

Crisis Response Plan Template Overview/Instructions



School Crisis Response Plan

The WVDE, in conjunction with the Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, has developed a School Crisis Prevention and Response Plan Template containing the requirements for school-specific School Crisis Prevention and Response Plans. This template aligns with the safe schools initiatives of the School Building Authority and Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Additionally, those portions of a school's access safety plan may be included in the School Crisis Prevention and Response Plan if there are any overlapping requirements. (WV Code §18-9F-9)

Preparedness is essential to assure students remain safe in the event of a school crisis and consists of the following steps:

1. Creation of the Crisis Response Planning Team
2. Creation of the Crisis Response Team
3. Creation of the Mental Health Crisis Response Team
4. Identification of community resources, including mental health resources
5. Identification of vulnerable students and staff
6. Scheduled exercises or drills
7. Education of the School Crisis Response Team and the School Mental Health Crisis Response Team
8. Annual training of school staff on procedures, practices, policies, and protocols, including training and orientation of new staff

School Crisis Response Planning Team

The Crisis Response Planning Team will be responsible for identifying the members of the Crisis Response Team, identifying the members of the School Mental Health Resource Team, and ensuring plans and protocol are in place should a crisis occur. As outlined by WV Code §18-9F-9, the Crisis Response Planning Team should consist of the school principal, school counselor, school nurse (if available), at least two teachers (with at least one being a special education teacher and serving as the Special Needs Coordinator), service personnel, and two parent/family representatives who have a child attending the school. Additional members may include a community mental health representative, a comprehensive behavioral health disaster coordinator, a school resource office and/or local law enforcement, a county board member, a member of the community fire/rescue team, and the local Emergency Management Agency director, and a student (for high schools only and in grade 10 or higher). An alternative composition for the Crisis Response Planning Team is the members of the Local School Improvement Council.

School Crisis Response Team

The Crisis Response Team should consist of the principal, the assistant principal or head teacher, the head custodian, the school nurse, the school counselor, the school resource office or local law enforcement, the designated evacuation coordinator(s), and the designated reunification coordinator(s). For schools with more than one assistant principal, include all administration on the Crisis Response Team. For schools that split the student population into more than one Evacuation/Reunification site, there must be a designated Coordinator for EACH site.

Addressing Mental Health in School Crisis Prevention and Response

Traumatic experiences can affect student mental health and school staff and the ability to teach and learn. Having a comprehensive system of school mental health services and supports already in place will assist schools better address the ensuing mental health needs that arise with any crisis. By preparing in advance, schools may prevent crises and are better prepared to address the needs of impacted students, including vulnerable students and staff, should a crisis occur.

This guide addresses mental health considerations for crisis plans that are required by Policy 2315: Comprehensive School Counseling Programs. It also contains resources, tools and recommendations for incorporating best practices related to mental health into the school crisis plans to address the four phases of school crisis: planning, prevention/ mitigation, response and recovery. Using resources found in this toolkit, the school counselor will lead the school crisis team to develop and routinely update the mental health component of your school's crisis plan.

School Mental Health Resource Team

The School Mental Health Crisis Response Team should consist of the school counselor, the school principal, the school nurse, the school social worker, the school psychologist, the school-based mental health provider (if applicable), a community mental health provider, PRO/SRO/law enforcement, a special educator, school counselors from other schools, faith based representatives, and other individuals that can provide mental health supports in response to a crisis.