



Tick Tock Training

Child Care Emergency Preparedness

Creating and Using a

Child Care Occupant Emergency Plan Checklist (OEP)

Security and emergency preparedness at work, at home, and in the community is everyone's responsibility. It requires coordinated prevention, protection, response, and recovery activities that span the preparedness spectrum.

In the workplace, occupants need to understand the nature of potential emergencies and what actions to take if emergencies do occur. Life safety, communication, efficiency, and roles and responsibilities are critical components to enhancing the security and preparedness of facility occupants.

Occupant Emergency Plans (OEPs) are used to address preparedness, and must be written, implemented, and maintained. OEPs require coordination among facility management and occupants, as well as with external emergency response resources. They describe actions that occupants should take to ensure their safety if emergency situation occurs. These plans reduce the threat to people, property, and other assets within the facility in the event of an incident inside or immediately surrounding a facility by providing facility-specific response procedures.

To be most effective at protecting life and property, all OEPs will:

- Provide clear instruction on roles and responsibilities for all aspects of the preparedness spectrum, from prevention and protection to response and recovery. Answer this? Who is responsible for calling for help, who is responsible for face to face contact with a dangerous or suspicious person, who is responsible for conducting drills or practice sessions? Etc..

- Use an approach that includes procedures to handle a wide range of hazards and threats - such as medical emergencies, bomb threats, van breaking down while on the road and full of children, suspicious packages, and natural disasters - that could affect a facility.
- Meet the specific characteristics, needs, and criteria for each facility. For example, location-specific procedures are added to address unique threats or hazards such as hazardous materials spills or releases of radioactive materials from within or surrounding the facility. If you are near a prison or jail, what do you do if a prisoner escapes?
- Involve coordination with local emergency responders. Have the local police come to a staff meeting and talk to you and your staff about these possible events.

This training will help you to create a checklist and USE IT! This checklist can be used to improve current policy, procedures and practices related to emergency preparedness. Providers should use this tool to review their OEP at the minimum annually to ensure completeness and accuracy.

Your facility should already have a written OEP. Your job is to make sure that the OEP answers all of the questions in this training. Please ask your Director for a copy of the plan if you do not already have one. Then, check the plan against the questions that follow. Now is a great time to ask your Director any questions that you do not understand. If your facility does not have a plan, you must create one! The safety of every child and staff in your facility depends on it.

1. Know your risks

- What natural disasters and manmade emergencies may occur in your area?
Do you have a plan for all potential weather emergencies, medical emergencies, fire, protests, chemical or biological threats, bomb threats, suspicious package, missing children, van breaking down, hostage situation or terrorist activity?
- How does your program address disturbances from staff or parents?
- Do you know the risks specific to the locality of your center? For example, are you near public transportation, a prison or jail, a fault line, or a potential flood zone from a nearby river? Is there a heightened alert in your community?
- Do you share space with a church or other building? Do you know who to coordinate with in your building? Do you know your designated official (DO), floor wardens (if applicable), property manager, and Federal Protective Service (FPS) contacts? And how can they help you prepare for emergencies?
- Are you involved in the facility security committee at your building?
- What types of local alerts do you get or how do you receive word about potential emergencies?

2. Plan Ahead

- Do you know who has the authority to order an evacuation or shelter in place?
- Have you created a chain of command so that others are authorized to act in case your designated official (DO) is not available? Most schools have Director, Assistant Director, and then a specific Teacher In Charge – also known as the TIC. A chain of command is a written order of names that show the staff who is in charge at that very moment.
- Do you know who is in your building, including parents and visitors, in case there is an emergency?
- Do you know who is responsible for determining the building is safe and can be re-occupied?
- Who provides an all-clear or return-to-work notification? The agency or the provider? How do you get this message back to parents or teachers.
- Have you assigned roles and responsibilities during an emergency? Are there designated back-ups in case the person is unavailable? A designated back-up is a person that will fulfill a duty if the person in charge is no longer able to do so. What happens if the director and assistant director are not available?
- What is the role for the person who gets the call regarding building related or emergency related incidents?
- Do you have a comprehensive plan that covers what you will do in the event of the different kinds of emergencies your center may encounter?

- Do you have two egress routes out of your building? Two separate ways to get out in case one way is blocked.
- Do you have at least two remote relocation sites, one further away than a typical building evacuation would require?
- Have you contacted your relocation site twice in the last year to ensure it is still available and they know to expect you? Do not just expect a location that you choose to accept you.
- Does your plan include maps of the walking routes?
- Are evacuation routes posted in all rooms of the facility for quick reference? Have you identified and clearly marked on the map locations of fire extinguishers, fire alarms and emergency shut off valves?
- Do you know if and when your evacuation will require transportation? If getting everyone out of the area is needed, how will it be coordinated? Does staff have the necessary paperwork if they will drive children?
- Have you identified a shelter in place (SIP) area in case the conditions outside are more dangerous than inside the building, such as a natural disaster, weather emergency, or disturbance near or within the building?
- Do you have a plan for children and adults with special needs? How will you accommodate for special transportation or medication needs?
- Do you have a plan for emergencies during field trips?
- What is the reunification plan with parents? Will parents be able to take their children before you reach your designated assembly area?
- **Be prepared to care for children for up to 72 hours.** How will you provide care for up to 72 hours?
- If families cannot get to their children within 72 hours, what is the plan?
- Does the staff have a plan for their own personal families while they are caring for the children at the childcare center? Someone ELSE must care for their families at home and throughout the emergency while they are doing their jobs at the center during an emergency.
- What is the expectation of staff who need to get home to care for their own families?

- Who else is available to call on to help in the event of an emergency? Other agencies in the building may be available to help in an evacuation. How is this coordinated and approved?
- Have you identified the vital records for your program's operation and how have you prepared to access them in an emergency? Are back-up copies stored at an off-site location?
- What is your process to continuously maintain the plan, keep it current and relevant?
- How can your corporate office or board offer support during an emergency?
- What is your medication management plan? What is your protocol if medication is mismanaged?
- Does someone besides the director and assistant director have access to safeguarded information such as secured files with where staff information is stored?

3. Plan for emergency communication

- Do you have at least 3 emergency contact numbers for each child? This is one of the most important things a teacher must have.
- Are family phone numbers easily accessible and updated regularly?
Where do you keep the information? How do you verify they are correct?
- Do you update the information quarterly? Who is responsible to update the information?
- How are parents notified if an emergency occurs?
- Does the center have the means to do a mass emergency alert via text, voice mail etc?
- What if the event occurs in the middle of the night and the center will not be open? Do you have information at home? How do you ensure people receive the information without going in to the center?
- How does building personnel (lessor or property manager) communicate emergencies to you?
- Who is the center responsible for communicating with (staff, parents, GSA, what about board and federal agency liaison)?
- Do you have an out-of-area emergency contact that parents can call to receive information?
- Have you contacted the out-of-area emergency contact to verify information and agreed process for receiving calls and relaying information in an emergency? What information do you want them to relay to parents? What if parents call them before you do? How often do you practice your emergency call system with parents and staff?

- Do you have speaker systems in the center and on the playground? How do you get information to those groups outdoors?
- Do you post a daily “person in charge” notice in a highly visible area in the center?
- Do you have multiple forms of communication in your emergency bag: cell phone, calling card, radio, walkie-talkie and building radio (if available)?
- How will you close the loop and communicate with GSA and your off-site emergency contact after you have relocated?
- How will you communicate with parents your operating status/ when you plan to reopen? Plan for several ways; website, outgoing message, e-mail, etc.
- What is your process for communicating with the media?

4. Prepare a Portable Emergency Supply Kit

- Do you have an emergency fly away kit/ emergency supply kit?
- Who is responsible for stocking the kits? How often do you inventory and monitor perishable items?
- Who is responsible for gathering the emergency kits during evacuation?
- How will transport your emergency supplies?
- Have you also pre-positioned supplies at your remote locations?
- Does your emergency kit have enough supplies to care for children up to 72 hours?

5. Prepare staff, children, and families

- How often do you practice the plan? In addition to monthly fire drills, do you practice other types of drills?
- Do you test the emergency notification system frequently?
- Do you practice evacuating to your relocation sites?
- Do you have emergency cards with all emergency phone numbers and relocation sites available for parents? How do parents know how to contact you in the event of an emergency?
- Do you review the OEP with your staff, discuss emergency procedures, and make changes to the policy? Are you doing this at least semi-annually or regularly during staff meetings?
- Does new staff receive orientation and training on the OEP before they begin working in the center? What systems are in place to monitor staff have received the orientation?
- Do you and your staff have current first aid and pediatric CPR training?
- Are procedures clearly communicated to staff in writing? Does the staff know their responsibilities in the event of an emergency?
- How do you provide parents with information on your emergency preparedness? Do you share this information through tours, parent events, or memos?
- Do parents know when you have practice drills or contact information verification drills?
- Where do you get local emergency information? Do you subscribe or get up to date information from emergency preparedness organizations?
- Have you prepared staff to respond to the emotional needs of children after an emergency?
- How will you address the staff's own emotional needs?