

NE Disaster Behavioral Health Exercise 2021

Situation Manual

July 21, 2021

This Situation Manual (SitMan) provides exercise participants with all the necessary tools for their roles in the exercise. Some exercise material is intended for the exclusive use of exercise planners, facilitators, and evaluators, but players may view other materials that are necessary to their performance. All exercise participants may view the SitMan.

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EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Name	Nebraska Disaster Behavioral Health Exercise 2021
Exercise Dates	July 21, 2021, 1:00pm - 5:00pm (CST)
Scope	This exercise is a seminar/workshop, planned for 4 hours to be conducted virtually. Exercise play is limited to seminar and facilitated discussion.
Focus Area(s)	Emergency Support Function-8 (ESF-8, Public Health and Medical Services) FEMA Mission Area - Recovery
Capabilities	ASPR: Foundation for Health Care and Medical Readiness (FEMA: Planning) ASPR: Continuity of Health Care Service Delivery (FEMA: Recovery-Health and Social Services)
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Orient participants to the concept of organizational resilience and various components thereof. 2. Discuss what organizational practices are needed to support organizational and employee resilience in the wake of a disaster. 3. Plan next steps to develop and implement policies for supporting organizational and employee resilience.
Threat or Hazard	Straight line winds
Scenario	A severe thunderstorm moving across Nebraska resulted in straight line winds upwards of 125 mph. Buildings, homes, roofs, windows, and vehicles have been severely damaged, and numerous large trees have been uprooted. Downed powerlines delayed initial cleanup, and the numerous repairs have overwhelmed local construction companies, resulting in a several months-long wait list for home and building repairs. Offices were closed for five months, and employees were required to work from home while buildings underwent repairs. Employees return to work and may still have home repairs that are left unsolved due to construction delays.
Sponsors	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services; University of Nebraska Public Policy Center
Participating Jurisdictions/ Organizations	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services; University of Nebraska Public Policy Center; Nebraska Emergency Management Agency; Nebraska Behavioral Health Regions; Nebraska Voluntary Agencies Active in Disaster; Nebraska Citizen Corps; Nebraska Health Care Coalitions; Nebraska Medicine; local Nebraska health departments; local Nebraska emergency management agencies.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Exercise Objectives and Capabilities

The following exercise objectives in Table 1 describe the expected outcomes for the exercise. The objectives are linked to capabilities, which are the means to accomplish a mission, function, or objective based on the performance of related tasks, under specified conditions, to target levels of performance. The objectives and aligned capabilities are guided by senior leaders and selected by the Exercise Planning Team.

Exercise Objectives	Capability
Orient participants to the concept of organizational resilience and various components therein.	Foundation for Health Care and Medical Readiness
Discuss what organizational practices are needed to support organizational and employee resilience in the wake of a disaster.	Continuity of Health Care Service Delivery
Plan next steps to develop and implement policies for supporting organizational and employee resilience.	Foundation for Health Care and Medical Readiness

Table 1: Exercise Objectives and Associated Capabilities

Participant Roles and Responsibilities

The term *participant* encompasses many groups of people, not just those playing in the exercise. Groups of participants involved in the exercise, and their respective roles and responsibilities, are as follows:

- **Players:** Personnel who have an active role in discussing or performing their regular roles and responsibilities during the exercise. Players discuss or initiate actions in response to the simulated emergency.
- **Observers:** Do not directly participate in the exercise. However, they may support the development of player responses to the situation during the discussion by asking relevant questions or providing subject matter expertise.
- **Facilitators:** Provide situation updates and moderate discussions. They also provide additional information or resolve questions as required. Key Exercise Planning Team members also may assist with facilitation as subject matter experts (SMEs) during the exercise.
- **Evaluators:** Are assigned to observe and document certain objectives during the exercise. Their primary role is to document player discussions, including how and if those discussions conform to plans, polices, and procedures.

Exercise Structure

This exercise will be a multimedia, facilitated exercise. Players will participate in the following three modules:

- Module 1: Presentation – “Employee & organizational resilience during disasters and public health emergencies”
- Module 2: Employee and Organizational Resilience Discussion
- Module 3: Incorporating Resilience into Existing Plans

Module 1 is a presentation to orient participants to different types of resilience. Modules 2 and 3 both begin with a multimedia update that summarizes key events occurring within that time period. After the updates, participants review the situation and engage in functional group discussions of appropriate health care system recovery issues. For this exercise, the functional groups are as follows:

- State agency representatives and Behavioral Health Emergency Response Team (BHERT)
- Behavioral Health Regions and local response partners, determined geographically

After each functional group discussion, participants will engage in a moderated plenary discussion in which a spokesperson from each group will present a synopsis of the group’s actions, based on the scenario.

Exercise Guidelines

- This exercise will be held in an open, no-fault environment wherein capabilities, plans, systems, and processes will be evaluated. Varying viewpoints, even disagreements, are expected.
- Respond to the scenario using your knowledge of current plans and capabilities (i.e., you may use only existing assets) and insights derived from your training.
- Decisions are not precedent setting and may not reflect your jurisdiction’s/ organization’s final position on a given issue. This exercise is an opportunity to discuss and present multiple options and possible solutions.
- Issue identification is not as valuable as suggestions and recommended actions that could improve resilience efforts. Problem-solving efforts should be the focus.
- The assumption is that the exercise scenario is plausible and events occur as they are presented. All players will receive information at the same time.

Exercise Evaluation

Evaluation of the exercise is based on the exercise objectives and aligned capabilities, capability targets, and critical tasks, which are documented in Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs). Evaluators have EEGs for each of their assigned areas. Additionally, players will be asked to complete participant feedback forms. These documents, coupled with facilitator observations and notes, will be used to evaluate the exercise and compile the After-Action Report (AAR)/Improvement Plan (IP).

MODULE 1: PRESENTATION – “EMPLOYEE & ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE DURING DISASTERS AND PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES”

This is a presentation reviewing the concepts of employee and organizational resilience. The presentation will define employee and organizational resilience and discuss, compare, and contrast resilience strategies that organizations can put in place to promote resilience. Table 2 below represents some of the most common strategies organizations and systems introduce to support employee resilience that will be discussed in this presentation.

Strategy	Self	Self with organizational support	Group or Organization
Self-Care - Exercise - Sleep Hygiene - Social Support	√ √ √	√	√
Emotional Health - Mindfulness practice - Stress management program - Psychological First Aid program	√	√	√ √ √
Organizational Justice			√
Effective leadership			√
Resiliency training - Computer based - In-person		√	√

Table 2: Common strategies organizations and systems introduce to support employee resilience.

Questions

Modules 2 and 3 pose questions based on the information provided in Module 1.

MODULE 2: EMPLOYEE AND ORGANIZATIONAL RESILIENCE

DISCUSSION

Scenario

April 15, 2021

A severe thunderstorm moving across Nebraska resulted in straight line winds upwards of 125 mph. The towns in which Behavioral Health Regions are headquartered have each endured considerable impact (Scottsbluff, North Platte, Kearney, Norfolk, Lincoln, Omaha). Buildings, roofs, windows, and vehicles have been severely damaged, and numerous large trees have been uprooted. Many homes in a local mobile home park were rolled. Downed powerlines have resulted in thousands being without power.

Two people died from weather related events. Others were evacuated from their homes when an uprooted tree ruptured an underground gas line.

April 17, 2021

Downed power lines have caused unsafe conditions and resulted in lengthy delays in both clean up and the restoration of power to some residents. Power lines down across major roads have restricted access to some areas until safe cleanup can be completed.

Office buildings that have been severely damaged by the storm have been closed and employees instructed to work remotely until repairs can be made.

April 22, 2021

Downed powerlines have been fixed and power is fully restored to all residents. Cleanup of debris is ongoing and the plethora of requests for building repairs from both commercial and residential buildings have swamped local construction companies. There is a several months-long wait list on building and home repairs. Several employees in your organization and partner organizations have been displaced from their homes. Your organizational headquarters are closed until repairs can be completed.

Key Issues

- Straight line winds have caused widespread damage to local infrastructure.
- Necessary repairs are extensive, and lack of resources have created a substantial delay in repair timelines.
- Employees will need to transition to remote work until office buildings can be reopened.
- Organizations will need to maintain operations and ensure productivity while employees are still working through a disaster.

Questions

Based on the information provided, participate in the discussion concerning the issues raised in Module 2. Identify any critical issues, decisions, requirements, or questions that should be addressed at this time.

The following questions are provided as suggested subjects that you may wish to address as the discussion progresses. These questions are not meant to constitute a definitive list of concerns to be addressed, nor is there a requirement to address every question.

1. What should be in place (policies, procedures, infrastructure) to support *organizational resilience* at your organization **and** partner organizations in the wake of a disaster?
 - a. How does this compare to what exists?
2. What should be in place (policies, procedures, infrastructure) to support *employee resilience* in the wake of a disaster?
 - a. How does this compare to what exists?
3. How should behavioral health be involved to support *organizational resilience* for other community organizations, businesses, and governmental entities?

MODULE 3: INCORPORATING RESILIENCE INTO EXISTING PLANS

Scenario

September 21, 2021

It has been 5 months since the storm. Repaired and renovated businesses and offices are re-opening (including yours), and employees are returning to work after working remotely on and off for the past 5 months. Some people are still dealing with insurance claims and unfinished repairs to their homes.

Key Issues

- Employees will be returning to in-person work while still dealing with the aftermath of the storm and damages to their own homes.
- Organizations will need to maintain communication lines during the transition back to work.
- Organizations should continue maintaining organizational resilience and supporting employee resilience.

Questions

Based on the information provided, participate in the discussion concerning the issues raised in Module 3. Identify any critical issues, decisions, requirements, or questions that should be addressed at this time.

The following questions are provided as suggested subjects that you may wish to address as the discussion progresses. These questions are not meant to constitute a definitive list of concerns to be addressed, nor is there a requirement to address every question.

1. What are the next steps your organization can take to support *organizational resilience* during recovery for your organization **and** partner organizations?
2. What are the next steps your organization can take to support *employee resilience* during recovery for your organization **and** partner organizations?
3. What gaps exist related to resilience in your organization's current emergency operations plans?
 - a. What lessons learned over the past few years can be applied/updated in your plans?
 - b. What can you add to your plans resulting from today's discussion?
4. How will you monitor and assess your resiliency strategies and/or actions as you implement them during this transitional period?

APPENDIX A: EXERCISE SCHEDULE

All times below are in Central Standard Time (CST).

Date	July 21, 2021
1:00 – 1:10	Welcome and Opening Remarks
1:10 – 1:50	Module 1: Presentation – “Employee and Organizational Resilience During Disasters and Public Health Emergencies”
1:50 – 2:00	Break
2:00 – 2:40	Module 2: Employee Resilience Discussion and Planning
2:40 – 3:00	Module 2; Small group report out
3:00 – 3:10	Break
3:10 – 3:50	Module 3: Organizational Resilience Discussion and Planning
3:50 – 4:10	Module 3: Small group report out
4:10 – 4:25	Hotwash and Evaluation Form
4:25 – 4:30	Closing Comments

APPENDIX B: ACRONYMS

Acronym	Term
AAR	After Action Report
AAR/IP	After Action Report/Improvement Plan
BHERT	Behavioral Health Emergency Response Team
CCP	Crisis Counseling Program
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
HSEEP	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
MRC	Medical Reserve Corps
NCTSN	National Child Traumatic Stress Network
NE DHHS	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
NEMA	Nebraska Emergency Management Agency
NUPPC	University of Nebraska Public Policy Center
PFA	Psychological First Aid
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
SAMHSA	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration
SitMan	Situation Manual
SPR	Skills for Psychological Recovery