CASA of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
Crisis Communication Plan



CASA of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2021

# Crisis Communication Plan

Purpose:

The purpose of this plan is to effectively manage communications through a formal, clearly defined channel in order to mitigate crisis, or serious negative repercussions for CASA of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and maintain a reputation of leadership and transparency on vital issues and breaking news.

The following is intended to serve as a crisis communications guide for CASA of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Its purpose is to help manage communications around a crisis through the following objectives:

* prepare CASA of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to effectively manage crisis communications
* help staff respond professionally and uniformly
* strategically enhance brand/reputation
* manage the distribution of sensitive information to the media, and public

Usage: This Crisis Communication Plan should be discussed at all staff orientations and be readily available to all staff and board members. The 'detailed crisis communication plan' provided should be used by the Executive Director, and any boards that are established, to oversee and evaluate the handling of communications around a crisis situation both internally and externally as appropriate. The steps outlined should be firmly in place and understood prior to a crisis occurrence. This plan shall be reviewed by staff and the board yearly or as necessary, as part of the annual review of policies and procedures.

# This Plan Includes

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# Crisis Communication Policy

1. All crises should be reported to the Executive Director immediately, as they arise.
2. **The Executive Director will notify Ohio CASA and National CASA as soon as a crisis arises.**
3. Only the chief spokesperson, which is the Executive Director, or the back-up spokesperson, Juvenile court Judge, are authorized to release information to the media and to the public. All other staff, board and volunteers of any sort, should be professional and helpful to the media by connecting them with the appropriate spokespeople, but will not provide detailed information.
4. There should be one designated crisis management lead person, which will be the Executive Director, who will direct and coordinate all aspects of the organization's response including managing the messages and the media. There should also be one designated spokesperson who actually interacts with the media. Given the size of CASA of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, both people will be the Executive Director.
5. All comments should be guided by professionalism and transparency, and serve to mitigate the crisis while reinforcing the leadership role of CASA of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
6. "No comment" is never an acceptable response by the spokesperson. If an answer is unknown, the inquirer should be told that you will get back to them. If there is a confidentiality issue in answering the question, let the inquirer know that. 'Please direct any questions to the spokesperson of CASA' is an appropriate response for those who are not the spokesperson/Executive Director.
7. Personnel matters should remain confidential.
8. When possible, responses should be proactive, responsive, and action-oriented.
9. CASA of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ recognizes the importance of media relation to public trust. In times of crisis, maintaining effective media relationships will be particularly critical in bolstering public confidence of the non-profit.

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# Crisis Communication Checklist Review

\*: CASA of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ recognizes that Ohio CASA and National CASA are to be notified first as according to standards, and that they are there as a resource to navigate the crisis.

This is a brief overview of the crisis management steps pertaining to CASA of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

* S**AFETY-** Ensure safety of all staff and site. Call 911 if needed.
* **NOTIFICATION**- Notify the Executive Director and President of Board ASAP as well as Ohio CASA and National CASA.
* **CRISIS COMMUNICATION TEAM-** Key staff and, if needed, Chair of the Board, will convene to strategically review the situation and manage the communications surrounding the issue.

Before going public

* Executive Director will be assigned as the spokesperson
* Assess the situation and determine the facts.
* Talk with Juvenile court Judge and determine appropriate response/action
* Create plan of action, both internally and externally
* Develop factual, detailed messages that reflect the status of the crisis, the Program's response, and proactive steps to mitigate the issue.
* Prepare talking points
* Determine if a press release, web or other updates is necessary
* Appoint staff to help manage media, platforms and contacts with partners/allies/stakeholders

Going public

* Begin placing phone calls with critical internal personnel.
* Begin media and external outreach
* Update website, or social media platforms, as needed.
* Evaluate message effectively, concisely, and consistently
* Implement methods for updating key audiences with updated info.
* Distribute post-crisis communications
* **EVALUATE CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS EFFORTS**

# Aftermath Component

Afterwards: Following any crisis, appropriate action must take place to ensure that CASA of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and others as necessary, receives needed information and assistance to help bring closure to the crisis as well as relief from the effects of the event. Attention also should be placed on identifying and implementing measures to improve the action plan used during the crisis.

Immediately following a crisis, it is imperative that CASA of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ be sensitive to the needs of the staff, volunteers and board who may have personally been affected by the disaster. There may be a need to assist individuals with obtaining information and/or a referral to available resources. An example might be to refer a volunteer to a grief counselor.

The Executive Director and any possible staff shall meet within 10 days following a crisis and review all actions taken as a result of the crisis to determine effectiveness and efficiency of operations and make any needed changes to this **Crisis Management Plan**.

# Media Relations Reminders

The following are reminders for those who are acting as the spokesperson of CASA of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the event of a crisis.

1. Always return media calls. The more cooperative you appear, the better.
2. Communicate with the media- talk to them as well as listen to them. During crisis time, you may learn a great deal from the media that can be useful for future crises or advancements to be made to the program.
3. Remember and enforce your confidentiality requirements.
4. Avoid antagonizing the media. Remember that your reputation and that of the program is on the line. Tone is important!
5. Consider establishing a dedicated call-in line that will offer information to the media or others. Information on news conferences and newly acquired information can be placed on a tape that can then be updated. Keep your social media platforms and website up to date with new information.
6. Consider how information you release to the media may affect other agencies, businesses or individuals. Be courteous of others reputations. Be transparent with stakeholders, allies, partnerships about what message CASA of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will be presenting to the media.
7. When talking to the media, be sure to give credit to other agencies, groups or individuals working on the crisis, including your staff. Make it understood that you are a united front.
8. Communicate with staff, volunteers, and be sure to inform the juvenile court administration.

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# Scheduling Review of this Document

This one page document is to be included in the Crisis Communication Plan . The Crisis Communication Plan should be reviewed by the Executive Director annually or as changes need to be made. Below is the scheduling of the next review.

**Last Revised:** Jan 23rd. 2021

**Next Review Scheduled:** Jan. 2022

**First Adopted:** Feb. 2021

**Revision History:** Created by CASA of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Jan. 23rd 2021