

Health and Safety

Severe Weather and Natural Disasters

I. POLICY:

- A. It is the policy of Bridge House / Grace House Corporation to protect persons served, employees, visitors, and property in the event of a severe weather emergency or natural disaster. All potential emergencies cannot be anticipated, therefore, emergency plans shall provide for adaptability to multiple situations.

II. PROCEDURES:

- A. The CEO or designee is responsible for oversight of emergency disaster plans and drills and ensuring that the organization's facilities are well prepared to respond effectively to any emergency.
- B. Specific procedures will be maintained for severe weather and natural disasters. In addition, emergency severe weather and natural disaster drills will be conducted at each site on an annual basis.
- C. The overall components of the organization's severe weather emergency plans are as follows:
 - 1.) Severe weather is defined as any weather condition or natural event that has the potential to cause physical harm and/or property destruction. These events include severe thunderstorms, tornados, and flash floods. Procedures for severe weather are as follows:
 - a. If a severe weather or tornado watch is issued, each site shall access radio or television reporting that provides information from the National Weather Service.
 - b. In the event of a "watch," employees on duty will be informed of procedures to be taken in the event a "warning" is declared.
 - c. During "watch" periods, all persons served and employees will be encouraged to limit trips and transportation to and from the site.
 - d. In the event of a severe weather or tornado warning, all persons within the facility will immediately move to the designated areas in the interior of the building.
 - e. Employees will assist persons served in arriving at the designated safety locations, and if time permits, will close all windows and blinds and all doors.
 - f. The CEO or designee will secure the first aid kit, flashlights, and a radio, and maintain them in the area being used for shelter.
 - g. The CEO or designee shall oversee the process of moving to the designated safety location(s) and conduct a head count when this activity is completed.

- h. The CEO or designee shall announce the end of the need to remain in the designated location when the warning is no longer in effect, according to the national weather service.
- i. The CEO or designee will be responsible for contacting any emergency entity that may be needed due to injuries or events such as power loss and/or broken utility lines.

D. The overall components of the organization's severe weather hurricane emergency plans are as follows:

HURRICANE

PROCEDURE

If a hurricane watch is issued, the Bridge House / Grace House will initiate a Hurricane Plan - Stage 1 - which will initiate a certain level of preparedness/readiness by the House. A hurricane warning, as initiated by the U.S. Weather Bureau, will signify a potential of a hurricane in the area in the next 48 to 72 hours.

Preparedness Review

Prior to the beginning of hurricane season (June 1) of each year, the Executive staff of Bridge House / Grace House Corporation will review the hurricane plan and recommend any needed changes to the plan.

All Bridge House / Grace House residents are informed that Bridge House / Grace House will be closed in the event that the City of New Orleans calls an evacuation.

All residents of Bridge House / Grace House are encouraged to develop a hurricane evacuation plan during hurricane season. Each resident's hurricane evacuation plan is placed in their chart. Every resident is asked to identify an individual that they will be able to evacuate with in the event that the city calls an evacuation. A generic form has been created to assist with this plan. Bridge House / Grace House staff suggest that residents speak to family members, friends, 12 Step sponsors or members of the AA program regarding possible options for emergency shelter. If no plans can be made, Bridge House / Grace House agrees to ensure such clients know the location of pick points for the City's Assisted Evacuation Plan (CAEP), and direction for the Evacuee Processing Center. As of this review, as a part of our annual preparedness review, in wake of the approaching Hurricane Season, that site has been identified as the Union Passenger Terminal, approximately ten (10) blocks from Bridge House Earhart, and accessible through CAEP transportation arraignments for Grace House Stratford clients.

Each resident will sign a hurricane discharge form if a mandatory evacuation is ordered. Once Bridge House / Grace House calls for a Hurricane Discharge they waive all

responsibility for each residents well-being, although every effort will be made to direct those clients without suitable transportation to the designated assisted evacuation sites.

Each employee will make management aware of their personal emergency management plan and provide contact information.

When a hurricane approaches, the preparations listed below will be followed:

Phase 1: Hurricane Watch

When a hurricane watch is announced, emergency operations are begun.

1. Review Hurricane Plan
2. Alert all staff to update their phone numbers and street addresses to give to the Business Office. At this stage all staff should begin making their personal plans early in the event a mandatory evacuation is ordered for the City, so that they will not feel encumbered while assisting with the client discharge and securing Bridge House / Grace House for such an evacuation.

Clinical Staff should contact the Clinical Director for further instructions at this time.

3. Check inventory of hurricane supplies. Procure additional supplies, if needed for a minimal duration of 72 hours (3 days) without delivery.
4. Bridge House / Grace House residents are encouraged to contact the individuals they plan to evacuate with to confirm their evacuation plan.
5. Counselors will secure signed Emergency Discharge forms and plans from their clients at this time.

Phase 2: Hurricane Warning

All staff will contact their immediate supervisors for further instructions, and prepare to assist in client discharge and securing the building. All contact information should be updated as necessary at this time as well.

Clients will have the opportunity to voluntarily evacuate with family even if no mandatory evacuation has been called by the City of New Orleans. Instructions detailing time frame for returning to Bridge House / Grace House after the event before discharge will be enacted, will be provided at time of departure.

The IT management service will ensure all computer backups have taken place.

Phase 3a: Shelter In-Place

Clients are afforded the opportunity to evacuate the city following their personal evacuation plans in the event of a hurricane whether or not the city issues a mandatory evacuation. However, client accommodations will be made to “Shelter In-Place” when no evacuation order, voluntary or mandatory, is issued and circumstances support such action.

In the event a shelter in place plan is enacted, non-sheltering staff will be advised of needed preparatory supports, and then allowed to leave. Staff volunteering to shelter in place with remaining client base will lead in preparatory work to include:

- Prepare sign-in sheets / client rosters to determine all individuals onsite.
- Ensure supplies are secured in appropriate sheltering areas
- Ensure emergency cell phone is charging in the event of power outages as well as ensure other communication devices that may be appropriate for prolonged shelter is in secure locale
- Move weather radio / television to secure sheltering areas to stay abreast of announcements and weather updates
- Ensure to announce advent of shelter in place action and when all departing parties have left lock and secure the building
- Ensure all sheltering staff and residents are accounted for
- Once event is over staff will check and ensure that the facilities are safe and secure.
- Any potential problems will be reported to the Building Engineer and other officials if they appear life threatening

Phase 3b: Mandatory Evacuation

All full time Bridge House / Grace House clinical staff is expected to report to work to secure the building and assist with client discharges. Bridge House / Grace House staff are informed by administration to shut down and unplug all computers.

Bridge House / Grace House staff will store all patio furniture, patio chairs, planters, cigarette butt containers inside buildings, will close and secure windows with all blinds in closed position and will unplug appliances from power outlets.

Checklist:

- a. unplug all electrical equipment such as PCs, printers, etc.
- b. cover equipment with plastic wrap or plastic bags and tape securely
- c. cover equipment in administrative offices, computer room, etc.
- d. ensure resident files are secure.
- e. notify staff scheduled to work that building is closing
- f. close and lock all doors and windows that haven't been secured

- g. change telephone voice mail message

Communication

Staff and clients will be given an e-mail address to reach the CEO, Executive Director of Clinical Services and other key personnel, in the event that staff and clients are not allowed reentry. Staff and clients can e-mail the CEO – Else Pedersen at epedersen@bridgehouse.org and pedersened53@gmail.com or the Executive Director of Clinical Service – Jacqueline Smith at JSmith@bridgehouse.org or jacqueline.633@gmail.com. All staff and clients are encouraged to e-mail the CEO or Executive Director of Clinical Services with contact information. The Bridge House / Grace House e-mail account is preferred, but may not work if the server goes down.

Recovery – Reentry

After the hurricane, Bridge House / Grace House employees and clients should monitor the news media to determine when citizens are allowed reentry into the City of New Orleans.

Communication failures are often a problem following hurricanes. Phone systems often go down, cell phones don't work, and staff does not have access to their Bridge House / Grace House e-mail. Clients will be asked to e-mail epedersen@bridgehouse.org and pedersened53@gmail.com or jsmith@bridgehouse.org or jacqueline.633@gmail.com to schedule a date for re-admission. Staff and clients can attempt to reach Else Pedersen at 504-228-0283 or Jackie Smith at 504-919-7615.

Engineering

When a Hurricane Watch is called the Chief Engineer will:

1. Roof's will be checked to make sure they are clear of debris
2. Flashlights will be issued to key personnel and each client
3. All ash urns, furniture and any loose exterior materials will be secured or removed from the exterior
4. Check all exterior drains to see that they are open. All pipes will be secured
5. All electrical and HVAC equipment will be secured

If a Hurricane Warning is elevated to a Level 3 storm and an evacuation is called for by the city – all facilities will be secured and shut down.

After the Hurricane has passed:

1. Inspect for structural damage
2. Check for loose or dangling electrical power lines, broken sewerage or water pipes
3. Check all circuits before restoring power if power was lost

BRIDGE HOUSE / GRACE HOUSE HURRICANE PROCEDURES

Because Bridge House / Grace House and its staff care about your safety, we ask that you read, understand and sign the following:

Upon admission to Bridge House / Grace House, I understand the following to be true: In the event of a Hurricane Watch Advisory, Bridge House / Grace House will begin making preparations for the potential upgrade to a Hurricane Warning Advisory. If the Advisory remains in effect, Bridge House / Grace House will provide all hurricane emergency supplies and take responsibility for securing my safety to the best of its ability and the safety of the House until all Advisories have been lifted. In the event that there is an upgrade to a Hurricane Warning Advisory, I will be required to have emergency shelter plans in place in the event that Bridge House / Grace House calls for a Hurricane Discharge. If I am not able to return to the care of family or friends, Bridge House / Grace House will refer me to either an Assisted Evacuation Pickup site or the actual Assisted Evacuee Processing Center... The Bridge House / Grace House staff has advised me of the importance of developing my plans for a Hurricane Discharge before such a crisis were to occur. They have suggested I speak to my sponsor or members of the AA program regarding possible options for emergency shelter if I am unable to return to the care of my family or friends. If no plans can be made, Bridge House / Grace House agrees to direct me to the nearest Assisted Evacuee Processing Center designated by the City of New Orleans and provide transportation if necessary. Once Bridge House / Grace House has called for a Hurricane Discharge, they waive all responsibility for my well-being until such time that I have been readmitted. I understand that during a Hurricane Discharge I am required to remain drug and alcohol free, and I will be screened upon readmission. Once a hurricane has passed, I am responsible for contacting Bridge House / Grace House at within 72 hours after the storm is over to schedule a date and time to return.

Bridge House: Julie Batt 504-330-0046

Grace House: Veronica Buccola 504-463-4113

Bridge House / Grace House: Jackie Smith 504-919-7615

Client Signature

Date

Counselor's Signature

Date

BRIDGE HOUSE / GRACE HOUSE HURRICANE DISCHARGE FORM

Date: _____

I request a temporary discharge from treatment at Bridge House / Grace House for reasons of Hurricane preparedness and/or to return to be with my family. I agree to remain free of chemicals during this interim period and to contact Bridge House / Grace House when the storm has passed. In addition, I agree to call Bridge House / Grace House, if I am able, to verify the appropriate readmission date a determined by Bridge House / Grace House.

Client Signature: _____

The above named client is given permission for temporary release of treatment under the above-stated conditions.

Staff Signature: _____

HURRICANE CLIENT INFORMATION

Client Name: _____

Client Contact Number: _____

Counselor: _____

I have the means to evacuate independently. As a part of my personal evacuation plan, in the event of a mandatory evacuation I am going to stay with the following individual(s):

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

The person(s) who will pick me up from Bridge House / Grace House is:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Client Signature: _____

I have no means of evacuating on my own. I will utilize the City-Assisted Evacuation Plan (CAEP) for New Orleans residents unable to evacuate without assistance.

Date of Registration: _____

Client Signature: _____

End of policy:

Chief Executive Officer

Date