

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

Mission: Serve as the conduit for information to internal and external stakeholders, including residents, staff, visitors and families, and to the news media, as approved by the Incident Commander.

Date: _____ Start: _____ End: _____ Position Assigned to: _____ Initial: _____
Positions Reports to: Incident Commander - Signature: _____
Nursing Home Command Center (NHCC) Location: _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____
Radio Title: _____

IMMEDIATE (Operational Period 0-2 Hours)	Time	Initial
Receive appointment and briefing from the Incident Commander.		
Read this entire Job Action Sheet and review Incident Management Team Chart (see NHICS Form 207).		
Notify your usual supervisor of your NHICS assignment. Put on position identification (e.g. vest, cap, etc.).		
Activate the facility communications and risk communications plan, policies and procedures.		
Establish a designated media staging and briefing area located away from the Nursing Home Command Center (NHCC) and resident services activity areas. Inform on-site media of the physical areas to which they have access and those that are restricted. Coordinate designation of such areas with the Safety Officer and the Physical Plant/Security Unit Leader.		
Contact external Public Information Officers (PIOs) from community and governmental agencies to ascertain and collaborate on public information and media messages being developed by those entities. Ensure consistent and collaborative messages from all entities.		
Assess the need to activate a staff and/or family member "hotline" for live or recorded information concerning the incident and the facility status. Establish if needed.		
Develop public information and media messages to be reviewed and approved by the Incident Commander before release to families, the news media and the public. Identify appropriate spokespersons to deliver the press briefings and public information announcements.		

IMMEDIATE (Operational Period 0-2 Hours)	Time	Initial
Attend all Command briefings and incident action planning meetings to gather and share incident and facility information.		
Conduct or assign personnel to monitor, and report to you, incident and response information from sources such as the internet, radio, television, and newspapers.		
Document all key activities, actions, and decisions in an Operational Log (see NHICS Form 201) on a continual basis.		
Document all key communications (internal and external) on an Incident Message Form (see NHICS Form 213). Provide a copy of the Incident Message Form to the Documentation Unit.		

INTERMEDIATE (Operational Period 2-12 Hours)	Time	Initial
Continue to attend all Command briefings and incident action planning meetings to gather and share incident and facility information. Contribute media and public information activities and goals to the Incident Action Plan.		
Continue contact and dialogue with external PIOs, in collaboration with the Liaison Officer, from community and governmental agencies to ascertain public information and media messages being developed by those entities. Coordinate translation of critical communications into multiple languages as needed for resident and families.		
Continue to develop and revise public information and media messages to be reviewed and approved by the Incident Commander before release to the news media and the public. Issue regular and timely incident information reports to the news media in collaboration with the Situation Unit Leader and Liaison Officer.		
Utilize internal nursing home communications systems (e.g., email, intranet, internal TV, written report postings) to disseminate current information and status update messages to staff.		
Assess the need to activate a “hotline” for recorded information concerning the incident and facility status, and establish the “hotline” if needed.		
Review the need for updates of critical information through directional signage for staff, visitors, and media. Assist in the development and dissemination of signage.		
Continue to document all actions and observations on the Operational Log (see NHICS Form 201) on a continual basis.		

EXTENDED (Operational Period Beyond 12 Hours)	Time	Initial
Continue to receive regular progress reports from the Incident Commander, Section Chiefs and others, as appropriate.		
Coordinate with the Logistics Section Chief to determine requests for assistance to be released to the public via the media.		

EXTENDED (Operational Period Beyond 12 Hours)	Time	Initial
With approval from Incident Commander conduct ongoing news conferences, providing updates on resident information and operational status. Facilitate staff and resident interviews as appropriate.		
Ensure ongoing information coordination with other agencies, hospitals, local Emergency Operations Center and the Joint Information Center.		
Prepare and maintain records and reports as indicated or requested.		
Ensure your physical readiness through proper nutrition, water intake, rest, and stress management techniques.		
Observe all staff and volunteers for signs of stress and inappropriate behavior.		
Upon shift change, brief your replacement on the status of all ongoing operations, issues, and other relevant incident information.		

DEMOBILIZATION/SYSTEM RECOVERY	Time	Initial
As need for Public Information team staff decreases, return staff to their normal jobs and combine or deactivate positions in a phased manner.		
Coordinate release of final media briefings and reports.		
Ensure return/retrieval of equipment and supplies, and return all assigned incident command equipment.		
Upon deactivation of your position, brief the Incident Commander on current problems, outstanding issues, and follow-up requirements.		
Upon deactivation of your position, submit all completed information for integration into facility log (see NHICS Form 201) to the Planning Section.		
Participate in after-action debriefings and document observations and recommendations for improvements for possible inclusion in the After-Action Report. Topics include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accomplishments and issues • Review of pertinent position descriptions and operational checklists • Recommendations for procedure changes 		
Participate in stress management and after-action debriefings. Participate in other briefings and meetings as required.		

DOCUMENTS/TOOLS

- Incident Action Plan
- NHICS Form 201: Incident Briefing Form
- NHICS Form 207: Incident Management Team Chart
- NHICS Form 213: Incident Message Form
- Facility emergency operations plan
- Crisis and emergency risk communication plan (Facility, and if available, community plan)
- Facility organizational chart
- Facility telephone directory
- Radio/satellite phone
- Community and governmental PIO and Joint Information Center contact information
- Local media contact information

Nursing Home Incident Command System (NHICS) Job Action Sheets have been adapted from the Hospital Incident Command System by the American Health Care Association (AHCA) Disaster Preparedness Committee