**How to use this template**

This template outlines the four phases of a critical incident:

**1.** Response-Impact Phase

**2A.** Assess the Situation

**2B.** Operational

**3A.** Communication Strategy – Internal

**3B.** Communication Strategy – External

**4.** Recovery Phase

Throughout this template, there are areas where you are required to insert information that is specific to your facility. Simply delete the sample text under the heading and replace it with your facility-specific policies and procedures.

Onsite resources to assist staff in dealing with emergencies should be easily accessible by all staff. We recommend laminating and posting the four phases for easy reference.

This template is formatted for 11x17” paper.

**RESPONSE**

1. **A. AT IMPACT**

**ASSESSMENT**

* Provide leadership
* End the danger and limit further physical and or psychological injury to staff
* Review Major Incident Bin checklist located in the guard office (\*available on Lifesaving Society website)
* Obtain a room for bystanders
* Obtain a room for the victim’s family if on site
* List Possible room options: Babysitting room/close blinds, Gymnasium/pull curtains, Pool deck-storage room
* Obtain bystanders from pool viewing areas and bring to the room
* Obtain victim families if on-site and bring to the room

**SECURE AREA**

* Secure an area away from media, bystanders and family members
* Spread staff out for the writing of staff witness statements
* Screen areas off from the public view for staff incident report writing.
* Lock the pool viewing areas
* Use lifejacket carts to block the view on the pool deck

**STATEMENT DOCUMENTATION**

* Did anyone witness situation?
* Obtain witness statement(s) if applicable or names and phone numbers
* Include with Accident/Incident report(s)

**ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT**

* Report(s) are to be completed and provided to immediate Supervisor before going home
* After critical incident has occurred, it is crucial that the staff not be allowed to leave until they have spoken with a Supervisor.

**NOTIFICATION**

* Contact Manager of Recreation & Client Services, Manager of Facilities, Director of Leisure Services, Town Manager, Director of Human Resources, Health & Safety Advisor, Ministry of Labour, Joint Health & Safety Representative, Director of Legislative Services, Communications Officer, Mayor, Town Council
* Provide regular updates
* Aquatic Supervisor will contact the Lifesaving Society
* Appoint one official spokesperson to speak to the media
* See Communication Strategy/External
* Assign task: Obtain food and water for staff
* Obtain a critical incident room for staff defusing session
* Possible options: Training Room off the deck\* cover window
* Obtain a room for staff families
* Possible options: Meeting Room at the front of the building\* cover little window

**2. A. ASSESS THE SITUATION**

**ASSESSMENT**

* Ensure the situation is stabilized
* Collect information from reliable sources
* Ensure you are kept up to date
* Contact Lifeguard Team not on shift about the incident
* For staff involved in the incident whom are minors, contact their parents/guardians if this hasn’t already been completed.
* If police or Ministry of Labour have taken over the investigation, a Manager or Supervisor should be present during the interview of staff if they are minors.

**COLLECTION OF DOCUMENTATION**

* Collect Major Accident Reports
* Collect Staff Witness Statements
* Collect Public Witness Statements
* Photograph the scene – see Critical Incident bin
* Collect physical evidence (where present)

**REVIEW DOCUMENTATION**

* Supervisor to review all documentation for completeness and legibility

**SUPPORT NOTIFICATION**

* Decide what Critical Incident support is required or necessary.
* Options: EAP, York Region CISM, Bill Tibbo and Assoc, Police-Victim Services, Police Debriefing, Grief Counsellor, OPP Counselling

**DEBRIEFING SESSION FOLLOW-UP**

* Staff who are identified as being at risk are referred to the Aquatic Supervisor, concerns are explored and the appropriate level of assistance and support is provided. Parents are informed, and where appropriate, a referral is made to an appropriate agency. Staff are informed about how to access support for themselves.

**DEBRIEFING SESSION**

* It may be determined that through the defusing process that a debriefing will be needed
* Option: Invite the parents of the staff involved in incident
* Provided within 24-72 hours

**DEFUSING SESSION**

* A defusing session will be conducted
* Must be held on site within 1 or 2 hours after the incident
* Decide if multiple defusing sessions for different groups are needed
* Session will last approx.(20-45 minutes)
* Provide handouts (CISM symptoms and understanding the normality of responses)
* A letter for parents/guardians of minors will be pre-drafted and handed out

**SUPPORT**

* Meet with the crisis response team

and discuss situation

**LIST**

* Make a list of names of who are affected and how
* Make a list of what needs to be communicated, to whom, by whom
* How will the situation be monitored

**2. B. OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

Aids needed:

* White board/markers for information update
* Access to a Phone/Computer/Printer

**COMMAND POST**

* Set up a critical incident command room/space
* Options: Board Room
* Team Leader established
* Evacuation procedures followed
* Direct patrons to the evacuation point
* Post Signs on all Entrances from the Critical Incident bin
* Team Leader stays at Entrance while doors are closed
* Contact program participants and cancel programs and provide credits if applicable
* Open the door for the parents of staff
* ID must be shown

**EVACUATION**

* Close the facility if needed

**COMMUNICATIONS**

* Information update on website and phone system. See Communications-Internal –Blue paper

**NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS OF STAFF INVOLVED**

* Contact the parents of staff to come and pick up their child
* Staff should not drive home
* Provide specific instructions during phone call to bring ID as facility will be closed
* Identify gathering area

Options: Pool training room

**NOTIFICATION TO STAFF**

* Inform all staff at the facility and related facilities of incident outlying the basic facts, and directing that all request from outside sources referred to official spokesperson

**COLLECTION OF DOCUMENTATION**

* Record all the parents seen
* Sign in sheet

**SUPPORT FOR CSRs**

* Determine customer service support with extra and distressing calls
* Debrief the front office staff on what to say when answering the phone

**INFORMATION MEETING**

* Aquatic Programmer/Supervisor or designate facilitate meeting
* Parents arrive and are sent to the training room
* Quick information meeting is held
* Manage Questions
* Letter given to parents at the end of meeting and appropriate materials from critical incident bin

**PROCESS FOR PARENTS/SPOUSE OF DECEASED**

* Attend to the deceased persons locker
* Contact Facility to cut the lock
* Ensure family is let into the building if they arrive and recommend them to go to the hospital.

**PREPARE FOR PARENTS ARRIVAL**

* Assign Task: Buy food and drink
* Sample letters are typed up on the Town’s system and ready for adaptation

**COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

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1. **A. INTERNAL**

* Manager/Director will liaise with the Communications Officer
* The nature and content of communication with families will be by meeting or by email or telephone depending on the situation. Follow-up visit with parents of any staff directly affected may be needed in extreme situations.
* A quick information meeting will be held for parents/guardians of the staff directly involved to provide an opportunity to address any needs and concerns about their children’s welfare. This meeting can be an opportunity for families and staff to build on their work in relation to staff well-being. The facts of the incident will be provided. At this meeting the Aquatic Supervisor will indicate reactions staff may experience to assist their understanding of what normal reactions and how best to respond.
* Information on sources of help for families available through the workplace and within the surrounding community will be provided.
* The Aquatic Supervisor or Aquatic Programmer will facilitate the meeting, and manage ‘questions and answers’.
* First update affected families, staff, council and users and then the media.
* A staff meeting will be held for other staff providing facts regarding the incident. Where certain details are not available or are to be withheld, it is important that it is stated and why. If a meeting isn’t an option than an email will be sent out.
* Continual check in with staff involved
* Prepare staff what to say in the public- key messaging
* Inform all staff at the facility in different focus areas (fitness, gym, rink, facility) and related facilities of the incident outlying the basic facts, and directing that all request from outside sources should thereafter be referred to the official spokesperson. Consider ripple effect, and staff can be affected by an event if they do not know the staff person directly involved. Staff may be influenced by the reactions of other staff.

ITEMS TO BE DECIDED ON:

* Decide how to handle staff being interviewed
* Photographers on premise

**COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

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**3. B. EXTERNAL**

* Manager/Director will liaise with the Communications Officer
* Appoint one official spokesperson to speak to the media

What to say when you know very little or nothing about what has happened?

* We are cooperating with Police and other authorities. Our thoughts are with the Family at this time.
* The designated person will prepare a press statement, give media briefings and interviews controlling the message by confirming the facts without compromising any ongoing investigations. Remember everything is on record. Prepare key messages for spokesperson
* Search/Obtain Media Release by Police
* Might have recognition of Lifeguard efforts
* Monitor social media, and create file for any Facebook posts, website posts, local newspaper, press releases etc.. Collect all media reports of the incident and put in major incident binder.
* Develop a strategy to respond to media request for information
* Communication will occur in stages by a knowledgeable trained spokesperson. Update messaging to get the facts out.
* Depending on situation- Recognize the family
* Options: Moment of silence, flags half-mast

**STAGES:**

1. Confirm there has been an incident and your operational status.
2. Provide an update regarding operational impacts ahead.
3. Provide details when you will re-open.
4. Be clear you will work with investigative bodies to determine the exact cause and contributing factors and will conduct an internal investigation.
5. Explain that investigation can take time and why?
6. When investigation is complete- release as much information as possible to form a creditable stand point.
7. Identify the steps that are being taken to prevent future incidents.

* Designate person to triage media calls. Additional staff will be needed to record contact information and follow-up with these calls.

**4. FOLLOW-UP/RECOVERY AFTER A CRITICAL INCIDENT**

**CRITIQUING SESSION**

* Hire Lifesaving Society to conduct a third party incident review.
* Contact local Paramedics or AED provider
* Post AED-use debriefing and defibrillator download to provide CPR performance feedback
* Construct a detailed time sequence of events for the day of the incident, starting from when the staff involved arrived at work. This should include staff activities before, during and after the incident plus their position, movements while on duty. Use pool diagram in incident bin.

Conduct an evaluation; this should be prepared in two parts:

1. An analysis of the procedures prior to the incident that contribute to accident prevention

* Staff qualifications and training
* Emergency procedures
* Staff deployment-number on duty, positioning of staff
* Facility design
* Equipment availability and functioning

1. An analysis of the procedures used in handling of the incident

* Recognition and response of lifeguards/Instructors
* First aid treatment provided
* Contact with EMS
* Follow up reports
* Provide Recommendations for how to improve operations
* Provide a Implementation plan strategy
* Monitor adherence to recommendations
* Contact the Lifesaving Society for an Aquatic Safety Audit

AND/OR

* Consulting Services: assistance with the management of critical incidents, advice on operational concerns, or the preparation of expert witness reports.

**RECOVERY AFTER A CRITICAL INCIDENT**

Restoring workplace to a regular routine:

* Maintain regular updated information to all staff.
* Some flexibility may be required as some staff may be unable to return to full/normal duties/routines. Monitor those situations
* Assist staff to create a safe, ordered environment as this will help to reassure staff.
* Maintain supportive environment. Perception of supportive structures has the potential to act as a safety net and an expression of concern for well being of the community.
* Prepare the staff for the After Math – possible Law Suit
* Statement of Claim
* Next Steps- understand the process
* Provide Staff Training
* Options:

Separate time to go swimming after incident

* Aquafitness class – exercise, fun, stress release
* Depending on situation: Recognition of Staff
* Local Newspaper/Council Presentation/Rescue Award of Merit