

Northern California Region of Narcotics Anonymous Disaster Contingency Plan

SERENITY PRAYER

*God, grant us the serenity
To accept the things we cannot change
The courage to change the things we can
And the wisdom to know the difference*

INTRODUCTION

As the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) warns:

“Preparedness is everyone's job. Not just government agencies but all sectors of society - service providers, businesses, civic and volunteer groups, industry associations and neighborhood associations, as well as every individual citizen -- should plan ahead for disaster. During the first few hours or days following a disaster, essential services may not be available. People must be ready to act on their own.”

This booklet is intended for use by NA groups, Areas, and our Regional Service Committee in order to aid our fellowship in getting back to the business of recovery as quickly as possible after a natural or human-caused disaster. These plans were adapted from the Carolina Region of NA and integrate materials from the FEMA's website www.ready.gov.

THE AFTERMATH OF A DISASTER

In any major disaster, services that we have come to depend on could, in all likelihood, cease to exist. Although it is critical to maintain up to date and accurate phone numbers, telephone service may not be available.

Electric service may be interrupted and has broad implications. For example, gasoline pumps run on electricity. Electricity is required for services run by computers including banking. Streetlights, television, radio stations, and refrigeration may be disrupted.

Transportation could be drastically affected. Roads and bridges could be washed out, collapsed, or impassable from debris. Airports could be closed.

Clean water and food will likely be in limited supply.

Saving human lives is the first priority in any disaster. As recovering addicts, our lives depend upon staying spiritually fit. Being hungry, angry, lonely, and tired can compromise good decision making. The following sections deal with plans of action to begin NA meetings quickly and in an organized manner.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

This booklet is formulated to be used in conjunction with following:

- Your Area meeting directory
- A Little White Book
- Roster and contact information for Area and/or Regional leaders
- Current H&I information
- Phone numbers and addresses of local radio stations and newspapers
- State and local maps

During and immediately after a disaster if all modern services are out, getting information back and forth may have to be done by hand. Therefore, it is important to consider every alternative that is available to you.

For example, a disaster may take out all phone service and damage roads. The status of meeting places will be uncertain. What's an addict to do?

Listen to the radio. Map out meeting places on your local maps, check the radio again for broadcasts on any road information and reroute accordingly.

The use of maps is very important for traveling safely. Well known landmarks such as signs, buildings, and other familiar terrain may look totally different. If you need to get to the nearest area not affected by the disaster, maps can help you find the way there.

As earthquakes have an epicenter and send shock waves over a wide radius, listen to the radio and travel away from the epicenter and away from the coastline. Do not travel unless you are sure the way you are headed is clear. Never send a recovering addict alone. Together we can.

If marshal law and curfews have been imposed, follow all directions exactly. Remember: such restrictions are imposed for your protection and to insure emergency services can get through to injured persons and to aid setting up relief stations.

FELLOWSHIP SERVICES TEAM’S PLAN IN THE EVENT OF A DISASTER

Your Fellowship Services Team (FST) is committed to supporting NA communities affected by disaster.

- The Chair and Vice Chair will make every effort to contact Regional Committee Members (RCMs) in affected Areas and find out your status and needs. As suggested in the “Area Response” section below, RCMs should attempt to get in touch with the Chair, Vice Chair, or Regional Communications Coordinator at their earliest convenience.
- Naturally, the goal is to return to normalcy as quickly as possible. If the Regional Service Office (RSO) or other regular RSC meeting place is undamaged, assume that the usual schedule of meeting—the RSC, the H&I/PR Sharing Forum, NCCNA, BOD, etc.—will continue as planned.
- In the event that the disaster impacts the Regional Service Office (RSO) or other regular RSC meeting place, the Chair will secure another location and attempt to communicate this with all concerned.
- Likewise, literature sales—an important function of the RSO—will resume at the usual location or, if need be, an alternative location to be determined and announced as soon as possible.

SUGGESTIONS FOR AREA SERVICE COMMITTEES & THEIR OFFICERS

Leaders in each of our Areas should have a plan in place in the event of a disaster. Consider the following:

- 1) Keep current contact information for all ASC participants, the RSC chair, and the RSO in hard copy.
- 2) Establish which member(s) of your team would be the point person for group check ins and for communication with the Region.
- 3) Should a disaster occur, Area Service Committee members should contact their RCM, their RCM Alternate and report on the status of their group. The RCM should follow up on groups who don’t check in within 72 hours.
- 4) The RCM or RCM Alternate should contact the Regional Chair or Regional Service Office and give them information as to how many groups have reported in and how many meetings

have been set up. Give detailed information on days, times, and locations of meetings which have not checked in.



SUGGESTION: Keeping our doors open and services intact also relies on maintaining or reconnecting lines of fund flow. It may be tempting for individuals, groups, and areas to withhold funds. This has the potential to further interrupt Area and Regional services including distributing literature, providing insurance coverage, and coordinating our response as a Region.

HOSPITALS AND INSTITUTIONS

NA members who are in hospitals and institutions are particularly vulnerable during a disaster. Like everyone else, they may have lost friends, family, and homes. Remember they are away from their loved ones, frightened, and unsure of what will happen next. They may also have precious little clean time.

Some facilities such as treatment centers may be evacuated, however, many may be in “lock down” or housed in damaged buildings. Contacting these facilities quickly is very important to assure these recovering addicts that the fellowship of NA is with them through the crisis.

Contacting these facilities should be a priority. Even if your area H&I volunteers are unable to conduct meetings immediately after a disaster, most facilities will still accept literature.

The DOs and DON'Ts of H&I still apply. Please do not carry notes or letters in or out of a facility. Don't give your personal contact information. Don't make phone calls on behalf of the client or prisoner.



SUGGESTION: Area H&I committees will want to put a post-disaster plan in place in order to resume services as soon as possible following a disaster. Be sure to keep printed records of the facilities your committee serves, their addresses, and contact information. Decide who will be responsible for making contact. Please keep Regional H&I leaders informed of your status and how they can help.

HOME GROUP MEMBERS & SECRETARIES

- 1) Check the location of your meeting place. If it's safe for member to meet, contact the radio station and newspaper so that they can announce it. (See Emergency PSAs.)
- 2) If your regular meeting place has been destroyed, sufficiently damaged, or you cannot reach it, set up a new location. NA meetings can be held anywhere during an emergency! Contact radio stations and your local newspaper with the new location. (If under marshal law or curfew set meetings for noon and 5:00 p.m.)

- 3) Check emergency shelters for NA members who may be housed there. If they made it to a shelter, their physical needs are being met but they could probably use emotional and spiritual support. Try to get them to a meeting or hold one in the shelter.
- 4) Contact a member of your Area Service Committee leadership team. Be sure to give them detailed information of where your meetings are being held and the correct times.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS EMERGENCY ACTION PSAs

RADIO STATION:

PHONE #:

ADDRESS:

ORGANIZATION: _____ AREA OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

DUE TO REASONS BEYOND OUR CONTROL THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
_____ GROUP OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS HAS CHANGED THE MEETING (TIME
&/OR PLACE) TO AM/PM AT <address>

Recovery IS What Happens At NA Meetings. It is possible to stop using drugs!!
(If phone numbers can be reached, please list them, too.)

LONG RANGE PLANS

Major disasters can create long term problems. Getting meetings started again is the beginning of disaster recovery. When radio and television stations, and newspapers are back in working order it is important to begin as many Narcotics Anonymous Public Service Announcements (PSAs) as possible. Areas should consider thorough public information efforts to last 4 to 6 months after the disaster. Refer to the Public Information Handbook often. Also, do not hesitate to contact the Regional Public Relations Chair and Vice Chair for any assistance.

Keeping the region informed of the progress of H&I and regular meetings is very important. In some instances meeting directories may need to be altered and reprinted. Area phone lines may need to be changed.

Groups and areas might also consider holding social events such as special speaker meetings, dances, bring a dish dinners, and outdoor activities to keep up moral. With effort, the fellowship will return to normalcy much more quickly

CHECK LIST – RCM / Area Chair

1. Do all groups in your area have a current meeting directory, state and local maps, and a copy of this booklet?
2. Are all addresses and phone numbers up to date?
3. Are all H&I information, addresses and phone numbers current?
4. Do you have any ham radio operators in your local fellowship? If so, do you have their phone numbers and addresses?
5. Do you have note pads, pens and pencils (to leave notes on doors), candles, matches, and flashlights?

It is important that one set of these materials be kept in the group meeting place and one set kept in a separate location in case the meeting place cannot be reached or has been damaged.

SAMPLE MEETING FORMAT

This sample meeting format is just that: a sample. It's designed so that, if your group chooses, you can use it exactly as it is. However, you're encouraged to change it and rearrange it according to the needs of your, group.

Leader.

Welcome members to the meeting and introduce yourself. Hello, my name is _____ and I'm an addict. Welcome to this meeting of the _____ Group of Narcotics Anonymous. I'd like to open this meeting with a moment of silence (15 to 20 seconds) for the addict who still suffers, followed by the Serenity Prayer.

We like to extend a special welcome to newcomers. Is there anyone attending their first NA meeting? Would you like to introduce yourselves? Is there anyone attending this meeting for the first time?

If this is a closed meeting: This is a "closed"—Narcotics Anonymous meeting. "Closed" NA meetings are only for drug addicts or those who think they might have a drug problem. Closed meetings provide an atmosphere in which addicts can feel more certain that those attending will be able to identify with them. If there are any non-addicts visiting, we'd like to thank you for your interest in Narcotics Anonymous. Our local NA meeting list on the literature table will direct you to an NA meeting in our community that is open to non addicts.

If this is an open meeting: This is an "open" Narcotics Anonymous: meeting; which means that non-addict friends, relatives, and—community members are welcome to attend. Other NA meetings may be closed to non addicts. We'd like to welcome our visitors, and thank you for your interest in Narcotics Anonymous. We ask that you respect the primary purpose of this

meeting, which is to provide a place where drug addicts can share their recovery with one another.

For the protection of our group as well as the meeting facility, we ask that no drugs or drug paraphernalia be on your person at the meeting. It costs nothing to belong to Narcotics Anonymous. You are a member when you say you are.

Recognize those with various periods of clean time. Key tags, chips, or medallions may be given out.

Select people before the meeting to read one or more of the following short pieces. These readings can be found either in our Little White Booklet, the Basic Text, or the group reading cards.

- a) Who Is An Addict?
- b) What Is The NA Program?
- c) Why Are We Here?
- d) How It Works.
- e) 12 Twelve Traditions.

Ask for topic or step for discussion and call on people to share, or introduce the speaker.

Leader:

About ten minutes before the meeting is scheduled to close, announce: That's all the time we have. I'd like to thank you for attending.

Begin passing the basket around, announcing: The basket being passed around is one way of practicing our Seventh Tradition, which says, "Every NA group ought to be fully self supporting, declining outside contributions." "The money we collect pays for rent literature, and refreshments. Through contributions from this group to various NA service committees, it also helps carry the NA message of recovery in our area and around the world.

If this is an "open" "meeting: I'd like once again to thank our non addict guests for the interest they've shown in Narcotics Anonymous. Because of NA's tradition of self support, this group asks that you not contribute any money when the basket passes your way.

Does the group service representative have any announcements? (The GSR will make announcements of upcoming group activities and NA events in the area.)

After the basket has come back around: Again, thanks for coming tonight. Would all those who care to, join in a circle to close? *Various groups close in different ways: with prayers, brief recitations from NA literature, etc.*

Keep coming back. It works!

POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR MEETINGS

Step One	H.A.L.T.	Powerlessness
Step Two	Freedoms	Tools of the Fellowship
Step Three	Anger	H.O.W.
Just for Today	Faith in a Higher Power	Going to Any Length
Denial	Keep it Simple	

PHONE NUMERS AND ADDRESSES

AREA:

ADDRESS:

CITY, STATE, ZIP

HELPLINE #:

AMERICAN RED CROSS:

ADDRESS:

CITY, STATE, ZIP

OTHER PHONE NUMBERS:

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RD:

RD ALT:

Current CHAIR:

Current VICE CHAIR:

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