



**OC HEALTH CARE AGENCY
CRISIS AND EMERGENCY RISK
COMMUNICATION PLAN
(HCA-CERCP)**

Annex to the HCA Emergency Operations Plan

April 2018

Table of Contents

Section One: Situation and Assumptions	3
I . Purpose:	3
II . Scope:	3
III. Situation and Assumptions.....	3
A. Situation:.....	3
B. Assumptions:.....	3
IV. HCA Emergency Operations Plan Development and Maintenance:	3
Section Two: Concept of Operations	Error! Bookmark not defined.6
I .HCA’s Responsibilities to the Operational Area.....	6
A . Public Health Officer	6

Section One: Situation and Assumptions

I. Purpose

The purpose of the HCA's Crisis and Emergency Response Communications Plan (HCA-CERCP) is to:

1. Formulate communications policy and objectives relating to the particular emergency or disaster.
2. Educate, inform, and protect individuals within Orange County from potential or further exposure to extreme public health risks.
3. Recommend and promote appropriate public health actions to the public.
4. Maintain and increase the public's confidence and cooperation by communicating credible information in a timely manner.

II. Scope

This plan is an Annex to the HCA Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and is intended to serve as a supporting document to help HCA disseminate coordinated public information during a public health emergency. Establishing a well-organized Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication Plan is essential for HCA to communicate messages and vital information that are empathetic, timely, accurate, culturally sensitive, and action-oriented to the public in order to reduce morbidity and mortality.

III. Situation and Assumptions

A. Situation

HCA may be called upon under a number of emergency circumstances to provide essential health care services to the people of Orange County. Communication plays a critical role in facilitating a comprehensive response and recovery effort to a public health emergency. Providing the public with accurate and timely information during a public health emergency will increase OCHCA's credibility and help afford the public the opportunity to make informed decisions about their health and safety.

B. Assumptions

1. Implementation of the HCA-CERCP may mitigate or reduce the health impact of any hazard or threat affecting Orange County and its neighboring jurisdictions by supporting the dissemination of public information.
2. All HCA service areas have unique public information needs and public information needs are often event specific.
3. The HCA-CERCP works in conjunction with the HCA EOP, the County of Orange and Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan and annexes, and HCA service area standard operating procedures.
4. Although the Public Information Officer (PIO) has overall responsibility for ensuring accurate and timely public information, the PIO is not expected to perform these tasks independently.
5. It is not the intention of this plan to provide guidance on the day-to-day operations for communications at HCA.

IV. OC Health Care Agency Crisis Emergency and Risk Communication Plan and Maintenance

The HCA-CERCP shall be reviewed and revised annually or earlier if necessary. All requests for changes to the HCA-CERCP shall be submitted to, documented and maintained by the Health Policy, Research and Communications division of the Director's Office.

Section Two: Concept of Operations

I. Initial Notification and Activation Procedures

Notification of a Public Health Emergency can be received by the HCA Public Health Officer and other HCA personnel through numerous channels. Additionally, the HCA Public Health Officer can declare a Public Health Emergency if the community is at risk from a public health threat. The HCA Public Health Officer, or the lead responding HCA personnel, is responsible for verifying the magnitude of the event and, if necessary, activating an Incident Command System (ICS). The Incident Commander shall staff the PIO position **within one hour** of the establishment of incident command (IC) to manage the public information process and media response, draft and distribute accurate messages to the media **within two hours** of established (IC) and have the capability to lead the agency in the execution of a news conference **within four hours** of established IC.

Options for physical location of an HCA-led news conference include, but are not limited to:

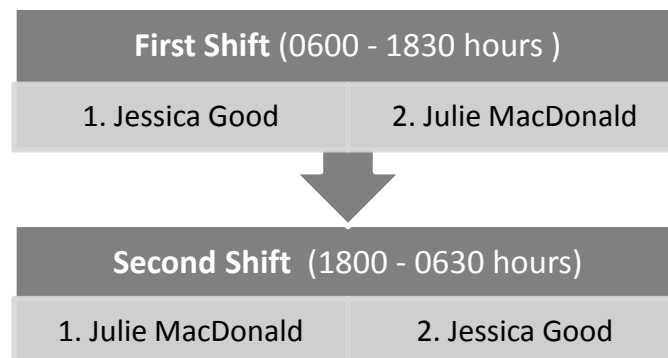
- Room 169, 1st floor, Hall of Administration, 333 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Santa Ana, CA 92701
- Conference Room A or B, 5th floor, Hall of Administration, 333 W. Santa Ana Blvd., Santa Ana, CA 92701
- Lobby, 1st floor, Health Care Agency Headquarters, 405 W. 5th St., Santa Ana, CA 92701

Based on the size and scope of the public health emergency, the PIO will activate the HCA-CERCP and the mass notification procedures (See Appendix A: Mass Notification Systems), to inform and direct HCA staff as well as determine if activation of the Joint Information System (JIS) is required to meet public information needs.

Upon notification of a disaster or emergency situation, HCA's on-call PIO will notify the Chief of the Health Policy, Research and Communications division of the Director's Office, the backup HCA PIO, as well as the PIO of the County Executive Office (if needed) to acquire adequate public information personnel for the Health Emergency Operations Center (HEOC). If the County EOC is also activated, the Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD) may request that the HCA PIO (and backup) report to that facility instead of the HEOC to provide countywide support and coverage. In that event, the HCA PIO will seek direction from the HCA Assistant Director regarding PIO coverage at the HEOC and EOC.

II. Staffing

The Agency's HEOC Organization Chart (See HCA EOP: Appendix C: Organizational Chart) shows the lines of communications and reporting responsibilities for all HEOC personnel. The following schedule has established initial PIO staffing of the HEOC:



E. Public Information Officer

- Issues press, social media, radio, and/or television announcements or instructions to the public in coordination with HCA service areas and in accordance with Agency and County policies.
- Serves as the Public Information Officer located at the OA EOC, and/or Joint Information Center (JIC) when activated.
- Participates in the JIC, when established.
- Manages all aspects of emergency media relations related to Agency functions.
- When the OA EOC is activated, all media inquiries may be handled through the CEO, Incident Commander, or Sheriff, in accordance with established County policy, and under the direction of the designated Director of Emergency Services. If activated, media inquiries will be handled through the JIC.

III. Communication Resources

A variety of distribution channels and lists exist that the HCA PIO may utilize during an event or disaster in order to communicate with internal and external audiences. Those include:

- AlertHCA: Contact HCA employees, partners, and stakeholders. See Appendix A: Mass Notification Systems
- AlertOC: Through the OCSD's Emergency Management Division, mass notification for individuals registered for emergency information in Orange County
- City PIO email distribution list in Outlook
- County of Orange social media sites:
 - HCA's Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ochealth>
 - HCA's Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ochealthinfo>
 - OCSD's Twitter: <https://twitter.com/orangecountyec>
- HCA-issued radio
- HCA's press release distribution list, accessible via www.mailchimp.com
- Hospital PIO email distribution list in Outlook
- ReddiNet: Direct messaging to hospital emergency rooms, paramedics and dispatch centers

IV. Disabilities or Access and Functional Needs

In connection with the County of Orange, HCA incorporates the Whole Community perspective in its emergency planning. By planning for the Whole Community, complexities in the diversity in Orange County are assimilated into the County planning strategy. HCA serves and participates as an agent of the County of Orange.

The contact information for Orange County organizations that support and/or advocate for persons with disabilities or access and functional needs are included in multiple distribution channels. Those organizations are on distribution lists that will receive HCA PIO communications intended for the whole community.

V. Back-up Systems

A. Disseminating Information in an Electrical Outage

- Radio, newspapers, and internet news sites
- Bull horn or vehicle PA systems (Orange County OA and first responders)
- AlertHCA: Contact HCA employees, partners, and stakeholders. See Appendix A: Mass Notification Systems
- Community phone bank (Orange County OA)
- Hospital and Health Care Coalition partners.
- Community Hotline (211/311)
- Volunteer groups (Medical Reserve Corps, Community Emergency Response Team, Citizen Corps)
- Church bulletins, Posting of notices on local community buildings

Appendix A: Mass Notification System

AlertHCA

AlertHCA is a mass notification system that operates in a similar fashion to AlertOC. The system's focus is on HCA's employees and partners. It can also be used for general agency information sharing among programs as well as use during times of emergency.

Currently it is expected that employees will enter all available work information upon registration to ensure notification during working hours. It is optional, but highly encouraged that employees enter personal contact information as well to ensure notification of emergencies that may or may not affect their ability to report to work.

The system is maintained by HCA's Emergency Medical Services Division. The Administrator is Mike Chiles, who may be reached by email at mchiles@ochca.com, desk phone at (714) 560-6103, and cell phone at (714) 620-4798. If you have not registered, please contact him and he can assist you.

Appendix B: Social Media Public Information Messages

Social media public information templates exist for some of the top jurisdictional hazards for Orange County. These templates have been customized for HCA and should be utilized in conjunction with approved press releases and other public information. Messages are designed to be edited and messages should be tailored for the specific incident.

I. Social Media Public Information Messages

Facebook and Twitter public information messages have been developed for the following local hazards:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Anthrax (inhalation) | Chlorine | Ricin |
| Boil Water Advisory | Cyanide | Sarin |
| Botulism | Point of Dispensing | Sulfur Gas |
| Brucellosis (inhalation) | Flooding | VX (chemical) |
| Chemical (evacuation) | Phosgene | Wild Fires |
| Chemical (shelter-in-place) | Recent Heavy Rains | Ricin |

II. Composition of Social Media Public Information Message

	INCIDENT	MAJOR ISSUE #1	MAJOR ISSUE #2	MAJOR ISSUE #3	MAJOR ISSUE #4	MAJOR ISSUE #5
		What is Anthrax?	Symptoms of Anthrax	Transmission of Anthrax	Treatment of Anthrax	Additional Information
SUPPORTING POINT #1	Local authorities believe that people who were at (insert location) on (insert date and time) may have been exposed to inhalation anthrax.	Anthrax is an acute infectious disease caused by the spore-forming bacterium <i>Bacillus anthracis</i> . Anthrax most commonly occurs in hooved mammals and can also infect humans.	Symptoms of disease vary depending on how the disease was contracted, but usually occur within 7 days after exposure. The serious forms of human anthrax are inhalation anthrax, cutaneous anthrax, and intestinal anthrax.	Direct person-to-person spread of anthrax is extremely unlikely, if it occurs at all. Therefore, there is no need to immunize or treat contacts of those ill with anthrax, such as household contacts, friends, or coworkers, unless they also were also exposed to the same source of infection.	In persons exposed to anthrax, infection can be prevented with antibiotic treatment. Early antibiotic treatment of anthrax is essential – delay lessens chances for survival. Anthrax usually is susceptible to penicillin, doxycycline, and fluoroquinolones.	Please stay tuned to local radio, TV stations, and trusted social media sources for more information.
<i>Character Count</i>	138	170	220	291	254	102
SUPPORTING POINT #2	Public Health and other local authorities are investigating this incident.		Initial symptoms of inhalation anthrax infection may resemble a common cold. After several days, the symptoms may progress to severe breathing problems and shock. Inhalation anthrax is often fatal.			The Orange County Health Care Agency will be using this Facebook page to answer questions and track public concern.
<i>Character Count</i>	73		198			116
SUPPORTING POINT #3	If you believe you have been exposed, or if you have any of the symptoms associated with inhalation anthrax, please see your doctor immediately.		The intestinal disease form of anthrax may follow the consumption of contaminated food and is characterized by an acute inflammation of the intestinal tract. Initial signs of nausea, loss of appetite, vomiting, and fever are followed by abdominal pain, vomiting of blood, and severe diarrhea.			Please visit http://ochealthinfo.com/ for additional and updated information.
<i>Character Count</i>	140		292			87

Each message template is a Word.doc and contains the following information for both Facebook and Twitter messages:

- Incident: Directly states known information about the situation
- Major Issue(s): Topics that PIO wants to provide more information to support the understanding of the incident
- Supporting Point(s): Each major issue contains at least one supporting point to provide further information regarding that major issues (ex: help explain the major issue, provide an action relating to that major issue, etc)
- Character Count: Totals the number of characters used in each message box

III. How to Utilize Social Media Public Information Message

Social media public information messages are stored in two locations:

1. The HCA HDM Shared Drive (U:\HSOC\HEOC\Management\Social Media Public Information Messages)
2. EOP Flash Drives distributed to key HCA response personnel

To utilize social media public information templates, simply copy and paste the desired phrases into the Facebook or Twitter application of choice. Fill in any missing information and edit messages as situation dictates before disseminating via Facebook and/or Twitter.

Appendix C: Glossary and Definitions

AlertHCA: AlertHCA is a mass notification system designed to keep HCA staff informed of emergencies and certain events. AlertHCA may be utilized as an initial notification to activate HCA certain response personnel.

CAHAN (California Health Alert Network): CAHAN is the State of California's web-based information and communications system available on a 24/7/365 basis for distribution of health alerts, dissemination of prevention guidelines, coordination of disease investigation efforts, preparedness planning, and other initiatives that strengthen state and local preparedness. CAHAN participants have the ability to receive alerts and notifications via alphanumeric pager, e-mail, fax, and phone (cellular and landline).

EMS (Emergency Medical Services): Plans, coordinates and regulates the County's emergency medical services system and its participants. The Emergency Management section plans and prepares for emergencies and disasters that have a health & medical impact on the community and the medical and health system.

HCA EOP (Health Care Agency Emergency Operations Plan): Provides guidance for all of the HCA's preparedness, response, and recovery to emergencies by establishing guidelines, procedures and assigning responsibilities to meet the health care needs of our community when confronted by the impact of a natural or technological emergency.

HEOC (Health Emergency Operations Center): Serves as the centralized point to manage HCA's response to major health emergencies. The Health Emergency Operations Center is responsible for coordinating HCA program response activities, implementing HCA policy directives, determining the mission and priorities of response, coordinating field response operations, engaging in long-range planning and coordination with external partners and agencies, and providing direction and authority to act.

JIC (Joint Information Center): Physical location, usually established in the Emergency Operations Center, where information management activities are performed.

OA EOC (Operational Area Emergency Operation Center): The physical location at which the coordination of information and resources to support incident management (on-scene operations) activities normally takes place.

PIO (Public Information Officer): Prepares news releases, information, interviews, and publications of public safety or health-related information to enhance awareness of the public. The Public Information Officer is responsible for communications with media and may field questions at press conferences.