



Hughes Behavioral and MH Services

Moving In the Right Direction

Hughes BMHS Emergency/Disaster Response Plan

Mission Statement

HBMHS is committed to providing services and supports aligned with evidenced based best practices. These practices are designed to assist each consumer served in achieving individually determined goals and objectives that promote growth, life satisfaction, and significant roles and connections to the community.

Or, Put Another Way...

**HBMHS provides services that:
Research indicates are effective...
Are based on a person's preferences...And
Help people learn, be happy, and develop relationships with others in their
community.**

3816-5 South New Hope Rd.
Gastonia, NC 28056
(P) 704-661-9833 (F) 562-286-5236
www.hbmhs.com

1455-D East Marion St.
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Purpose

The purpose of the Hughes BMHS Emergency/Disaster Response Plan is:

- To provide guidance about when to implement emergency/disaster procedures.
- To provide procedures for the management of consumers, staff, and other persons in Hughes BMHS facilities during an emergency/disaster.
- To ensure the assignment of Hughes BMHS personnel to specific tasks and responsibilities in the event of an emergency or disaster.
- To ensure the health, safety, and well-being of staff and consumers of Hughes BMHS.
- To minimize the disruption in services and supports provided to consumers of Hughes BMHS.

Implementing Emergency/Disaster Procedures

Whenever a situation arises in which normal operations of Hughes BMHS will be suspended for an unforeseen amount of time, or when there is imminent risk of harm to consumers or staff, emergency/disaster response procedures should be considered for implementation. Procedures should always be implemented in a timely manner to assure the safety of staff and consumers. Prior to implementation of emergency/disaster procedures, staff should contact, when appropriate and feasible, one of the Hughes BMHS Safety Officers. If a Safety Officer cannot be contacted prior to the initiation of emergency/disaster procedures, one should be contacted as soon as feasible after the implementation of emergency/disaster procedures.

Disaster Training and Exercises

Training to ensure effective and timely implementation of emergency/disaster protocols will be conducted in all Hughes BMHS facilities on an ongoing basis. Specifics regarding the scheduling of emergency/disaster drills and trainings are noted on the Hughes BMHS Safety Drill Grid.

Important Phone Numbers

Charity Davis, Safety Officer: 704-661-9835
Eddy Hughes, Safety Officer: 704-661-9833
Candice Williams, Assistant Director: 704-995-9148
Fire, Police, Emergency Responders: 911
Poison Control: 800-222-1222

Emergency Management and Partner Agencies Contact Numbers

Gaston County Office of Emergency Management: 704-866-3350
Lincoln County Office of Emergency Management: 704-736-8511

Cleveland County Office of Emergency Management: 704-484-4841
Gaston County Red Cross: 704-864-2623
Lincoln County Red Cross: 704-735-3500
Cleveland County Red Cross: 704-487-8594
Partners Behavioral Health Management: 704-884-2501
Disaster Preparedness/Response Coordinator for Division of MHDDSAS: 919-715-2780
MHDDSAS State Emergency Operations Center: 919-733-3198
Gaston County Sherriff: 704-869-3160
Lincoln County Sherriff: 704-732-9050
Cleveland County Sherriff: 704-484-4888
Gaston County DSS: 704-865-3500
Lincoln County DS: 704-736-8578
Cleveland County DS: 704-487-0661

Training

All Hughes BMHS staff will be trained on the Hughes BMHS Emergency/Disaster Response Plan as part of their orientation to the facility. The Hughes BMHS Safety Officer will provide the orientation.

Relocating Services

Should a Hughes BMHS facility become uninhabitable, the essential services provided at that location will be provided from an alternate agency location. Possible operating locations include the following:

3816-5 South New Hope Rd.
Gastonia, NC 28056
(P) 704-661-9833 (F) 562-286-5236

1455-C East Marion St.
Shelby, NC 28150
(P) 704-661-9835 (F) 562-286-5236

8716 Londonshire Drive
Charlotte, NC 28216
(P) 704-395-0325

Protecting Information and Technology

All Hughes BMHS computers are regularly backed-up to a remote server daily. Because of this, no non-routine actions are necessary in the event of a disaster/emergency. Office staff should follow normal shutdown procedures for agency computers, terminals, copiers, and all other electronic systems. Staff or consumer safety should never be compromised when making efforts to ensure the protection of agency information and technology systems/tools.

Protecting Consumer Records

All Hughes BMHS medical records are maintained in locking fire-proof file cabinets. In the event of a disaster, all consumer records should be placed in the file cabinets and the cabinets locked prior to the last staff person exiting the office. Records are not to be removed unless necessary to assure continuity of care during the period of the

emergency/disaster. If records are removed, agency policies related to ensure the confidentiality and transportation of records must be followed. Staff or consumer safety should never be compromised when making efforts to ensure the protection of consumer records.

Protecting Personnel Records

In case of an emergency/disaster and subsequent need to evacuate, all personnel files will be returned to the locked fire-proof file cabinets where the files are maintained on a daily basis. Staff or consumer safety should never be compromised when making efforts to ensure the protection of personnel records.

Coordination of Services

In the event of an emergency/disaster that affects a broad geographical area, Hughes BMHS Safety Officers will collaborate and coordinate with Partners BHM, local county Emergency Operations Centers, local Red Cross offices, the Division of MHDDSAS, and other appropriate agencies. Hughes BMHS Safety Officers will be responsible for appropriate coordination and information sharing between external entities and the consumers/staff of Hughes BMHS. Hughes BMHS administrative staff will monitor for emergent weather emergencies and, in collaboration with the agency's Safety Officers, assure notification of all affected consumers and staff.

Specific Procedures

Evacuation Procedures:

In the event of an emergency that requires a facility to be evacuated, the following procedures will be as follows:

- a) Evacuation of the facility shall occur should any of the following events occur:
 - a. Fires: If it is immediately determined that the extent of the fire cannot be contained with quick and direct actions, the building will be evacuated.
 - b. Violence and/or Aggression: If a crisis situation occurs that involves a direct threat to any persons in the building, the building will be evacuated.
 - c. Utility Disruption or Crisis: Situations that will necessitate evacuation in this area include gas leaks and electrical malfunctions determined to present a health risk.
 - d. Noxious Odors or Fumes: If it is determined that there are odors or fumes that are a health risk due to eye, skin, or lung irritation, the building will be evacuated.

- e. Bomb Threat: In the event of a bomb threat made toward the organization, the building will be evacuated.
- b) In the event it is determined the building should be evacuated, the following procedures will be followed:
- a. The Safety Officer will inform all staff of the evacuation order verbally.
 - b. All staff in direct care service areas or in direct contact with persons served will assist the patient(s) in exiting the building. Staff not in direct contact with persons served or patient areas will immediately exit the building according to the facility emergency exit plan/map. Staff in consumer areas will check the rest rooms to ensure that all persons evacuate.
 - c. The Safety Officer will exit the building with the safety binder, in order to access information on contacting emergency personnel.
 - d. All staff and persons served will proceed to the designated evacuation area by the parking lot dumpster as quickly as possible.
 - e. The Safety Officer, or designee, will determine if all staff and persons served are present and out of the building, through surveying staff to determine if all persons served during the time of evacuation are accounted for and determining if all staff are also accounted for.
 - f. Should it be determined that someone in the building is not present outside the building, the Safety Officer will determine if the nature of the emergency presents a threat to life and/or health to the degree that it would not be prudent to re-enter the building briefly to seek the location of the missing individual or individuals. If it is determined that the situation would allow a quick re-entry to locate the missing individual, the Safety Officer will briefly re-enter and call out the name of the individual. If there is not a response, the Safety Officer will exit the building and wait for emergency personnel to arrive and take control of the situation.
 - g. Should administrative offices not be of the condition to be re-occupied to provide services, all essential administrative services will be provided at the alternate administrative office.
 - h. Phone numbers for the following entities for use in the event of an evacuation, will be maintained in the site specific Hughes BMHS Safety Binder:

- (1) Gas company
- (2) Electric company

- (3) Emergency Services
- (4) Hazardous spills
- (5) Police
- (6) Fire

i. Once an emergency evacuation has occurred, the building cannot be re-occupied until the responding emergency authority grants permission that the health and safety of staff and persons served is no longer compromised. Should an immediate re-occupation not be allowed by the authorities, occupation will be determined through the authority of the entity that is charged to bring the building back into compliance with health and safety standards (gas company, fire department, building inspector, etc.)

Severe Weather:

Severe weather is defined as any weather condition or natural event that has the potential to cause physical harm and/or property destruction. These events include severe thunderstorms, tornados, and flash floods. Procedures for severe weather are as follows:

- a. If a severe weather or tornado watch is issued, each site shall access radio or television reporting that provides information from the National Weather Service.
- b. In the event of a “watch,” employees on duty will be informed of procedures to be taken in the event a “warning” is declared.
- c. During “watch” periods, all persons served and employees will be encouraged to limit trips and transportation to and from the site.
- d. In the event of a severe weather or tornado warning, all persons within the facility will immediately move to the designated areas in the interior of the building that are designated on the posted evacuation routes.
- e. Employees will assist persons served in arriving at the designated safety locations, and if time permits, will close all windows and blinds and all doors.
- f. The Safety Officer, or designee, will secure the first aid kit, flashlights, and a radio, and maintain them in the area being used for shelter.
- g. The Safety Officer shall oversee the process of moving to the designated safety location(s) and conduct a head count when this activity is completed.

- h. The Safety Officer shall announce the end of the need to remain in the designated location when the warning is no longer in effect, according to the national weather service.
- i. The Safety Officer will be responsible for contacting any emergency entity that may be needed due to injuries or events such as power loss and/or broken utility lines.

Fire:

The following are the overall components of Hughes BMHS' fire emergency plans. These serve as basic approaches to responding to fire emergencies; however, each site may have additional components due to the nature of the physical layout of the facility and local regulatory requirements. The components of the organization's fire emergency plans are as follows:

In the event of the discovery of a fire, evacuate all individuals from the immediate area.

1. Close all doors to contain the fire.
2. If the fire is small, attempt to contain it by using a fire extinguisher.
3. Announce that there is a fire in the building and the need to immediately evacuate by shouting "Fire Everyone out!".
4. Call 911 and report the fire, providing the name and address of the site.
5. Assist in the evacuation process and account for all persons served, employees, and visitors.
6. To expedite the evacuation process, all ambulatory persons served and visitors are evacuated first, followed by staff members who will assist all others in evacuation.
7. All persons will be evacuated and assembled at a location that is pre-determined by each facility as the evacuation assembly area.
8. The safety officer or designee will provide any special information to arriving emergency personnel such as size and location of fire and location of any flammable or explosive items, and will relinquish control of the situation to the local authorities.

9. The fire department will be the final authority in determining building re-entry.
10. If the facility cannot be re-occupied, the designated employee in charge of managing the site will manage, through consultation with the (place responsible position here), the continuation of essential services, as per those procedures contained in this policy.
11. The (place responsible position here) will be notified as soon as possible of the incident and an incident report will be completed and processed as per the Critical Incident Policy.

Medical Emergencies:

A medical emergency is defined as an incident that requires interventions beyond simple first aid available at the facility in order to stabilize a condition that may result in a serious medical outcome. Conditions include, but are not limited to, excessive bleeding which is unable to be controlled, accidents involving serious injury, failure or obstruction of the respiratory system, failure of the circulatory system, chest pain or severe abdominal pain, loss of consciousness unrelated to predictable seizure activity, or any type of distress that is determined to seriously limit an individual's normal level of daily functioning.

- 1.) When an event occurs that is determined to be an emergency health care incident, 911 will be immediately called to access emergency personnel to assist and transport the individual to medical services.
- 2.) The organization's critical incident policy will be followed for all medical emergency events.
- 3.) If determined to support the stabilization of a serious and acute medical condition, staff members who hold current certification in CPR and First Aid will implement CPR and/or First Aid procedures, when appropriate, to stabilize a condition prior to the arrival of external emergency personnel.
- 4.) If the individual is a person served, the Medical Emergency Care Consent will be accessed, contact made with the emergency contact names, and pertinent information will be given to the transporting emergency technicians. All Emergency Information Sheets/Identification Face Sheets included in the record will include:
 - h. Name and telephone number of the physician to be called.
 - i. Name, address, and telephone number of a relative or other person to be notified.
 - j. Medical insurance company name and policy number, or Medicaid/Medicare number.

- k. Information concerning the use of medication, medication allergies, and significant medical problems.
- B. Employees will not transport individuals in their personal vehicles and/or the organization's vehicles in emergency health care situations.
- C. Following containment of the emergency, an Incident Report form will be completed.
- a. If the emergency involves an employee, the designated staff responsible for the sited human resource files will access the employees personnel information
- D. If the emergency involves an employee, agency staff will access the Employee Emergency Contact Form. Employee emergency medical forms will include the following information:
- a. Name and number of primary care physician
 - b. Name and number of emergency contact person
 - c. Any medical conditions that the employee may deem important and voluntarily disclose on the form that could assist emergency responders, such as medications and physical health conditions.
 - d. Preferred medical treatment location.

The telephone number of the local poison control center will be posted throughout the organization. All staff members and persons served will be orientated to the location of this information

Bomb Threats:

- 1.) In the event of a bomb threat received by telephone (a call in which an individual indicates a bomb has been placed within or near the facility):
 - e. Obtain as much information as possible from the caller, noting details of voice, speech patterns, and any background noise.
 - f. Ask where the bomb is and when it will go off, and document any information that is provided by the caller.
- 2.) If the threat is received by letter or note:
 - a. Do not handle the letter or note any more than is necessary so evidence is not compromised.

- 3.) If you notice a package, container, briefcase, or other object that is unattended and is out of place within the facility, does not have common identifiable markings or labeling, and is not recognized as belonging to an employee, person served, or visitor, proceed as follows:
 - a. Upon the discovery of a suspicious object/package/container, do not touch or move it.
 - b. Ask people in the area the object was discovered if they know what it is or if it belongs to someone.
 - c. If no one claims the object or cannot identify what the object is, notify the facility safety officer, or facility manager/director, who will determine if the facility should be evacuated and law enforcement authorities summoned, based on further investigation within the facility regarding the ownership of the suspicious package, container, briefcase or other type of unattended object.
 - d. If the object/package cannot not be identified, or is not claimed and identified by someone within the facility, evacuate the building and summon/contact law enforcement authorities.
 - e. Wait for the arrival of law enforcement authorities outside the building and turn over management of the unidentified object to law enforcement upon their arrival.
 - f. Re-enter the building and resume services only after clearance is obtained from the public officials managing the situation.
- 4.) In all situations involving the threat of a bomb, follow these procedures:
 - a. Remain calm and do not alarm persons served, visitors, or other staff members.
 - b. Immediately seek the Executive Director/Safety Officer to discuss the situation.
 - c. The clinic director/manager, and/or the safety officer, are responsible for contacting the police and activating the evacuation procedures.
 - d. Evacuation will be handled as per the organizational/facility evacuation policy and procedures.
 - e. In situations where the building/facility has been evacuated, agents of the police or other authorities will assess the situation and, if the present danger is terminated, will then inform the facility manager/director, or designee. Only the police authority

may activate the “all clear” and only then may anyone enter the building.

- f. Following the all clear, crisis debriefing procedures will be followed, as appropriate.

Workplace Violence:

Workplace threats and violence is defined as any situation in which there is a perceived threat of violence, or a situation where violence is or has occurred. Procedures to provide the optimal response for safety apply to persons served, staff members, and visitors who may exhibit threats of violence or actual violent acts.

- 1.) Staff members should exercise common sense in any situation with an aggressive person. If a situation involves a weapon, such as a knife or gun, do not attempt to remove the weapon from the individual.
- 2.) If you or anyone else is assaulted or physically threatened by another individual while conducting business, if possible remove yourself from the situation, call for help (vocally or by phone), and/or notify another staff member to summon the police by calling 911.
- 3.) Do not attempt to engage in any type of physical restraint with a person who is threatening violence, unless your life is in imminent danger.
- 4.) If you cannot remove yourself from the situation, follow the guidelines provided through the organizational violence prevention training (NCI) regarding de-escalation techniques for dealing with such situations.
- 5.) If you are not directly involved in the situation, seek to assist in the evacuation of persons served, visitors, and staff from the building.
- 6.) At no time should any staff members put themselves at harm in an attempt to diffuse a situation. Always attempt to remove yourself and seek local law enforcement assistance.

The following procedure is to be used to notify staff members/your supervisor of threatening behavior without alarming the aggressor if the situation, such as being alone with the aggressor in a closed office or isolated from other staff who can aid you with the situation, warrants such an approach:

If staff are in a potentially dangerous situation and need to alert their supervisor/others, but can not speak freely, they should call their supervisor/other staff and say the phrase “I need to reschedule my PICK training.” This will alert the supervisor/other staff and he/she will take all necessary steps to assure staff’s safety (e.g., calling 911).

Power Failure:

A power failure is defined as a full or partial power outage that affects the ability of the organization to provide a normal range of services and operations and may compromise the safety of occupants of the facility.

- b) In the event of a power failure, remain calm. If in an interior office without natural light or emergency lighting, utilize the personal flashlight provided for safe egress to evacuate to a hallway area. Assist persons served to the lighted area, if necessary. If emergency lighting is not available, in hallway areas, continue to utilize your personal flashlight.
- c) If using a computer, turn it off to prevent damage due to power surges, prior to leaving your work area.
- d) The Site Supervisor will check circuit breakers and the main breaker panel and, if the power outage is not attributed to the internal system, will turn off all breaker switches and call the local utility company to report the outage.
- e) If it is deemed necessary by the Safety Officer or the facility director, evacuate the building by following evacuation procedures.
- f) If evacuation occurs, lock the entrances to the facility to prevent re-entry.
- g) The Site Supervisor or designee will determine whether the site will be shut down and, in consultation with utility company employees and/or other staff, will determine when the building is ready for occupancy.
- h) Prior to re-entry, the Site Supervisor, in consultation with the utility company, will ensure that the facility is in ready for occupancy prior to authorizing re-entry.