

EXTERNAL DISASTER EMERGENCY PLAN — CODE ORANGE PLAN

Purpose

The policy provides guidelines for staff to respond and manage an external disaster (such as a community disaster, natural disaster or extreme weather event) to ensure the safety and security of residents, staff members, volunteers and visitors in the Homes.

Note: This emergency plan does not cover a response to a Chemical-Biological-Nuclear-Radiological Emergency. More information can be found at [Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca).

DEFINITIONS At the end of the document

Policy

The key requirements of this policy are:

1. **Activation:** *External Disaster Emergency Plan (CODE ORANGE)* may be activated by the Charge Nurse (if there is an immediate threat to the Home) or the Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours) once they receive notification of an external emergency
2. **Duty to respond:** All staff have a duty to support and respond to a CODE ORANGE
3. **Equipment and Supplies:** The Homes will ensure staff have access to resources, supplies, personal protective equipment, and equipment to adequately respond to a CODE ORANGE
4. **Communications:** The Homes will be equipped with an effective public address system for announcing CODE ORANGE to those in the Home
5. **Reporting:** The Home must report a critical incident that presents an emergency to the Ministry of Long-Term Care immediately
6. **Education and Training:** All staff, students and volunteers will receive orientation training and annual retraining on emergency and evacuation procedures

PARAMEDIC AND SENIORS SERVICES

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Procedures

This section contains procedures for the following:

- A. Activating and responding to a CODE ORANGE
- B. During a CODE ORANGE
- C. Ending a CODE ORANGE
- D. Post CODE ORANGE Procedures and Documentation

A. Activating and responding to a CODE ORANGE

A staff member, student or volunteer will:

- Upon becoming aware of a potential external disaster, immediately contact the Charge Nurse and provide information about the external disaster (including source, such as a news site or emergency alert on their phone)

A Charge Nurse (or designate) will:

- In situations where there is an immediate threat to the Home (such as threat to life or safety), determine the Home-level response by following procedures for the Administrator or the Manager-on-call below
- Otherwise, as soon as it is safe to do so or when there is not an immediate threat to the Home notify the Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours)

The Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours) will:

- Determine whether the external disaster requires a Home-level response such as:
 - A need to shelter in place
 - A need for staff to prepare for an influx of individuals in the Home (who may need to seek shelter) or external residents
 - A need to evacuate the Home. See *Evacuation Plan – CODE GREEN (Policy and Procedures)*
 - A need to close the building to non-essential personnel
 - A need to activate the *Emergency Communications Plan* to notify stakeholders as appropriate and provide staff and residents key message

If a Home-level response is required:

- Take command of the emergency and consult with the Director, Seniors Services on whether to activate the Incident Management System (IMS)

- Delegate a staff member to make one of the following statement **three times** using the public address system:
 - CODE ORANGE: ICE STORM
 - CODE ORANGE: TORNADO
 - CODE ORANGE: HIGH WINDS
 - CODE ORANGE: FLOOD
- Communicate to all those in the Home actions to take in response to the emergency
- If receiving residents from another long-term care home, ensure the evacuating facility has obtained temporary licenses required. See *Appendix E1: Ministry of Long-Term Care, [The Guide on the Policy, Process, and Procedures during Emergency Evacuations](#)*

All Staff will:

- Protect the safety of all residents in the building
- Keep residents calm

B. During A CODE ORANGE

The Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours) will:

- Determine any actions that may be required in responding to the emergency, such as:
 - A need to activate the food and fluid provision plan or access to prescription plan. See *Long-Term Care Emergency Plan*
 - A need to evacuate the Home. See *Evacuation Plan – CODE GREEN*
 - Damage to the Home. See *Loss of Essential Services Emergency Plan – CODE GREY*
 - A missing resident. See *Missing Resident Emergency Plan – CODE YELLOW*
- Communicate to the Charge Nurse any updates to actions needed in the Home

A Charge Nurse (or designate) will:

- Inform staff of actions required in supporting a CODE ORANGE
- Assign staff to complete *Appendix C: Fire Watch Patrol Log for Emergencies*
- Obtain emergency response kit equipment, as required
- Upon notification of incident/injury, ensure care is provided, **and** report any incidents/injuries using the appropriate tools

All Staff will:

- Respond to the updated instructions from the Charge Nurse (or delegate)

- Identify persons with injuries and provide medical assistance as appropriate

C. ENDING A CODE ORANGE

The Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours) will:

- Declare the CODE ORANGE over when the external disaster no longer poses a risk to the safety of those who live and work at the Home
- Delegate a staff member to announce the following statement three times over the public address system:
- “CODE ORANGE. All clear”

Note: Once a CODE ORANGE has been declared over, normal operations resume unless the Home has maintained damage. See *Loss of Essential Services Emergency Plan – CODE GREY (Policy and Procedures)*

D. POST CODE ORANGE PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTATION

The Charge Nurse (or designate) will:

- Report any incidents/injuries using the appropriate tools
- Complete debrief(s) and any other actions identified in the *Emergency Recovery Plan*
- Ensure all emergency response equipment is replenished and cleaned

The Director of Care (or designate) will:

- Follow the *Mandatory and Critical Incident Reporting Policy and Procedures*
- Notify Joint Health and Safety Committee regarding all incidents involving staff, volunteers, visitors, and contract workers
- Notify the Wellbeing Team to ensure staff supports are in place for those who experienced distress

The Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours) will:

- In consultation with the Director, Seniors Services, deactivate the Incident Management System (IMS), if activated

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff, students and volunteers

- Report and support a CODE ORANGE

Director of Care (or designate)

- Initiate Mandatory Critical Incident System Report, if required

Charge Nurse (or designate)

- Complete actions as required by the *Long-Term Care Emergency Recovery Plan*

Administrator (during business hours) or the Manager-on-Call (after hours)

- Assume command of a CODE ORANGE
- Following consultation with the Director, Seniors Services, activate the Incident Management System (IMS) and deactivate when emergency is over
- Complete actions as required by the *Long-Term Care Emergency Recovery Plan*

Emergency Management Specialist

- Provide education and training on Emergency Plans
- Complete After-Action Review (AAR) as required by the *Long-Term Care Emergency Recovery Plan*

Wellbeing and Culture Transformation Team

- In coordination with People, Equity and Culture (PEC), maintain staff supports and resources for those who experienced distress and provide referral(s), as required

AUTHORITY

Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021; General Regulation 246/22; Accreditation Standards Manual, as current; and York Region Seniors Services Administration

DEFINITIONS

CODE ORANGE

A term that alerts staff to an external disaster that has occurred in the community or vicinity of the Home

Emergency

An urgent or pressing situation or condition presenting an imminent threat to the health or well-being of residents and others attending the home that requires immediate action to ensure the safety of persons in the home

External Disaster

A term used to mean a community disaster, natural disaster or extreme weather event. Examples may include a winter ice storm, tornado, high wind or flood warning

Extreme weather event

Extreme weather events such as tornadoes, hurricanes, hail, blizzards, ice storms and heavy rain are monitored by Environment and Climate Change Canada 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If a severe storm is on the horizon, the weather service issues a “Weather Watch” and then if more severe a “Weather Warning”

Shelter-In-Place

A term that means finding a safe location indoors and staying there until you are given an “all clear” or told to evacuate

You may be asked to shelter in place because of a community disaster, natural disaster or extreme weather event (CODE ORANGE), a violent outburst (CODE WHITE), a bomb threat (CODE BLACK) or any other emergency where the safety and security of those who live and work at the Home may be at risk and shelter-in-place is an appropriate strategy to employ

Staff

Means a person who works at the Home either:

- (a) As an employee of the Region/Home. This includes unionized staff, including but not limited to CUPE 905 Long-Term Care Bargaining Unit Staff (excluding Seniors Community Program Staff), and Non-Union staff working in the Homes. This also includes any redeployed Regional staff
- (b) Has a contract or agreement with Region/Home. This includes but not limited to the Medical Director, Registered Dietician, Physician, Pharmacy Service Provider, Physiotherapist, etc.
- (c) At the Home due to a contract or agreement between the Region/Home and an employment agency or other third party. This includes agency staff (including those who may not provide direct care to residents)

Weather Warning

A term used for dangerous winds, severe thunderstorm with possibility of tornado imminent which could cause injury to life and property (such as a severe thunderstorm is in progress or expected to occur within two hours). If Environment and Climate Change Canada had confirmation of a tornado, they would issue a "TORNADO WARNING"

Weather Watch

A broad category issued up to six hours in advance to alert public for a specified forecast region of Ontario that there is a high potential for dangerous thunderstorm weather, which may be accompanied by winds, hail and/or a tornado

Alternate formats or communications supports are available upon request by contacting newmarkethealthcentre@york.ca or maplehealthcentre@york.ca.