

# ALLSAINTS

## WOODFORD WELLS

<b>Title</b>	Emergency and Critical Incident Policy and Procedure
<b>Owner</b>	Operations Director
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# Emergency and Critical Incident Policy and Procedure

## 1. Purpose and Scope

Emergencies and critical incidents in the workplace can affect people physically and psychologically, and affect program continuity of All Saints' Church.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure All Saints' Parochial Church Council (PCC) prepares for and effectively responds to emergency situations and critical incidents through the appropriate use of resources. The prevention and effective management of emergency situations and critical incidents can assist to minimise the negative impact of an unexpected event.

This policy applies to all staff, PCC members, congregational members, volunteers, Atrium customers, hirers and visitors.

The PCC is ultimately responsible for this policy.

## 2. Definitions

An emergency is an unplanned or imminent event that affects or threatens the health, safety or welfare of people, property and infrastructure, and which requires a significant and coordinated response. The defining characteristic of an emergency event or situation is that usual resources are overwhelmed or have the potential to be overwhelmed.

Emergencies may be a specific event with a clear beginning, end and recovery process, or a situation that develops over time and where the implications are gradual rather than immediate.

Emergency management is the coordination of an emergency response and management of recovery. The aim of emergency management is to minimise physical and psychological impacts on all parties and to minimise damage to assets, operations, reputation and staff productivity.

A critical incident is an unexpected traumatic event, involving personal or professional threat, which evokes extreme stress, fear or injury. Providing appropriate support following a critical incident is part of emergency management.

A traumatic event is one in which a person experiences, witnesses or is confronted by experiences that involve actual, threatened or perceived death or serious injury and/or threat to their own or others' physical and emotional integrity. The person's response may then include intense fear, feelings of helplessness and horror, which impact on their sense of 'self'.

Complex trauma refers to a condition resulting from multiple exposures to one or more traumas. When repeatedly exposed to traumatic stress, disruptions can occur in brain structure and function, central and autonomic nervous system arousal, endocrinological and immunological function. These biological disruptions interact with psychological, emotional, cognitive and spiritual processes.

Critical Incident Debriefing (CID) is a preventative health measure to minimise the impact of traumatic events and the development of major psychological health problems such as Post Traumatic Stress (PTS) Disorder.

### 3. Principles

Emergency management planning is being prepared for events or incidents that stretch our ability to cope beyond normal day-to-day capacity.

All Saints' Church is committed to the protection of staff, PCC members, congregational members, volunteers, Atrium customers, hirers and visitors during emergencies.

All Saints' Church swiftly and effectively responds to emergency situations, with the foremost goals of preserving life, protecting the church's property, and restoring operations as quickly as possible.

Critical incidents can be a threatening experience and appropriate supports are required to minimise long term effects arising from exposure to the trauma.

### 4. Outcomes

Emergency situations are prevented as far as practical.

The negative impacts of emergency situations and critical incidents are minimised through effective management.

### 5. Functions and Delegations

Position	Delegation/Task
Wardens and PCC	Develop and review Emergency and Critical Incident Policy.  Compliance with Emergency and Critical Incident Policy.
Management	Compliance with Emergency and Critical Incident Policy.  <u><b>PCC / Senior Management Team (SMT) / Senior Staff</b></u> Ensure development and implementation of Emergency and Critical Incident Policy.  Ensure potential disaster and emergency situations are identified, and appropriate emergency management plans are in place.  <u><b>Operations Director (OD)</b></u> Holds lead responsibility for implementation of emergency and critical incident procedures, including identification of potential situations, developing, documenting and communicating response plans, reporting on actual situations, and reviewing

	policy and procedures following a disaster or emergency situation.
Operations Director	Coordinates staff training in emergency and critical incidents, such as fire response, building evacuation, etc.
Staff	Compliance with Emergency and Critical Incident Policy.  Contribute to the development of Emergency and Critical Incident Policy.

## 6. Risk Management

All Senior Staff members, staff and volunteers are trained in disaster and emergency response procedures at induction and annually by the Operations Director.

Emergency evacuation drills are undertaken in all sites a minimum of once per annum under the instruction of the Operations Director.

Disaster and emergency management plans are reviewed annually and/or following the event of a disaster or emergency situation.

As far as possible, traumatic events are prevented, and the impacts of trauma are minimised following traumatic events.

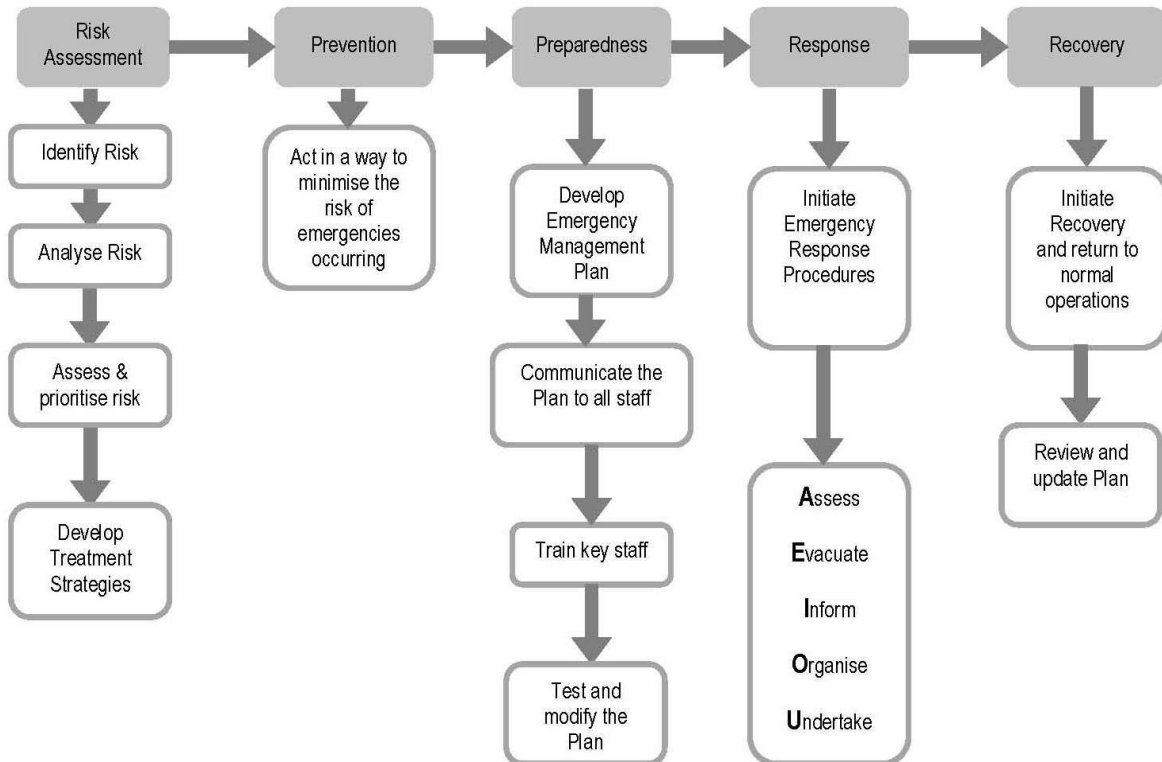
## 7. Policy Implementation

All staff have access to and are familiar with policies and procedures relating to disaster emergency management.

All staff have information which outlines actions to follow for various disaster and emergency situations and are supported to undertake training for specific roles in emergency and critical incident.

## 8. Policy Detail

The PCC, Operations Director, Senior Management Team and Senior Staff Team identify, prevent and manage disaster and emergency situations within their sphere of responsibility and influence, until the arrival of appropriate emergency services.



A range of emergency situations may occur on the premises with the potential to impact on the safety of staff, PCC members, congregational members, volunteers, Atrium customers, hirers and visitors, including:

- fire;
- gas or water leak;
- vehicle and other accidents;
- chemical, radiation or biological spill;
- storm;
- earthquake;
- bomb threat;
- civil disorder or illegal occupancy;
- hostage or terrorist situation;
- death;
- robbery;
- acts of terrorism;
- physical (including sexual) assaults.

### 8.1. Risk Assessment

The PCC uses risk assessment processes to identify and control barriers to effective emergency management.

Staff, PCC members, congregational members, volunteers, Atrium customers, hirers and visitors are expected to behave in a way which minimises the risk of emergencies occurring.

## 8.2. Preparedness

The Emergency Situation Checklist supports the organisation to prepare for potential disaster and emergency situations and is reviewed on a six-monthly basis. Disaster and emergency management plans are reviewed on an annual basis.

All staff, PCC members and volunteers are provided with training to ensure they are familiar with implementation of disaster and emergency management plans.

All staff, PCC members and volunteers familiarise themselves with emergency evacuation procedures, including their responsibilities and the emergency evacuation assembly point.

All fire safety activities undertaken by the organisation are recorded and reviewed to identify gaps in training, knowledge, equipment or processes. Fire activities include, but are not limited to, fire safety training, drills and exercises, records of maintenance and inventories of equipment kept.

Where relevant, all staff and volunteers familiarise themselves with techniques to minimise physical and emotional harm from other people.

## 8.3. Response

When a disaster or emergency situation arises, the primary aim of the response is to ensure the safety of all people on the premises, to preserve life and to protect property.

The PCC initiates recovery and aims to restore operations as quickly as possible.

The availability of critical incident debriefing is an essential component of the organisation's approach to emergency management.

When required, supportive counselling is provided or signposted to Atrium customers, hirers, staff, volunteers, congregational members and PCC members who are affected by an emergency or critical incident within two hours of the event (for defusing and mobilisation) and then within 48 to 72 hours (for critical incident debriefing).

## 9. Emergency and Critical Incident Procedures

Staff, PCC members, congregational members, volunteers, Atrium customers, hirers and visitors who experience a critical incident related to their involvement with All Saints' Church should immediately inform the **Operations Director** where possible. If this is not possible, they should immediately inform a member of the **Senior Management Team** or, if none is immediately available a member of **Senior Staff**.

### 9.1. Critical Incident Report

A Critical Incident Report:

- is to be completed by the staff member involved in the incident or notification of the incident, and

- is to contain as much information as possible and indicate the people directly involved in the incident.

The staff member who receives the report will ensure that the person(s) identified in the critical incident receives all appropriate support. They are to contact emergency services where required and must contact the **Operations Director** immediately.

The **Operations Director** in conjunction with members of staff as appropriate will assess the Critical Incident and implement a plan of action to follow up the Critical Incident.

Where required, a meeting will be organised to determine issues and responsibilities relating to:

- Assessing risks and response actions;
- Liaison with emergency and other services;
- Contact with the affected person's relatives and other supports;
- Liaison with other organisations;
- Counselling and supporting staff, PCC members, congregational members, volunteers, Atrium customers, hirers and visitors not directly involved in, but affected by, the incident;
- Media management (if required); and
- Where appropriate **All Saints PCC** may be required to provide support in the form of:
  - hiring interpreters
  - making arrangements for hospital/funeral/memorial service/repatriation
  - obtaining a death certificate
  - assisting with personal items and affairs including insurance issues.

**All Saints' PCC** will conduct a review of actions arising from the above meeting to ensure:

- Follow up such as de-briefing, counselling and prevention strategies have been completed;
- Relevant people have been informed of all outcomes from the incident;
- A recommendation as to the response to the critical incident is documented and included in the quality improvement cycle; and
- Further follow up required is documented and responsibilities allocated to appropriate staff.

## 9.2. Critical Incident Debriefing (CID)

Critical Incident Debriefing (CID) will occur within 48 - 72 hours after the incident.

Debriefing may include individual and group counselling, where the aim is to:

- Decrease feelings of isolation, and/or;
- Provide people affected by the incident with a facilitated session to assist them to normalise their thoughts and feelings. Groups assist people to explore their differing perspectives of the incident and share their similar thoughts and feelings.

There will usually be an initial counselling session, followed up with one or more debriefing sessions.

Initial counselling will occur as soon as possible after the incident, preferably immediately or within a few hours. Depending on the type or severity of the critical incident, initial defusing may include:



- A short factual statement about what is known about the incident, the possible effects on those involved, what is being done for them and what is going to happen in the future, eg.; planned debriefing sessions;
- Information on acute stress response (what is happening to people now) and how people can care for themselves;
- An arrangement for a structured debriefing session within 48-72 hours;
- The provision of different levels of service for those differently affected; and
- Referrals to various resources including counsellors.

**All Saints' PCC** will maintain confidentiality to ensure that:

- Only a record of when and where a debriefing took place will be kept; and
- No information will be released without the agreement of the individual or group.

### **9.3. Evacuation**

In the event of an alert to evacuate - either verbal, automatic alarm or manual alarm, all staff, PCC members, congregational members, volunteers, Atrium customers, hirers and visitors must:

- Proceed along designated routes to the designated assembly area(s);
- Ensure assistance is provided to people with disabilities and/or special needs;
- Remain at the assembly area until advised by the **Operations Director** (or delegate) and/or emergency personnel that it is safe to return to premises.

In the event of a fire threat and if it is safe to do so, close all doors and windows and turn off power supply before leaving the premises.

In the event of a bomb threat and the threat is not immediate, open all doors and windows before leaving the premises.

### **9.4. Fire**

In the event of a fire:

- Activate the fire alarm;
- Contact fire emergency services;
- Alert the nominated chief fire marshal and/or a senior staff member;
- Evacuate people from the immediate area of the fire behind a rated fire door or outside the building;
- Fight the fire with existing equipment if safe to do so.

### **9.5. Bomb Threat**

In the event of a bomb threat via phone call:

- Remain calm and
- Record as much information as possible from the caller using questions and observations including:

- *What type of bomb is it?*
  - *How will it go off?*
  - *What does it look like?*
  - *When it set to go off?*
  - *Where is it?*
  - *When was it put there?*
  - *Who put it there?*
  - *Why was it put there?*
  - *Will it explode or will something be released?*
  - *If a substance is released, what is it? How much is there? How will it be released?*
  - *Observations about the caller: gender, age, accent?*
  - *Any background noise?*
- Evacuate Atrium customers, staff, volunteers, congregational members, hirers and visitors as per the above evacuation procedure in 9.3 above
  - Contact police to inform them of bomb threat
  - Notify **Operations Director** and/or other **Senior staff**.

## 9.6. Suspicious Mail

In the event of a suspicious item of postal mail arriving to the premises:

- Do not disturb, move or touch the package if possible;
  - If you have touched the article wash your hands if it is possible, within the work area;
  - Notify **Operations Director** and/or other **Senior staff** who will then take the lead on the points below
- 
- Contact police who can assist in determining if evacuation is required;
  - Inform others present of what has occurred and advise them to stay in their work area;
  - Prevent others from entering the work area;
  - Do not attempt to clean up spilt material or brush it off your clothing;
  - If instructed, evacuate Atrium customers, staff, PCC members, congregational members, volunteers, hirers and visitors as for the above evacuation procedures;

## 9.7. Hold-up

In the event of a hold-up situation:

- Assume the offender is armed and that any firearms are loaded;
- Comply with instructions given by the offender, doing no more or less than what you are told to do, and answer all questions asked;
- Do not attempt to disarm or apprehend the offender;
- Take mental notes of details about the offender and any items that are touched by the offender;
- If it is safe to do so, raise the alarm by activating the fire alarm.

Immediately after the incident:

- Lock access doors to secure the area and prevent people from approaching;
- Notify the police immediately;
- Notify **Operations Director** and/or other **Senior staff**;
- Attend to the post-incident needs of Atrium customers, hirers, staff, volunteers, congregational members and visitors affected by the incident.

## 9.8. Earthquake

In the event of an earthquake:

If you are indoors:

- Remain indoors and seek shelter under strongly constructed tables, desks or door frames;
- Keep away from windows, fixtures, furniture, and items that may become unstable;
- Evacuate the premises if it is safe to do so.

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If you are outdoors;

- Move quickly away from buildings, electrical structures and flammable products;
- Proceed to designated assembly area if safe to do so.

After the earthquake:

- Check attendance at assembly area against the attendance registers, where possible;
- Respond to injured people;
- Check for gas leaks, power failure and any other hazard;
- Turn off electricity, gas and water if it is safe to do so;
- Prevent entry to premises if unsafe;
- Contact and liaise with emergency services if required;
- Notify **Operations Director** and/or other **Senior staff**.

## 9.9. Flood

In the event of an expected flood:

- Eliminate potential electrical hazards;
- Place high value equipment and records away from impending floodwaters if it is safe to do so;

In the event of a flood:

- Stay in a safe location while it continues to offer protection;
- Evacuate customers, staff, PCC members, congregational members, volunteers and visitors as for the above evacuation procedures where protection is no longer provided.
- Do not enter the flood waters unless absolutely necessary;
- Contact and liaise with emergency services if required;
- Notify **Operations Director** and/or other **Senior staff**.

## 10. Emergency Contact Numbers

**Organisation**

Police

Local Police

Fire Brigade

Ambulance

**Phone No**

999 or 112 (emergency)

101 (non emergency)

999

999

**Operations Director**

07780 558131

**11. Relevant Legislation**

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

The Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999