

**OPTIONS, INC.
INCIDENT RESPONSE PROCEDURES**

Snow Storm Emergency Procedures

Options will **no longer** conform to the closings and late starts, due to **weather conditions, that are announced by the Big Lake Public Schools.** Options will make its own determination and our status will be announced on WCCO Radio 8.30 AM, WCCO Television Channel 4, WCCORADIO.COM and WCCO.COM and on KSTP TV. Residences and family members of consumers are advised to watch and to listen for **Options, Inc.'s** announcements.

The Director shall make closing decisions. In the Director's absence, responsibility for weather decisions goes to the Program Managers. Should the Director consider it advisable to close after consumers have arrived, all residences and families of consumers who reside with them will be notified of the closing by phone to assure that someone is home to receive them. Consumers will not be sent home if an appropriate caretaker is not reached and other arrangements will be made.

Should conditions deteriorate to the point that it is not deemed advisable to send consumers home, the consumers shall remain at OPTIONS, INC. Local Police and Red Cross personnel will be notified for further instructions on evacuation to a designated emergency shelter. OPTIONS, INC. personnel shall remain with the clients throughout the emergency, maintaining the normal staff to client ratios. The consumer's residence shall be contacted (if possible) to advise of the change in plans and steps that are being taken.

Consumers placed through Options' licensed Supported Employment Program will be trained in the Severe Weather Emergency Procedures of the business at which they are employed, as well as, the procedures of the transportation system on which they rely as part of their orientation.

Authorized by: _____
Executive Director

Date

OPTIONS, INC.
INCIDENT RESPONSE PROCEDURES

SEVERE WEATHER EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND REPORTING

I. Policy

To develop procedures to respond to severe weather conditions and to ensure that all staff and consumers are trained on what actions to take in the event of severe weather.

II. Definitions

A. Warning: Issued by National Weather Service local offices indicating that a particular weather hazard is either imminent or has been reported. A warning indicates the need to take action to protect life and property, i.e., seek immediate shelter. The type of hazard is reflected in the type of warning (e.g., tornado warning, blizzard warning).

B. Watch: Issued by National Weather Service local offices indicating that a particular hazard is possible, i.e., that conditions are more favorable than usual for its occurrence. A watch is a recommendation for planning, preparation, and increased awareness (i.e., to be alert for changing weather, listen for further information, and think about what to do if the danger materializes).

C. Advisory: Issued by National Weather Service local offices indicating that situations that may cause some inconvenience or difficulty to travelers or people who must be outdoors.

III. Procedures

Whenever there is the threat of severe inclement weather, the following steps will be taken to ensure the safety of all individuals.

A. Monitoring Weather Conditions

If there is a tornado watch or severe thunderstorm, a general announcement will be made to Options' staff indicating the time of the watch expiration and informing staff to prepare to move to shelter, if necessary. Options will also contact Instructors and Job Coaches who are away from the building through the "walkie talkie" feature on the cell phones to advise them of the weather conditions.

1. The staff person in charge is responsible for monitoring the status of the weather and determining what steps need to be taken to insure the safety of the consumers. In the Director's absence, responsibility for weather decisions goes to the Program Managers.
2. The following considerations will be taken into account when severe inclement weather conditions arise:
 - a. A weather radio alert device shall be monitored in the office area at all times during program hours. A flashlight and a transistor radio will be permanently kept in the office file room.
 - b. The whereabouts of all consumers and staff will be accounted for.
 - c. For tornado watches, staff will check the flashlight and have readily available.

The tornado plan must also be reviewed. Staff and consumers should remain in close proximity to safe shelter.

d. When a weather watch is issued staff must be aware that conditions may change and necessitate the cancellation of community activities and the closing of DT & H programs.

1) The supervisor/designee should be prepared to modify the schedule on short notice to insure adequate staffing to meet the needs of the program. The supervisor or designee will be responsible for deciding whether to postpone an activity or not

B. Seeking Emergency Shelter

In the event of a tornado warning or other severe weather condition that may force people to seek emergency shelter:

1. An announcement will be paged over the phone system: "Due to weather conditions, please walk to the designated shelter areas within the building". Consumers and staff from back workshop area should go to the Staff Dining Room #111, Conference Room A, and the main hallway just outside of Seniors/HNA and shut the double doors. WLSA consumers and staff should go to the Shower Room and Activity Room in the WLSA. Consumers and staff from Seniors and LEA should go into the restrooms, shower room and activity rooms in/by their areas. Consumers and staff from HNA should go into the HNA restroom. These areas are posted on the emergency evacuation plan. All staff will be informed of the location of the designated emergency shelter area. As soon as the consumers are seated, the Program Managers will take a head count to confirm that all consumers are present.
2. All staff and consumers are to remain seated until an all clear has been issued by the weather bureau and the Director has given permission to return to work. The brakes on wheelchairs are to be engaged.
3. Shut all adjacent doors for protection.
4. If staff and consumers are not in the program facility at the time emergency shelter must be sought staff will seek the most appropriate safe shelter available in the area.
5. Remain calm and protect consumers at all times.
6. Listen to the radio for updates and remain in the emergency shelter area until the warning is lifted.

E. Evacuation

1. In the event that weather conditions force evacuation, the staff person in charge will remain tuned into the radio and follow evacuation procedures outlined there.
2. The staff person in charge will ensure all consumers are safely removed from the service site to a pre-designated alternative service site or a designated emergency shelter in the community.

F. Traveling During Severe Weather

1. If staff and consumers are traveling at the time emergency shelter must be sought:
 - a. staff will stop the vehicle and pull over to the side of the road
 - b. staff will remain calm and protect consumers at all times
 - c. in the event of a tornado warning move consumers to the lowest ground area nearby and have consumers lay low and watch for the severe weather to pass

- over before going back into the vehicle
- d. Otherwise remain in the vehicle until the warning is lifted

2. Emergency Equipment

All vehicles providing transportation to consumers of the program must be equipped with the following for winter travel:

- a. blankets;
- b. first-aid kit; and a
- c. cellular phone when traveling outside the local community.

G. Notification

1. Once everyone is safely evacuated from the facility due to a fire, the program administrator or designee will complete the following steps:
 - a. Report the fire to program administration, including the program director and the appropriate manager/designee.
 - b. Arrange for the completion of an incident report by the staff person who was in charge at the time of the fire.
2. The program administrator or designee will report the fire within 24 hours to:
 - a. the parents or legal representative, if any
 - b. other licensed caregivers, if any
 - c. county case managers

IV. Severe Weather Evacuation Drills

In order to be prepared for the possibility of a real severe weather emergency the program will hold regular emergency evacuation drills. The following conditions must be met:

- A. Clear evacuation plans will be posted throughout the facility showing routes of evacuation.
- B. Fire drills will be held at least three times per year. A tornado drill, involving moving consumers to a safe area within Options, will be conducted each year in April.
- C. Drills will be conducted at varied times, under varied conditions, and will use all possible exits.
- D. During drills clients must be evacuated to a designated meeting place.
- E. Following each evacuation drill, a report will be completed noting:
 1. any problems noted and corrective action taken
 2. personnel present
 3. client responses
- F. The supervisor will be responsible for reviewing each report and maintaining a complete file of all drills.

V. Staff Training

- A. All staff persons will be trained in severe weather evacuation procedures and the location and use of any related emergency equipment.
- B. The emergency evacuation plans and procedures shall be reviewed by all staff persons at least quarterly.
- C. Training will be provided to insure that staff are trained in the evacuation of clients with physical disabilities.

Consumers placed through Options' licensed Supported Employment Program will be trained in the Tornado/Weather Emergency Procedures of the business at which they are employed as part of their orientation at that business.

Authorized by: _____
Executive Director

Date