

Communications Room – This room/space will be used to hold all needed communications equipment. It should be located far enough away from noise producing areas but as close as possible to the Registration Area/Room.

Counseling Room(s) – This room or multiple rooms should be arranged to facilitate the needs of citizens who will or have experienced tragic news. Separate exits should allow for citizens to discretely leave without media or crowds immediately present.

Staff and Supply Room – This room or multiple rooms will be used to receive needed supplies for the CRC – water, food, clothes, blankets, etc. This room will also serve as a break area and check in room for staff working the CRC.

To facilitate a smooth reunification process, the CRC requires several necessary items such as:

- Adequate seating area for all arrivals
- Private counseling rooms for officials to have one-on-one discussions with family members (these rooms should be in an area away from the remainder of the group)
- Tables and chairs for registration areas, food, and supplies
- Computers and printer, if possible
- Copier, if possible
- Wristbands with sign in / out forms
- Sharpie markers / pens
- Transportation, if needed
- Crowd control rope/tape to establish orderly lines
- Food and water if needed (remember to check for possible food allergies)
- Restrooms

Community Reunification Center (CRC) Organizational Structure

The organization of the CRC is based upon Incident Command System (ICS) principles (see Figure 1). All ICS positions for the CRC may not be needed; the Community Reunification Center Manager (CRCM) or designee will assume responsibility for unfilled positions.

Community Reunification Center Manager (CRCM) provides the overall supervision for the reunification plan and is therefore responsible for the overall effectiveness of the reunification duties and responsibilities such as:

- :
- Establishing objectives for the CRC as well as objectives for each operational period
 - Establish crisis counseling services as soon as possible
 - Assuring the system is adequately functioning
 - Problem-solving issues that can't be resolved at a lower level
 - Performing any necessary senior liaison and public information tasks
 - Addressing any safety issues for the CRC and families / students (unless delegated to a safety officer).

Public Information Officer (PIO) provides consistent, clear, and accurate information to the community as a whole. Duties and responsibilities shall consist of:

- Obtain briefing from Incident Commander.
- Establish staging area for media outlets.
- Identify systems to utilize to reach special needs / non-English speaking populations.
- By approval of Incident Commander, identify a "pool" reporter to broadcast from inside the CRC to educate citizens on the process.
- Prepare media releases in a timely manner (Establish a minimum frequency of releases).
- Monitor media for inaccurate information or rumors. Quickly contact media with accurate information when rumors develop.
- This position reports directly to the CRC Manager.

Registration Group (RG) duties and responsibilities shall consist of:

- The overall reception, cataloging, and briefing of all citizens who arrive.
- Establishing an identification system to ensure accountability.
- Citizens will give staff their ID (verbal identification if ID card is missing) and staff will print information requested on form. Registered citizens will be given a wristband to assist in maintaining a secure site.

Yellow Wristband – Citizens

Blue Wristband – Staff working at the CRC

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- When citizens are reunited with their family or group, a photograph will be taken of the group prior to being discharged from the CRC. Someone in the photograph will hold a sheet of paper that has a number clearly visible on it. That number will correspond to the sign in form(s) for the people in the group.
- The SPG / PPG report directly to the Family Reunification Center Manager (FRCM).

Missing Person Task Force (MPTF) duties and responsibilities shall consist of:

- Interview the citizen(s) who are reporting missing person(s).
- Obtain the missing person(s) information such as:
 - Name
 - Gender
 - Skin color / ethnicity / race
 - Age
 - Height and weight
 - Their address and phone number
 - Special needs
 - Clothing – hat, shirt, pants/shorts, shoes
 - Hair color and style
 - Eye color
 - Facial hair
 - Jewelry/piercings
 - Tattoos (location and of what)
 - Scars (location)
 - Birthmarks
- The MPTF reports directly to the Registration Group (RG) Supervisor.

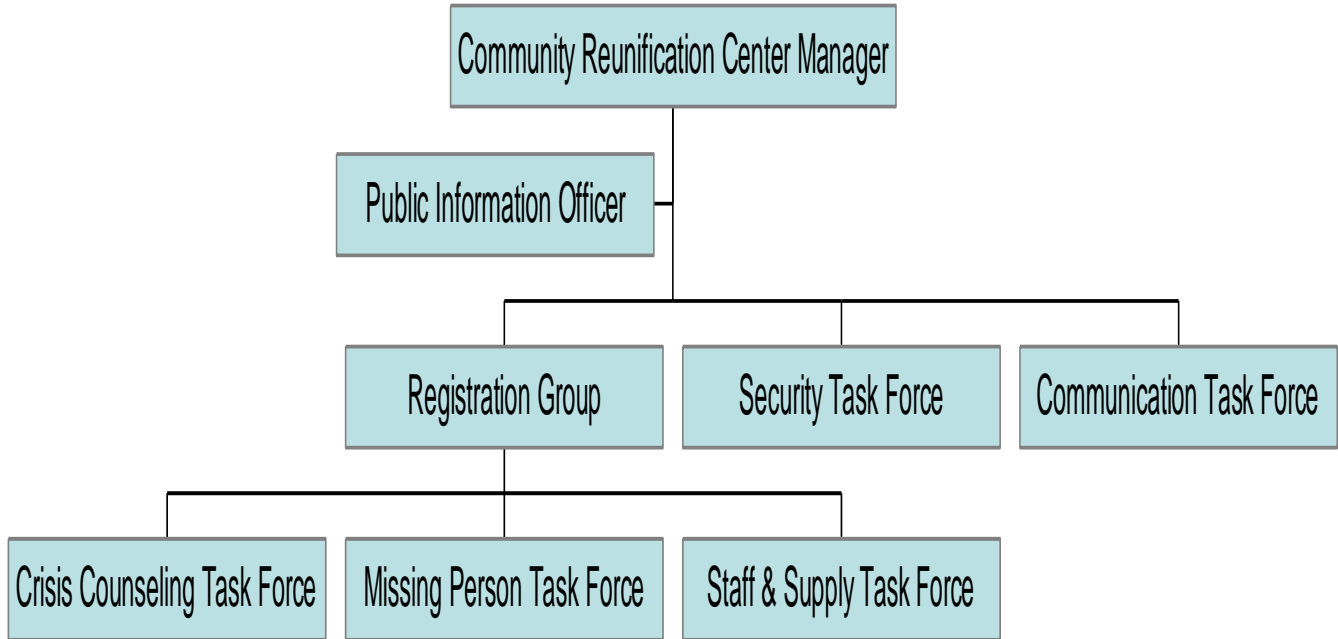
Security Task Force (STF) duties and responsibilities shall consist of:

- The safety of everyone in the Community Reunification Center (CRC). Particular attention should be placed on ingress / egress routes to the CRC as well as monitoring of outside areas to include the parking areas.
- The Task Force Leader should be a Law Enforcement Officer. The STF will be comprised of staff from several agencies. Not all members of the STF have to be Law Enforcement.
- If the incident dictates, everyone who enters the CRC will be searched for weapons.
- The STF reports directly to the Community Reunification Center Manager (CRCM).

Crisis Counseling Task Force (CCTF) duties and responsibilities shall consist of:

- Crisis counseling needs for citizens and staff of the CRC.
- The CCTF staff should be trained in crisis counseling and made available as soon as possible. The CCTF may include Clergy, Social Workers, Psychologists, Psychiatrists, etc.
- The CCTF reports directly to the Registration Group (RG) Supervisor.

Community Reunification Center ICS - Figure 1



Abbreviations

CRCM – Community Reunification Center Manager

PIO – Public Information Officer

RG – Registration Group

MPTF – Missing Person Task Force

CCTF – Crisis Counseling Task Force

STF – Security Task Force

CTF – Communications Task Force

SSR – Staff and Supply Room

JOB ACTION SHEETS

Remove the Job Action Sheets and Issue to each person in charge of an area

Community Reunification Center Manager Job Action Sheet

- Determine if building has the appropriate space for the rooms needed:
 - Registration Room/Area
 - Waiting Room/Area
 - Communications Room
 - Counseling Room(s)
 - Staff and Supply Room
- Establish communications with incident command post.
- Assign staff members to get essential supplies to meet reunification needs
 - Tables and chairs for registration areas, food, and supplies
 - Computers and printer, if possible
 - Copier, if possible
 - Wristbands with sign in / out forms
 - Sharpie markers / pens
 - Transportation, if needed
 - Crowd control rope/tape to establish orderly lines
 - Food and water if needed (remember to check for possible food allergies)
- Develop incident objectives to meet needs of reunification.
- Develop ICS organizational structure. (See ICS structure above.)
- Assign staff to positions based on knowledge, skills, and ability.
- Develop an integrated communications plan.
- Ensure security is established at all entrances / exits before students / families arrive.
- Identify staging area for media and notify PIO
- Brief staff on incident and reporting instructions.
- **Monitor communications** and assess effectiveness of incident objectives.

Public Information Officer (PIO) Job Action Sheet

Your primary objective is to provide consistent, clear, and accurate information to the community as a whole. Duties and responsibilities shall consist of:

- Obtain briefing from Incident Commander.
- Establish staging area for media outlets.
- Identify systems to utilize to reach special needs / non-English speaking populations.
- By approval of Incident Commander, identify a “pool” reporter to broadcast from inside the CRC to educate citizens on the process.
- Prepare media releases in a timely manner (Establish a minimum frequency of releases).
- Monitor media for inaccurate information or rumors. Quickly contact media with accurate information when rumors develop.
- This position reports directly to the CRC Manager.

Registration Group Job Action Sheet

Your primary objective will be to register every citizen who comes to the CRC looking for a loved one. You will issue them a yellow wristband or use a marker to denote they have been registered. After registration is complete, send the person(s) to the Missing Person(s) Task Force area.

One person should be in charge of this group. This person will be referred to as the Registration Group Supervisor. This supervisor reports directly to the CRC Manager.

Items needed for the Registration Group:

- A room(s) big enough to handle the number of possible citizens.
- Chairs set up to meet the number of citizens.
- Table and chairs set up for staff working at the sign in tables.
- Sign in sheets, public safety radios / communication system, post-it notes, **yellow wristbands**, and pens, should be available at sign in table.
- Post it notes placed on wall with each individual letter of alphabet A – Z.
- Citizens must be signed in on sign in form.
- Signage or staff positioned so arriving citizen(s) know where to go.
- Citizens will give staff their ID (*verbal identification if ID card is missing*) and staff will print that information on the sign in form. Registered citizens will be given a wristband to assist in maintaining a secure site.

Yellow Wristband – Citizens

Blue Wristband – Staff working at the CRC

- When citizens are reunited with their family or group, a photograph will be taken of the group prior to being discharged from the CRC. Someone in the photograph will hold a sheet of paper that has a number clearly visible on it. That number will correspond to the sign in form(s) for the people in the group.
- Remove the wristband prior to citizens being discharged from the CRC.
- After citizen is registered, send them to the Missing Person(s) Task Force
- Registered citizens will wait in the Waiting Room/Area until they are reunited with their party
- Any registered citizen who wishes to leave the CRC prior to being reunited with their missing party can do so. Attempt to gather the best way to contact the citizen if needed. Instruct them to stay away from the incident location.

Missing Person Task Force (MPTF) Job Action Sheet

Your primary objective will be to document all the person(s) who are reported missing. To help locate the missing, we need as much information about their last known location and what they look like and are wearing.

- After a citizen has been registered in the Registration Room/Area, they will come here to the Missing Persons Task Force.
- The Registration Room/Area and Missing Person Task Force can be together in the same area. One staff member could register someone and then interview them for who they are missing.
- Interview the citizen(s) who are reporting missing person(s).
- Obtain the missing person(s) information such as:
 - Name
 - Gender
 - Skin color / ethnicity / race
 - Age
 - Height
 - Weight
 - Their address and phone number
 - Special needs
 - Clothing – hat, shirt, pants/shorts, shoes
 - Hair color
 - Hair style
 - Eye color
 - Glasses?
 - Facial hair
 - Jewelry/piercings
 - Tattoos (location and of what)
 - Scars (location)
 - Birthmarks
- Maintain current records of total numbers of missing persons
- Make copies, as needed, of the Missing Persons Report so they can be issued to the Incident Commander to help facilitate locating the Missing Person(s).
- The MPTF reports directly to the Registration Group (RG) Supervisor.

Crisis Counseling Task Force Job Action Sheet

Your primary objective is to provide for the mental health of all citizens and staff at the Community Reunification Center (CRC). Citizens may receive tragic news and you will be important to have present during their time of crisis. Staff may become overwhelmed by their duties and you will be needed to assist with maintaining mental wellness.

- Report to Community Reunification Center Manager and get job assignment / room(s) location / sign in.
- Identify integrated communications devices (cell phone, face-to-face, radio) needed to maintain situational awareness and be contacted.
- Ensure counseling room(s) is/are set up and ready for use.
- Make contact with citizens and staff to monitor individuals for mental health issues
- Utilize critical incident stress debriefing tools when necessary.
- Maintain appropriate records when providing counseling services.
- Report any problems / issues to your ICS supervisor.

Security Task Force (STF) Job Action Sheet

Your primary objective is to maintain peace, good order, and safety of the Community Reunification Center (CRC).

- Address any disturbances that may develop and use your skill as a mediator to calm the disruption.
- If the incident dictates, everyone who enters the CRC will be searched for weapons. This will be decided by you and the CRC Manager.
- You will assist with directing people to where they should go.
- You will not allow any unauthorized people to enter the CRC.
- You report directly to the CRC Manager.
- Particular attention should be placed on ingress / egress routes to the CRC as well as monitoring of outside areas to include the parking areas.
- The Task Force Leader should be a Law Enforcement Officer.

Communications Task Force (CTF) Job Action Sheet

Your primary objective is to coordinate effective communications between the Community Reunification Center and the Incident Commander.

The manner in which communications will take place depends a lot on the type of incident that took place. Options for effective communications are as follows:

- Cell phones
- Landline phones
- Two way radios
- Text Messaging
- Facsimile
- Electronic Mail
- Face-to-face (runners)

Note – during most large incidents communications is critically important and is usually the first area that falls apart or fails. Maintaining accurate notes and addressing communications deficiencies are two important elements to preserving effective communications.

Staff and Supply Room (SSR) Job Action Sheet

Your primary objective is to register all persons who arrive that will be working at the Community Reunification Center (CRC). You will also maintain an inventory of needed supplies for the CRC.

- Tables and chairs for registration areas, food, and supplies
- Computers and printer, if possible
- Copier, if possible
- Wristbands with sign in / out forms
- Sharpie markers / pens
- Transportation, if needed
- Crowd control rope/tape to establish orderly lines
- Food and water if needed (remember to check for possible food allergies)

All staff working the CRC must wear a **Blue wristband**. If wristbands are not available, then a mark on the back of their right hand must be made with a permanent marker.

