From: [redacted]
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:05 PM
To: nrotering@cityhpil.com
Subject: My condolences on the horrific

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Dear Mayor Notering,

My condolences to all the citizens of Highland Park, all of the employees, and the citizens and relatives of those who have either been wounded or died.

There have been 300-309 mass shootings and 15 mass killings in the USA as of today, July 4, 2022.

Any murder of even one person is terrible, but the above facts are horrific.

I cannot fathom the pain of those who have lost loved-one relatives, as well as those who were injured.

I would hope that this latest shooting would be a catalyst to stop the carnage in the USA, but sadly it will not be.

May all of you living in and around Highland Park have the strength to endure what has happened, and may all of you endure the loss and hurt with the least pain possible.

Sincerely,

(Mr.) Stacey Bindman
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

P.S. You need not reply to this e-mail. There are more important things to be done with your time

From: Selvaggio, Anita (NBCUniversal) <Anita.Selvaggio@nbcuni.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:08 PM
To: acivitello@cityhpil.com
Subject: NBC Inquiry
Attachments: image001.png

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Good evening,
I am with NBC Chicago and I was wondering if we might be able to do an interview with the Mayor or someone with the city about a followup to the shooting yesterday.
We have a crew in Highland Park and will be live at 4am – 7a tomorrow.
Can you give us a call at 312- 836- 5658?
Thanks.
Anita

Anita Selvaggio/Assignment Editor

Anita.Selvaggio@nbcuni.com

o. 312.836.5658

454 North Columbus Dr. Chicago, IL 60611

From: nrotering@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:08 PM
To: [redacted]
Subject: Re: All hands safe amidst unspeakable tragedy.

Unbelievable. Thank you, Bill.

On Jul 4, 2022, at 8:34 PM, William G. Schur [redacted] wrote:

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

It took the help of Almighty God and several hours after the shooting to secure the safety of the sailors. We had been split up after the shooting began, but with the help of these Highland Park residents, another sailor and I were able to reunite with the rest of the Navy Color Guard. They are safe tonight at Naval Station Great Lakes.

Bill

<Resized_Resized_20220704_174157.JPEG>

Sent from my iPhone

William G. Schur
Attorney at Law
426 Park Avenue East
Highland Park, Illinois
60035
(312) 853-0156 Phone
[redacted]

https://linkprotect.cudasvc.com/url?a=https%3a%2f%2fwww.schurlaw.com&c=E,1,b-ht8JaTiM8peGikshKnJvvowlaXIqJuCAjLB9REzXS5djcROWOdb4s9p0USqQA0qYNm-ePf-qUi6k_6h-Bzp8LCprXX2uvBM73DfnDwDRzvyQDW350z71Tr&typo=1

From: Valeria Gonzalez <vagonzalez@televisaunivision.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:09 PM
To: jschrage@cityhpil.com; fnardomarino@cityhpil.com
Subject: Noticias Univision 24/7 Interview Request
Attachments: image201895.png; image368126.png; image850599.png; image248034.png

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Good evening,

I hope this email finds you well.
My name is Valeria Gonzalez and I work as a producer for Univision Network News.
Please, we would like to request an interview in Spanish via Zoom or live on location with our crews in Highland Park for our show Noticias Univision 24/7 which airs on VIX nationwide.
This could be tomorrow between 7-9am ET / 1-3pm ET / 4-5pm ET / 7-8pm ET / 9:30pm-10:30pm ET... just let me know what time works best on your end.
This would be regarding recent fourth of July parade shooting.
TelevisaUnivision Inc., the world's leading Spanish-language media and content company, recently launched VIX, the first global large-scale streaming service created specifically for the Spanish-speaking world.
Please, let me know if this is something we could coordinate.

Thank you,

Televisa Univision
Valeria Gonzalez | Manager Assignment Desk
TelevisaUnivision, Inc. | http://televisaunivision.com
8551 NW 30th Terrace, Miami, FL, 33122
(305) 714-7927 | [redacted]

From: nrotering@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:11 PM
To: ljogmen@cityhpil.com; CONeill@cityhpil.com
Subject: Fwd: Extreme Caution ⚠ Is Warranted In Illinois Over Armed Angry White Men On A Deadly Mission To Kill and Injury Victims.
Attachments: 20220704_172951.jpeg

Sharing weird emails with you. Thanks.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Timmy Jones <[redacted]om>
Subject: Fwd: Extreme Caution Is Warranted In Illinois Over Armed Angry White Men On A Deadly Mission To Kill and Injury Victims.
Date: July 4, 2022 at 8:24:32 PM CDT
To: nrotering@cityhpil.com

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

---------- Forwarded message ---------
From: **Timmy Jones** <[redacted]
Date: Mon, Jul 4, 2022, 6:00 PM
Subject: Extreme Caution Is Warranted In Illinois Over Armed Angry White Men On A Deadly Mission To Kill and Injury Victims.
To: <[redacted]

Dear Public Safety:
It is advised to use extreme caution if you are living in or traveling/ visiting Illinois, Armed Angry White Men have threatened in the past to open fire on adults , children, teens and police · .

Angry about them Jews ✡ in Belleville Illinois Family Court pushing up veterans children to lie on their parents and filing all kinds of lies on innocent military veterans ect...

It had become obvious right before the Covid Pandemic that many of those Angry Armed White Men threatening deadly violence was not joking nor playing around about their deadly intentions.

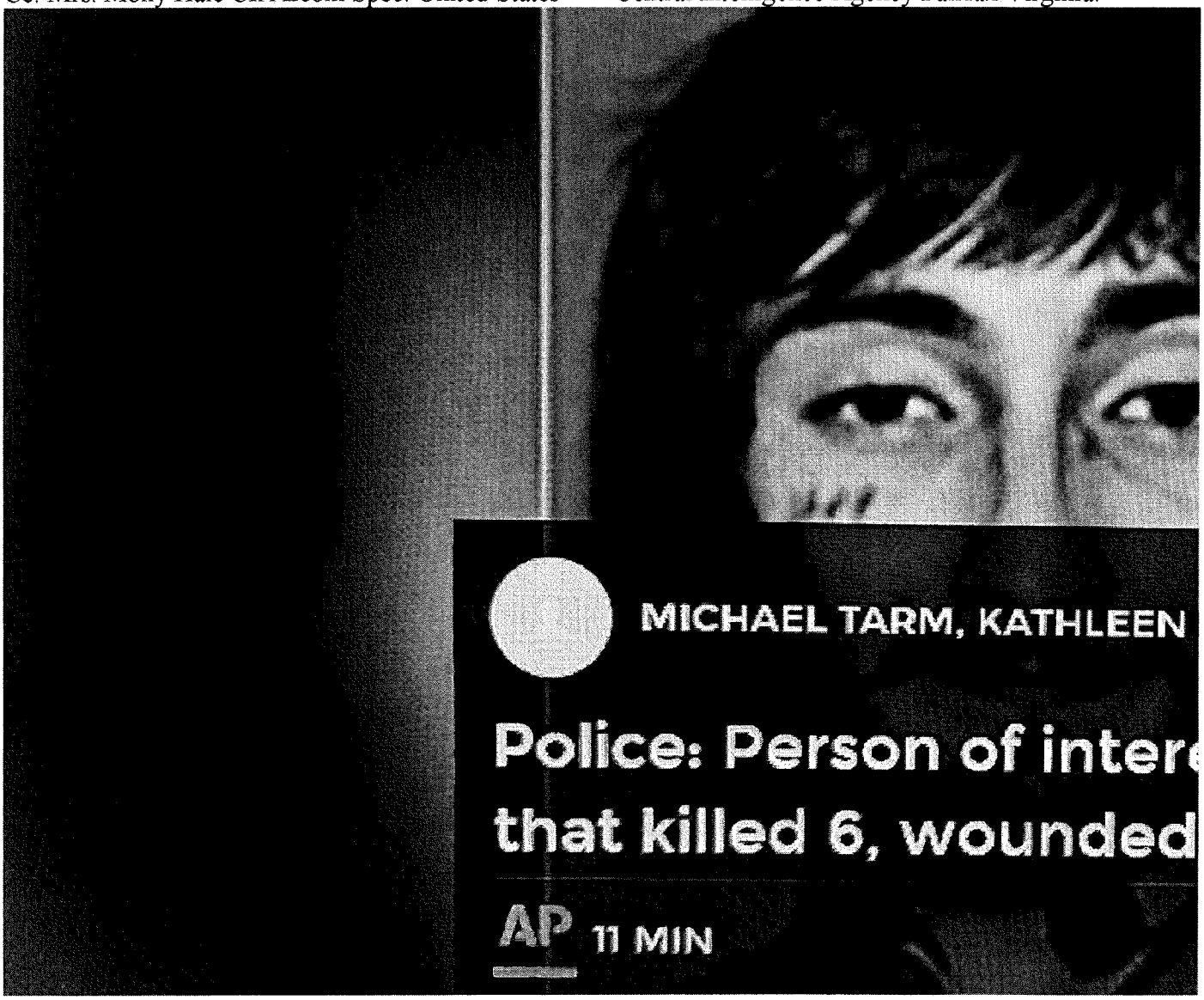
Now with the Mass Shooting in Highland Park area of Chicago Illinois with 6 dead and 30 wounded it is no longer violent threats but real murder and terrorism and God only knows how many more of these Angry Armed White Men are out there and heading for the State Of Illinois.

Sincerely,
SG 22 E Com

United States ▪ ▪
Armed Forces
InDef.

The Generals Senior Field Cmdr. Communications Intelligence.

Cc. Mrs. Molly Hale CIA Ecom Spec. United States ▪ ▪ Central Intelligence Agency Fairfax Virginia.



From: nrotering@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:14 PM
To: gneukirch@cityhpil.com
Subject: Fwd: Mass shooting playbook and protocol
Attachments: massshootingplaybookprotocol.zip

Let's go over tomorrow if we can.

Begin forwarded message:

From: Denyse Stoneback <denyse@repdenysestoneback.com>
Subject: Mass shooting playbook and protocol
Date: July 4, 2022 at 6:54:54 PM CDT
To: Nancy Rodkin Rotering <nancy.rotering@northwestern.edu>

UNITEDONGUNS

Mass Shooting Protocol
FIRST 24 HOURS

A RESOURCE FOR U.S. MAYORS AND CITY MANAGERS



PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY INSTITUTE

Sarah C. Peck
Emily Nink
and
Mark Gottlieb

The Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook is a two-part resource intended for mayors, city managers, and their staff. The Protocol covers the first 24 hours of the response. The supplemental Playbook provides best practices and resources city officials can use to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a public mass shooting.

Mass Shooting Protocol:
The First 24 hours

This Protocol is the result of research involving mayors, first responders, and others who have responded to a public mass shooting. Below you will find key decisions that you, as mayor, will need to make during the first 24 hours of the response. There are also links to the companion guide, the **Mass Shooting Playbook**, for additional information and resources to help with ongoing crisis management. Additionally, best practices for preparedness actions can be found in the Playbook. To obtain a copy of the Playbook, please visit www.UnitedOnGuns.org.

1. Communications

- Your primary role during the response is as the "communicator-in-chief." Decide in consultation with your police chief who will speak about what. Often law enforcement officials communicate details about the investigation. The public will look to you for messaging about public safety, updates about the victims, referrals to mental health resources, and messages of unity and healing. Secure the press area to prevent unauthorized officials from speaking to the press pool.
- Your first challenge is to get as much information as possible, as often as possible, from law enforcement. Ask for a dedicated police official whose sole responsibility is to keep you informed.
- Schedule early and regular press briefings, even when there isn't much new information to share, to prevent the development of rumors and misinformation.
- Release information relating to the shooting via one social media account (ideally operated by the public safety office), to be amplified by the city and other agencies. Direct all press inquiries to this single, monitored account.
- Host a dedicated webpage where all public information about the shooting is posted and updated, along with names of the victims. This will reduce the intense pressure to respond promptly to public record requests.
- Consider including a "How You Can Help" section for the public in press releases and all social media and online messages.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 1 on Communications.

2. Emergency Operations

- Confer with your City Counsel, Chief Administrative Officer, Chief of Staff, and Chief Financial Officer. This "C4 team" should meet daily to coordinate emergency operations and reduce legal exposure to the city and its employees.

- Consider making a local declaration of emergency. There is no downside to making the declaration immediately; it triggers mutual aid agreements, has the potential to defray costs relating to police overtime costs, and may protect the city from legal risks.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 2 on Emergency Management.

3. Victims and the Families

- Prioritize the needs of victims and family above all else. Designate a member of your staff to serve as family liaison to keep you updated on their needs.
- Ensure the location of the Family Reunification Center (also called the Family and Friends Reception Center) is separate from the press center. It should be scalable and have a secure perimeter to prevent the press from approaching grieving family members.
- The families of victims should receive death notifications in the most timely, humane, private way possible. Applicable law can slow the process. You may need to engage with the coroner's office and law enforcement to urge them to find a way to speed the release of victims' names to their families.
- Confirm there are dedicated victim advocates assigned to the families.
- After the families are notified, quickly establish the Family Assistance Center to ensure the immediate needs of victims and families are met, including appropriate mental health services.
- Spend time with the victims and families. Take their calls (including calls from families from previous shootings who have invaluable insights to share). Visit victims in the hospital. Attend their funerals if invited. Consult the families when planning vigils and developing the distribution protocol for public donations.
- Activate national resources. The American Red Cross can help you establish the Family Assistance Center. The FBI Victim Services Division has significant family assistance resources and expertise you can tap into even if the FBI is not the lead law enforcement agency in the case. However, the city must initiate the request for assistance from both organizations.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 3 on Victims and Families.

4. Donations

- Arrange a funding mechanism to accept donations immediately. If the city has a 501(c)(3) charitable entity already established, you can use it for this purpose (forming a new one may take too long). Alternatively, the National Compassion Fund (www.nationalcompassionfund.org) or a trusted community foundation can receive the funds. Whichever funding mechanism you choose, establish the fund as soon as possible after the shooting and encourage the public to give to only one, trusted fund to avoid fraud.

- The distribution of the fund should be developed in close consultation with the survivors and families of the victims. Families of victims of previous shootings strongly recommend that 100% of the funds go to the victims and their families. However, some cities have set aside a small portion of the funds raised for education initiatives, mental health services for affected communities, and the restoration of a place of worship damaged during an attack.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 5 on Donations.

5. Vigils

- The community needs to grieve and will want to arrange a vigil immediately following the shooting. Security may be required, which could delay the vigil if the law enforcement response is ongoing.
- Take steps to avoid politicizing the shooting. Doing so will further traumatize the families of the victims. This may mean limiting the speaking roles of elected officials (including visiting VIPs).
- If the shooting is a hate crime or perpetrated by a member of a marginalized faith or ethnic group, the risk of retaliation against that group may become an issue. Consult with faith leaders to host an interfaith vigil if relevant.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 9 on commemorations.

6. VIP Visitors and Elected Officials

- Federal, state, and local elected officials may converge on the city. Direct them to activities that will be helpful to victims and their families.
- For more information, see Playbook Appendix B on VIP Visits.

7. Mental Health

- Trauma is a major issue. You will be affected, as will your staff, first responders, families of the victims, and nearly everyone in the city at the time of the shooting. Consult with your local public health agency, victim assistance experts, and local mental health providers as soon as possible to develop trauma-informed messaging.
- Provide information about available mental health resources in your press briefings. Take the time to learn about psychological first aid to ensure that victims and families receive appropriate services.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 10 on Mental Health.

Mass Shooting Protocol: Checklist

(Selected actions from the comprehensive checklists found in the Playbook)

Communications

- ☐ Establish a regular schedule for communicating with the press and follow it.
- ☐ Decide which officials will speak and in what order at press conferences.
- ☐ Keep messages simple, credible, and consistent. Correct misinformation.

Emergency Operations

- ☐ Activate the Emergency Operations Center. Request regular briefings from a designated law enforcement official.
- ☐ Assemble your "C4" team to provide coordination and legal compliance.
- ☐ Consider whether to make a declaration of emergency.

Establish Family Reunification and Assistance Centers

- ☐ Work with law enforcement, the American Red Cross, the FBI, and local partners to establish the Family Reunification Center (FRC) and the Family Assistance Center (FAC).
- ☐ Ensure both centers are located separately from the Joint Information Center (away from the press), have a secure perimeter, and are scalable.
- ☐ Communicate FRC and FAC locations and services in press briefings.
- ☐ Urge the coroner to release victim's names to families as soon as possible.

Establish the Victims Fund

- ☐ Establish a victims' fund right away using city-operated 501(c)(3) charitable entity, the National Compassion Fund, or a local foundation.

Begin Planning for Recovery

- ☐ Seek the guidance of mental health experts to develop trauma-informed messaging and to ensure appropriate mental health services are available.
- ☐ Plan vigils in consultation with families and the affected community.



UNITEDONGUNS

About the Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook

This **Protocol** is a four-page overview of a mayor's role during the first 24 hours after a mass shooting. It highlights the key decisions the mayor will need to make and contains links to the Playbook that can provide additional information as needed. A one-page checklist highlighting immediate action steps is also included.

The **Playbook** is a resource guide that is informed by the recommendations and experience of mayors who have responded to a mass shooting. It is organized into ten topic areas: communications, emergency management, victims and families, law enforcement, donations, school shootings, community partnerships, legal considerations, commemorations, and mental health. Each chapter includes the actions and training that a mayor can take in advance of a mass shooting; actions a mayor should take during the response phase; and guidance for providing services to victims, family members, and the broader community as they recover. The Playbook features case briefs of the six mass shootings researched for the project, with key takeaways. These case briefs may be useful to mayors for planning and training purposes, as well as to researchers and law enforcement officials. Finally, the Playbook includes appendices that contain additional resources, such as a compilation of all training resources, funding resources, and information about urban gun violence and suicide.

For more information or to obtain a copy of the Mass Shooting Playbook, please visit www.UnitedOnGuns.org.

Published in the United States of America by
Public Health Advocacy Institute
Northeastern University School of Law
360 Huntington Ave, 117CU
Boston, MA 02115
www.phaionline.org

© 2021 by Public Health Advocacy Institute. "UnitedOnGuns" is a registered trademark of the Public Health Advocacy Institute. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of Public Health Advocacy Institute, or as expressly permitted by law, by license, or under terms agreed with the appropriate reproduction rights organization. Inquiries regarding use or reproduction should be sent to the address listed above.

UNITEDONGUNS

Mass Shooting PLAYBOOK

A RESOURCE FOR U.S. MAYORS AND CITY MANAGERS



PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY INSTITUTE

Sarah C. Peck
Emily Nink
and
Mark Gottlieb

The Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook is a two-part resource intended for mayors, city managers, and their staff. The Protocol covers the first 24 hours of the response. The supplemental Playbook provides best practices and resources city officials can use to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a public mass shooting.

Mass Shooting Playbook

A Resource for U.S. Mayors and City Managers

Public Health Advocacy Institute
Sarah C. Peck, Emily Nink, and Mark Gottlieb

This Playbook may be downloaded
for official use by mayors, city managers, and their staff.
Visit UnitedOnGuns.org

Public Health Advocacy Institute
UnitedOnGuns Initiative
Northeastern University School of Law
360 Huntington Ave, 117CU
Boston, MA 02115
www.phaionline.org

UNITEDONGUNS

Public Health Advocacy Institute

The Public Health Advocacy Institute (PHAI), founded in 1979, is a legal research and advocacy center focused on public health law. It is an independent 501(c)(3) organization located at Northeastern University School of Law. PHAI is committed to researching public health law; advancing public health policy development; providing legal technical assistance; and leading collaborative work at the intersection of law and public health. In 2019, PHAI launched an initiative called UnitedOnGuns to promote public health approaches to reduce gun violence, while respecting the rights of responsible gun owners.

"Public Health Advocacy Institute" and "UnitedOnGuns" are
registered trademarks of
Public Health Advocacy Institute.

Published in the United States of America by
Public Health Advocacy Institute
Northeastern University School of Law
360 Huntington Ave, 117CU
Boston, MA 02115

www.phaionline.org

© 2021 by Public Health Advocacy Institute

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of Public Health Advocacy Institute, or as expressly permitted by law, by license, or under terms agreed with the appropriate reproduction rights organization. Inquiries regarding use or reproduction should be sent to the address above.



UNITEDONGUNS



We are indebted to Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto, who responded with inspiring leadership and compassion to the tragic Tree of Life Synagogue Shooting on October 27, 2018. He proposed this protocol and playbook project to help mayors prepare for, respond to, and recover from a public mass shooting in their communities.

We are grateful to all the mayors, staff, first responders, and experts who generously contributed their time, experience, and expertise to this project. We are also grateful for the support of Northeastern University, our funders, and our advisors, especially Professor James Alan Fox, who generously contributed his time and expertise throughout the project.

Finally, we acknowledge the tragic loss of life and the widespread trauma caused by mass shootings in our country. It is our hope that the Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook will help mayors save lives and comfort grieving families and community members.



UNITEDONGUNS

Foreword

In the early morning hours of August 4, 2019, a disturbed young man fatally shot nine people and wounded 27 others with an AR-15 style pistol outside a bar in my city's downtown entertainment area. Our outstanding police responded in less than a minute of the first shot and killed the attacker. I received the news no mayor wants to receive in the early hours of the morning, when the city attorney knocked on my door.

Of course, every mayor must be prepared to handle a crisis, whether snowstorms in the Northeast, wildfires in the West, hurricanes in Florida, or flooding along the Mississippi. Less than three months before the attack, my team and I responded to a tornado that ripped through Dayton. But these are familiar challenges. We know how to plow our streets even if there is a record amount of snow.

Mass shootings are a different kind of crisis. They are sudden, unexpected, and extremely traumatic to large numbers of people in your community. As mayors, we are not responsible for the law enforcement response, but we are responsible for the aftermath. How we handle this crisis will permanently affect the lives of our residents and could be the most important work of our tenure in office.

Having lived through the experience, I now tell other mayors, "it isn't if, but when" a mass shooting happens in your community. You need to prepare. The best way to start is by planning a tabletop exercise with your staff and the relevant stakeholders.

Fortunately, you have in your hands a resource that can help you to be as ready as you can be. Researchers at Northeastern University's Public Health Advocacy Institute interviewed me, Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl, and 13 others including mayors, law enforcement officials, and city staffers who responded to a public mass shooting. The hard-earned experience of those interviewed is consolidated in this Protocol, which can help you get through the first 24 hours of a shooting, and the Playbook, which is filled with the best practices you can use to prepare, respond, and help your community recover from a mass shooting.

I am proud to have been a part of this important project.

Mayor Nan Whaley
Dayton, OH
July 15, 2021

Timeline of Mayoral Response to a Public Mass Shooting

This timeline illustrates an aspirational mayoral response to a hypothetical public mass shooting. The time frames are based on interviews with mayors, first responders, and subject matter experts. In response to actual mass shootings, many mayors did not take these actions within the suggested time frames. However, with advance planning (as recommended in this playbook), the timeline shown is achievable and would improve public safety and public health outcomes.

Day 1

- Shooting occurs
- Law enforcement response begins
- Family and Friends Reception Center (FRC) opens
- Death notifications made within hours (ideally)
- Emergency Operation Center (EOC) and Joint Information Center (JIC) established
- State of Emergency declared (optional)
- First press conference held
- First vigil takes place

Day 2

- Victim's Fund is launched to accept donations
- Key partners are contacted, including American Red Cross and FBI Victim Services Division
- Meeting is held to determine Family Assistance Center needs
- Family Assistance Center (FAC) opens
- Presidential/VIP visits may take place
- Regular press conferences begin
- Regular updates from law enforcement continue
- Social media policy is implemented

Week 1

- Funerals and vigils are scheduled
- Visit victims and families in FAC and hospital
- Meet with mental health experts
- Messaging transitions from factual updates to messages of healing
- Begin responding to public record requests
- C4 team meets daily
- Establish city website for regular updates

Week 2

- FAC closes and Resiliency Center opens to provide services to families and community
- Community board is formed to oversee victims' fund management
- Meeting is held to determine Family Assistance Center needs

Later

- Potential criminal trial
- Ongoing victim and family services
- Apply for funds to defray costs of response
- Plan first annual remembrance
- Begin planning permanent memorial
- Conduct after-action review of response
- Update training and protocols for future emergencies

Table of Contents

Introduction

Timeline of a Mayoral Response to a Public Mass Shooting viii
Overview: How to Use this Playbook 1
Research Methods and Contributors 3

Case Briefs

Case Study: Dayton Oregon District Shooting (Ohio) 11
Case Study: El Paso Walmart Shooting (Texas) 15
Case Study: Orlando Pulse Nightclub Shooting (Florida) 19
Case Study: Parkland School Shooting (Florida) 23
Case Study: Pittsburgh Tree of Life Shooting (Pennsylvania) 29
Case Study: San Bernardino Terrorist Attack (California) 33

Mass Shooting Protocol

Public Mass Shooting Protocol: The First 24 hours 39
Mass Shooting Protocol Checklist 42

Playbook Chapters

Chapter 1: Communications

Strategies for engaging with the press, social media management, and developing trauma-informed messaging

Chapter Summary 45
Preparedness 46
- **Crisis Communications Planning** 46
  - Protocol for Press Briefing 46
  - Joint Information Center 47
  - **Key Resources: Joint Information Center** 48
  - Alert Systems and Capacities 48
  - Social Media Protocol 48
  - **Key Resource: FEMA Social Media in Emergency Management Training** 49
- **Crisis Communications Techniques and Training** 49
  - Learn the Basics of Crisis Communications 49
  - **Key Resource: CDC Crisis Communications Training and Manual** 50
  - **Key Resource: ATSDR Communications Toolkit** 50

Crisis Communications Media Training 50
"Go-Kits" for Yourself and Key Staff 51
Response 51
Initial Communications Decisions 51
Your First Public Statements 52
Key Resource: Full Press Conference, Indianapolis Federal Express Shooting 53
Managing the Press 54
Prioritize the Needs of Victims and Families 55
Managing Visits from Elected Officials 55
Recovery 56
Messaging: Shifting from Response to Recovery 56
Consult Mental Health and Behavioral Health Experts 56
Engage Community Partners in Interfaith or Hate Prevention Work 57
Engage Schools 57
Suicide Prevention 57
Advocacy 58
Communications Checklist 59

Chapter 2: Emergency Management

Operationalizing the emergency response to a mass shooting through municipal preparedness plans and systems

Chapter Summary 61
Preparedness 62
Emergency Operations Planning 62
Key Resource: National Incident Management System (NIMS) Guidance 62
Alert Systems and Capacities 62
Emergency Preparedness Training 63
Key Resources: Recommended FEMA Training 63
Public Health Resources 64
Key Resources: The Public Health Agency Role 64
Response 65
Emergency Operations Center (EOC): Activation and Access 65
Emergency Declarations 65
Receive Briefing on Emergency Response 66
Recovery 66
Obtain Funds to Cover Costs of Emergency Response 66
Program Evaluation of Emergency Response 66
Emergency Operations Checklist 68

Chapter 3: Victim and Family Assistance

Key considerations for providing services to victims and their families

Chapter Summary 69
Background 70
Overview of Centers for Victims, and Families and Friends 70
Family Reunification (or Reception) Center (FRC) 70
Family Assistance Center (FAC) 71
Resiliency Center (RC) 71
Agencies and Organizations that Provide Victim Services 71
Preparedness 72
Convene Partners to Plan Victim Reunification and Assistance Services 72
Key Resource: Office of Victims of Crime (OVC) Toolkit 72
Key Resource: Family Assistance Center 73
Other Considerations 74
Response 75
Work with Law Enforcement to Establish the Family Reunification (aka Reception) Center (FRC) 75
Track Victims 76
Engage with Hospitals 76
Establish Family Assistance Center (FAC) 76
Connect with Victims and Families 78
Visit the FAC 78
Visit the Hospital 78
Recovery 79
Transition from the FAC to the Resiliency Center (RC) 79
Victim Services During a Trial 80
Key Resources: Victim Services During a Trial 80
Crime Victim Compensation 80
Ongoing Engagement with Family Members 81
Victims and Family Assistance Checklist 82

Chapter 4: Collaborating with Law Enforcement

Best practices for effective engagement with law enforcement agencies

Chapter Summary 83
Preparedness 84
Partnerships with Law Enforcement 84
Mutual Aid Agreements 84
Key Resource: Mutual Aid Agreements 85
Understanding and Activating FBI Resources 85
Critical Incident Response Group (CIRG) 85
Victim Services Division (FBI-VSD) 85
Key Resources: FBI Services 86

Response 86
Your Role During the Critical Incident Response 86
Key Resource: Role of Law Enforcement in Assisting Victims of Mass Violence 87
Recovery 87
Recovery for Police First Responders 87
Key Resources: Mental Health Services and Benefits for First Responders 88
Police Overtime Pay 88
After-Incident Review 89
Law Enforcement Checklist 90

Chapter 5: Donations and Volunteer Management

Best practices for establishing the victims' fund and managing volunteers

Chapter Summary 91
Preparedness 92
Develop a Victims' Fund Strategy 92
Key Resource: The National Compassion Fund and Kenneth Feinberg 93
Establish Protocols for Volunteer and In-Kind Donations Management 93
Response 93
Establish a Fund Right Away 93
Keep the Public and City Officials Informed About the Fund 94
Direct Volunteers to Where They Can Help 95
Key Resources: Volunteer Management 97
Recovery 98
Fund Distribution to Victims and Families 98
Donations and Volunteers Checklist 100

Chapter 6: School Shootings

Issues and resources specific to school shootings, including school security considerations and student mental health and wellness

Chapter Summary 101
Preparedness 102
Cultivate Relationships with Law Enforcement 102
Cultivate Relationships with School Officials 102
Schedule a Tabletop Exercise Focused on a School Shooting 102
Key Resource: FEMA Campus Resilience Toolkit 103
Ensure School District Has Developed a Violence Prevention Plan 103
School Safety Information and Resources 103
U.S. Department of Justice Community-Oriented Policing Services Office Report.. 103
Key Resources: COPS School Safety Planning Recommendations 104
Role of Law Enforcement in School Safety Planning 104

Role of City in School Safety Planning 104
Student Mental Health Services 105
Key Resource: Mental Health System Assessment Tool 106
Active Shooter Drills 106
A Word About the School Security Industry 106
Response 106
Communications 106
Law Enforcement 106
Encourage School Officials to Access Available Resources 106
Seek Advice from Those Who Came Before 107
Recovery 107
Funding for School Recovery 108
Schools Shootings Checklist 111

Chapter 7: Community Partnerships

Strategies for engaging local and national partners in the preparation, response, and recovery phases (especially important for victims' services)

Chapter Summary 113
Preparedness 114
Identify Community Partners Needed to Respond to a Shooting 114
Key Resource: OVC Checklist for Partnership Planning 114
Local Mental Health and Behavioral Health Experts 115
Local Faith-Based Organizations 115
Key Resources: Faith-Based Organizations and Preventing Hate Crimes 116
Minority and Underserved Communities 116
School Communities and Districts 117
Local Business Community 117
Community Crisis Response Team 117
Engage National Partners 117
Response & Recovery 118
Direct Partners Where They Are Needed Most 118
Community Partnerships Checklist 121

Chapter 8: Legal Considerations

Issues that should be reviewed by the city's attorneys to reduce potential liability

Chapter Summary 123
Preparedness 124
Assemble a Crisis Leadership Team ("C4") 124
C4 Public Mass Shooting Preparedness Training 124
C4 Internal Review 125
Assess and Minimize Legal Risks 125
Evaluate Agreements to Ensure Resource Needs are Met During a Shooting 125

Review Coroner Office Protocol 125
Establish a 501(c)(3) Charitable Entity 126
Prepare for Public Records Requests 126
Insurance: Consult with a Risk Management Expert 127
Consult with Experienced Legal Experts 127
Understand State Preemption Laws 127
Response 128
Contact the C4 Team 128
Consider Whether to Make an Emergency Declaration 128
Respond to Open Government & Public Record Requests 129
Establish a Victims' Fund 129
Engage the Local Bar Association 129
Recovery 130
Litigation and Trial Considerations 130
Key Resource: Legal Summaries of Potential Claims Arising from Mass Shootings 130
Legal Considerations Checklist 131

Chapter 9: Commemorations

Guidance for commemorating the victims, planning permanent memorials, and preserving artifacts

Chapter Summary 133
Preparedness 134
Response 134
Vigils 134
Funerals 135
Recovery 136
First Annual Remembrance Event & Commemorations 136
Key Resources: Resources for Helping Victims and Planning Vigils 137
Permanent Memorials 137
Archival Considerations 138
Key Resources: Permanent Memorials and Archiving 139
Commemorations Checklist 141

Chapter 10: Mental Health

Information and resources related to trauma recovery and community resilience

Chapter Summary 143
Preparedness 144
Consult Mental Health Experts in Preparedness Efforts 144
Understand the Traumatic Impact of a Mass Shooting 144
Community Crisis Response Team 144
Key Resource: Community Crisis Response 145

Student Mental Health Services 145
Response 146
Ensure Mental Health Services are Available 146
Crisis Communications Informed by Mental Health Experts 146
Psychological First Aid 146
Key Resource: NC-PTSD Psychological First Aid (PFA) Manual 147
Recovery 147
Communications: Shifting from Response to Recovery 147
Provide Services to Address Ongoing Trauma 148
Include Information on Mental and Behavioral Health in After Action Reports 148
Key Resource: After Action Report Recommendations and Templates 148
First Responders' Mental Health 148
Key Resources: Mental Health Services and Benefits for First Responders ... 149
Community Conflict 149
Taking Care of Yourself and Your Staff 150
Mental Health Checklist 152

Afterword & Appendices

Afterword: A Note About Community Gun Violence 155

Appendices
Appendix A: Training Opportunities 159
Appendix B: VIP Visits 165
Appendix C: Funding Opportunities 171
Appendix D: To Prevent Mass Killings, Prevent Suicides 177
Appendix E: Additional Resources from the National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center 179

About the Public Health Advocacy Institute 181

Overview:
How to Use This Playbook

"It's not if, but when, a mass shooting happens in your community."
– Mayor Nan Whaley, Dayton OH

When a mass public shooting takes place, it falls on our nation's mayors to respond. Though supportive state and federal resources are available, there is no coordinated national response, and the response largely falls to local governments to coordinate. The Protocol and Playbook are intended for mayors, city managers, and their staff to help them prepare for, respond to, and recover from a public mass shooting.[1] The best way to use this Playbook is to organize a tabletop exercise and use the Playbook as a reference to inform your planning.

About this Playbook

The **Protocol** is a four-page overview of a mayor's role during the first 24 hours after a mass shooting. It highlights the key decisions the mayor will need to make and contains links to the Playbook that can provide additional information as needed. A one-page checklist highlighting immediate action steps is also included.

The **Playbook** is a resource guide that is informed by the recommendations and experience of mayors who have responded to a mass shooting. It is organized into ten topic areas: communications, emergency management, victims and families, law enforcement, donations, school shootings, community partnerships, legal considerations, commemorations, and mental health. Each chapter includes the actions and training that a mayor can take in advance of a mass shooting; actions a mayor should take during the response phase; and guidance for providing services to victims, family members, and the broader community as they recover. Each chapter includes a checklist and is intended to stand alone, so there is some intentional duplication of resources and information.

Throughout the Playbook, **key resources** (prepared by the CDC, FEMA, the FBI, the Office of Victims Assistance, and other agencies) are highlighted. So are best practices shared by the mayors who participated in the research. Many chapters include a "mayors in action" vignette to illustrate how mayors handled a particular challenge during their response to a shooting. Some of the chapters are cross cutting, including the mental health and legal considerations chapters.

The Playbook also includes **case briefs** of the six shootings we researched. These case briefs may be useful for planning and training purposes. There are also appendices that contain additional resources, such as a compilation of all the training resources we found, funding resources, and information about urban gun violence and suicide.

[1] We use "Mayors" and "Police Chiefs" throughout the Protocol and the Playbook to refer to the senior constitutional and primary law enforcement officers in the jurisdiction, which may also include City Managers, Sheriffs, and other officials.

We note that local government structure and charters in the United States are not uniform. Some cities have a "weak mayor" system in which a city manager directs most city agencies. Other cities have a "strong mayor" who acts as the city executive. We interviewed mayors from both structures. Whether you are the mayor of a small town or the mayor of a large city with complex executive functions, this Playbook provides insights and resources that will assist you in the event of a public mass shooting.

We also note that this project focused on responding to public mass shootings. However, many of the best practices may apply to other extreme emergencies, such as a terrorist attack or other mass casualty incident, such as a building collapse or fire.

Mayors Helping Mayors

This Playbook was made possible by the generous support of the mayors who participated in this research. They contributed generously of their time. They relived the emotional pain of their experience. They freely shared their staff, their protocols, and their best practices with us. They did all this to help other mayors.

Please share these resources with other mayors. Email the Protocol, along with your condolences, if a public mass shooting happens on the watch of a mayor you know. Share the Playbook with members of your staff and encourage them to plan a tabletop exercise. Encourage organizations that support mayors, city managers, and other officials to share it with their members.

If you have experience you want to share, or have ideas, resources, or feedback that could improve this Playbook, please contact: Sarah C. Peck at speck@phaionline.org.

Research Methods and Contributors

In fall 2019, a year after the horrific Tree of Life Synagogue Shooting took place in Pittsburgh, Sarah Peck met with Mayor William Peduto. She asked what he, as mayor, had needed, but lacked, when called upon to respond to the shooting. Mayor Peduto said that he would have benefitted from having a "mass shooting protocol" to help guide his response to the shooting, but one did not exist. He suggested working with mayors and other experts to develop such a protocol.

Together with colleagues at the Public Health Advocacy Institute (PHAI), Mark Gottlieb and Emily Nink, Ms. Peck launched a research project under the aegis of Northeastern University. As detailed below, a semi-structured interview schedule was developed to derive input from mayors and officials who have responded to a public mass shooting. The mayors' experiences and existing public health resources were then used to create the Mass Shooting Protocol and a supplemental resource guide, the Mass Shooting Playbook. These resources can be used by mayors, city managers, and their staffs to prepare for, respond to, and help their communities recover from the trauma of a mass shooting.

Methodology

The news organization Mother Jones has compiled a list of mass shootings in the U.S. dating back to 1982.[1] Mother Jones originally defined "mass shooting" as "indiscriminate rampages in public places resulting in four or more victims killed by the attacker," but in 2013 lowered the threshold to three killed. Mother Jones excluded "shootings stemming from more conventionally motivated crimes such as armed robbery or gang violence," domestic violence-related murders, and rampages that resulted in fewer than the threshold number of victim fatalities. We selected potential research cases from the Mother Jones database using the criteria described below. Note that other databases define "mass shooting" differently (see footnote ii).

Inclusion Timeframe

We chose cases that took place between January 1, 2011 and December 31, 2019. We selected this timeframe based on technological developments relevant to crisis response (*e.g.*, use of social media by public safety officials) and our ability to assess recovery efforts (for this reason, we excluded mass shootings in 2020 and 2021).

Exclusion Factors

We excluded cases with a deceased mayor, that involved sprees across multiple jurisdictions, or that happened in unincorporated areas for which a local leader was not identifiable as the primary responder to the incident. We also excluded cities that do not have a mayor as part of their government structure, such as Newtown, CT, site of the December 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre.

Selected Cases	Population in Year of MCI	Shooting Category	Location of Shooting	Total Victims (Fatalities)[i]	Year of Shooting	Interview Participants
Washington, D.C.	619,371	Airport / Military / Government	Washington Navy Yard	20 (12)	2013	0
Roseburg, OR	21,937	School	Umpqua Community College	18 (9)	2015	0
San Bernardino, CA	214,112	Workplace[ii]	Inland Regional Center	35 (14)	2015	2
Orlando, FL	263,306	Indoor Public Accommodation	Pulse Nightclub	102 (49)	2016	5
Pittsburgh, PA	303,587	Place of Worship	Tree of Life Synagogue	17 (11)	2018	4
Parkland, FL	30,471	School	Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School	34 (17)	2018	1
Dayton, OH	140,569	Outdoor event / Entertainment	Oregon District—Ned Peppers Bar	36 (9)	2019	3
El Paso, TX	679,813	Indoor Public Accommodation	Wal-Mart Store	48 (22)	2019	1

N=16

[i] We report the total victims and total fatalities that Mother Jones reports as of May 27, 2021. Note that these counts do not include perpetrators who died or were wounded during the attack. Note also that there are many databases tracking mass killings and some report different victim counts, depending on the interpretation of a victim and methods used for gathering information. For more information, see James Fox & Jack Levin, *Mass confusion concerning mass murder*, 40 THE CRIMINOLOGIST (2015).

[ii] The victims of the San Bernardino shooting were county government employees, thus this case also has "government" aspects.

Diversity Factors

To ensure that the research results would be broadly useful to mayors across the country, we sought a diverse group of possible respondents to interview. We invited women and men, mayors from across the political spectrum, and mayors representing all major areas of the country: the East and West Coasts, the Midwest, the South, and the Southwest regions. We selected both large and small cities. We also sought racial diversity, although we were ultimately unable to recruit a Black mayor to participate in our sample.

We then re-categorized the Mother Jones list into six location categories of shootings: (1) airport, military, and government; (2) workplace; (3) school; (4) place of worship; (5) outdoor event or entertainment; and (6) public accommodation (indoor). These categories were defined to highlight the unique challenges that different mass shooting settings present to mayors and their staff.

Research Participants

Finally, within each category we chose the cases with the highest number of victims because they most likely required a complex municipal response and ongoing recovery services for the victims, their families, and the community as a whole. This selection process produced the eight public mass shooting cases listed in the table below. We invited the mayors who had responded to these shootings to participate in this research. Six agreed to be interviewed: the former and current mayors of Dayton, El Paso, San Bernardino, Orlando, Parkland, and Pittsburgh.

To understand perceptions and observations of actions taken by the mayors, we also interviewed "key informants" from each of the cities selected, including law enforcement officials, city staffers, and others who were identified by these informants during interviews. In total, we interviewed 16 individuals between December 2020 and March 2021. The number of respondents from each city is listed below.

Review Process

To ensure the accuracy and inclusivity of the content in the protocol and playbook, and to ensure they become useful tools for mayors and their staff in the event of a tragedy, we requested multiple rounds of review by members of our advisory group. First, at least one of our advisors reviewed each of the chapters of the playbook (see list of advisors below). We then asked the following mayors' chiefs of staff to review the entire playbook: Torey Hollingsworth from Dayton, Heather Fagan from Orlando, and Dan Gilman from Pittsburgh. Next, we invited each of the participating mayors to review the playbook. The playbook in your hands incorporates the input, feedback, and experience of many who had to respond to a mass shooting, as well as our advisors.

A Word About Community Gun Violence

Our focus for the Mass Shooting Playbook & Protocol is on "public mass shootings" because of the extraordinary challenges they pose to mayors. However, we note these mass shootings account for only 0.4% of the victims killed in gun violence in the United States.[2] Many more people are killed each year in gang- and drug-related homicides in U.S. urban centers. These shootings also traumatize the communities where they take place. This violence—often referred to as community gun violence—poses serious challenges that all mayors must address. Importantly, there are research-based approaches that mayors can and should employ to reduce the scourge of these shootings, save lives, and improve the lives of the people who live in urban communities. Please see the Afterword on Community Gun Violence for more information.

Research Advisors

Richard A. Daynard, J.D., Ph.D., PHAI President

Professor Daynard holds a J.D. from Harvard Law School, an M.A. in Sociology from Columbia University, and a Ph.D. from M.I.T. in Urban Studies and Planning (specializing in Law and Social Policy). He is a University Distinguished Professor of Law at Northeastern University and the founder of the Public Health Advocacy Institute (PHAI) at Northeastern University School of Law. Professor Daynard is devoted to combating the epidemics caused by tobacco and, more recently, obesity and gun violence. He has published over 80 articles, appeared in or been interviewed by major international media programs, and spoken on these issues in more than 50 countries.

Dr. Matthew Miller, MD, MPH, ScD, Public Health and Firearm Injury Prevention Expert

Dr. Miller, a physician, is Professor of Health Sciences and Epidemiology at Northeastern University, Adjunct Professor of Epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health, and Co-Director of the Harvard Injury Control Research Center. Dr. Miller is an expert in injury and violence prevention. His research encompasses intentional and unintentional injury, with an emphasis on firearm-related violence and suicide prevention. Dr. Miller is also Assistant Editor of the journal Injury Epidemiology and a recipient of the Excellence in Science Award from the American Public Health Association.

Dr. Peter T. Masiakos, MS, MD, FACS, FAAP, Surgeon, Massachusetts General Hospital

Dr. Masiakos is a pediatric and thoracic surgeon at Mass General and an Associate Professor at Harvard Medical School. He is the director of the pediatric trauma surgery service at Mass General and an injury-prevention advocate. Dr. Masiakos has focused on educating lawmakers on the risks certain products pose to children. He is the co-founder of Mass General's Center for Gun Violence Prevention, a multidisciplinary initiative dedicated to preventing firearm-related violence and promoting safety in the homes and communities of the hospital serves.

Robert A. Jones, Executive Director of Security, former FBI senior official

Mr. Jones is a 24-year veteran of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. His distinguished career includes domestic and international assignments, and expertise in the areas of counterterrorism, intelligence, and weapons of mass destruction. Notably, Mr. Jones was the Special Agent in Charge of the Pittsburgh Field Office, where he led the law enforcement response to the Tree of Life Synagogue shooting. He is currently the Executive Director of Security for a professional sports team. Mr. Jones received a BA in Administration of Justice from the Pennsylvania State University and a master's degree in social science from Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Public Affairs. Prior to joining the FBI, Mr. Jones served as a U.S. Marine Corps infantry officer.

James Alan Fox, Ph.D., The Lipman Family Professor of Criminology, Law, and Public Policy at Northeastern University

Professor Fox is a widely recognized expert on mass shootings. He has published 18 books, dozens of journal and magazine articles, and hundreds of freelance columns in newspapers around the country, primarily in the areas of mass murder, youth crime, school and campus violence, workplace violence, and capital punishment. He is a member of USA Today's Board of Contributors, where his column appears regularly. In addition, he was the founding editor of the Journal of Quantitative Criminology.

Mary Harvey, Ph.D., Director, Violence Transformed, Community Trauma Expert

Mary R. Harvey, Ph.D. is the Founding Director of Violence Transformed, a unique arts, public health and social justice initiative. In addition, Dr. Harvey is an Associate Clinical Professor of Psychology in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and founding director (now retired) of the Victims of Violence (VOV) Program of the Cambridge Health Alliance. A community and clinical psychologist, she has lectured widely and written extensively about the ecological context of interpersonal and sexual violence, the treatment of psychological trauma, and expressions of recovery and resiliency in trauma survivors. She continues to serve as a Senior Psychologist at the Victims of Violence Program and, as an emerging artist, has exhibited her work at both Violence Transformed and other area venues.

Endnotes

[1] Mark Follman, Gavin Aronsen & Deanna Pan, *US mass shootings, 1982–2021: Data from Mother Jones' investigation*, MOTHER JONES (2021), https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2012/12/mass-shootings-mother-jones-full-data/ (last visited MAY 27, 2021).

[2] *The Patterns and Prevalence of Mass Public Shootings in the United States, 1915–2013*, in THE WILEY HANDBOOK OF THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MASS SHOOTINGS 20–35, https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/9781119048015.ch2 (last visited Aug 18, 2021).



Case Briefs



UNITEDONGUNS



Case Brief:
Dayton Oregon District Shooting

Introduction

In the early morning hours of August 4, 2019, a young man fatally shot nine people and wounded 17 others with an AR-15 style pistol outside a bar in the "Oregon District," Dayton's downtown entertainment area.[1] The shooter was fatally shot by law enforcement officers, who responded within one minute of the first shot.

This case brief highlights the preparedness actions taken by Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley in advance of the Oregon District shooting, immediate actions she took in response, and further actions she took to help her community recover from the trauma.[2] PHAI researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with Mayor Whaley, Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl, and Chief of Staff Torey Hollingsworth.

Dayton's mayoral response is noteworthy for the Mayor's effective communication strategy, her close relationship with the Chief of Police that aided in the response and recovery, and for her handling of the visit of President Donald J. Trump, who was a divisive figure for many in her community.

City and Mayor Profile

Dayton is the sixth largest city in Ohio with more than 140,000 residents. Mayor Whaley, a Democrat elected in 2013, serves alongside four other City Commissioners. Together they appoint a City Manager to lead the city's executive functions (a "Council-Manager" form of local government). The Mayor announced she would not seek re-election in 2021. She is now running for governor of Ohio.

Preparation

Training and Experience

Dayton officials cited a range of training and experience that was useful during their response to the Oregon District Shooting. The Dayton Police Department participated in active shooter trainings through the National Tactical Officers Association and the Ohio Tactical Officers Association, though the Mayor and her staff were not involved. The Fire Department/EMS conducted tabletop exercises to prepare the Mayor's staff to respond to municipal emergencies such as water main breaks and natural disasters. Though helpful in coordinating key emergency support functions after the shooting, these exercises did not include planning relevant to the recovery phase of a public mass shooting. However, the Mayor said crisis communications training she received through a private group helped prepare her for effectively communicating with the public after the shooting. She also mentioned that a previously established a relationship with the Montgomery County Alcohol Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS), one of 50 boards formed to oversee alcohol/drug treatment and behavioral health services in the state, was helpful in crafting the city's messaging.

---

[1] We report the total victims and fatalities that Mother Jones reports as of May 27, 2021. Note there are many databases tracking mass killings; some report different victim counts. See James Fox & Jack Levin, *Mass confusion concerning mass murder*, 40 THE CRIMINOLOGIST (2015).

[2] Dayton is one of six cities researched by the Public Health Advocacy Institute in 2020-21 to inform a Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook PHAI developed for mayors, city managers, and their staff. PHAI classified the Oregon District Shooting as an outdoor public mass shooting.

Response

Communication

Mayor Whaley considered communication her primary responsibility after the shooting. She scheduled regular updates to the media every three hours and conducted the briefings on schedule even if no new information was available. She explained this is important to prevent the development of misinformation. From the Joint Information Center (JIC) located at the Dayton Convention Center, the Mayor's Chief of Staff and city communications professionals coordinated their messages with police and FBI Public Information Officers (PIOs). The PIOs and the Mayor's team agreed to hold press conferences jointly: the Chief of Police and law enforcement officials communicated about the investigation while the Mayor communicated messages of resilience and unity. Additionally, the Mayor managed the speaking roles and duties of other elected officials, as well as the visits of dignitaries including the President. The communications team worked overtime for a prolonged period after the shooting responding to the high volume of media requests.

Victim and Family Assistance

The Family Reunification Center (which later served as the Family Assistance Center) was co-located with the JIC at the Dayton Convention Center. This proved to be a problem because the press and city staff in the JIC could hear the cries of grief as family members were notified of the deaths of their loved ones. Further, family members were not adequately protected from the media. Therefore, the Mayor emphasizes the importance of separating the Family Reunification and Assistance Centers from the JIC and the press.

The Victim's Advocates Team at the County's Prosecutor office provided victim and family assistance services at the Family Assistance Center. Unlike in other cities, the FBI Victim Services Division and American Red Cross were not the lead coordinators of victim services in Dayton. The Mayor's staff coordinated services initially and directed victims and families to the responding organizations as they reached out. Everytown For Gun Safety provided "lighter touch" services for those who were not ready to seek formal mental health services or grief counseling. The Mayor kept a respectful distance from victims and families but called those who contacted her office.

Collaboration with Law Enforcement

The Mayor and the City Manager benefitted from a close working relationship with each other and with the Police Chief. This relationship was fortified through previous initiatives to combat opioid use, respond to natural disasters, and address local immigration issues. The Dayton Police had primary jurisdiction over the shooting, with the FBI providing additional support. The Mayor said she trusted both agencies during the response and investigation based on her previous experience working with them. The effective flow of information between law enforcement officials and the Mayor and her staff is noteworthy. Based at the JIC, the City Manager received tactical updates from Dayton Police via the law enforcement PIO and relayed those to the Mayor's communications staff to craft messaging for press conferences.

Vigils

Faith communities privately organized a vigil on the afternoon of August 4, 2019, the day of the shooting. The "Downtown Dayton" business association, in partnership with several City Commissioners, organized a candlelight vigil that evening. Mayor Whaley said she invited the Commissioners to participate in the organization of the second vigil to ensure they played a substantive role in the response. The Dayton Police provided security for the event. A crowd of several hundred mourners at the candlelight vigil sang songs, participated in prayers, and chanted "do something." Mayor Whaley spoke at the candlelight vigil.

Presidential Visit

President Trump visited Dayton on August 7, 2019 before traveling to El Paso, where another mass shooting had occurred just hours after the Dayton shooting. The Mayor discouraged the President from visiting the Oregon District, anticipating his visit would be divisive in her community. Instead, she welcomed the President at the tarmac and directed him to visit with victims in the hospital, where his presence might have a healing effect. Though the visit was short, the planning and coordination responsibilities for the visit were a heavy lift for Mayor Whaley's small staff, who worked overtime in the days following the shooting.

Recovery

"The Tragedy Fund"

Within 12 hours of the shooting, Mayor Whaley asked a private charity, the Dayton Foundation, to establish a fund to receive donations from the public. Relying on the best practices of other cities that have responded to mass shootings and terror attacks, the Foundation established the "Tragedy Fund." The Mayor was not directly involved in overseeing the Fund. The Foundation appointed a community oversight board, which determined how to allocate payouts to victims and family members. The Mayor designated a city staffer to serve as a non-voting member on the Board; this staffer kept the Mayor informed.

The Fund collected nearly $4 million and distributed 100 percent of the donations to 47 applicants (victims and family members). The Dayton Foundation waived all administrative fees associated with the Fund. The allocation was: approximately 70 percent of the funds went to the families of the deceased, 20 percent went to injured victims who were hospitalized for 48 hours or more, and the remaining 10 percent went to victims who were treated and released from the hospital in less than 48 hours.

State Crime Victim Compensation

The Ohio Attorney General's office paid $102,731 in state crime victim compensation to 29 victims of the shooting. However, at least 19 victims who applied did not receive victim compensation from the state. These victims were denied assistance due to past felony charges having nothing to do with the shooting or because they had drugs in their system when they were injured. Mayor Whaley advocated for changes to state law to ensure all victims of mass shootings receive the compensation and services they need. Recent legislative proposals in Ohio aim to expand the definition of "victim" to cover more affected individuals, increase the maximum claim for grief counseling, and lower barriers to receiving compensation.

Funerals and Benefit Events

The Mayor further supported victims by attending all the funerals to which she was invited and supporting events to benefit victims and families. Singer John Legend (in coordination with Everytown) hosted a private event for families and survivors in the Oregon District a week after the shooting. The Mayor met with him to discuss advocacy for gun violence prevention but did not attend the private event. She spoke publicly when Dave Chapelle gave a public benefit concert a few weeks after the shooting. Volunteers helped staff the event and the Dayton Chamber of Commerce raised funds for event security. The Mayor issued a proclamation declaring August 25 "Dave Chapelle Day" in Dayton.

Mental and Behavioral Health

Mayor Whaley emphasized the importance of understanding the long-term mental health needs of victims and family members, law enforcement officers, city staff, and the broader impacted community. The Mayor worked with ADAMHS to ensure the city's messaging was trauma-informed and healing, building on past work with this group developing an approach to the opioid crisis. Mental health resources for victims and families were provided through the County Prosecutor's office. The Mayor worked to secure services for first responders as well. She also modeled the importance of seeking mental health care by personalizing her messages and explaining that she was visiting a therapist in the aftermath of the shooting.

One Year Remembrance and Permanent Memorial

The one-year remembrance of the event was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The city and community partners offered socially distant and virtual activities under the banner of #DaytonShines. Activities included a memorial tree planted in the Oregon District on which notes of remembrance and seed packets could be placed, an online photo mosaic, and nine minutes of silence starting at 8:04 PM, during which the city shared a video tribute live on Facebook (no elected officials spoke). Community partners and the city continue to collaborate on a potential permanent memorial.

Dayton: Key Takeaways

- The Family Assistance Center and Joint Information Center/press area should be separate. The perimeter of the Family Assistance Center should be secure.
- Advocate for adequate state crime victim compensation for all affected victims and family members.
- Schedule regular and frequent press briefings and conduct the briefings on schedule even if you do not have all the answers.
- Develop partnerships in advance with mental health experts and seek their guidance for help crafting trauma-informed messaging during a crisis.
- Establish a victim's fund as quickly as possible, ideally on the day of the shooting.
- Direct VIP visitors to activities that can promote healing in the community and avoid situations in which VIP visitors could be divisive for the community.
- Ensure first responders obtain appropriate mental health support.

Case Brief:
El Paso Walmart Shooting

Introduction

On August 3, 2019, a shooter entered a Walmart in El Paso, Texas and fatally shot 22 people and injured 26 others with a WASR-10 AK-47–style semi-automatic rifle.[1] The victims were mostly Hispanic residents of El Paso and Mexico. The FBI is investigating the shooting as a hate crime and an act of domestic terrorism. The shooting has been described as the deadliest attack on the Hispanic community in modern U.S. history.

This case brief discusses the City of El Paso's preparation for, response to, and recovery from the Walmart shooting in 2019, with an emphasis on Mayor Dee Margo's role in all three phases.[2] The brief is based on a semi-structured interview with Mayor Margo, background conversations with national partners, and information gathered from online resources.

El Paso's mayoral response is noteworthy for the Mayor's ability to mobilize corporate and community partners, as well as the public, in key aspects of the response and recovery. Mayor Margo relied on his significant national media experience gained through the focus on El Paso as part of the debate about border security policy to advocate for the residents of El Paso. He also advocated for the speedy release of death notifications to grieving family members. The El Paso United Family Resiliency Center exemplifies an important public health resource and best practice.

City and Mayor Profile

El Paso is a border city of more than 650,000 residents situated on the Rio Grande across from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. Mayor Margo, a Republican, served as Mayor from 2017 to 2021. Under El Paso's council-manager form of government, the Mayor is a voting member of the City Council and presides over Council meetings and official city events and ceremonies. The City Manager oversees day-to-day operations of the city.

Preparation

Training and Experience

The El Paso police and fire departments participated in active shooter trainings prior to the shooting. The local hospital also conducted an exercise involving mass casualties just before the shooting. The Mayor cited the active shooter trainings and medical exercise as instrumental in the response.

In addition, El Paso's Office of Emergency Management (OEM)—a joint effort between the city and the county—maintains the Emergency Management Basic Plan and conducts regular trainings and exercises to test emergency response capabilities.

---

[1] We report the total victims and fatalities that Mother Jones reports as of May 27, 2021. Note there are many databases tracking mass killings; some report different victim counts. See James Fox & Jack Levin, *Mass confusion concerning mass murder*, 40 THE CRIMINOLOGIST (2015).

[2] El Paso is one of six cities researched by the Public Health Advocacy Institute in 2020-21 to inform a Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook PHAI developed for mayors, city managers, and their staff. PHAI classified the Walmart Shooting as an "indoor public accommodation" mass shooting.

The Mayor and his staff did not participate in any trainings relevant to the response to the Walmart shooting. The Mayor recommends that mayors should observe a law enforcement active shooter drill. Without such training, the Mayor admitted he had to devise his response as he went along. However, he had significant national media experience due to El Paso's border city status that he relied on during the response.

Response

Communication

Mayor Margo was in Austin at the time of the shooting. He made immediate arrangements to fly back to El Paso, arriving about three hours after the shooting. From the airport, the Mayor went directly to the Emergency Operations Center at the 9/11 Fusion Center, which was also the location of the Joint Information Center for the incident. The Mayor was briefed there by local police, the FBI, Public Safety, and Department of Justice officials. He then spoke with these officials outside the Fusion Center at a press conference that took place about seven hours after the shooting.

The Mayor's messaging emphasized the theme of love over hate. He contrasted the fact that the killer drove 700 miles to commit his hate crime with the peace-loving nature of El Paso's residents. He later explained in a press interview, "I've said from day one this [shooting] will not be a defining moment in our history. ... I want to relegate it to an asterisk footnote." After the first press conference, the Mayor delivered daily press briefings with the Chief of Police to update the public about the status of the investigation.

Victim and Family Assistance

The El Paso OEM, the FBI, the American Red Cross (ARC), the Salvation Army, and the United Way collaborated to open a Family Reunification Center at a local middle school on the afternoon of the shooting. Mayor Margo communicated with the governor and the assistant police chief, urging law enforcement officials to expedite crime scene processing so that the families could receive death notifications quickly.

The El Paso Independent School District staffed the cafeteria to offer food to the families and community members who arrived. The FBI Victim Services Division took witness statements and handled death notifications. They also maintained contact with area hospitals and trauma centers to update families about the location of their loved ones. The Mayor visited the Family Reunification Center the evening of the shooting and visited injured victims in the hospital the next day.

OEM and ARC opened the Family Assistance Center (FAC) three days later at a nearby convention center. It offered victims and families extensive services, including referrals to crime victim compensation, grief counseling, and legal services. Immigration and travel services were of particular importance given that seven fatalities were Mexican nationals (an additional resident of Ciudad Juarez who died was a German national). The FAC closed after 10 days. The El Paso United Family Resilience Center (RC) opened shortly thereafter to offer ongoing support to survivors (see below).

Blood donations were critically needed. Residents lined up for hours to donate in 100-degree heat, requiring a response by volunteer organizations to distribute water and sunscreen. The Mayor donated blood the day after the shooting and met with donors standing in line. He described the overwhelming response to the request for blood donations as a moving demonstration of the community's unity in the face of crisis.

Collaboration with Emergency Response

The EOC was located at the 9/11 Fusion Center, an all-crimes and all-hazards tactical information and intelligence hub for the El Paso Police Department and the region. The Center is a collaborative between local, state, and federal agencies in El Paso and Dona Ana County, New Mexico. The EOC was set up within an hour of the shooting and a countywide emergency alert was issued about 77 minutes after the shooting.

The OEM operates a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to educate volunteers about disaster preparedness and train them in basic response so they can help support first responders during a disaster. However, the CERT was not activated as the emergency response needs were met by responding organizations.

Vigils

Many vigils were held in the days following the shooting, but were not hosted by the city. The largest vigil was a bilingual service held at the baseball stadium attended by 8,000 community members from both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. Mayor Margo spoke at this vigil and focused his remarks on the victims, "They represent generations of El Pasoans and Mexicans that have lived in unison and harmony throughout our 350-year history." He reprised his healing message, telling mourners, "hate will never overcome our love."

Presidential Visit

President Donald J. Trump visited El Paso four days after the shooting. The visit was opposed by some elected officials and residents. Nevertheless, Mayor Margo met with the President at the 9/11 Fusion Center, taking the opportunity to ask for "any and all federal resources available" to aid with response and recovery. Although he received substantial criticism and even death threats for welcoming the President, he considered hosting the visit an essential part of his duties. President Trump did not speak publicly. Instead, he met with first responders to thank them and visited with families of three survivors who agreed to meet him at the University Medical Center of El Paso (despite a petition signed by 1,000 medical staff opposing his visit).

Recovery

"One Fund El Paso"

The National Compassion Fund administered the victims' fund, One Fund El Paso. The Fund was a collaboration between the city and local foundations: the Paso del Norte Community Foundation and the El Paso Community Foundation. The Mayor promoted transparency in fund administration through weekly updates in city council meetings. The fund organizers partnered with at least seven community organizations to help victims and family members apply for funds. Information about the Fund was provided in both English and Spanish. Community partners provided representatives to serve on a task force to oversee the donations and create the distribution protocol. The Fund ultimately disbursed $11.8 million to 355 victims and victims' family members. An additional $50,000 was donated to the Resiliency Center (see next section).

Family Resiliency Center

Local and state agencies collaborated to establish the El Paso United Family Resiliency Center (RC) to help survivors and families recover from trauma caused by the attack. Initially funded by a Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant, the RC opened three months after the shooting. As of 2021, the RC is still open and funded by the Office of the Governor and United Way El Paso. Notably, the RC provides services to community members beyond the victims of the 2019 shooting. To promote long-term community healing, the RC uses "resiliency navigators" to direct people to the resources of nearly 40 community-based organizations to provide individualized case management, referrals for counseling, financial planning, legal guidance, spiritual care, and more. The support of these partners made it possible for the RC to meet the changing needs of the community, facilitate programs tailored for specific populations, and reduce stigma around receiving mental health care through outreach and education.

Remembrances and Permanent Memorials

The items left by the community at a makeshift memorial at the Walmart were preserved at a local history museum. The city conducted focus groups with community members (including some family members of victims) to understand how they wanted to memorialize the shooting. The families wanted to concentrate the memorial in one location so as not to have a constant reminder of the tragedy. After these listening sessions, Walmart held a private event to unveil its "Grand Candela" memorial, a 30-foot obelisk honoring the victims with a "beacon of light." At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic limited the City's ability to host the one-year remembrance of the shooting. An online event in August 2020 was described as "not ideal" for healing because of the lack of in-person contact.

State Crime Victim Compensation and Reimbursement for Recovery Costs

The State of Texas provided $5.5 million in funding to the City of El Paso for a range of services, including psychological first aid, state behavioral health services, county reimbursements related to the prosecution, school-based mental health services, and the Family Resiliency Center to meet the ongoing mental health needs of survivors.

Funerals

The Mayor attended every funeral except those in Mexico. He took care to emphasize that many of the victims and grieving family members were Mexican citizens.

El Paso: Key Takeaways

- Crisis communications should focus on the unique characteristics of the community to help residents overcome trauma and unite in solidarity.
- Community partners can play a vital role in fund establishment, vigils, family assistance and resilience centers, and memorials.
- Promote transparency and inclusivity when establishing the victims' fund.
- Blood donations need to be well-organized to protect the wellbeing of donors.
- States are an important source of funding for the response and recovery costs.
- The El Paso Resiliency Center is a model for other cities.

Case Brief:
Orlando Pulse Nightclub Shooting

Introduction

On June 12, 2016, a shooter fatally shot 49 people and wounded 53 at Pulse, a gay nightclub celebrating Latin night.[1] The shooter, who declared allegiance to ISIS, used a Sig Sauer MCX semi-automatic rifle and a Glock 17 semi-automatic pistol. He took hostages and engaged police in a three-hour standoff before he was killed by law enforcement officials. FBI investigators declared the event a terrorist attack.

This case brief highlights preparedness actions taken by Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer and his staff before the Pulse shooting, and actions they took during the response and recovery phases.[2] PHAI researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with Mayor Dyer, Chief of Staff Heather Fagan, City CFO Christopher McCullion, Deputy Chief Venues Officer Craig Borkon, and Director of Strategic Partnerships Kathy Devault. The researchers also arranged background conversations with subject matter experts and reviewed online resources.

The Mayor's response to the Pulse shooting illustrates a well-coordinated response by a large city with sophisticated policing and municipal resources. The Mayor's tabletop exercise before the attack is noteworthy, as is his management of key operations, including the OneOrlando fund, the Family Assistance Center, and the Orlando United Assistance Center (a Resiliency Center). The Mayor empowered his staff to act while focusing on his role as a voice for unity and healing on the international stage. Recognizing the challenge of responding to a mass shooting, the Mayor sent city staff to aid other mayors in their response to mass shootings in Las Vegas and Parkland.

City and Mayor Profile

Orlando is Florida's third largest city with over 263,000 residents. Mayor Dyer is a registered Democrat and has served as Mayor since 2003. The city government is of the "strong mayor" structure, in which the Police Chief and city agencies report to the chief executive, the Mayor, who also sits on the City Council.

Preparation

Training and Experience

The Mayor hosts an annual tabletop exercise. Prior to the shooting, the Mayor and city officials conducted a tabletop exercise on the theme of civil disobedience. The Fire Department operated the exercise; city staff from emergency support functions (ESFs) participated. During the tabletop, the team developed a social media protocol that was used during the response to the shooting. The Mayor and his staff cited this exercise as highly instructive for the coordinated interagency response to the shooting.

---

[1] We report the total victims and fatalities that Mother Jones reports as of May 27, 2021. Note there are many databases tracking mass killings; some report different victim counts. See James Fox & Jack Levin, *Mass confusion concerning mass murder*, 40 THE CRIMINOLOGIST (2015).

[2] Orlando is one of six cities researched by the Public Health Advocacy Institute in 2020-21 to inform a Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook PHAI developed for mayors, city managers, and their staff. PHAI classified the Pulse shooting as an indoor public accommodation mass shooting.

Additionally, city staff participated in joint exercises with the county, as emergency management is a function of county government in Florida. Local law enforcement participated in tactical trainings involving active shooting scenarios, including at school sites and the football stadium. Finally, city officials had significant experience responding to natural disasters, such as hurricanes. They relied on their emergency communications experience during the Pulse shooting response.

Response

Communication

Because the shooting took place in the middle of the night and there were concerns about explosives, the Mayor and law enforcement officials postponed the first press conference until the scene was secured. The Mayor then negotiated with the FBI about who would take the lead at the initial press conference. The Mayor felt the first message about the attack and security status should come from the Mayor, because he is trusted by the community, rather than an unrecognized FBI agent. After the Mayor spoke, law enforcement officials provided details about the investigation. The press area was moved after elected officials from outside Orlando spoke to the press even though they lacked information about the attack. Recognizing the importance of coordinated and accurate messaging, the Mayor recommends securing the press area.

Public Records Requests

City staff received hundreds of public records requests. The city promoted transparency and reduced the impact of repetitive requests by hosting a webpage on which all public documents relating to Pulse Nightclub and the shooting were published and regularly updated. The city also sought clarification from a court before releasing 911 calls and transcripts. ThecCity released these within a week of receiving a court order that clarified which calls and transcripts needed to be redacted to protect victims' personal information. Pulse-related records remain online today.

Victim and Family Assistance

Family reunification was initially provided at a nearby hospital but was soon overwhelmed and moved to a nearby community center. Recognizing that the site could not accommodate the large number of victims, family members, and friends, the Mayor asked city staff to stand up a Family Assistance Center (FAC) at Camping World Stadium. The FAC opened the next morning. The stadium was chosen for its size, secure perimeter, and ample parking. Both the American Red Cross and the FBI Victim Services Division helped city staff establish and operate the FAC. Nearly 40 community-based organizations and businesses provided services. Local law enforcement provided security. Services included mental health care, immigration and travel services, child and pet care, and funeral services. Volunteer lawyers from the local bar association provided pro bono legal services. Importantly, service providers were received at an intake area that was separate from the entrance for victims and families. After operating the FAC for six days, the city transitioned services to the Orlando United Assistance Center (OUAC) in collaboration with Orange County and Heart of Florida United Way. The OUAC continues to support survivors with referrals to mental health care and other services five years after the shooting.

Collaboration with Law Enforcement

The Orlando police, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, FBI, and hostage negotiators were involved in the response. Mayor Dyer based himself in the mobile Command Center with his Chief of Staff Heather Fagan and kept an appropriate distance from law enforcement operations. This uncommon arrangement (mayors are often based on the Joint Information Center) allowed the Mayor to stay informed in real time and base his communications on firsthand knowledge of the response. The mayor's station in the Command Center was made possible by pre-established personal relationships and mutual trust with law enforcement officials.

Emergency Declaration and Disaster Aid

In consultation with the Mayor, Governor Rick Scott declared a state of emergency in Orange County and Orlando following the shooting. According to the Mayor, this declaration relaxed rules related to police overtime and allowed full deployment of emergency response staff. Due to the Mayor's experience responding to hurricanes, he believed the declaration would also make FEMA funding possible for excess costs incurred by the city during the response. However, the Governor's request for $5 million was denied, in part because the state failed to demonstrate the response was beyond the capacity of state and local government. However, the Small Business Administration (SBA) approved $353,000 for an Economic Injury Disaster Loan, which provided support for small businesses impacted by the shooting. The declaration of emergency was necessary for the city to be eligible for this loan.

Vigils

City staff coordinated with faith leaders and community organizations that serve the LGBTQ+ and Latinx communities to host an interfaith vigil. Because the event was declared a terrorist attack, Mayor Dyer invited a respected local Muslim leader—Muhammad Musri, senior Imam of the Islamic Society of Central Florida—to attend the vigil and press conferences to speak about his community's rejection of hate crimes. This was done to prevent possible retaliation attacks against the Muslim community. At the vigil, Musri declared the support of the Muslim community for the victims of the tragedy, saying "we condemn the ideology of hate and death and destruction and we call for all Muslim leaders and communities across this nation and across the world to stand up and to deal with this cancer and to remove it once and for all."

Recovery

The "OneOrlando" Fund

The city had an existing 501(c)(3) charitable entity. After receiving offers of sizable donations from local corporate donors, including Disney, city staff quickly made adjustments to that entity so it could receive donations from the public. On the advice of Boston officials who established the victims' fund following the Marathon bombing, city staff contacted attorney Kenneth Feinberg. He offered *pro bono* services on the condition that existing funds be consolidated into one, unified fund. City staff heard from family members of previous shootings that 100 percent of the money donated should go to victims and families; the city followed that recommendation. The fund's distribution protocol prioritized the families of deceased victims for the highest payouts, injured victims for payouts in accordance with the length of their hospital stay, and victims present at the scene but not physically injured for the lowest amounts.

Mental and Behavioral Health

The Mayor recognized the far-reaching mental health impact of the shooting. In addition to the trauma experienced by families and survivors, city staff were also traumatized by the event. For example, staff who operated the Family Assistance Center were not prepared for the emotional impact of providing services and had difficulty transitioning back to their normal duties after the Family Assistance Center closed. The Mayor advocated for group therapy sessions for them and the use of therapy animals in City Hall.

Remembrances and Permanent Memorials

Immediately following the shooting, the city hosted vigils and events that prompted local, national, and international participation and mourning. The Pulse Foundation was established to provide a place for reflection and to preserve photographs and items left at the site of the shooting. Staff from the History Center worked around the clock to archive items left at the site by community members, such as flowers, candles, and photographs. One year after the shooting, city staff worked with Orange County and the onePULSE Foundation to host Orlando United Day. Buildings throughout Orlando and central Florida were lit in rainbow colors. Events were also hosted by the University of Central Florida and other colleges. Tens of thousands of community members attended Lake Eola Park Amphitheater for an evening of prayer, live music, inspirational dance, and a moment of reflection for the victims. The city was involved in planning and provided the security for the Lake Eola event. In June 2021, five years after the shooting, the city and its partners again planned a week of remembrance events to honor the victims. The former site of the Pulse Nightclub was designated as a permanent memorial in 2021, five years after the shooting.

Orlando: Key Takeaways

- Conduct a tabletop exercise to plan the interagency response to a mass shooting.
- Secure the press area to prevent the spread of misinformation by uninformed speakers and elected officials.
- Post public information online to efficiently respond to intensive and repetitive public records requests.
- Venues used for family reunification and assistance need to be scalable and secured to accommodate the potentially large number of affected victims, family members, and (importantly) friends of the victims.
- Public mass shootings may not be eligible for FEMA funds.
- Establish a 501(c)(3) in advance. It can be used for many things, including for a victims' fund following a mass casualty event or natural disaster, or to receive donations for the families of fallen first responders.
- Family members from previous shootings advocate that 100% of the money raised should go to the victims and their families.
- Mental health services and other forms of support may be needed by survivors, family members and friends for years after the shooting. In addition, plan to provide mental health services for city employees who work on the response.

Case Brief:
Parkland School Shooting

Introduction

On February 14, 2018, a troubled student opened fire on his classmates with an AR-15 rifle at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL, killing 17 people and injuring 17 others.[1] The shooter was arrested an hour later in nearby Coral Springs. He was charged with 17 counts of murder and 17 counts of attempted murder.

This case brief discusses the City of Parkland's preparation for, response to, and recovery from the Parkland shooting, with an emphasis on Mayor Christine Hunschofsky's role in all three phases.[2] The case study is based on findings from one semi-structured interview, background information obtained via phone calls with experts and review of online materials, and a review of the National Police Foundation's after-action report on lessons learned from the incident and recommendations, which involved comprehensive information gathering.

The Parkland case illustrates the unique issues posed by a school mass shooting, which command national attention and are especially traumatizing for children and families. PHAI's research found that advance preparation is especially important in smaller cities that lack the resources of larger cities for comprehensive emergency management planning, and where school shootings are more likely to take place. Smaller cities responding to a school shooting may also face the challenge of coordinating multiple divisions of government that do not report to the Mayor. Parkland's mayoral response is noteworthy for the Mayor's compassionate leadership during a tragedy that affected community members she knew personally. The city's planning for the first annual remembrance event is also noteworthy as a best practice.

City Profile

Parkland is a small, suburban city in Florida with 30,471 residents at the time of the shooting. The city has a Commission-Manager form of local government. The City Commission has five voting members: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and three Commissioners. Unlike the "strong mayor" form of local government, the Mayor's authority is limited and co-equal to that of the other Commissioners. The Mayor cannot direct staff or city resources. That is the role of the professional City Manager, who has operational authority for city functions. Mayor Hunschofsky, a Democrat, served as mayor from 2016-2020. In 2020, she was elected to the Florida House of Representatives.

[1] We report the total victims and fatalities that Mother Jones reports as of May 27, 2021. Note there are many databases tracking mass killings; some report different victim counts. See James Fox & Jack Levin, *Mass confusion concerning mass murder*, 40 THE CRIMINOLOGIST (2015).

[2] Parkland is one of six cities researched by the Public Health Advocacy Institute in 2020-21 to inform a Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook PHAI developed for mayors, city managers, and their staff. PHAI classified the Parkland shooting as a school shooting.

Preparation

Training and Experience

The City of Parkland contracts with the Broward County Sheriff's Office for law enforcement services and the Coral Springs Fire Department for fire/EMS services. Law enforcement and EMS officials report to the City Manager, who in turn reports to the Mayor and the City Commission. The National Police Foundation (NPF) found that Broward County and the city had comprehensive emergency management plans, but these plans did not include provisions for managing the response to an active shooter incident. The Mayor, the City Manager, and the City Commissioners had not participated in a tabletop exercise or other training related to a mass shooting.

Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School is operated by Broward County Public Schools (BCPS), which is independent from both the city and the county. BCPS is overseen by a superintendent and school board. BCPS had a district-wide safety plan and each school had a safety plan and emergency code procedures, but these plans were not accessible for review by the NPF. Though city officials had engaged with individual schools and attended PTA and other public meetings related to school security, they had no direct authority over the schools nor input on issues such as threat assessment, active shooter drills, or student mental health services.

Response

Communication

Because no communication protocol had been established between city public information officers (PIOs) and law enforcement PIOs in advance, the Mayor, the City Commission, and staffers had difficulty obtaining real-time information about the law enforcement response. In fact, according to press reports, officials at City Hall received updates from television coverage and Twitter. The Mayor was not included in press conferences, which instead were handled by State andstate officials, Broward County officials, and school officials. However, individual reporters contacted the Mayor directly. She focused her messages to the community rather than to national audiences and emphasized the importance of mental health and community support. According to the NPF's after-action report, the city's lack of unified messaging with all involved agencies created a vacuum filled by divisive messages that at times "overshadowed messages of unity and resilience, which also hampered the ability of the entire Broward community to focus on a collaborative recovery process."

Victim and Family Assistance

A Family Reunification Center (FRC) was quickly established by local law enforcement agencies at a nearby Marriott Hotel after the Coral Springs City Manager called the hotel to see whether it was available. Over eight hundred people signed into the FRC and made statements to law enforcement officials. Parkland's City Manager deployed city staff to support the FRC. The Mayor visited the FRC the evening of the shooting to comfort families waiting for information about their loved ones. The operation was reportedly uncoordinated and chaotic, as multiple community-based organizations showed up to offer blankets, water, and other resources. The process for issuing death notifications was drawn out by law enforcement protocols, adding to the anguish experienced by the families at the FRC. According to the NPF, "Increased, regular communication with families awaiting reunification or notification may have helped to ease the chaotic environment at the FRC."

The City of Parkland, assisted by the American Red Cross and local organizations, established a Family Assistance Center three days after the shooting to provide comprehensive mental health and other services. On February 24, 2018, services for survivors and family members were transferred to the Broward County Resiliency Center (see below). The Mayor attended all public meetings about victim and family services to keep herself informed, to provide oversight, and to communicate the needs of family and community members with whom she stayed in regular contact.

Collaboration with Law Enforcement and Emergency Response

Multiple law enforcement agencies responded to the scene, including Coral Springs and the Broward County Sherriff's office, agents from Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and the FBI. Unified command was not established at the scene for about an hour, which negatively impacted communication and later compromised the operations of the Family Reunification Center. According to the NPF report, "Broward County partially activated the County Emergency Operations Center (CEOC) and the City of Parkland [referring to the City Manager] activated a modified municipal EOC (MEOC) during the response to the MSD shooting, but both played a minimal role during the response and in the immediate aftermath because they did not receive timely information from the scene."

Unlike in other mass shooting cases, where mayors were either physically present in the incident command post or operating with their staffs out of the emergency operations center or joint information center, Mayor Hunschofsky did not have access to the initial response infrastructure and therefore learned the details of the investigation at the same time as the public. Notably, the Mayor, who personally knew many impacted families and members of the school community, stationed herself at the school to offer comfort to them and direct them to the FRC.

Vigils

The initial candlelight vigil in Pine Trails Park was organized by City of Parkland staff. The event was described as traumatizing to the families of the victims because some elected officials delivered divisive/political messages rather than messages of unity and healing. There were also traffic control issues due to the thousands of attendees. Many other vigils, marches, and events were held in the days and weeks following the shooting, which the under-resourced city staff did their best to support. Partnerships were established with community-based organizations and the American Red Cross to assist with volunteers and logistics.

Recovery

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Victims' Fund

Within two days of the shooting, the Broward Education Foundation started a fund using GoFundMe. The National Compassion Fund helped establish the distribution protocol, which was based on thoughtful engagement with survivors and families. The Mayor attended listening sessions to stay updated so that she could share information about the fund with the affected families and members of the school community and amplify their views. According to press reports, 100 percent of the $10.5 million was distributed to survivors and family members of the victims.

Mental and Behavioral Health Services

The Mayor attended meetings about students' mental and behavioral health needs after the shooting. The Broward League of Cities established a school and community public safety task force with stakeholders including the Children's Services Council, Broward Behavioral Health Coalition, law enforcement, representatives from other cities, and representatives from the school system. The Children's Services Council's Executive Director helped raise funding and obtain grants for initiatives to promote mental health in Broward County public schools.

In the immediate aftermath of the shooting, a campus wellness center with a range of services was established at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. (Additional services were offered to the broader community at a separate location.) However, concerns remain that the services offered to students were not appropriate for those experiencing severe trauma. For example, services were offered in a setting that lacked privacy and utilized talk therapy (generally not indicated for people who have recently experienced trauma). As a result of this mismanagement, in-home services later offered by the Broward Behavioral Health Coalition were under-utilized by those in need of care, despite efforts by the Mayor and others in the community to promote the availability of the services. Although not a substitute for appropriate, trauma-informed therapy, therapy dogs were used successfully at schools, community sites, and City Hall. The dogs were important for those who were not yet ready to talk about their experience and became an important and lasting aspect of community care.

The Broward County Resiliency Center was later established to provide grief counseling, referrals to community resources, and specialized group counseling for those impacted by the shooting. The Center is no longer operating, but family counseling is offered at two school-based sites in the community. Online mental health resources are also available through the Broward County Public Schools website.

One Year Remembrance

Parkland community members and city staff organized events centered on unity and volunteerism for the first annual remembrance of the shooting. The "Day of Service and Love" offered "something for everyone," recognizing that people process grief in different ways.

Notably, events were intentionally free of political messaging at the behest of the Mayor, who wrote a letter inviting elected officials to attend, but not to speak, at the City's remembrance ceremony on February 14, 2019. Throughout the day there were activities for students and community members, such as painting stones for an outdoor memorial, playing with therapy dogs, and packing meals for children experiencing food insecurity. There were art projects, including a Temple of Time project created by an artist in collaboration with the community. The school opened for a half day: some students attended school events, participated in a moment of silence, or performed a community service project. Others chose to stay home. There was a breakfast for first responders. Communal prayer vigils and candlelight ceremonies were held throughout the day.

Parkland: Key Takeaways

- City emergency management plans should include active shooter events.
- A tabletop exercise is recommended to plan for a school shooting. In a city with a Commission-Manager form of government, the City Manager, the Mayor, the other City Commissioners, and City staff should all attend and clarify their roles during the response. County, school, and law enforcement officials should be included to promote intra-agency cooperation.
- As part of this exercise, potential locations for a Family Reunification Center (FRC) in different parts of the city should be identified. Each potential location should have a secure perimeter and space for private meetings.
- A communication protocol should be developed in advance with POIs and law enforcement that ensures that the City Manager, Mayor, and City Commission are all regularly briefed by law enforcement officials during the response to a mass shooting.
- As the city's official representative to the state, the nation, and internationally, the Mayor should be included in press briefings.
- Schools, cities, and counties should work together on school security issues, including threat assessment, active shooter drills, and student mental health services.
- Commemorations should be in the spirit of unity and healing. Elected officials should be discouraged from making divisive remarks.
- Compassionate city leadership and trauma-informed messaging can help promote trauma recovery for victims, families, and the affected community.
- After action-reporting and evaluation can lead to system improvements and better emergency planning practices.



Case Brief:
Pittsburgh Tree of Life Shooting

Introduction

On the morning of October 27, 2018, a shooter opened fire during Shabbat services at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh's Squirrel Hill neighborhood. He used a Colt AR-15 SP1 semi-automatic rifle and three Glock .357 SIG handguns to kill 11 victims and wound six others.[1] The shooter was apprehended by law enforcement officials and will stand trial for murder. The attack was declared a hate crime and is one of the deadliest attacks on the Jewish community in U.S. history.

This case brief highlights the City of Pittsburgh's preparation for, response to, and recovery from the Tree of Life shooting, with an emphasis on the role Mayor William Peduto played in all three phases.[2] PHAI researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with Mayor Peduto, Pittsburgh Public Safety Director Wendell Hissrich, FBI Special Agent in Charge Robert Jones, and the Mayor's Chief of Staff, Daniel Gilman.

The response to the Tree of Life shooting illustrates the benefits of advance planning and deployment of federal resources. The City's Emergency Management Agency (OEMHS) organized active shooter training for first responders and at risk-communities. Multiple law enforcement agencies, led by the FBI, marshalled a well-coordinated, multi-layered response to the attack. The Mayor's response is noteworthy for his singular focus on meeting the needs of the victims and family members, his effective communications management, and for the relationships established in advance with the Jewish community that made it possible for law enforcement officials to warn synagogues throughout the city of the attack even when phone contact could not be established because it was the Jewish Sabbath.

City and Mayor Profile

Pittsburgh is the second largest city in Pennsylvania with over 300,000 residents. The Mayor manages the city's executive functions (a "strong mayor," Mayor-Council form of local government). The Chief of Staff serves as de facto Deputy Mayor and plays a key role advising the Mayor. The Police Chief is appointed by the Mayor, approved by the City Council, and reports to the Chief of Staff. Mayor Peduto, a Democrat, served on the City Council from 2002 to 2014 and as Pittsburgh's Mayor from 2014 to 2021.

---

[1] We report the total victims and fatalities that Mother Jones reports as of May 27, 2021. Note there are many databases tracking mass killings; some report different victim counts. See James Fox & Jack Levin, *Mass confusion concerning mass murder*, 40 THE CRIMINOLOGIST (2015).

[2] Pittsburgh is one of six cities researched by the Public Health Advocacy Institute in 2020-21 to inform a Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook PHAI developed for mayors, city managers, and their staff. PHAI classified the Tree of Life shooting as a "place of worship" mass shooting.

Preparation

Training and Preparedness Actions

The Pittsburgh Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS) is responsible for the city's emergency management. OEMHS works with city, county, regional, state, and federal government partners to develop all hazards plans for natural disasters and human-caused events. In advance of the Tree of Life shooting, OEMHS organized active shooter trainings for Public Safety staff and police. The Mayor's Chief of Staff (COS) observed one of these trainings. Training for the Mayor's office was also scheduled but had not taken place at the time of the shooting.

OEMHS coordinates with community organizations, businesses, and schools to help them develop plans to respond to an active shooter. As part of this preparedness planning, the police department, in coordination with the FBI, did walk-throughs with the Jewish Community Center to assess its security and make recommendations. Lines of communication were established for use in the event of a shooting or other emergency. As a result, the Public Safety Staff had a list of all the locations of synagogues and Jewish sites in the city. Because the attack took place on the Jewish Sabbath, these sites could not be contacted by telephone. The police used the list to go physically to each site to warn of the attack and secure the site.

According to COS Gilman, the Mayor's role in these activities was to provide budget priority, clear vision for OEMHS responsibilities, and effective oversight of police department operations.

Partnerships

The Mayor's staff emphasized the importance of personal relationships during the response and recovery. Important local partners included the Jewish Community Center, the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh, and Pittsburgh's universities and medical centers. National partners included the FBI and the American Red Cross.

Response

Communication

The FBI Public Information Officer (PIO) assembled the Mayor, the FBI Special Agent in Charge (SAC), and the Chief of Police to define their speaking roles at the press conferences. Visiting officials, including the Governor and a U.S. Senator, were not initially given speaking roles. At the first press conference, the Mayor spoke about public safety and what the city was doing to meet the needs of victims and families. Law enforcement officials spoke about the investigation. Throughout the response, the COS filtered media requests and coordinated calls between the Mayor and elected officials. On social media, the public safety PIO released updates. The Mayor's account and other city accounts amplified these updates. This disciplined, coordinated approach allowed the City to communicate to the public with a unified voice.

Victim and Family Assistance

Initially, the FBI set up a Family Reunification Center (FRC) at Chatham University, but the Jewish Community Center also provided similar services. COS Gilman recommended locating the FRC at one location to prevent confusion. The Jewish Community Center was ultimately chosen because it was a

familiar place to the affected community. Its perimeter was secured so that its staff could protect families from the media. Specialists from the U.S. Attorney's Office and FBI's Victim Services Division provided services ranging from the return of personal effects, to death notifications, to referrals to local mental health resources. The Mayor met with the families at the FRC, visited the victims in the hospital, and attended funerals upon request. He prioritized meetings with families over other commitments, including interviews with the press.

Collaboration with Law Enforcement

Multiple law enforcement agencies responded to the attack. It was soon apparent that the incident fit the definition of a federal hate crime. Therefore, the FBI was given jurisdiction and took over the crime scene and investigation. The County began a parallel investigation because the shooter was shot by law enforcement responding to the scene. Law enforcement leaders relied on established working relationships to coordinate the investigation and communicate with the Mayor and elected officials. However, at times the Mayor's staff had difficulty obtaining the updates they needed. Therefore, COS Gilman recommends requesting that a law enforcement official based in the command unit or Emergency Operations Center be designated as the point person whose sole function is to regularly brief the mayor and elected officials.

Vigils

On the night following the shooting, the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh hosted a large community vigil at the Soldiers and Sailors War Memorial. Mayor Peduto, the Governor, and other officials spoke at that event. The Mayor also attended an event with Tom Hanks at Point State Park a week later, organized by the city. Vigils were also organized by Jewish communities and took place around the country.

Recovery

"Victims of Terror" Fund

The Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh established a fund to collect donations for the victims. The Federation appointed an independent committee to oversee the distribution of the fund. According to press reports, $6.3 million was raised. Most of the money, $4.8 million, was distributed to victims and family members. However, $500,000 was provided to injured police officers and their families, $450,000 went to the Tree of Life congregation to rebuild the severely damaged building, and some funds went toward memorials and education connected to the massacre. The Mayor was not involved in the establishment or administration of the victims' fund but helped establish a separate trust fund for large donations from sports teams and other institutions. He obtained City Council approval for this step.

Mental and Behavioral Health

City officials and the FBI anticipate that victims and family members will need mental health care during the upcoming criminal trial, which has the potential to retraumatize them and the affected community. The FBI Victim Services Division will return to Pittsburgh before the trial begins to liaise with family members and connect them to local mental health services and other resources as needed.

The Mayor spoke of the need to ensure mental health services are available for first responders and city officials. In Pittsburgh, the Public Safety Department has its own peer program, established because its employees are believed to be less likely to seek professional help. Services for FBI agents are available via an FBI Employee Assistance Program. Mayor Peduto urged other mayors to take care of themselves

so that they can take care of their constituents. He recommended seeking counseling and learning how to manage when one chooses to reflect on the incident. For example, in the post-recovery phase it may be necessary to turn down interviews about the shooting.

Funerals and Burials

Jewish burial customs require someone to stay with a body until it is buried, and that all remains (including blood) must buried with the body. Once informed, law enforcement officials worked to balance these faith customs with standard crime scene procedures. The FBI also requested the coroner to make positive identification at the scene rather than at the morgue after autopsy. This helped speed the process of victim identification and ease the burden on family members and volunteers from the Jewish community who stayed in vigil with the bodies. The Public Safety Department provided security for the funerals, which in some cases involved thousands of people who turned out and participated in outdoor processions.

Remembrances and Permanent Memorials

Discussions about a permanent memorial remain underway, in parallel with discussions about reopening the Tree of Life Synagogue for in-person services. In partnership with the Jewish Community Center, the Mayor's office has tried to coordinate planning discussions between the city, the Jewish community, a person representing the interests of the victims and families, and the wider community.

Pittsburgh: Key Takeaways

- A mayor's primary role is to focus on meeting the needs of the victims, their families, and the affected community.
- Active shooter training for law enforcement and the mayor's office is a best practice, as is working with community organizations, schools, and businesses to help them assess threats and develop security plans consistent with the city's Emergency Operations Plan.
- The mayor should meet with law enforcement officials and public information officers before the first press conference to define roles. It is important to speak with a unified voice.
- Another best practice is to designate a point of contact within the Emergency Operations Center or command unit whose sole responsibility is to keep the mayor's office informed of the investigation in real time.
- When minority and religious groups are targeted, it is important to understand their customs related to funerals and burials and to balance them with law enforcement protocols.
- The FBI successfully negotiated a way to bypass coroner's office procedures to speed death notifications.
- Established relationships with leaders of the affected community, local service providers, and national organizations such as the FBI and the American Red Cross proved to be essential during the response and recovery.

Case Brief:
San Bernardino Terrorist Attack

Introduction

On December 2, 2015, a married couple carried out a mass shooting and an attempted bombing at the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino, California. The shooters targeted a San Bernardino County Department of Public Health training event, killing 14 County employees and injuring 22.[1] Weapons used during the attack included AR-15 style rifles, 9mm semi-automatic pistols, and pipe bombs. Four hours later, police killed the shooters in a shootout that left two officers injured.

This case brief discusses the City of San Bernardino's preparation for, response to, and recovery from the San Bernardino terrorist attack at the Inland Regional Center, with an emphasis on Mayor R. Carey Davis' role in all three phases.[2] The brief is based on findings from semi-structured interviews with two participants and a review of three comprehensive reports that assessed the response.

The response to the San Bernardino shooting illustrates a case in which the Mayor took a background role to the county response, which was the employer of the victims of the attack. While mayors always have a role to play as the face of their community and voice for unity and healing, there may be less city involvement in a shooting that targets a workplace capable of a strong organizational response. This response is also notable for the challenging coordination between city, county, and federal authorities.

City and County Profile

The County of San Bernardino is geographically the largest county in the country with more than 22,000 employees. The chief county official is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The City of San Bernardino had 214,112 residents in 2015. At the time of the shooting, the City was rebuilding from bankruptcy and had recently transitioned to a Mayor-Council form of local government with the City Manager heading most city functions. The County Sherriff is an elected position that does not report to the CEO or the Mayor, while the city's Police Chief reports to the City Manager. Mayor Davis, a Republican, served as Mayor from 2014 to 2018.

Preparation

Trainings and Experience

The city completed its Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) about six months before the shooting occurred. As part of the process, the Mayor participated in tabletop exercises and meetings to delineate emergency management roles and educate city staff about the operations of an Emergency Operations Center. The final plan was approved by the Mayor in October 2016 (10 months after the shooting). Having a certified EOP in place allowed the city to access emergency funds, which it did to recover some of the cost of responding to the mass shooting.

---

[1] We report the total victims and fatalities that Mother Jones reports as of May 27, 2021. Note there are many databases tracking mass killings; some report different victim counts. See James Fox & Jack Levin, *Mass confusion concerning mass murder*, 40 THE CRIMINOLOGIST (2015).

[2] San Bernardino is one of six cities researched by the Public Health Advocacy Institute in 2020-21 to inform a Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook PHAI developed for mayors, city managers, and their staff. PHAI classified the San Bernardino Shooting as a workplace mass shooting.

The County of San Bernardino has its own emergency management functions and personnel and maintains its own EOP. In addition, each department within the county maintains a Departmental EOP and each facility owned/operated by the county has an EOP. The organizational report highlights the lack of (and need for) a mass notification system at the county level as a key lesson learned.

The city had a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), which consists of trained volunteers that can supplement the emergency response. However, the CERT was not activated during the shooting, perhaps because dozens of probation officers from a nearby county facility were available to assist with evacuation, triage, and transportation of victims.

Response

Communication

Mayor Davis focused on coordinating messaging from City Hall and responding law enforcement agencies to ensure a unified message. He worked with the city's communications staff to field media inquiries and receive information from the police Public Information Officer (PIO). He visited the command post to receive briefings but operated out of City Hall. There, he focused on coordinating messaging with other city departments, explaining, "it was important that we were speaking with one voice."

Notably, the city staff convened an emergency City Council meeting the night of the shooting to allow the Police Chief to brief Council members on appropriate messaging. The goal was to prevent inflammatory statements that could motivate retaliation against the Muslim community. As a result of this briefing, City Council members and staff took care to avoid making statements that could be misinterpreted by the media or that could damage the investigation. For this reason, the Mayor's office was cautious about using social media.

Victim and Family Assistance

Victim and family assistance was provided by both the county and the FBI's Victim Services Division. The city was not involved in establishing family assistance services because of the role the county played as employer of the victims and lead responder.

An initial Family Reunification Center was established by the unified command of various law enforcement agencies at the Hernandez Community Center. However, problems with media access and lack of amenities plagued this Center and an alternate location was established ten miles away at a Hampton Inn, which was underutilized by the families. The FBI established a Family Assistance Center, which the FBI operated for two days. According to a subsequent organizational report, tensions arose between the FBI and the county concerning next-of-kin notifications and Family Assistance Center operations. Because of these problems during the response, the county's Office of Emergency Services later negotiated a memorandum of understanding with the FBI field office and the two agencies are now working more collaboratively.

According to the retired CEO of San Bernardino County and the organizational report, the county, as the employer of the victims, exercised strict control over victims' and family members' contact information. It appointed victim liaisons to help victims and their families navigate the complexities of available services administered by the county. These services included counseling, crime victim compensation services, employee benefits, workers' compensation, death benefits, short-term disability, and payouts from the victims' fund of public donations. The Mayor attended some funerals but did not make any hospital visits per the privacy restrictions imposed by the county.

Collaboration with Law Enforcement

Local law enforcement from multiple jurisdictions responded to the incident, as well as agents from the Sherriff's office and the FBI. Existing mutual aid agreements in the region were activated. Unified command was quickly established, but incident command was not transferred from the local Police to the FBI until two days after the attack, when it was confirmed to be an act of terror. The Mayor briefly visited the command unit to receive communications briefings, but was otherwise uninvolved in the law enforcement response.

The law enforcement response to a mass shooting or terror attack is costly. Mayor Davis informed the City Manager and Police Chief about the need to document law enforcement overtime and other costs associated with the response to enable the city to apply for federal funds for reimbursement. The Mayor also briefed the City Council on the overall cost of the response. Under the Mayor's leadership, the city applied for and received a DOJ grant for $500,000, a fraction of the overall cost of the response.

Emergency Declaration

Both the city and county declared local states of emergency following the shooting, mostly to activate mutual aid agreements and state assistance with the response. The state also declared a state of emergency in the county to authorize assistance from the State Department of Health and to suspend some fees associated with disposition of victim remains and issuance of copies of death certificates. Despite these emergency declarations, federal disaster funds were not accessible because the threshold for state-level expenditures was not exceeded. The county's declaration was continually renewed through August 2017 so that the county could continue to access mutual aid, emergency contracts, and recovery coordination.

Vigils and Commemorations

After the shooting, a member of the City Council organized a nondenominational candlelight vigil at a local baseball stadium. For the one-year remembrance, community groups organized an event at Cal State San Bernardino with victims, religious leaders, and community members. The Mayor spoke at this event, at which a Peace Garden to honor the victims was announced. He also spoke at a candlelight vigil held by a Catholic church. At the fourth year remembrance event, a city staff member rang a bell in the Peace Garden 14 times, once for each victim. The bell remains silent for the rest of the year. At the fifth year remembrance event, plans for a memorial to honor the victims were announced. The memorial should be completed Summer 2021.

Recovery

"SB United Relief Fund"

Multiple funds and crowdfunding pages were established immediately after the shooting. Two days later, the county partnered with Arrowhead United Way to establish an official victims' fund, the "SB United Relief Fund," for victims and families. The city supported this effort by setting up a GoFundMe page where the Mayor solicited donations for the fund. Former San Bernardino Mayor Pat Morris was involved in establishing the distribution protocol, but Mayor Davis abstained from participating as the sitting Mayor. The fund raised $2.5 million and distributed 100 percent of the money raised to the victims and families, in consultation with national experts and victims of previous tragedies.

Mental and Behavioral Health Services

The trauma from the attack radiated beyond the victims and their families to all county employees, who were coworkers of the victims and deeply affected by the shooting. Nearly half of county employees in the Environmental Health Services department that was targeted chose not to return to work or were no longer employed as of June 2018.

The county used multiple approaches to provide mental health support to the victims, families, and the larger workplace community. Team building became a primary focus of the organization, with support and recommendations from clinical psychologists. The county made sizable investments to upgrade security and renovate facilities. The goal was to help employees feel safe and to prevent triggering memories by providing workspaces that felt completely different from the previous facilities. The county also paid $1.7 million in employment benefits to the victims and survivors, including $300,000 for contracted counseling services. According to the retired CEO of the county, it was important to be flexible when managing employees after the attack. He explained that department policies could not be applied in a uniform manner because traumatized employees were experiencing different needs and recovery timelines.

San Bernardino: Key Takeaways

- Communicating with a unified voice is crucial and requires focused effort to coordinate between multiple law enforcement, city, and county agencies.
- Briefing the City Council on appropriate messaging can ensure unified messaging, promote healing, and prevent retaliation.
- Mass shootings that occur in a workplace necessitate a comprehensive response by the employer organization and may raise unique issues relating to workplace morale and workers' compensation.
- The Mayor's role may change when an employer or other responders, such as the county, are available to provide resources and services.
- The FBI Victims Services Division is an important resource for victims' assistance, but tensions can arise during a response. It is important to establish a relationship with the FBI Special Agent in Charge in advance. A best practice is to negotiate a memorandum of understanding with the FBI to ensure seamless cooperation when administering victim services.
- Police overtime and other costs need to be timely documented in order for the city to apply for a DOJ grant or other funding sources for reimbursement.
- Having mutual aid agreements in place contributes to the effectiveness of a regional emergency response.
- It is a best practice to establish an official victims' fund the day of the shooting so that competing funds are not established by others.

Mass Shooting Protocol



UNITEDONGUNS



Mass Shooting Protocol:
The First 24 hours

This protocol is the result of research involving mayors, first responders, and others who have responded to a public mass shooting. Below you will find key decisions that you, as mayor, will need to make during the first 24 hours of the response. Please consult the relevant chapters of the **Mass Shooting Playbook** for additional information and resources to help with ongoing crisis management.

1. Communications

- Your primary role during the response is as the "communicator-in-chief." Decide in consultation with your police chief who will speak about what. Often law enforcement officials communicate details about the investigation. The public will look to you for messaging about public safety, updates about the victims, referrals to mental health resources, and messages of unity and healing. Secure the press area to prevent unauthorized officials from speaking to the press pool.
- Your first challenge is to get as much information as possible, as often as possible, from law enforcement. Ask for a dedicated police official whose sole responsibility is to keep you informed.
- Schedule early and regular press briefings, even when there isn't much new information to share, to prevent the development of rumors and misinformation.
- Release information relating to the shooting via one social media account (ideally operated by the public safety office), to be amplified by the city and other agencies. Direct all press inquiries to this single, monitored account.
- Host a dedicated webpage where all public information about the shooting is posted and updated, along with names of the victims. This will reduce the intense pressure to respond promptly to public record requests.
- Consider including a "How You Can Help" section for the public in press releases and all social media and online messages.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 1 on Communications.

2. Emergency Operations

- Confer with your City Counsel, Chief Administrative Officer, Chief of Staff, and Chief Financial Officer. This "C4 team" should meet daily to coordinate emergency operations and reduce legal exposure to the city and its employees.
- Consider making a local declaration of emergency. There is no downside to making the declaration immediately; it triggers mutual aid agreements, has the potential to defray costs relating to police overtime costs, and may protect the city from legal risks.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 2 on Emergency Management.

3. Victims and the Families

- Prioritize the needs of victims and family above all else. Designate a member of your staff to serve as family liaison to keep you updated on their needs.
- Ensure the location of the Family Reunification Center (also called the Family and Friends Reception Center) is separate from the press center. It should be scalable and have a secure perimeter to prevent the press from approaching grieving family members.
- The families of victims should receive death notifications in the most timely, humane, private way possible. Applicable law can slow the process. You may need to engage with the coroner's office and law enforcement to urge them to find a way to speed the release of victims' names to their families.
- Confirm there are dedicated victim advocates assigned to the families.
- After the families are notified, quickly establish the Family Assistance Center to ensure the immediate needs of victims and families are met, including appropriate mental health services.
- Spend time with the victims and families. Take their calls (including calls from families from previous shootings who have invaluable insights to share). Visit victims in the hospital. Attend their funerals if invited. Consult the families when planning vigils and developing the distribution protocol for public donations.
- Activate national resources. The American Red Cross can help you establish the Family Assistance Center. The FBI Victim Services Division has significant family assistance resources and expertise you can tap into even if the FBI is not the lead law enforcement agency in the case. However, the city must initiate the request for assistance from both organizations.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 3 on Victims and Families.

4. Donations

- Arrange a funding mechanism to accept donations immediately. If the city has a 501(c)(3) charitable entity already established, you can use it for this purpose (forming a new one may take too long). Alternatively, the National Compassion Fund (www.nationalcompassionfund.org) or a trusted community foundation can receive the funds. Whichever funding mechanism you choose, establish the fund as soon as possible after the shooting and encourage the public to give to only one, trusted fund to avoid fraud.
- The distribution of the fund should be developed in close consultation with the survivors and families of the victims. Families of victims of previous shootings strongly recommend that 100% of the funds go to the victims and their families. However, some cities have set aside a small portion of the funds raised for education initiatives, mental health services for affected communities, and the restoration of a place of worship damaged during an attack.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 5 on Donations.

5. Vigils

- The community needs to grieve and will want to arrange a vigil immediately following the shooting. Security may be required, which could delay the vigil if the law enforcement response is ongoing.

- Take steps to avoid politicizing the shooting. Doing so will further traumatize the families of the victims. This may mean limiting the speaking roles of elected officials (including visiting VIPs).
- If the shooting is a hate crime or perpetrated by a member of a marginalized faith or ethnic group, the risk of retaliation against that group may become an issue. Consult with faith leaders to host an interfaith vigil if relevant.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 9 on Commemorations.

6. VIP Visitors and Elected Officials

- Federal, state, and local elected officials may converge on the city. Direct them to activities that will be helpful to victims and their families.
- For more information, see Playbook Appendix B on VIP Visits.

7. Mental Health

- Trauma is a major issue. You will be affected, as will your staff, first responders, families of the victims, and nearly everyone in the city at the time of the shooting. Consult with your local public health agency, victim assistance experts, and local mental health providers as soon as possible to develop trauma-informed messaging.
- Provide information about available mental health resources in your press briefings. Take the time to learn about psychological first aid to ensure that victims and families receive appropriate services.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 10 on Mental Health.

MASS SHOOTING PROTOCOL CHECKLIST

(Selected actions from the comprehensive checklists found in the Playbook)

Communications

- ☐ Establish a regular schedule for communicating with the press and follow it.
- ☐ Decide which officials will speak and in what order at press conferences.
- ☐ Keep messages simple, credible, and consistent. Correct misinformation.

Emergency Operations

- ☐ Activate the Emergency Operations Center. Request regular briefings from a designated law enforcement official.
- ☐ Assemble your "C4" team to provide coordination and legal compliance.
- ☐ Consider whether to make a declaration of emergency.

Establish Family Reunification and Assistance Centers

- ☐ Work with law enforcement, the American Red Cross, the FBI, and local partners to establish the Family Reunification Center (FRC) and the Family Assistance Center (FAC).
- ☐ Ensure both centers are located separately from the Joint Information Center (away from the press), have a secure perimeter, and are scalable.
- ☐ Communicate FRC and FAC locations and services in press briefings.
- ☐ Urge the coroner to release victim's names to families as soon as possible.

Establish the Victims Fund

- ☐ Establish a victims' fund right away using city-operated 501(c)(3) charitable entity, the National Compassion Fund, or a local foundation.

Begin Planning for Recovery

- ☐ Seek the guidance of mental health experts to develop trauma-informed messaging and to ensure appropriate mental health services are available.
- ☐ Plan vigils in consultation with families and the affected community.

Playbook Chapters



Chapter 1: Communications

"You are communicator-in-chief."
– Mayor Nan Whaley, Dayton OH

Chapter Summary

Your primary role after a mass shooting is to share facts with the community, correct misinformation, and communicate messages of safety, unity, and empathy. Your public speaking experience will guide your messaging. However, a public mass shooting is traumatizing and presents unique challenges. This chapter presents crisis communications resources and best practices from mayors that you can use to prepare for and respond to a mass shooting.

In the **preparedness** phase, you can develop a crisis communications plan in partnership with your chief of police, plan the location and operations of a Joint Information Center (JIC) (separate from the family reunification center), arrange crisis communications training for yourself and your team if needed, review communications systems and capacities, and learn about trauma-informed messaging.

During the first 24 hours after the shooting (the **response** phase), your goal is to stay ahead of the news cycle. Communicate early and often to prevent the spread of inaccurate information. Coordinate with law enforcement to get regular updates, deliver the facts as they become available, proactively correct misinformation, and coordinate your message with other agencies to present unified leadership. As "communicator-in-chief," you decide who will speak, about what, and when. You may opt not to be the lead spokesperson, instead allowing law enforcement officials to deliver information about the investigation. Your messages might instead highlight safety, unity, and healing. Above all, transparency is the goal.

You may be responsible for managing a stream of dignitaries. One mayor advised directing visitors to where they can provide comfort to the victims and their families. During visits of elected officials, you may need to work closely with them to prevent remarks that could politicize the shooting.

As you enter the **recovery** phase, your messaging may shift from providing facts about the shooting to messages of healing and availability of mental health resources. Consult with victims' assistance agencies for help crafting these messages.

Preparedness

Your primary role after a mass shooting is to share facts with the community, correct misinformation, and communicate messages of safety, unity, and empathy. You will develop these messages in response to the specific circumstances of the shooting. However, you can develop a crisis communications plan, form relationships with mental health experts, and obtain crisis communications training, if needed, in advance.

Crisis Communications Planning

In collaboration with your Police Chief and municipal communications staff, develop a crisis communications plan. It should be informed by the concepts developed by FEMA for responding to a crisis, as described in the National Incident Management System (NIMS). If you already have a crisis communications plan that covers natural disasters or other types of emergencies, review the plan for its applicability to a mass shooting. Elements of a crisis communications plan should include:

- A protocol for press briefings
- The operations and location of a Joint Information Center (JIC)
- A policy for the city's emergency alert system, if the city has one
- A protocol for managing social media accounts

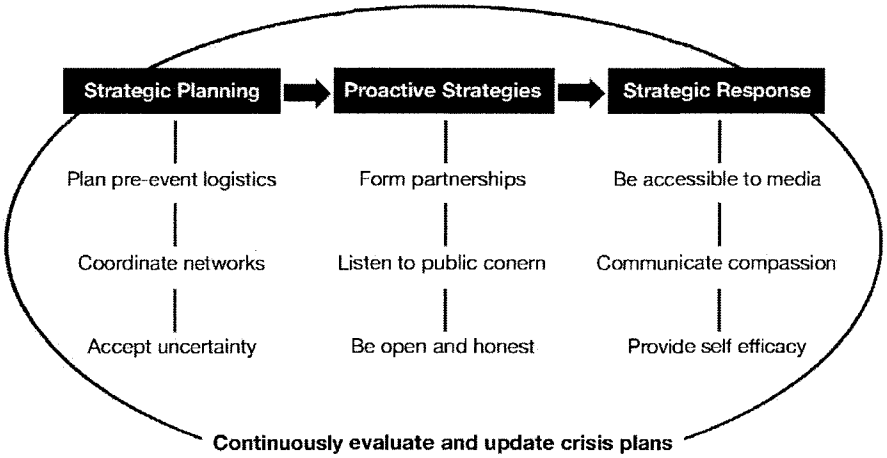


Figure 1: *Best practices in risk and crisis communication.*[1]

Protocol for Press Briefings

Meet with your Police Chief and determine the roles you will each play during press briefings. Often law enforcement officials take the lead communicating details about the investigation. You may opt to speak about public safety, the victims, and offer messages of unity and healing. Also, develop a system for receiving regular briefings from law enforcement officials. One staffer recommended appointing a dedicated law enforcement official in the Emergency Operations Center whose sole responsibility is to keep you informed.

Best Practices Tips for Press Conferences from a Law Enforcement Public Information Officer (PIO)

1. Speak with one voice. Assign one media contact.
2. No "off the record" remarks. Make sure everyone follows this guidance, even people who answer phones.
3. Plan in advance where your press conferences will be held.
4. Have some prepared remarks on hand so that you don't have to start from scratch.
5. Initial remarks should include answers to "who, what, when, where (but not why), and what you are doing about it.
6. Think about the questions the media will ask and find the answers (*e.g.*, did the shooter have a record?)
7. Include directions to the families of victims (location of the reunification center) and to the public (road closures, lockdowns, etc.)
8. For the speakers: agree in advance on a signal for when you are ready to end your remarks so that your PIO can end the briefing for you. Keep your remarks short. Avoid redundancy.
9. Determine speaker order, length of remarks. Practice.
10. For speakers who like to read remarks: memorize your most important points and look up at the camera when you make them. That's what the media will cover.

Joint Information Center

The Joint Information Center (JIC) coordinates interagency communication and manages the press during a mass shooting. Your planning should identify where the JIC can be located, as well as locations for the press pool and their vehicles. Brainstorm potential locations ahead of time, based on where a shooting could happen in your community. Ideally, the JIC should be located quite close to the site of the shooting. If a mass shooting happens, you may want to station yourself at the JIC to facilitate the flow of accurate information. Review with your staff the information technology (IT) systems and digital communications resources that are needed for activating the JIC.

The mayors we interviewed strongly recommended locating the JIC separately from the Family Reunification and Assistance Centers so that family members are protected from the press, and so that people working in the JIC are not distracted by the sounds of grief. (For other considerations for planning the Family Reunification and Assistance Centers, see Chapter 3.)

Key Resources: Joint Information Center

National Response Team Joint Information Center Model: this resource explains the JIC model, how to establish a JIC, functional responsibilities for staff, and worksheets/ other sample materials for use by JIC staff.
https://www.nrt.org/sites/2/files

FEMA basic guidance for Public Information Officers:
https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_nims-basic-guidance-public-information-officers_12-2020.pdf

Alert Systems and Capacities

If your city lacks an Emergency Notification System (ENS), determine whether to implement one. These systems send mass notifications via phone, text, social media, and email to the public in an emergency. In the case of a mass shooting, they can alert the public of immediate safety concerns, and order the public to shelter in place or to avoid a specific area if a shooter is still at large. For example, in the aftermath of the Boston Marathon bombing, shelter in place messages were sent multiple times during the manhunt for suspects that spanned days.[2]

Your plan should consider how an ENS will be operated, and who will be responsible for maintaining it (*e.g.*, the public safety office, emergency response office, or law enforcement organization). If the city has an ENS, it should be tested periodically. Review with your staff the IT needs (including materials and staff) that are needed for effective management of the ENS.

Similarly, familiarize yourself with hotlines operated by the city, or decide whether to establish a new hotline to provide information to the public in case of emergency. Emergency alert messages and hotline recordings can be recorded ahead of time.

Social Media Protocol

Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer conducted a tabletop exercise prior to the Pulse shooting. During that exercise, his team developed a social media protocol that they used in response to the shooting. The elements of that protocol include:

- Use the social media account of the public safety office or a law enforcement agency to provide regular updates to the public. Direct the press to this account, and retweet/share the content from mayor's office accounts and other agency accounts to amplify the messages. The advantage of this approach is two-fold: (1) messaging is unified, and (2) messages sent through public safety channels may be seen as more legitimate and less politicized.
- Normally scheduled social media messages on other topics may need to be cancelled across city accounts during the crisis.
- Use social media to directly and proactively correct misinformation.
- You can also include "how you can help" guidance to the public through social media channels (*e.g.*, identify the official victim's fund, where to donate blood, how to volunteer, what not to donate.)

- Post updates as quickly as is feasible, balanced with the need to clear posts through your internal review. Using a sole account reduces the number of clearances needed and ensures the messaging is consistent.

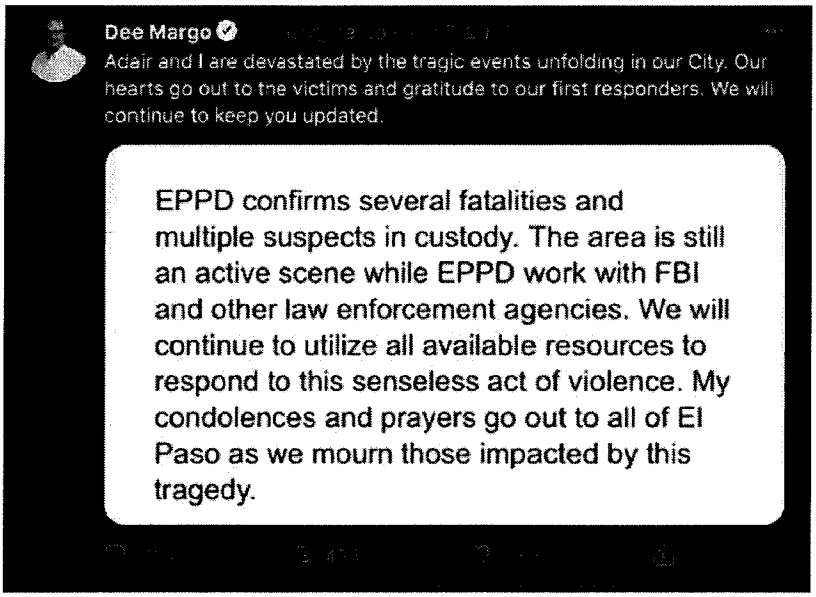


Image 1: *Example of initial social media messaging used by a mayor following a mass shooting, amplifying a statement from law enforcement (Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/mayor_margo/status/1157730991265345536)*

Key Resource: FEMA Social Media in Emergency Management Training

FEMA, Social Media in Emergency Management: This online training course (IS-42) covers the use of social media in emergency response plans. The course is for state, local, tribal, and territorial emergency managers and their staff. https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-42

Crisis Communications Techniques and Training

Learn the Basics of Crisis Communications

Establish relationships with your local victims' assistance office, mental health experts, and public health officials. Meet with them in advance to discuss how to craft messages for a traumatized community. These mental health experts can also help should you need to establish a Family Assistance Center, direct community members to local mental health services, or organize vigils or other commemorative events.

Review available resources to understand the psychology of trauma. One excellent resource is the CDC's Crisis and Emergency Response Communication (CERC) manual. The chapter on the psychology of crisis is short and informative. According to the CERC manual, to be effective during a crisis your messages should be simple and:

- Be repeated
- Come from multiple credible sources
- Be specific to the emergency being experienced
- Offer a positive course of action that can be executed

Key Resource: CDC Crisis Communications Training and Manual



CDC Crisis and Emergency Response Communication (CERC) program: includes trainings, presentations, and the CERC Manual.
https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/manual/index.asp

CDC CERC: Crisis Communications Plan:
guide to integrating a crisis communications plan into the local emergency operations plan.
https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/ppt/CERC_Crisis_Communication_Plans.pdf

Key Resource: ATSDR Communications Toolkit



The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) protects communities from harmful health effects related to exposure to natural and man-made hazardous substances. The ATSDR Communications Toolkit is a simple "Message mapping" tool your PIO can use to develop simple messaging to help the public respond to a crisis.
https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/communications-toolkit/documents/12_message-mapping-tool-final-111015_508.pdf

Crisis Communications Media Training

In addition, consider crisis communications training for yourself or your staff if you have limited experience handling the national press. Training can give you confidence in front of the cameras and help you craft appropriate messaging, properly handle information related to the investigation, and understand privacy laws.

Best Practice Tip

Assemble a duplicate supply of essential equipment, such as extra cell phones and chargers for you, your staff and visitors.
— Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto



During the response to the Tree of Life shooting in Pittsburgh, phones were waterlogged due to rain and backup phones were not available, interfering with the ability to provide social media updates to the public.

"Go-Kits" for Yourself and Key Staff

The core emergency response team (*e.g.*, you, your Chief of Staff, City Manager, Chief Administrative Officer, and City Attorney) should carry a cell phone at all times so they can be reached immediately in the event of an emergency. The team should consider assembling a "go-kit," as described by FEMA's guidance for Public Information Officers.[3] The go-kit can be left in the car or office. Include extra cell phones and chargers, a jacket if you must unexpectedly appear before the press, snack bars, basic sundries, a sweater, etc.

Response

Initial Communication Decisions

During the first hours and days after the shooting, you will likely spend much of your time in the JIC, gathering information, planning and scheduling press conferences, managing visiting elected officials and dignitaries, and responding to requests from the press. The first decisions you will need to make include:

- Decide locations of the JIC and the Family Reunification Centers, if that hasn't already been determined. It is important to keep them separate (see Chapter 3).
- Schedule your first press briefing with your Police Chief. Deliver the first press conference at the predetermined hour and announce the schedule for the following press conferences at the conclusion of the first.
- Determine your roles through a pre-conference "huddle" that takes place 30-60 minutes before the first press conference. Often law enforcement officials take the lead communicating details about the investigation. You may opt to speak about public safety, the victims, and offer messages of unity and healing.
- Limit the number of speakers to the minimum required. Too many speakers (especially elected officials), can be redundant and runs the risk of creating confusion or politicizing the tragedy.
- Consider whether to send out an emergency notification on the city's ENS and/or declare a state of emergency (see Chapters on the Emergency Operations Plan and Legal Considerations).

- Consider including a "How You Can Help" section in your social media strategy, on the city's web site, and in every press release or other communications issued during the response. Direct the public to where they can donate money, volunteer, give blood, or provide assistance to the response operations.
- Implement the protocol for receiving regular information from law enforcement officials. Best practice: ask for a dedicated police official whose sole responsibility is to keep you informed. Request regular meetings with your chief.
- Direct your communications team to proactively correct misinformation.
- Initiate your social media strategy. As noted above, a best practice is to release information relating to the shooting via a single social media account (operated by your public health office or the police PIO), which is retweeted by the city and other agencies. Direct all press inquiries to that account.

In some cases, law enforcement or the FBI may take the lead in a press conference (the decision is joint). To avoid bruised egos and hard feelings, focus on the needs of the victims and families. Remind the speakers and their staffers that you are on the same team and should present a unified front in the immediate aftermath of the crisis.

Mayors in Action: Negotiating the Order of Speakers

Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer: "We had a discussion with the FBI about who should take the lead in the first press conference. We felt strongly we should lead the press conference. Our rationale was that our community and the families of victims should hear first from somebody that they know and trust. They did not know the FBI Special Agent in Charge, so we felt he would be unable to convey the message of safety and unity we thought was needed. That message needed to come from the Mayor of Orlando. Eventually the FBI deferred to us."

Your First Public Statements

Mayors told us their top priority at the first press conferences was to convey that the situation was under control and provide information about the victims. Be mindful that law enforcement considerations may limit what you can say and when you can say it. Work with the coroner's office and law enforcement officials to identify the victims as quickly as possible so that you can convey that critical information to their families and to the public.

Keep messages simple, credible, and consistent. Your messages should express empathy and show respect and sensitivity for victims and families. Act quickly to correct misinformation. Provide actions the public can take to be helpful.

Messages that will be necessary to convey following the shooting:

- Where families and members of the affected community should gather.
- The status of the coroner's office investigation to identity the victims.
- Reliable sources of information, such as a dedicated social media account, a city web site where public information about the shooting will be posted regularly, and hotlines established for this purpose.
- Include "how you can help" guidance for the public (*e.g.*, identify the official victim's fund, where to donate blood, how to volunteer, what not to donate).

One mayor said he avoided naming the shooter at all press conferences. Research has shown that naming the shooter repeatedly can contribute to a media focus on the perpetrator instead of the victims, contributing to a desire among some individuals to imitate the shooter's actions and/or to glorify the violence.[4] For this reason, the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training team and the FBI established a "Don't Name Them" campaign.[5]

Mayors in Action: Remarks at the First Press Conference

Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley: "If you are the family or friend of a victim, we invite you to come to the convention center or call [local helpline number]. And if you have any information on the incident, if you were in the Oregon District today and have information, please call [police tip-line]. Red Cross, the Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association, ADAMHS and support for our police and first responders are on the scene to help the situation. Of course we are incredibly grateful for our partners in this very sad incident."[6]

Key Resource: Full Press Conference, Indianapolis Federal Express Shooting

Full press conference from Indianapolis FedEx Ground Facility shooting in April 2021:
https://www.wsls.com/news/2021/04/16/watch-live-press-conference-on-mass-shooting-at-fedex-facility-in-indianapolis/.

Best Practice Tip

Coordinate messaging from every agency and office.
"It is important to speak with one voice."
– Former San Bernardino Mayor R. Carey Davis

Managing the Press

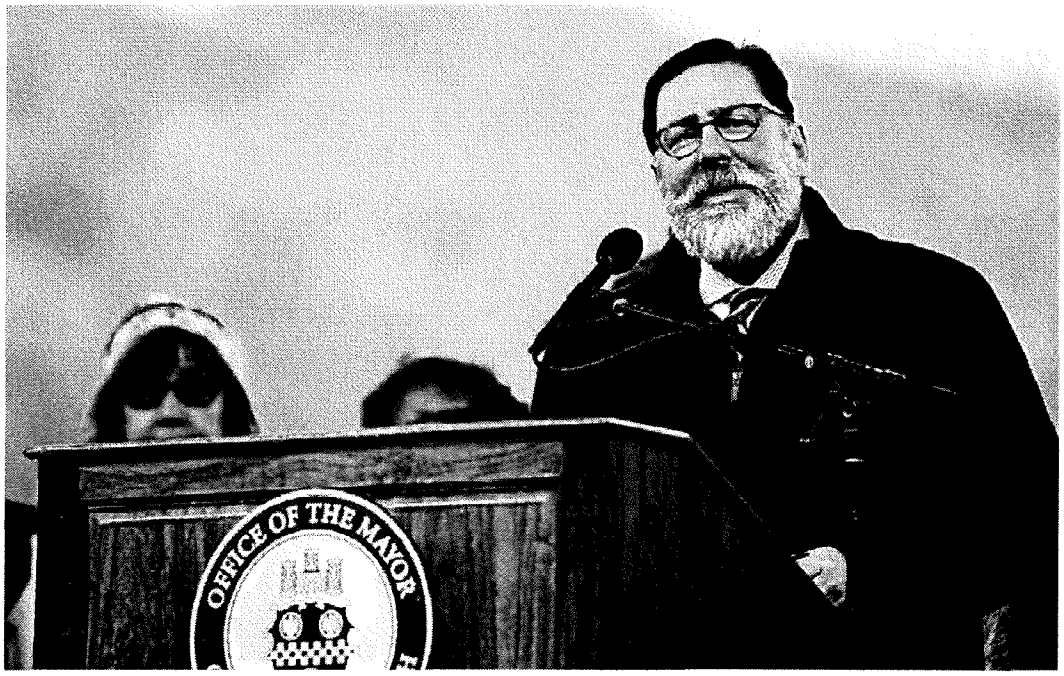


Image 2: *Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto speaks to the press following the Tree of Life Synagogue shooting (Photo by Alexandra Wimley, Copyright ©, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 2021, all rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.)*

Schedule the first press conference as soon as possible, even if you don't have much information to share. Inform the press that you will schedule regular press conferences and deliver them when you say you will. Tips for managing press conferences include:

- Secure the press conference site: many will want to speak but you need to control the messaging. You may need to restrict access to the press area.
- Provide all journalists and types of media equal access to information.
- Find a balance between local media (to provide relevant information to affected residents) and national media (to reach a broader public audience). One mayor suggested reserving time for press meetings with local press only.

Note that journalists from the same network compete with each other for your interview. Feel free to decline multiple interviews requests from the same network and provide access to other networks and local news.

Also, due to the newsworthiness of a mass shooting, press briefings, even with local media, may be aired nationally. Prepare yourself and your remarks accordingly. That said, one mayor chose to deliver messages intended for the local community, leaving messages geared to the national audience to others.

Prioritize the Needs of Victims and Families

One mayor recommended prioritizing the needs of the victims and their families in your communications strategy. Strategies for establishing effective communication with victims and families include:

- Designate a media liaison for victims and families at the JIC to facilitate the exchange of messages and information between the families and your office.
- Do what you can to speed the release of the names of the victims to their families and loved ones (the public's need to know is secondary).
- Tailor messaging to be respectful to the families.
- Visit the families at the Family Reunification Center as soon as possible so that you can communicate face-to-face.
- Prioritize your time. If faced with a choice between an interview and an invitation to meet with family members, for example, feel free to pass on the interview. The press will still be there when you are free.

Mayors in Action: Remarks About FAC Services

Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer: "It's important to remember that these victims are having normal reactions to a very abnormal event...Services at the family assistance center range from grief counseling to financial assistance to obtaining visas...we can't thank these organizations enough for their tireless efforts in this difficult situation...If you don't feel comfortable coming down to the site, we would still encourage you to call us...and we will reach out to you. The Family Assistance Center will remain open throughout the weekend."[7] (Video of full remarks available at endnote 7.)



Managing Visits from Elected Officials

In the immediate aftermath of a mass shooting, elected officials may converge on your city, from the U.S. President ("POTUS"), to your governor, to national and state legislators and officials from neighboring districts. Some of these visits could be controversial. They may burden your already overstretched staff and police force. Yet, hosting these visitors provides the opportunity to communicate your city's needs to policymakers who may be able to help. Mayors who welcomed VIPs following a shooting offered these tips:

- Decide whether to invite them to speak at press conferences.
- Give them something to do that can help victims and survivors.
- Help them develop appropriate messages to avoid politicizing the shooting or traumatizing the affected community.

For best practices for managing VIP visits, see Appendix B.

Recovery

Messaging: Shifting from Response to Recovery

As the public begins to process what has happened, your messaging will gradually shift from the "response" to the "recovery" phase. This process may begin within hours of the shooting and continue for months or even years. Your recovery messaging will focus on fostering long-term community resilience, restoring hope, and healing from trauma. Common themes include solidarity, unity, resilience, and strength (*e.g.*, "Dayton Shines," "Boston Strong," and Pittsburgh's "Stronger Than Hate").

Use this opportunity to highlight the many caring actions taken by members of the community, from volunteers who bring meals to first responders, to community members who donate blood, to companies that make financial and in-kind donations and provide needed services to victims and families, to groups who contribute art and culture to lift the spirits of victims and their families. These people are "ambassadors of hope." Their selfless actions and compassion can help make a tragedy bearable.

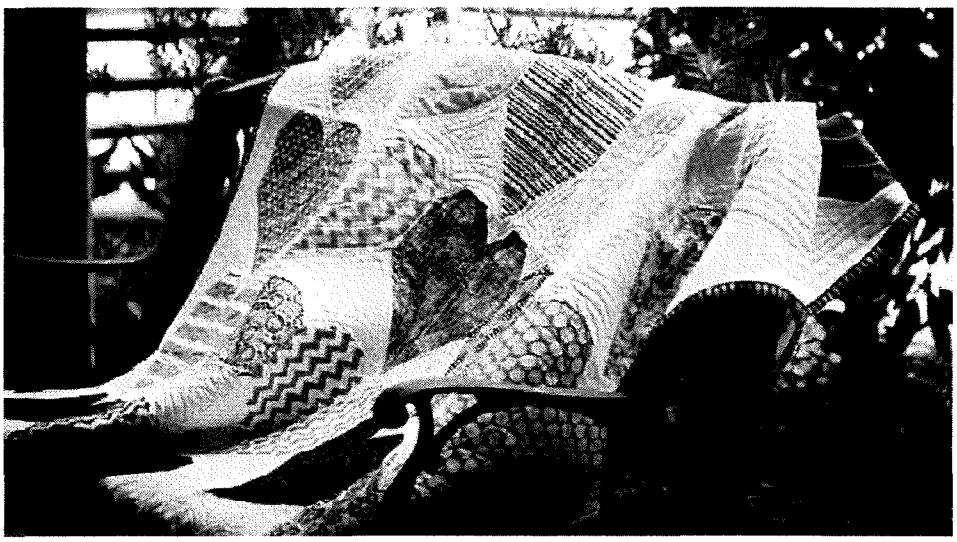


Image 3: *1500 quilts were handmade and distributed to victims, family members, first responders, and city officials who responded to the Pulse shooting (Photo by Paula Kennedy).*

Consult Mental Health and Behavioral Health Experts

Your communications should include messages about available mental health services. Consult with mental health experts to understand the mental health impact on your community and for guidance developing trauma-informed messages. For example, to prepare messaging after the shooting in Dayton, Mayor Whaley consulted a countywide mental health services network with whom she had previously partnered to communicate about the opioid crisis.

Best Practice Tip

Whether promoting healing, planning vigils, or arranging services for victims and family members, remember to consult with mental health experts.



Engage Community Partners in Interfaith or Hate Prevention Work

In the wake of a hate-motivated shooting, it is especially difficult for the community to process and understand the event. Retaliation against the group associated with the shooter may be a risk. Consult with trusted community leaders to develop messages of religious pluralism, respect for minority groups, and unity across cultures.

For example, reflecting on his response to the shooting at the Sikh temple in Oak Creek, WI, Mayor Steve Scaffidi wrote, "The messages of diversity, mutual respect, and acceptance are important, and I began to talk about them in earnest at the vigil [three days after the shooting]."[8] Other mayors also spoke of the importance of interfaith messaging, engaging the leaders of the groups targeted in a hate crime, and developing respectful relationships with these groups long before any attack happens.

Some religious groups have prepared prayers for victims of mass shootings, which may provide comfort to members of the community who turn to their faith for comfort.[9]

Engage Schools

If you are responding to a school shooting, you may need to include messages about school safety, mental health and counseling services for troubled students, and threat assessment. Work with the relevant partners, including school boards, superintendents, parent advocacy groups, and school nurses to understand your role in the school's recovery and how to include relevant and timely messages to the school community as well as the broader public. See Chapter 6 for more information on school shootings.

Suicide Prevention

Research has shown that many public mass shooters were suicidal. If the shooter in your city died or took his own life while committing the attack, you might use this opportunity to speak generally about suicide prevention resources in your community, and the importance of preventing access to firearms when a member of the household is suicidal or in crisis. Doing so could help prevent suicides (two-thirds of gun deaths are suicides, over 25,000 annually). Additionally, educating the public about suicide may help prevent a future public mass shooting. See Appendix D for more information.

Advocacy

As communicator-in-chief, you may use your access to the press to educate the public about gun violence prevention topics of relevance to your community. Public health-related measures include calling for increased mental health resources, school safety measures, crime victim compensation, and more. It could be helpful to advocate for additional state or federal funding to help other cities respond to mass shootings.[10]

According to the CDC's CERC manual, it is appropriate to inform the public of ways they can give, volunteer, or advocate for change. Helping grieving community members play a positive role can promote healing.

Endnotes

[1] National Center For Food Protection And Defense, *Best Practices in Crisis Communication: An Expert Panel Process*, Journal of Applied Communication Research. 232-244, 2006.

[2] Homeland Security Office Of Emergency Communications, *Emergency Communications During the Response to the Boston Marathon Bombing*, 2013, *available at* https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/oec-case%20study-support%20for%20response%20to%20boston%20marathon%20bombing-2013_0.pdf.

[3] Federal Emergency Management Agency, *National Incident Management System Basic Guidance for Public Information Officers*, 2020, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_nims-basic-guidance-public-information-officers_12-2020.pdf.

[4] James N. Meindl & Jonathan W. Ivy, *Mass Shootings: The Role of the Media in Promoting Generalized Imitation*, 107 Am J Public Health 368–370 (2017).

[5] *Id.*

[6] City Of Dayton, *7 AM Press Conference, Mass Shooting Incident of Aug 4* (1:40-2:35), *available at* https://www.facebook.com/cityofdayton/videos/841566729577954 (last visited Jun 3, 2021).

[7] Jeff Weiner, Rene Stutzman & Del Quentin Wilber, *Pulse nightclub security video recovered by agents*, Orlando Sentinel (2016), https://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/breaking-news/os-shooting-developments-friday-20160617-story.html (last visited Jun 3, 2021).

[8] Stephen A. Scaffidi, Six Minutes In August: A Story Of Tragedy, Healing And Community 66 (2015).

[9] Michelle Boorstein, *Denominations have begun creating special prayers for fatal mass shootings*, Washington Post (2021), https://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/2021/07/16/mass-shooting-newtown-parkland-pulse-new-prayer-litany-episcopal-mass-shooting/ (last visited July 16, 2021).

[10] Sarah C. Peck and James Alan Fox, *Proposed policy would help mayors respond to a mass shooting* (April 6, 2021), Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, https://www.post-gazette.com/opinion/Op-Ed/2021/04/06/Proposed-policy-would-help-mayors-respond-to-a-mass-shooting-Pittsburgh-Boulder-Colorado/stories/202104060012 (last visited Jun 3, 2021).

COMMUNICATIONS CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Develop a crisis communications plan with your Chief of Police and Public Information Officer. Review and update as needed.
- ☐ Establish relationships with your local victims' assistance office, mental health experts, and public health officials.
- ☐ Assess whether to establish an Emergency Notification System. Develop a policy for its use and request regular testing and operation of the system.
- ☐ Review the CDC's Crisis and Emergency Risk Communications (CERC) Manual. If you have limited experience speaking to the national media, consider crisis communications training.
- ☐ Ask your PIO to assemble messages that you can use in a crisis, and practice delivering them.
- ☐ Prepare a "go-kit." Program contacts into your phone and assemble supplies.

Response

- ☐ Establish a schedule for communicating with the press.
- ☐ Decide who will speak and in what order at press conferences.
- ☐ Seek the guidance of victims' assistance and mental health experts to develop trauma-informed messaging.
- ☐ Keep messages simple, credible, and consistent. Express empathy, show respect for victims and families. Act quickly to correct misinformation.

Recovery

- ☐ Focus your messaging on bolstering long-term community resilience, restoring hope, and healing from trauma.

Chapter 2: Emergency Operations and Public Health

"This can happen anywhere. Think about your plan."
– Mayor Buddy Dyer, Orlando FL

Chapter Summary

Emergency preparedness is the creation of organizational structures within government agencies that enable them to provide support, resources, and services needed during and after emergencies. Although you may never be fully prepared for a public mass shooting, you can take steps to ensure your agencies are equipped to handle the specific challenges posed by a mass casualty incident.

In consultation with public safety and emergency management staff and your public health agency, you can review and update your emergency management plans and determine whether a supplemental plan for a mass casualty incident is needed. You can participate in tabletop exercises and training to practice emergency operations specific to a mass shooting. You should ensure your communications infrastructure is equipped to handle such an emergency.

Include public health officials in **preparedness** planning, as they play an essential role in coordinating mental health services and other crisis response in the aftermath of a mass shooting. During this phase, assess emergency alert systems and review or revise emergency operations plans to prepare for a potential mass shooting in your city.

During the **response** phase, law enforcement will establish an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) that coordinates first responders and law enforcement operations. This might be a mobile command unit or a permanent EOC that may have been established in the city. Collecting information will be a top priority. You will monitor all aspects of the emergency response while you work with your staff to coordinate unmet needs.

Emergency management continues after the situation is contained and the crime scene is processed. You can direct a formal evaluation of the emergency response to inform your own agencies and other localities of lessons learned. You can also work with the appropriate agencies to transition from emergency operations to long-term services to help the community "return to normal" during the **recovery**.

Preparedness

Emergency Operations Planning

It is critically important to review your emergency operations plan (EOP) with your public safety director or emergency manager. This plan, often required by law, generally designates authority among agency directors and specifies operational procedures for crisis management, including by coordinating emergency responders. It may not, however, cover specific incidents and hazards such as a public mass shooting. In consultation with your public safety and emergency management staff, determine whether a supplemental plan for emergency operations during a public mass shooting is needed.

In some cases of mass shootings, the all-hazards EOP was never officially activated, nor did elected officials declare a state of local emergency. However, many of the functions described by the local EOP—including establishment of unified command among multiple response agencies, establishment of communications channels between elected officials and law enforcement, and activation of mutual aid agreements with other jurisdictions—will occur. For this reason, it is crucial that you understand your local EOP and its applicability to a public mass shooting.

Emergency operations planning usually utilizes the National Incident Management System (NIMS), which was prepared by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for elected officials. One aspect of the NIMS model is Emergency Support Functions (ESFs), a structure used to coordinate between multiple federal agencies to provide support, resources, program implementation, and services needed during an emergency. Review the NIMS guidance and resources below to understand your role as mayor in the NIMS model and guide your planning.

Key Resource: National Incident Management System (NIMS) Guidance

FEMA, National Incident Management System (2017, 3rd edition): guidance for using the National Incident Management System (NIMS) at all levels of government, including commentary on the roles of local elected officials in incident management. https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/is700b/6ho/national_incident_management%20system_third%20edition_october_2017.pdf

Alert Systems and Capacities

Emergency Notification Systems (ENS) send mass notifications via phone, text, social media, and email to the public in an emergency. In the case of a mass shooting, they can alert the public of immediate safety concerns, order the public to shelter in place, or to avoid a specific area if a shooter is still at large. As part of your preparedness planning, you should consider whether your city would be best served by establishing an ENS. See Chapter 1 on Communications for more information and resources.

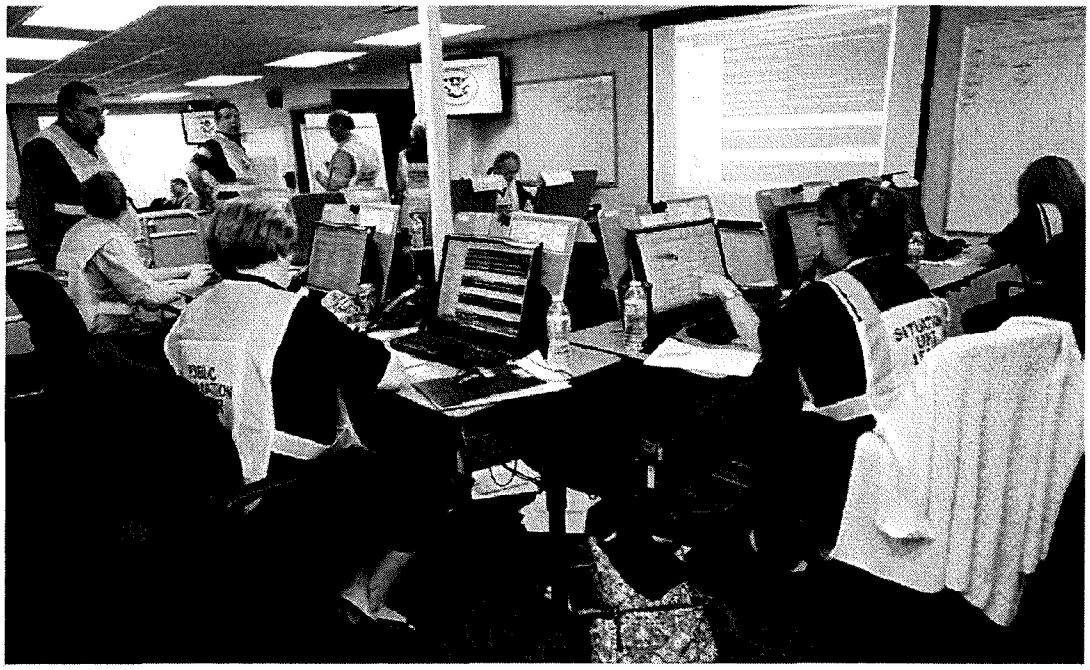


Image 4: *An example of an Emergency Operations Center in action, showing coordination among a Public Information Officer and officials during a simulated mass casualty incident (Photo by Shannon Arledge, The U.S. National Archives).*

Emergency Preparedness Training

Training is an important component of emergency preparedness. The trainings FEMA recommends for elected officials are detailed below. In addition, mayors we interviewed strongly recommend tabletop exercises. Make time to schedule a tabletop exercise for your staff and relevant agencies and attend tabletop exercises and trainings (such as active shooter trainings) conducted by city officials and/or law enforcement. These may cover crisis communications, emergency operations, IT systems and needs, and other actions, usually in the context of a specific scenario. For more on tabletop exercises and a compilation of all training opportunities and recommendations, see Appendix A.[1]

Key Resources: Recommended FEMA Training

G-402 Incident Command System (ICS) Overview for Executives/Senior Officials: FEMA recommends elected officials complete this course, which covers the basics of what you need to know about the National Incident Management System, Multiagency Coordination Groups, Incident Command Systems, and Emergency Operations Centers. The course also summarizes the chief elected official's role in emergency preparedness, which may be applied to preparedness for a public mass shooting. https://training.fema.gov/gstate/downloadmats.aspx?rd=1&course=G0402%20-%20ics-402%20-%20incident%20command%20system%20(ICS)%20overview%20for%20executives%20and%20senior%20officials

G-191 Incident Command System/Emergency Operations Center Interface: According to FEMA, this course reviews Incident Command System and Emergency Operation Center responsibilities and functions and provides an opportunity for participants to begin developing an interface between an Incident Management Team and EOC personnel. FEMA recommends this course for elected officials. The course is not available online as of this writing.
https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/trainingmaterials/ https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/trainingmaterials/

Public Health Resources

Public health officials, especially mental health and behavioral health experts, should help plan emergency operations for a mass shooting. They provide mental health communications expertise and can assist in the delivery of emergency response functions, such as providing psychological first aid (PFA) to victims, witnesses, and first responders. In some cases, they can activate large groups of volunteers such as the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). They can also help plan for the recovery phase, which is often overlooked.

Key Resources: The Public Health Agency Role

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Public Health Emergency Response Guide for State, Local, and Tribal Public Health Directors: Actionable and accessible guidance for local public health agency staff in all phases of an emergency incident. The guide explains how to coordinate with existing emergency operations plans and management frameworks and does not replace or duplicate these plans. The checklists for each phase are easy to follow and are geared toward public health staff specifically.
https://emergency.cdc.gov/planning/responseguide.asp

National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) Resource list for PHAs: A list of active shooter trainings and psychological first aid resources tailored to be especially relevant for local public health agencies.
https://www.naccho.org/blog/articles/san-bernardino-shooting-incident-community-preparedness-resources-for-active-shooter-incidents

NACCHO, Public Health's Roles in Active Shooter Events (Webinar): Speakers from local public health agencies discuss their roles in responding to public mass shootings in Las Vegas, NV and Aurora, CO, and provide lessons learned for other public health agencies as well as further resources. Access slides and handouts in addition to the webinar recording using the above hyperlink.
https://www.pathlms.com/naccho/courses/13368

NACCHO blog:
https://www.naccho.org/blog/articles/the-role-of-public-health-in-terrorism-and-active-shooter-preparedness-and-response

Response

Emergency Operations Center (EOC): Activation and Access

Law enforcement staff provide information management, resource allocation and tracking, as well as advanced planning support at the EOC.[2] The EOC may be a mobile command unit set up by law enforcement (as happened in Orlando), or located in a permanent structure that also integrates the Joint Information Center (JIC). In Dayton, the EOC was located at the Convention Center.

Best Practice Tip

Request a designated law enforcement officer in the EOC whose sole responsibility is to provide updates to the mayor and city manager.



In many cities, the EOC is reserved for law enforcement personnel. Elected officials operate from the JIC and receive briefings from the EOC or command unit. The challenge can be obtaining timely information from the EOC. Daniel Gilman, Chief of Staff to Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto, recommends having a law enforcement designee in the command unit whose sole job was focused "outward" to communicate the mayor and his or her chief of staff.

Emergency Declarations

Consider whether to declare a local emergency or local disaster. There is no downside to making the declaration, which can be terminated at any time. The implications of the declaration vary state by state, but the declaration may authorize you to[3]:

- Activate local EOP and mutual aid agreements with nearby jurisdictions, county law enforcement, the FBI, and other resources.
- Activate local EOC and national incident management system (NIMS).
- Suspend or temporarily waive union rules or other labor laws and deploy responders for longer work shifts.
- Activate immunities and liability protections for staff who respond.

You may also ask the governor to declare a statewide emergency, depending on the scope of the incident and whether state resources are needed. Local declarations of emergency may require you to assess whether local emergency response resources would be exhausted before allowing the declaration of a statewide emergency and/or requesting state aid.

A state or federal emergency declaration for an incident that meets the criterion of a "major disaster" may provide access to federal funding, including SBA disaster loans and FEMA funding authorized by the Stafford Act.[4] See Chapter 8 for more on the legal and financial considerations in making an emergency declaration, including opportunities for reimbursement of local costs. See Appendix C for more information about FEMA and other funding sources.



Mayors in Action: Emergency Declaration



In consultation with Mayor Buddy Dyer, Florida Governor Rick Scott declared a local state of emergency in Orange County and the City of Orlando following the Pulse Nightclub shooting. According to the Mayor, this declaration relaxed certain rules in Orlando related to police overtime and allowed full deployment of law enforcement and other emergency management staff for the response by suspending paid time off (PTO) during the emergency. In some cases, an emergency declaration may also help the city to obtain funding to defray the costs of response, such as law enforcement overtime, or obtain FEMA assistance for small businesses that were impacted.[5]

Receive Briefing on Emergency Response

During the first 24 hours, you should be briefed on the emergency response, including the operations of the EOC and any services delivered by first responders (*e.g.*, psychological first aid (PFA). For more information on PFA, see Chapter 10 on Mental Health). Based on this briefing, begin planning for the closeout of emergency services, the de-escalation of the EOC and incident response teams, and begin planning for recovery. Consult FEMA's NIMS, 3rd Edition and its resources cited earlier in this chapter to learn more about de-mobilizing first responders from other jurisdictions and deactivating mutual aid responses. Request regular updates from your emergency response staff until the mobilization of resources is complete.

Recovery

Obtain Funds to Cover Costs of Emergency Response

Federal and state funding sources are available to help your city cover some municipal costs incurred from response to a mass shooting incident. These expenses may include police overtime and costs of operating the EOC. See Appendix C for a detailed explanation of potential funding sources.

Program Evaluation of Emergency Response

A key aspect of emergency response is evaluating the response after the incident. While the police and/or the FBI will provide an "after action" report of the law enforcement response to the shooting, it is equally important to evaluate the emergency response of your office and other agencies. Doing so will help the city plan for future emergencies.

Response evaluation has other benefits: your report can justify resources allocated to emergency preparedness and response and demonstrate the contributions of emergency management to public safety, including the important role of public health agencies.[6] Your report could also be an invaluable resource for other mayors.

Endnotes

[1] Federal Emergency Management Agency, *NIMS Training Program FAQs*, 2011, https://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/nims_training_program_faqs.pdf.

[2] Federal Emergency Management Agency, *National Incident Management System*, 2017, *available at* https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/is700b/6ho/national_incident_management%20system_third%20edition_october_2017.pdf (last visited Apr 8, 2021).

[3] Association Of State And Territorial Health Officials, *Emergency Authority & Immunity Toolkit*, https://astho.org/Programs/Preparedness/Public-Health-Emergency-Law/Emergency-Authority-and-Immunity-Toolkit/Emergency-Declarations-and-Authorities-Fact-Sheet/.

[4] Congressional Research Services, *Stafford Act Assistance and Acts of Terrorism*, 2019, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/R44801.pdf.

[5] Congressional Research Service, *Stafford Act Assistance and Acts of Terrorism*, 2019, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/R44801.pdf.

[6] Daniel Henstra, *Evaluating Local Government Emergency Management Programs: What Framework Should Public Managers Adopt?,* 70 Public Administration Review 236–246, 237 (2010).

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Review local EOP for applicability to a public mass shooting.
- ☐ Consider/complete supplemental EOP if needed.
- ☐ Review FEMA materials and consider training for yourself and team.
- ☐ Include public health agencies in your planning.

Response

- ☐ Activate Emergency Operations Center.
- ☐ Request regular briefings from designated EOC official.
- ☐ Consider whether to declare a local declaration of emergency.
- ☐ Consider whether a state declaration of emergency is needed to activate further resources. If so, call the governor to request.
- ☐ Consult emergency management staff from state agency about available resources.
- ☐ Receive briefing on emergency response, including psychological first aid.
- ☐ Begin planning for recovery phase.

Recovery

- ☐ Evaluate emergency response to complement police after action report.
- ☐ Apply for grants for reimbursement of response costs.

Chapter 3: Victim and Family Assistance

"Every mayor should have a family reunification plan."
– Kathy Devault, Orlando FL (established Family Assistance Center)

Chapter Summary

Following a mass shooting, victims and their family members have short- and long-term needs. Cities often establish specialized centers to meet these needs: the **Family Reunification Center** (aka Family Reception Center), followed by the **Family Assistance Center**, and then in many cases, the **Resiliency Center**. A background section on the role of these centers has been provided for your general information.

During the **preparedness** phase, develop a family reunification and assistance plan as part of your overall emergency management plan for mass casualty incidents. Convene the American Red Cross (ARC), mental health experts, and victim service providers—including local law enforcement and the FBI Victim Services Division (FBI-VSD), prosecutors, and community-based organizations—to determine and coordinate the victim services that will be needed in the event of a mass shooting.

In the **response** phase, focus your attention on meeting the needs of victims and families. Ensure that areas or centers where family reunification and assistance are provided have a secure perimeter and are separate from the Joint Information Center (JIC) where the press will be located. Work with law enforcement and the coroner's office to speed the process for notifying family members of deaths. Ensure all families have privacy when needed and are assigned an advocate to connect them to services and help them apply for crime victim compensation.

Contact the ARC and the FBI-VSD, as well as local partners, to help you establish victim and family services. Meet with victims and families directly to ensure their needs are being met, to solicit their input for vigils, and to comfort them.

As the response transitions to the **recovery** phase, continue your outreach to, and support of, victims and their families. You may need to establish—and find funds for—a Resiliency Center to meet their ongoing recovery needs. Separately, families and victims will need mental health and security services if the shooter is prosecuted and goes to trial. Consult with the families to solicit their input on remembrance events or memorials. For more information, see Chapter 9 on Commemorations.

Background

Overview of Centers for Victims, and Families and Friends

Victim and family assistance is usually provided in phases, as summarized below.

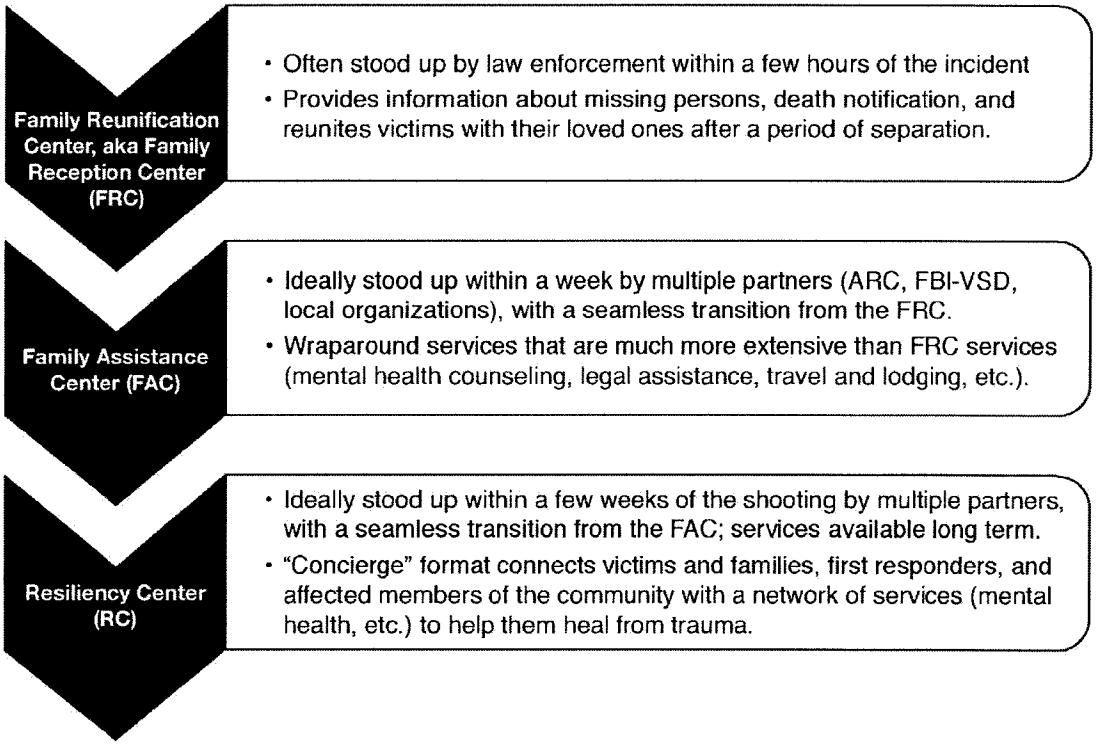


Figure 2: *Overview of Centers for Victims, Families, and Friends*

Family Reunification (or Reception) Center (FRC)

In the immediate aftermath, a Family Reunification Center (FRC) provides a place for families and friends to gather and receive updates, be reunified with their loved ones, and receive death notifications.[i] The FRC can also facilitate the return of some personal effects (those not part of the crime scene) and provide psychological first aid and other services. The FRC is often jointly operated by emergency management and law enforcement and is closed once a Family Assistance Center is ready to open.

[i] Note that the ICPTTA program recommends calling the FRC the "Family and Friends Reception Center" instead of the "Family Reunification Center" out of respect to families of victims that were killed, who have said the word "reunification" gave them false hope. However, we point out that "reception" has celebratory connotations that may also be inappropriate under the circumstances.

Family Assistance Center (FAC)

After the FRC closes, a Family Assistance Center (FAC) provides continuing assistance and wraparound services for victims, families, and affected members of the community. Ideally, the FAC should open within 24-48 hours of the shooting. The FAC may be collaboratively operated by the city, local agencies and businesses, law enforcement agencies, the ARC, and FBI-VSD. Plan for a seamless transition between the FRC and the FAC so that the families receive services without interruption.

Resiliency Center (RC)

Similarly, there should be a seamless transition from the FAC to the Resiliency Center (RC) during the recovery phase. The lasting effects of trauma are addressed by the RC, which often offers "concierge" services. The RC serves as "safe place" for victims and families, first responders, and the affected community to heal. It connects them to a network of mental health care and other services they will need over the long-term.

Agencies and Organizations that Provide Victim Services

Get to know the state and local organizations and agencies that provide services to victims of crime in your city. In addition to law enforcement agencies, these may include special offices or divisions within prosecutors' offices, regional or county agencies, and state agencies that distribute Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding. These state agencies offer victim advocacy and support services, support to nonprofit organizations serving victims, and referrals to services that may be needed in the aftermath of a mass shooting. There may also be community-based non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that specialize in trauma recovery and can provide mental health services to victims of crime or social services to their families.

Familiarize yourself with federal agencies and national organizations and their resources. The FBI's Victim Services Division (FBI-VSD), the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), and the American Red Cross (ARC) are almost always involved in a city's response to a mass shooting (see below for information about the role they can play).

Local organizations and businesses can provide essential services to victims and families, which can vary depending on the community and nature of the crisis. Examples of services that may need to be provided at the FAC include:

- Healthcare
- Behavioral health care services specific to disasters/mass violence
- Referrals for long-term behavioral health services
- Childcare and pet care
- Crime victim compensation
- Crime victim advocacy (victim advocates work directly with the victims to support them with services that meet their individual needs and may stay with them for years in some cases)

- Employee assistance
- Insurance and legal guidance
- Travel assistance
- Assistance with funeral and medical costs for victims (especially the uninsured)
- Assistance with funeral and medical costs for victims (especially the uninsured)

See also Chapter 7 on Partnerships for help identifying partnerships you may want to establish in advance of a crisis.

Preparedness

Convene Partners to Plan Victim Reunification and Assistance Services

Plan victim and family services for your community, which at a minimum should include protocols for family reunification and operating a FAC and potential locations for these operations. Convene a meeting with potential partners using the OVC toolkit below. This meeting should be part of your overall emergency management planning described in Chapter 2 so that victim and family services are integrated into city and regional emergency management plans.

The OVC funds a program called the ICPTTA (Improving Community Preparedness to Assist Victims of Mass Violence and Domestic Terrorism) to help you and your partners plan the services needed by victims and families and to integrate your planning into the emergency management plan and other protocols. The OVC Training and Technical Assistance Center and the ARC can also assist in the planning process.

Key Resource: Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) Toolkit

Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC), Helping Victims of Mass Violence & Terrorism Planning, Response, Recovery, and Resources: This publication is focused on victim assistance for a wide range of disaster events that require coordinated, cross-sector responses. Includes links to the following Toolkit materials: Partnerships & Planning, Response, and Recovery. Each section includes checklists, samples, a glossary, and victim assistance resources. https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/pubs/mvt-toolkit/index.html

Improving Community Preparedness to Assist Victims of Mass Violence and Domestic Terrorism: Training and Technical Assistance: https://icptta.com/

Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center website: https://www.nmvvrc.org/.

As part of the planning process, mayors and other experts we spoke to recommended:

- Identify potential locations for the FRC and FAC during the preparedness phase. Using a grid of the city, determine possible locations in different parts of the city near places an attack could take place. Look for buildings large enough to host victims and families (ideally scalable), in a secure area away from the press, with adequate parking. Examples include stadiums, hotels, and institutional buildings. Make a list of available facilities and update it regularly.
- Ask law enforcement agencies and victim service providers about their protocols for operating an FRC and FAC and keep these on file and accessible.
- Determine who may need to be contacted to provide mental health care and essential services in the event of a mass shooting (see examples of potential partners and essential services in the background section above).
- Plan to incorporate the command of the FAC into the existing Incident Command Structure so that the unified command stays intact and there is clear leadership.
- Make plans to secure the perimeter of the FRC and FAC using local law enforcement assets, private security contractors, or mutual aid agreements.
- Keep in mind that not all victims and family members will be from your city. To stay connected to them, you may need plan to offer remote services, hotlines, or partner with organizations with national reach.

Key Resource: Family Assistance Center

Mass Fatality Incident Family Assistance Operations: National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the FBI Office for Victim Assistance developed this guide for local and state agencies involved in the response to mass fatality events. It explains how to set up a family assistance center to provide services to victims and family members.
https://www.ntsb.gov/tda/TDADocuments/Federal-Family-Plan-Aviation-Disasters-rev-12-2008.pdf

OVC Bulletin on the role of the Medical Examiner and Family Assistance Center after a mass casualty event:
https://www.ncjrs.gov/ovc_archives/bulletins/prfmf_11_2001/188912.pdf



Examples of Family Assistance Center plans:
https://files.asprtracie.hhs.gov/documents/aspr-tracie-ta-facs-for-mass-fatality-incidents-092817-508.pdf

Other Considerations:

- Language: The FRC and FAC may need interpreters and/or translators. For example, some families and victims did not speak English in Oak Creek, WI. Community members stepped up as volunteer interpreters for both law enforcement and the media. After the Pulse Nightclub shooting in Orlando, the majority of victims and their families received services in Spanish.[1]

- Cultural practices: learn about the cultural practices of minority groups in your community so that services provided are culturally appropriate. In Pittsburgh, understanding Jewish traditions relating to caring for the dead was essential in responding to the Tree of Life shooting. In Oak Creek, vigil attendees covered their heads out of respect for Sikh traditions. In Orlando, service providers needed to understand that the LGBTQ+ community broadly defines "family member" to include close friends and partners, and some victims did not want to be "outed" by the media.[2]

- Residency status: Public mass shootings often affect undocumented residents and foreign citizens. This was the case in the Oak Creek, Orlando, and El Paso shootings. All victims of crime are eligible for victim services regardless of residency status, but some victims hesitate to access services due to fears of immigration consequences. Family members living abroad may need help gaining an emergency visa to come to your city. At the FRC and FAC, these issues pose unique legal challenges and may require immigration attorneys to provide victim services. If you suspect they will be needed, include immigration attorneys (contact your local bar association for volunteers) and organizations trusted by undocumented groups in the planning process.

- Online services: OVC recommends establishing an FAC website to provide services to those who cannot or will not visit the FAC in person.

- Advocacy: Designate a family liaison for each family to ensure they get the services they need and to facilitate communication with your office.

- Privacy: Some families will need a private, quiet space where resources are available but not intrusive. Plan for private rooms that offer beverages, informational pamphlets, soft toys for children, and above all—peace and quiet.

- Vetting: At the FRC and FAC, service providers and volunteers should use an entrance/intake area separate from the entrance used by families and victims.

Best Practices Tip

The Family Reunification and Assistance Centers should be:
1. **Separate** from Joint Information Center, volunteer intake process, and the press
2. **Scalable** to meet the needs of any number of victims and families
3. **Secure**, with access controlled by law enforcement and closed off to the press



Response

Work with Law Enforcement to Establish the Family Reunification (aka Reception) Center (FRC)

Emergency management and law enforcement officials typically establish the FRC, which operates for the first 24-48 hours or so. You have four primary roles:

1. Ensure the FRC is situated in an appropriate location away from the press and provides the protections and services families will require. This includes a secure perimeter and private rooms where family members can meet with counselors. If at all possible, ensure the meeting rooms are physically separate so that difficult discussions cannot be heard by others.

2. Work with law enforcement and the coroner's office to speed the process of victim identification to ensure families and friends can be notified as quickly as possible. See the Legal Considerations Chapter for more information.

3. Ensure that every family has a dedicated victims advocate to make sure they get the services and information they need immediately and over time.

4. Contact the ARC and FBI-VSD. The ARC has responded to nearly all public mass shootings in recent years but must be invited as it is not statutorily authorized to respond to mass shootings on its own. Therefore, instruct your Emergency Management staff to contact the ARC immediately to request assistance with the FRC and FAC. Basic services delivered by the ARC include health care, mental health services, and spiritual care. Your local ARC chapter can mobilize a response from the ARC national headquarters, including experts who have responded to similar incidents. Likewise, the FBI-VSD can provide comprehensive services (even if the FBI is not the lead law enforcement agency), but must be requested. Contact your state's FBI Special Agent in Charge (SAC).



Image 5: *An FBI Victim Assistance member carries a bag of personal effects from the site of the November 2018 mass shooting at Borderline Bar and Grill in Thousand Oaks, California, to the nearby Family Assistance Center for collection by its owner (Courtesy of FBI Multimedia Database).*

Track Victims

Experts recommend a centralized system for tracking victims as they are identified by law enforcement. This system should be made accessible to your staff if possible. The tracking system allows FRC and FAC officials to know which victims are being treated and released from which hospitals and communicate this information to families and friends. This may be a challenge due to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), but can often be accomplished through hospital consortiums and the ARC, which is HIPAA-exempt during disasters. In Orlando, Mayor Dyer called President Obama to discuss HIPAA regulations and request a waiver, which may have helped to speed the release the names in compliance with the law.

Engage with Hospitals

Hospitals may also establish limited victim and family services at their facilities, but families and victims need to be connected to the larger response. If needed, direct your staff to contact responding hospitals and medical facilities to request access for outside responders (*e.g.*, victim advocates or the ARC) to brief families and victims on which services will become available and how they should receive them. These families and victims should also be provided remote access to the family briefings that take place at the FAC.

Establish Family Assistance Center (FAC)

Meanwhile, you can oversee the establishment of the FAC. See the preparedness section of this chapter for planning steps, resources, and a list of essential services that may need to be provided at the FAC. During the response, you should take the following actions to establish the FAC:

- Convene law enforcement officials and victim services providers, the FBI, the OVC, and the ARC to develop a FAC protocol (or implement an existing one) and determine the services that will be provided at the FAC (see above).

- Identify the location for the FAC, make legal arrangements for its use, and arrange security.
- Coordinate with ARC and FBI-VSD to contact local partners to operate the FAC and provide services.
- Define who is eligible for services (typically the lead law enforcement agency or the District Attorney makes this call). Advocate for a broadly inclusive definition.
- Discuss the cost of services with partners, determine who can donate funds or provide pro-bono or in-kind services.
- Urge law enforcement to retain incident command for the FAC. It is recommended to transfer the incident command to the FAC.
- Assign roles for city staff, if needed. They can brief you regularly so that you can ensure victims' needs are being met and troubleshoot as needed.
- Document the elements of the plan for use by FAC service providers.
- Begin communicating the location and services of the FAC to the public.
- In the recovery phase, seek reimbursement from OVC and other sources.

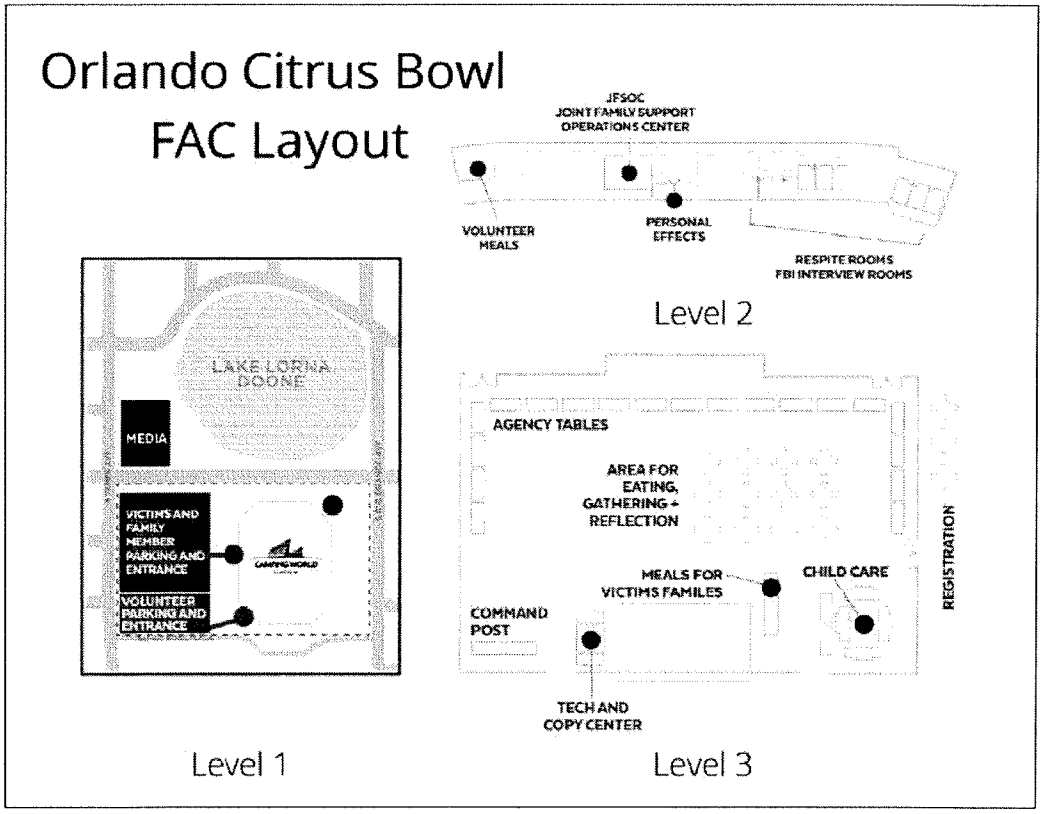


Image 6: *The layout of the Family Assistance Center in Orlando following the Pulse Shooting, showing separate entrances for victims/families and volunteers, private rooms, and a secure perimeter with a separate area for media. (Courtesy of City of Orlando staff).*

Connect with Victims and Families

One mayor told us, "nothing shows you care like showing up."

Mayors who have responded to a mass shooting emphasize that nothing can prepare you for the difficult conversations you will have with victims and family members.
Nevertheless, here are a few suggestions:

- Be composed and compassionate.
- Be well-briefed so that you can provide information about available resources.
- Anticipate anger, anguish, and pain, so know your limits.
- Be authentic: Draw on beliefs and trainings that give you strength and inspiration in difficult times. For example, one mayor spoke about relying on his faith when engaging with his community.

Visit the FAC

You may want to visit the FAC to speak to victims and family members, check on the operation of the FAC, and liaise with victims' services professionals. Request a briefing from FAC officials when you arrive. Expect to meet in a private area with victims and family members who have agreed to speak with you. Do not expect photo or video opportunities with them.

Visit the Hospital

All the mayors we interviewed said they visited victims in the hospital. Here are a few best practices:

- Contact the hospital's media relations department or office of community outreach to inform them of your visit and determine which victims you will visit (this may involve obtaining informed consent from patients).
- Your staff should coordinate with the hospital's media relations department about press coverage resulting from your visit, including compliance with patient privacy laws and hospital policies. Families and victims should be informed ahead of time about potential press coverage so that they are not taken by surprise. Press coverage of hospital visits should be limited to noting your visit but should not include live coverage that may be viewed as exploitative. As at the FAC, hospitals are not appropriate opportunities for photos or videos, out of respect to victims and families. (Remind visiting VIPs of this concern as well).
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not possible to visit victims in the hospital. Some healthcare facilities established new systems for providing video conferencing software to allow remote patient "visits."[3]

Recovery

Transition from the FAC to the Resiliency Center (RC)

Most survivors of a public mass shooting show resilience over time. However, others experience ongoing mental health problems. Experts say that providing a place for collective healing does the most to strengthen families and communities during the recovery phase.[4] That's why a Resiliency Center (RC) may be needed.

While the FAC is still operational, plan what will happen when the national partners (*e.g.*, the FBI-VSD and ARC) pull out. Engage local partners to begin planning a RC to connect victims and families to ongoing services. Cities that established a RC after a public mass shooting or bombing include Orlando (see below), El Paso, Aurora, Newtown, Las Vegas, Parkland, and Boston. The Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC) consultants can help you write a grant proposal for OVC funding, which can help fund the RC for a limited period.

Given the long-term effects of trauma, RCs often operate for years following a mass shooting. For example, the Resiliency Center in Orlando (named the Orlando United Assistance Center, or OUAC) is still operating five years after the Pulse shooting.

Mayors in Action: Resiliency Center

Orlando launched the Orlando United Assistance Center (OUAC) immediately after the FAC closed. The OUAC is a collaboration with the City of Orlando, Orange County Government, and Heart of Florida United Way. Services available at the OUAC include:

- Case management working directly with an OUAC Case Manager
- Navigation of community resources
- Referrals for mental health and counseling services
- Referrals for housing assistance, emergency financial assistance, employment, training, and educational opportunities

OUAC is now managed by the LGBT+ Center of Orlando and continues to provide individualized care to those impacted by the Pulse tragedy. For more information about the OUAC: https://orlandounitedassistancecenter.org/.

Victim Services During a Trial

In cases where a shooter is prosecuted, victims and their family members will need support services throughout the legal proceedings. These will be coordinated by Victim Advocates connected to the prosecuting office (District Attorney or U.S. Attorney). Your office can collaborate with partners and agencies to ensure these services are comprehensive. The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) recommends establishing safe havens (physical locations) where families and victims can receive coordinated services. Also, you can develop a media plan to limit press contact with the families. You should also consider providing security for victims and families who attend trial proceedings.

Key Resources: Victim Services During a Trial

Providing Services to Victims Viewing a Trial at Multiple Locations: OVC provides a protocol for providing standardized services to victims of mass violence during the trial, sentencing, and other court proceedings.
https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/publications/infores/trials_cctv_for_victims/welcome.html

Prosecution-Based Mass Violence Response Toolkit: A Guide for Victim Advocates Responding to Mass Violence Incidents When the Offender will be Prosecuted: a guide for victim advocates who will provide standard services during court proceedings, including templates, considerations for advocates' self-care, and advocacy protocols.
https://www.trynova.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Mass-Violence-Prosecution-Victim-Advocate-Toolkit.pdf

Crime Victim Compensation

Both federal and state agencies provide financial support to victims of crime, including victims of a public mass shooting. The FAC team (or your staff) can connect victims to crime victim compensation. Note that state crime victim compensation programs are not the only source of victim assistance. Public donations supplement these programs. However, it is important to understand that families' access to donations may impact their eligibility for crime victim compensation.

A summary of crime victim resources is provided in Appendix C on Funding. See Chapter 5 on Donations for more information about establishing a victims' fund.

Mayors in Action: Victim Compensation

In Dayton, a state victim compensation fund made available through the Ohio Attorney General's office paid out $102,731 to 29 victims of the shooting.[5] However, at least 19 victims were denied state assistance.[6] The legislature later enacted reforms to address these victims' difficulties.[7] For instance, victims were denied assistance because of prior felony charges unrelated to the mass shooting, or because they had drugs in their system when they became victims.[8] The legislature also proposed to expand the definition of "victim" to cover more affected individuals, increase the maximum claim for grief counseling, and lower barriers to receiving compensation.[9] Mayor Nan Whaley advocated for these changes.



Ongoing Engagement with Family Members

Continue to meet with victims and families as appropriate or requested to ensure their needs are being met and to solicit their input for vigils and permanent memorials. El Paso Mayor Dee Margo recommended following up with victim's families every few months for the first year to inquire how they are doing. In El Paso, a caring staff member made the regular check-in calls and advised the Mayor when he needed to make a personal call.

Endnotes

[1] Olga Molina, Bonnie Yegidis & George Jacinto, *The Pulse Nightclub Mass Shooting and Factors Affecting Community Resilience Following the Terrorist Attack*, 15 Best Practices In Mental Health 1–15 (2019).

[2] *Id.*

[3] centers For Disease Control And Prevention, *Management of Visitors to Healthcare Facilities in the Context of COVID-19: Non-US Healthcare Settings*, September 15, 2020, *available at* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/non-us-settings/hcf-visitors.html.

[4] Amy Novotney, *What happens to the survivors?*, 49 Monitor On Psychology 36 (2018).

[5] Josh Sweigart & Laura A. Bischoff, *State leaders looking at victim compensation reforms after Dayton Daily News investigation*, Dayton Daily News (2020), https://www.daytondailynews.com/news/state-leaders-looking-at-reforms-after-dayton-daily-news-investigation/AG6MO3NH4ZESBFY2GN76QSXHAU/ (last visited Jun 2, 2021).

[6] *Id.*

[7] Ohio S.B. 369, https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-documents?id=GA133-SB-369.

[8] Sweigart & Bischoff, *supra* note 6.

[9] Ohio S.B. 369, https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-documents?id=GA133-SB-369.

VICTIM AND FAMILY ASSISTANCE CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Meet with law enforcement, the FBI Victim Services Division, the American Red Cross, and community-based organizations to develop a plan for victim and family reunification and services.
- ☐ Identify potential locations for the Family Reunification and Assistance Centers.
- ☐ Review state and federal victim compensation and assistance funding sources.
- ☐ Identify potential service providers for victims and families.

Response

- ☐ Establish the FRC and FAC and ensure they are separate from the JIC and have a secured perimeter.
- ☐ Communicate FRC and FAC locations and services in press briefings and social media channels.
- ☐ Visit victims and family members at the FAC and hospital.
- ☐ Begin planning for the RC.
- ☐ Identify local resources that can address unmet needs of victims and families, such as translators, immigration attorneys, and/or religious services. Help connect them to the FAC.

Recovery

- ☐ Work with partners to establish the Resiliency Center.
- ☐ Ensure victim services related to a criminal trial are provided, if relevant. This may include providing victims security and protection from the press.
- ☐ Work with state and federal agencies to ensure all available funding is provided to victims (directly) and to victim assistance providers.
- ☐ Apply for funding to cover unreimbursed expenses relating to victim and family services, including police overtime to provide security.

Chapter 4: Collaborating with Law Enforcement

"Your role is to gather information, support the chief, and stay out of the way during the investigation."
– Mayor Buddy Dyer, Orlando FL

Chapter Summary

When a mass shooting happens, law enforcement officials—your local police, sheriff, or the FBI—are responsible for the initial response. Their top priorities will be to locate the shooter(s), eliminate the threat, ensure public safety, and identify victims.

In advance of a shooting (the **preparedness** phase), establish a strong, trusting relationship with your chief of police, even if he or she does not report to you. You can familiarize yourself with the jurisdiction and services provided by local, county, and state law enforcement agencies, and the FBI. Police Chief Richard Biehl of Dayton, OH advises that mayors should understand modern policing, including the threat environment and equipment needs. If your role includes police oversight, you can work to ensure the police force has adequate training, funding, and equipment to adequately respond to a public mass shooting. This may include negotiating mutual aid agreements.

While the law enforcement **response** to a mass shooting is taking place, your primary role will be to obtain the information you need from law enforcement to provide the answers the public will demand from you. This may be a challenge. Otherwise, as Orlando Mayor Dyer said, your role with law enforcement is to "stay out of the way."

During the **recovery** phase, work with your chief of police to ensure that the officers involved in the response receive the mental health services they need, that overtime pay is properly documented, and that police overtime costs are reimbursed. In addition, ensure that your police department has the resources needed to make needed policy or protocol changes recommended in an after-action report.

Preparedness

Partnerships with Law Enforcement

Develop a strong working relationship with your Police Chief.[i] Mayors and law enforcement officials told us their strong relationships came from partnering on other initiatives, such as addressing the opioid crisis in their communities, responding to natural disasters, and preventing "everyday gun violence." These partnerships established relationships built on trust. Mayors and law enforcement leaders later relied on this trust to present unified leadership during a mass shooting crisis.[i]

Best Practice Tip



Develop a strong relationship with your Police Chief even if he or she does not report to you.

-- **Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley:** "Imagine going through this kind of crisis if you don't have a good relationship with your Police Chief. You have to have that trust built-in before this crisis happens."

Schedule a training or tabletop exercise to define your respective roles during the response. Include the FBI Special Agent in Charge (SAC), U.S. Attorney's office, local law enforcement agencies to understand their respective jurisdictions and the victims' services they provide. As discussed in Chapter 1, determine key points of contact and include city and law enforcement PIOs to negotiate a communication protocol for press conferences. For more information about trainings, see Appendix A.

Police Chief Richard Biehl of Dayton advises that mayors should understand modern policing, including the threat environment and equipment needs. If your role includes police oversight, you can work to ensure the police force has adequate training, funding, and equipment to adequately respond to a public mass shooting.

Mutual Aid Agreements

Law enforcement agencies often have agreements in place to share resources with nearby jurisdictions in the event of a crisis. These "mutual aid agreements" or "interagency agreements" ideally should be in place before a mass shooting occurs.

Mutual aid agreements can be negotiated between local, county, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, as well as with medical centers and other kinds of emergency service providers. If you are mayor of a larger city, your police department may be called upon regularly to provide mutual aid, while in smaller cities your police force may require the assistance of neighboring agencies.

---

[i] Throughout the Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook, when we refer to Mayors and Police Chiefs, we mean the senior constitutional and law enforcement officers in the jurisdiction. In some jurisdictions these positions may have other titles, but we use those that are most common and familiar to readers.

As explained further in Chapter 8, your legal counsel and "C4 team" should review and update these agreements on an annual basis (at minimum). Participate in the review to ensure your law enforcement agency has access to the resources they will need to respond to, or participate in, a regional police response. According to one police chief, regional responses are becoming more common in the current threat environment, so it is vital that elected officials understand the nuances of mutual aid agreements.

Also, you may need to weigh in on how to resolve issues that could arise if a mutual aid agreement is activated, such as how to resolve different police union policies, police conduct policies and standards, and funding issues.

Key Resource: Mutual Aid Agreements

Department of Justice, Multi-jurisdictional Partnerships for Meeting Regional Threats: Department of Justice has prepared a resource to use when planning mutual aid agreements called Multi-jurisdictional Partnerships for Meeting Regional Threats. https://www.policefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Bureau-of-Justice-Assistance-2005-Mutual-Aid-Multijurisdictional-Partnerships-for-Meeting-Regional-Threats.pdf



Understanding and Activating FBI Resources

It is important to establish a working relationship with your regional FBI Special Agent in Charge (SAC). The FBI may be the lead law enforcement agency if the mass shooting is a violation of federal law, such as in the case of a terrorist attack or hate crime. Even if the FBI does not take the lead, it can provide significant resources for the response and investigation far beyond what could be provided by local law enforcement. Two key FBI resources are the Critical Incident Response Group (CIRG) and the Victim Services Division (VSD).

Critical Incident Response Group (CIRG)

CIRG coordinates FBI assets for the immediate response, including a Hostage Rescue Team, command post vehicles that can be used as Emergency Operations Centers, aircraft for surveillance and transport, and evidence response resources. If the case involves major evidence response, the local field division of the FBI can quickly access and provide resources from around the country to support the effort.

Victim Services Division (FBI-VSD)

FBI-VSD coordinates more than 170 victim specialists located throughout the country. These specialists become liaisons to the victims and families, and they are available to support local and state police whether or not FBI is taking over the investigation. FBI-VSD's resources are unmatched when it comes to the task of analyzing personal effects and assessing which are evidence and which may be returned to family members.

FBI victim specialists can also help establish the Family Assistance Center, as discussed in Chapter 3. They can coordinate meals, pass information to the families, and activate local victim service providers/partners with whom they already have relationships. They also serve as a buffer between investigators and victims and families so that investigators can focus on the investigation and remain impartial.

While FBI-VSD resources can be invaluable, your staff should be aware of certain limitations. For example, Orlando staff were not permitted to access victim information obtained through intake forms processed by FBI-VSD at the Family Assistance Center due to an FBI protocol intended to protect the privacy of the victims. As a result, the city had to generate a parallel intake process that required families and victims to sign in twice. In some cases, the city was unable to obtain the names of people processed by the FBI, making it impossible to provide follow-up services to them. These bureaucratic pitfalls might be avoided through advance planning with your FBI SAC or victim specialists.



Key Resources: FBI Services

FBI Victim Services Division overview:
https://www.fbi.gov/resources/victim-services.

Critical Incident Response Group overview:
https://www.fbi.gov/services/cirg.

The Coming Storm, an FBI-produced film to help prepare officials to respond to an active shooter event:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9jgS7jBXZU4

Response

Your Role During the Critical Incident Response

Law enforcement agencies will handle the incident response, investigation, and security in accordance with police protocols. As mayor, your role will be to obtain regular law enforcement briefings so that you can keep the families and the public informed. Because law enforcement officials are understandably focused on the incident, it may be difficult to obtain the information you require. Law enforcement officials may also want to hold back information they deem sensitive to the investigation. Therefore, a best practice is to request a designated law enforcement official at the EOC whose sole function is to keep you and elected officials informed. In addition, having a strong relationship with your police chief and SAC in advance of a crisis will pay off through streamlined communication.

As noted in Chapter 1 on Communications, you will need to plan press conferences in collaboration with law enforcement officials. If additional support is needed for victim and family assistance, call the FBI SAC in the field division that covers your jurisdiction. This agent can activate national resources from the FBI's Victim Services Division and support local law enforcement. For more information, see Chapter 3.

Key Resource: Role of Law Enforcement in Assisting Victims of Mass Violence

Police Executive Research Forum, The Role of Police Executives in Assisting Victims of Mass Violence: Lessons from the Field: https://www.policeforum.org/assets/AssistingVictimsMassViolence.pdf

Mayors in Action: Engaging with Law Enforcement

In the case of the Tree of Life shooting in Pittsburgh, multiple law enforcement agencies responded within an hour. The FBI Special Agent in Charge (SAC), the local District Attorney (DA), and the U.S. Attorney were all at the scene, and discussed which level of government should lead the investigation. The U.S. Attorney convinced the DA that the incident fit the definition of a federal hate crime. Once a decision was made to prosecute at the federal level, the FBI SAC took charge of the law enforcement response. Establishing the chain of command early on helped to coordinate the law enforcement response.

Once Mayor Peduto was informed of the jurisdiction decision, he focused on communications with the public and dignitaries who were visiting Pittsburgh that day. He also ensured that the gathered dignitaries remained "outside the tape" of the crime scene and appropriately distanced from the mobile command unit where law enforcement was engaged in tactical operations.

Recovery

Recovery for Police First Responders

Work with your police chief to ensure that officers who responded to the shooting receive the mental health care they need. According to Dayton Chief Richard Biehl, the lack of mental health resources for first responders is a national problem.

Similarly, in the event of a serious injury or death of an officer, there are concrete actions you can take to ensure that the officer is recognized for his or her heroism. Beyond advocating on behalf of the officer's family for the services and benefits they will need, you can also use an existing 501(c)(3) charitable entity operated by the city to receive public donations intended for the officer's family. See Chapter 5 for more information on donations and fund management.

Key Resources: Mental Health Services and Benefits for First Responders

COPS Office resource center, Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Programs: Eleven Case Studies: The COPS Office publishes materials for law enforcement and community stakeholders to address crime and disorder challenges. This link features a book titled *Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Programs: Eleven Case Studies*, which describes agencies' programs that protect the mental and emotional health of law enforcement officers, their nonsworn colleagues, and families. https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ric.php?page=detail&id=COPS-P371

Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act—Funding opportunities available through the COPS office: https://cops.usdoj.gov/lemhwaresources

National Alliance on Mental Illness, Preparing for the Unimaginable: this report describes actions to take within police departments to safeguard officers' mental health, promote resilience, and prevent secondary trauma. https://www.nami.org/Support-Education/Publications-Reports/Public-Policy-Reports/Preparing-for-the-Unimaginable/Preparing-For-The-Unimaginable

Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program (PSOB): PSOB provides death and educational benefits to the survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other first responders, and disability benefits to officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty. https://psob.bja.ojp.gov/

NC-PTSD, Psychological First Aid (PFA) Manual: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/type/psych_firstaid_manual.asp

Police Overtime Pay

The cost of overtime pay for police departments that have responded to a public mass shooting can be significant. Overtime will be accrued providing services for the response, investigation, traffic control, and security needs for dignitaries, vigils, funerals, and the Family Reunification and Assistance Centers. For example, in response to the Las Vegas shooting, police overtime costs exceeded $3.5 million.

During the recovery phase, work with law enforcement to ensure that overtime costs are carefully documented so they can be reimbursed. For information about sources of funding that may cover the cost of police overtime pay, mental health benefits for first responders, and death and educational benefits for the survivors of fallen first responders, see Appendix C.

After-Incident Review

After a mass shooting, review with police leadership the tactical response and lessons learned. While law enforcement will take the lead on developing and submitting an after-action report, your staff should review its contents and determine with law enforcement whether there were resource gaps or unmet needs that hindered the law enforcement response to the shooting. The after-action report should be completed as quickly as possible to ensure the accurate recollections of all participants are included.

In particular, review existing mutual aid agreements and assess whether the agreements met the needs of the incident. Work with your chief of police, legal counsel, and City Council (if needed), to update mutual aid agreements with other jurisdictions to be better prepared in the future.

Endnotes

[1] U.S. Conference Of Mayors, 88th Winter Meeting: Lesson Learned - Preventing, Preparing for, and Responding to Mass Shootings, 2020, *available at* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hijqn9q1rQg (last visited Apr 8, 2021).

LAW ENFORCEMENT CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ With your chief of police, schedule a training or tabletop exercise to define your respective roles during the response.
- ☐ Ensure the police force has adequate training, funding, and equipment to adequately respond to a public mass shooting.
- ☐ Meet with the FBI SAC, local law enforcement agencies, and community-based organizations to understand the victim services they provide.
- ☐ Ensure adequate mutual aid agreements are in place.

Response

- ☐ Establish communications channels to obtain regular law enforcement updates.
- ☐ If needed, activate FBI resources via the Special Agent in Charge.

Recovery

- ☐ Work with your chief of police to ensure first responders get the mental health services and benefits they require.
- ☐ Ensure appropriate documentation of police overtime pay; seek reimbursement.
- ☐ Determine with law enforcement whether there were resource gaps or unmet needs that hindered the law enforcement response to the shooting.

Chapter 5: Managing Donations and Volunteers

"It's about the community having a place to put their pain."
– Mayor Nan Whaley, Dayton, OH

Chapter Summary

After a mass shooting, people want to help. Financial donations pour in from across the country and around the world. Community members show up to lend their support to the victims and families. People donate food, teddy bears, and other items, and leave flowers and letters at a makeshift memorial area to remember the victims. To be fully **prepared**, you should plan how you will manage donations and volunteers.

Despite the intense pressure in the first 24 hours following the shooting (**response**), mayors recommend establishing a fund right away for the benefit of the victims and families. Tell the public where they can safely direct their donations. Mayors offered the following lessons learned: (1) create a fund immediately, (2) establish a community oversight board for it, (3) encourage the public to give only to the established fund to avoid scams, and (4) determine a protocol (in advance, if possible) to guide the distribution of donations to victims and families.

Managing volunteers and non-financial donations can be another challenge. For example, after the shooting in Las Vegas, the local public health agency had to provide food inspectors to handle perishable items, which posed potential food safety concerns. After the Sandy Hook Elementary shooting, organizers had to ask the public to stop donating teddy bears after they filled a warehouse with 67,000 stuffed animals.[1] Yet some of the items left at the scene or other memorial sites may have value for future commemorations and historical purposes, so you may need to coordinate with community partners to document and catalog items left by the public.

In the long-term **recovery**, your staff may continue to coordinate donations and volunteers for events, including one-year remembrance events and donations for permanent memorials. While community organizations and foundations often take the lead, you may designate staff to serve on community boards or oversee key events.

Preparedness

Develop A Victims' Fund Strategy

Determine your strategy in advance so that you can immediately establish a victims' fund if a mass shooting takes place. The strategy will also be useful if you must respond to other extreme emergencies, such as a natural disaster or terror attack. Even though you have many other aspects of the response to attend to, do not leave the fund management to private organizations. You will want to ensure the city is doing everything it can to help the victims and families, including by ensuring the fund is properly managed (which may even reduce the city's potential liability).

As part of your strategy, determine the funding vehicle you will use to receive donations. In Orlando, the city already had a 501(c)(3) charitable entity for managing donations for events. With a few tweaks, the city was able to use that entity to accept donations for the Pulse victims right away. However, there are other good options. Dayton relied on a relationship with a community foundation to establish a fund. San Bernardino used a crowd-funding website (GoFundMe). El Paso used the National Compassion Fund, a national organization that provides pro bono services after mass shootings. Both Dayton and Orlando used the services of national expert Kenneth Feinberg for help setting up their funds and determining protocols for distributions.

In addition, you should determine who will manage the fund, how funds will be distributed, and who will provide oversight. Determine whether you will need authorization to establish a fund. For example, in Pittsburgh the mayor's office had to seek permission from the city council to establish a special trust fund where donations could be deposited. The National Compassion Fund can help you develop your strategy, whether or not it is done in advance.

Best Practice Tip

Plan how you will manage a victims' fund *before* a mass shooting happens.

– Heather Fagan, Chief of Staff to Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer: "Distributing the funds is a major process that required multiple community meetings and translation services. We established a board to manage the process. I think mayors in other cities need to consider how they would approach the establishment and management of a victims' fund ahead of time."

Key Resources: The National Compassion Fund and Kenneth Feinberg

The National Compassion Fund accepts public donations for victims of a mass casualty event. Developed by the National Center for Victims of Crime in partnership with victims and family members, it offers tax deductibility to donors, no administrative fees, and a transparent process for distributing the funds. Staff from the National Compassion Fund can provide technical assistance to your local community foundation or directly set up a fund to provide assistance to the victims and family members.
https://nationalcompassionfund.org/



Several mayors consulted with attorney/consultant Kenneth Feinberg, who provides *pro bono* assistance to establish a victims' fund so long as the envisioned fund meets certain conditions.

Establish Protocols for Volunteer and In-Kind Donations Management

In collaboration with public safety, public health, and emergency management staff, develop protocols for managing volunteers and in-kind donations in the event of a mass shooting. These protocols can be included in the city's emergency preparedness plan and tabletop exercises. Protocols can address where food and other types of donations might be stored, which staff are trained to accept and inspect donations, and which staff might manage volunteers in coordinating in-kind donations.

Response

Establish a Fund Right Away

Establish the victims' fund as quickly as possible in consultation with your C4 team. Mayor Whaley established the Dayton Oregon District Tragedy Fund the day after the shooting. Mayor Dyer used a pre-existing city-owned 501(c)(3) to establish the OneOrlando Fund. See Chapter 8 for information about the legal considerations involved in establishing the fund.

It is important to ensure there is only one fund. This will help prevent confusion, promote transparency, ensure consistency in the distribution of the money, and limit the opportunity for scammers to capitalize on the public's grief. In addition, because there *may* be a liability reduction component to such a fund, it may be in the best interest of the city to establish the fund rather than waiting for another entity to establish one. For these reasons, Mayor Dyer and his staff convinced other groups that had established their own funds to merge them with the OneOrlando Fund.

Best Practice Tip

Ensure that the establishment of the fund is transparent.

– **El Paso Mayor Dee Margo:** "Once the Fund was set up, I provided weekly status updates for city council members and the public. Every two weeks I brought members of the oversight committee to the council to answer questions and encourage eligible victims and family members to apply for funds."

Keep the Public and City Officials Informed About the Fund

As soon as the fund is established, make regular announcements at press conferences to inform the public how to make donations and warn of potential scams. Provide information about how victims can apply to receive compensation from the fund. Include the information in social media channels and in the languages most likely to reach the affected community.

Mayors in Action: Victims' Fund Management

In Orlando, donations poured in from around the world following the Pulse shooting on June 12, 2016. At first, city officials expected the fund to be managed by an external organization, but after receiving calls from Disney and Universal Studios pledging large donations, the City needed to find a way to accept these funds.

In consultation with the Mayor, Orlando's CFO Christopher McCullion opted to use the City's existing not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, Strengthen Orlando, as the repository for the donations. They quickly obtained a "doing business as" (DBA) license in order to prevent commingling of funds with other Strengthen Orlando monies. City staff acquired a website domain for the fund and activated online credit card processing and text-to-donate functions. Although the city did not have protocols for handling the donations, the fundamentals of funds management, record keeping, fraud prevention, and transparency were familiar to city officials.

McCullion sought guidance from Mitch Weiss, who served as Chief of Staff to Mayor Thomas Menino during the Boston Marathon bombing. Weiss advised McCullion to work with attorney Kenneth Feinberg on the distribution protocol. Feinberg agreed to assist pro bono on the condition that all donations would be directed to one funding vehicle.

Uniting the funding streams was needed because several organizations established funds in addition to the city's fund, including Equality Florida, the GLBT Community Center of Central Florida, and the National Compassion Fund. These organizations agreed to partner with the city to merge the funds into the OneOrlando Fund, "to ensure all funds collected for victims [were] disbursed in a unified process that [would] expedite funds, ensure transparency and safeguard against fraud."[2]

Mayor Dyer appointed a board to oversee the distribution of donation funds. Board members were selected to represent the LGBTQ+ and Hispanic communities affected by the tragedy, and also included leaders from local foundations and philanthropies, city staff, and Orlando Magic CEO Alex Martins.

The distribution board considered two strategies: give 100% of the donations directly to the victims and families or retain a portion of the funds to provide long-term services for victims, including mental health and rehabilitation.

A group of victims and families from other shootings closely aligned with the National Compassion Fund urged the board to give 100% of the funds to the victims and families of the Pulse shooting. They had seen other cities retain funds for service-providing nonprofits, only to lose a sizable portion of those funds to administrative costs. McCullion learned that "there's a strong feeling among past survivors that fundraising that uses pictures of the deceased and then directs the money to anything other than direct support re-victimizes people who have already been victimized."



On that basis, the board decided to follow the group's recommendation to give 100% of the donations to the victims and their families. There were no administrative costs relating to the fund itself: credit card companies waived their fees and all other services were provided pro bono or by the city. The city resolved to seek funding elsewhere to provide the long-term services needed by the survivors.

The distribution protocol was developed with public input from two town hall meetings and by circulating a draft distribution protocol for comment. The final protocol provided payments according to the extent of loss or injury: families of victims who died received the highest payments. Victims who sustained injuries received payments according to the length of their hospital stay. Victims who witnessed the attack but were uninjured received lower payments than the first two groups.

Using this approach, the OneOrlando Fund distributed more than $31 million to 308 claimants, representing 100% of the donations.[3]

Direct Volunteers to Where They Can Help

The American Red Cross and the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program provide aid after a disaster, including a public mass shooting. As mayor, you can recommend that these organizations be contacted immediately to help guide the establishment of the Family Assistance Center, advise on the services needed by the victims, and provide skilled volunteers trained in psychological first aid, grief counseling, and other first responder skills. These volunteers can be coordinated at the scene via the National Incident Management System and also provide services directly through the Family Assistance Center.



***Image 8**: Los Angeles Fire Department CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) Unit volunteers organized in Sylmar, CA in response to an earthquake (LAFD Photo by Cody Weireter).*

Community members and people from around the country may appear at the site of the shooting or the Family Assistance Center offering to help. It can be challenging to properly manage these untrained volunteers. To the extent possible, they should be directed to where they can provide the most benefit and have the least chance of inadvertently interfering with the investigation and efforts of first responders. In the past, untrained volunteers have helped set up public spaces for a vigil or public event, helped process in-kind donations such as food and flowers, and delivered food to first responders. See the resources listed below for suggestions on managing volunteers.

In your press conferences and on social media, tell the public how they can help, including by directing volunteers to where they are needed. You may need to announce that volunteers are *not* needed, and that people can best help by staying home, avoiding the area, or making a financial donation.

An important way the public can help is by donating blood. In Orlando, people began donating blood within hours after the Pulse shooting, with blood banks working overtime to ship the blood collected from other cities to Orlando.[4] The response was so great that the need was met the following day. El Paso Mayor Dee Margo spoke of blood donors standing in long lines for hours under the hot sun, which required the distribution of bottled water to those waiting in line. Consult with the American Red Cross or your local blood bank to ensure the safety of blood donors.

Key Resources: Volunteer Management

FEMA, Managing Spontaneous Volunteers in Times of Disaster: The Synergy of Structure and Good Intentions: This publication offers a basis for developing a national strategy on working with unaffiliated, often spontaneous, volunteers. It is an outgrowth of an earlier publication, *Preventing a Disaster Within the Disaster*, which outlined the challenges involved in working with unaffiliated volunteers and offered recommendations on how to develop a national strategy.
https://www.fema.gov/pdf/donations/ManagingSpontaneousVolunteers.pdf

National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters: This organization serves the volunteer-based organizations that respond to disasters, allowing them to share knowledge and resources during preparation, response, and recovery efforts.
https://www.nvoad.org/



Points of Light Foundation, Preventing a Disaster Within the Disaster: The Effective Use and Management of Unaffiliated Volunteers: This report addresses disaster volunteer management and provides recommendations for engaging volunteers more effectively in times of disaster.
https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/Archive/202852NCJRS.pdf

Strategies for Managing Volunteers during Incident Response: A Systems Approach: This article describes how to plan for and manage spontaneous volunteers using a systems-based approach. https://www.hsaj.org/articles/684

HandOn Network, Top 15 Things to Know When Managing Volunteers in Times of Disaster: This list outlines the basic steps involved in managing volunteers during a disaster.
https://www.kalhd.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Top_15_Things_to_Know_When_Managing_Volunteers_in_Times_of_Disaster.pdf

Recovery

Fund Distribution to Victims and Families

The process of developing a distribution protocol can be time-consuming. Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto emphasized the importance of consulting with family members of victims when determining how the funds will be distributed. Other mayors echoed his recommendation. Family members from other mass shootings offered their advice in some cases. Feedback was solicited from the public in community meetings and city council sessions. Although every case is different, it may help to consult with mayors and staffers who have established a victims' fund to avoid re-inventing the wheel.

Mayors told us they did not get involved in the actual distribution of funds to victims and families. However, they took actions to ensure the process was transparent. In some cases, a member of the mayor's staff participated on the board that oversaw these distributions. That allowed them to keep the mayor appraised of the process, liaise with victim services organizations to ensure victims were heard throughout the process, and keep the City Council, local agencies, and the public informed on the process and timeline of distributions.

Mayors in Action: Fund Distribution Protocol



In Dayton, the victims' fund established by the city distributed more than $3.8 million to victims and their families (47 applicants) in an initial payout[5] and around $150,000 in a second payout.[6] Approximately 70% went to families of the deceased, 20% went to injured victims who were hospitalized for 48 hours or more, and 10% went to victims who were treated and released in less than 48 hours.

Several of the funds researched for this Playbook distributed 100% of the funds to the victims and their families (as recommended by families of previous mass shootings). However, not all of them did. For example, in Pittsburgh, $6.3 million was raised according to press reports. Most of the money, $4.8 million, was distributed to victims and family members. However, $500,000 was provided to injured police officers and their families, $450,000 went to the Tree of Life congregation to rebuild the severely damaged building, and some funds went toward memorials and education connected to the massacre.

Although 100% of the donations to the OneOrlando Fund were distributed to the victims and their families (see vignette above), Orlando Mayor Dyer recommends that distribution boards consider withholding a small percentage of the donations to pay for mental health services, not only for the victims and their families, but also for other members of the community who were not directly affected but are traumatized.

The best practice is to closely consult with the survivors, families of the victims, and members of the affected community and use their input to establish a distribution protocol that is appropriate for your community.

Endnotes

[1] CHRIS MURPHY, THE VIOLENCE INSIDE US, 128-129 (2020).

[2] Natalie Bednarz, *OneOrlando Fund Update*, ONEORLANDO FUND (2017), https://www.oneorlando.org/oneorlando-fund-update-april-7-2017/ (last visited May 27, 2021).

[3] *Id.*

[4] Paul Brinkmann, *How blood banks handled Pulse shooting, 28,000 donors*, ORLANDOSENTINEL.COM (2016), https://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/pulse-orlando-nightclub-shooting/os-oneblood-ceo-pulse-20160629-story.html (last visited Apr 15, 2021).

[5] Joshua Richardson, *Tragedy Fund distributes $3.8 million to Oregon District shooting victims*, WRGT (2019), https://dayton247now.com/news/local/tragedy-fund-distributes-38-million-to-oregon-district-shooting-victims (last visited Jun 2, 2021).

[6] John Bedell, *Disbursements of money in ODS Tragedy Fund to end Sept. 30*, WHIO (2020), https://www.whio.com/news/disbursements-money-ods-tragedy-fund-end-sept-30/L4IY5NNDV5AKTFKU4VTCHUIBOE/ (last visited Jun 2, 2021).

DONATIONS AND VOLUNTEERS CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Plan the vehicle needed to accept donations for a victims' fund. Meet with your local community foundation or establish a nonprofit for this purpose.
- ☐ Establish a victims' fund protocol.

Response

- ☐ Establish a victims' fund right away, ideally the day of the shooting.
- ☐ Communicate with the public about the fund and warn about possible scams.
- ☐ Direct volunteers as appropriate, understanding the distinction between trained volunteers and spontaneous, untrained volunteers.
- ☐ Work with the American Red Cross and local blood banks to direct blood donors and volunteers for blood drives.

Recovery

- ☐ Promote transparency. Consider appointing a member of you staff to serve on community oversight board for donations management.

Chapter 6:
School Shootings

"We're going to need a lot of support here to help those who've been affected by this tragedy ... get through it."[1]
– Mayor Christine Hunschofsky, Parkland FL

Chapter Summary

The best practices described elsewhere in this Playbook apply to a mass shooting that takes place in a school. However, school shootings merit special attention because, although exceedingly rare, they present unique challenges for mayors. Schools are usually governed and regulated by entities not under the control of a mayor, making it difficult to collaborate on safety planning. Also, school shootings often occur in smaller cities that lack the staff and resources large cities have to devote to the response and recovery. Most importantly, school shootings target children. The community may experience heightened anguish and outrage due to the age of the victims.

Preparedness is essential. Cultivate a strong professional relationship with your police chief or local sheriff, even if they do not report to you. Schedule a tabletop exercise with city leaders (including your city manager and city commissioners), and law enforcement, county, and school officials. Use the exercise to determine roles, communication channels, a school security protocol, and the location of a Family Reunification Center in the event of a school mass shooting. Familiarize yourself with the issues surrounding active shooter drills and school safety.

Your role during the **response** to a school shooting may include facilitating the flow of information between school leadership, parents, and law enforcement, as well as protecting families from the press. If a public mass shooting happens elsewhere in the community, you can alert school partners to activate lockdown procedures to keep students safe.

In the **recovery** phase, consult with school leaders to determine how your office and city agencies can best support the school community. It may also help to consult with child trauma experts, and mayors and groups of family members who have been affected by a school shooting in the past.

Preparedness

Cultivate Relationships with Law Enforcement

Maintain a working relationship with law enforcement leaders, even if they do not report to you. Request a briefing on school safety protocols currently in place. Your role is to understand these protocols and (if applicable) to provide budgeting priority and oversight to ensure police have the resources they need.

Mayors in Action: Challenges Working with Law Enforcement



In Parkland, FL, the city lacked its own police force. It contracted with the Broward County Sheriff's Office (BSO) for law enforcement services and the Coral Springs Parkland Fire Department (CSPFD) for fire/EMS. As a result, the emergency response to the Marjory Stoneham Douglas High School shooting was led by two agencies with different response protocols and tactics, which proved difficult.[2]

Because no communication protocol had been established between city public information officers (PIOs) and law enforcement PIOs in advance, the Mayor, the City Commission, and staffers had difficulty obtaining real-time information about the law enforcement response.[3] In fact, according to press reports, officials at City Hall did not even attempt to engage law enforcement because they did not want to contribute to the chaos of the response, leaving them to learn of updates from television coverage.[4]

Cultivate Relationships with School Officials

Even though you may not have authority over local schools, you should establish relationships with leaders of the schools in your city. This may include school board members, the county school superintendent, parent associations, college presidents, and organizations that provide school-based services. Use these relationships to work together to plan and promote school safety best practices in schools across the city.

Schedule a Tabletop Exercise Focused on a School Shooting

Consider organizing a tabletop exercise with law enforcement, county, and school officials to plan the city's response to a school shooting. This effort can help ensure each school has a violence prevention plan in place, and that schools, law enforcement officials, and city and county agencies understand their role in the unlikely event that a school shooting takes place. For more information, see Appendix A on Training, as well as Chapter 1 on Communications and Chapter 3 on Victims and Families.

Key Resource: FEMA Campus Resilience Toolkit

FEMA Campus Resilience Toolkit: This resource can be used to facilitate a tabletop exercise to plan a response to a school shooter.
https://educateiowa.gov/sites/files/ed/documents/Iowa Elementary School Active Shooter TTX SitMan2.docx



Ensure School District Has Developed a Violence Prevention Plan

The U.S. Secret Service recommends that school districts develop a comprehensive violence prevention plan.[5] The plan should identify threats, create a central reporting mechanism, and develop risk management options. Although you are not responsible for developing such a plan, you may want to ensure such a plan is developed and that you are familiar with it. The following section provides information and resources that may be useful to you and your staff, and can be shared with school district officials, if needed. We advise familiarizing yourself with these issues before meeting with school officials to discuss school safety.

School Safety Information and Resources

U.S. Department of Justice Community-Oriented Policing Services Office Report

In 2020, a working group of the Community-Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office at the U.S. Department of Justice produced a report that outlines ten essential actions schools and law enforcement agencies can take to prevent and respond to school shootings. The topic areas of these actions are:

- Comprehensive Needs Assessment
- School Climate
- Campus, Building, and Classroom Security
- Anonymous Reporting Systems
- Coordination with First Responders
- Behavior Threat Assessment and Management
- School-Based Law Enforcement
- Mental Health Resources
- Drills
- Social Media Monitoring

Key Resources: COPS School Safety Planning Recommendations

Department of Justice, Ten Essential Actions to Improve School Safety: a COPS Office School Safety Working Group Report to the Attorney General. The two-page Executive Summary can be accessed here (accessed February 24, 2021). https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/Publications/cops-w0891-pub.pdf

Role of Law Enforcement in School Safety Planning

Law enforcement agencies often work with schools to develop their plan. For example, in Pittsburgh, the police provide training to Community Resource Officers (CROs)[i] (based in schools) on threat assessment and active shooter situations. In coordination with the FBI, the Pittsburgh police perform walk-throughs with school officials to assess security, make recommendations for technology and emergency preparedness, and establish lines of communication for use in the event of a shooting.

Role of City in School Safety Planning

Florida law requires cities to maintain school security plans and the layout of every school, which can help law enforcement locate and isolate the shooter during the response. Consider implementing this practice even if your state does not require you to do so.

Also, even if you do not have authority over the schools in your city, you can advocate for student safety and ensure student and parent concerns are part of the process of planning active shooter drills and school violence prevention plans. You can also advocate for resources needed by the school district, such as funding for mental health resources for students (see *Image 1*).

Best Practice Tip

Keep school maps and security plans on file at city hall.

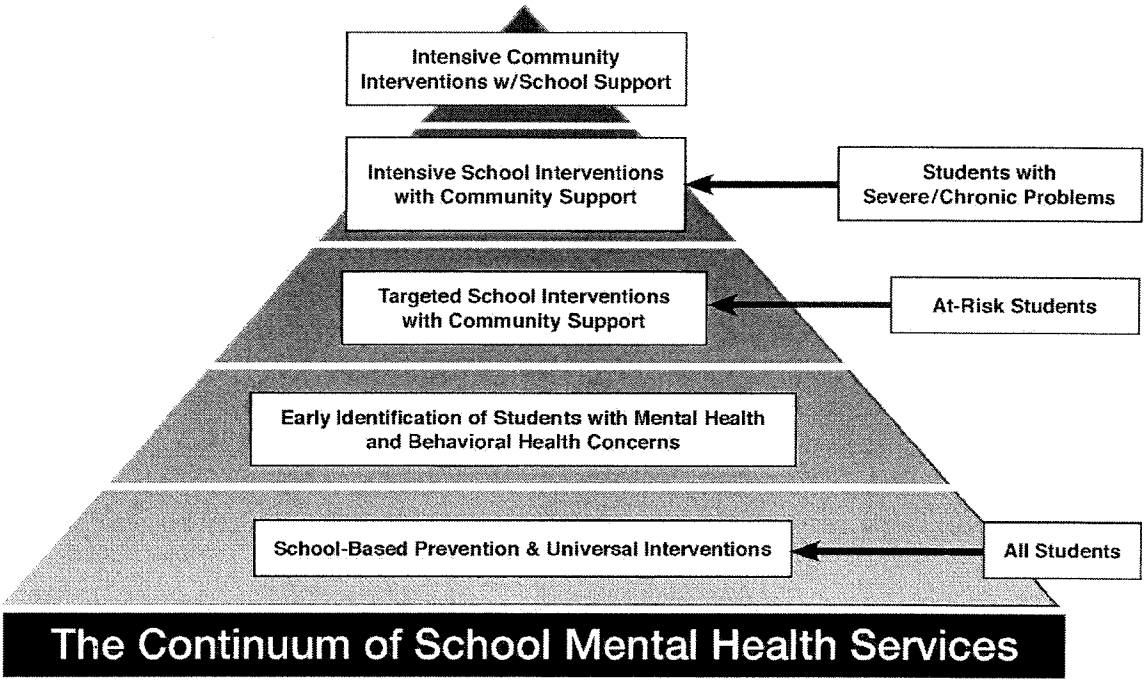
--**Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer:** "Florida has state legislation relating to school resource officers [and threat assessment]. We have plans, documents of all of the school locations that you can just pull up on your computer in the event you're having to respond to a school shooting."

[i] Note, there is some disagreement among researchers on the security value of CROs. See James Alan Fox and Aviva M. Rich-Shea, Don't defund all police, but keep police out of schools. Kids will do better without them., USA TODAY (2020), https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2020/06/12/defund-school-police-obstacles-to-student-success-column/5336791002/ (last visited May 27, 2021).

Student Mental Health Services

Most school shooters left behind evidence that they were victims of bullying or otherwise in crisis; for example, the majority were suicidal. Appropriate services might have helped some of them. Therefore, in addition to countering external threats, schools should address the mental health needs of their students.

As the diagram below highlights, the community has a role to play in developing appropriate mental health services for schools. For example, in Washington D.C., the Department of Behavioral Health and the Department of Health collaborated on a behavioral health plan for school-based services in the district's schools. The plan coordinated clinical care from both agency clinicians and other local resources.[6]



Adapted from "Communication Planning and Message Development: Promoting School-Based Mental Health Services" in Communique, Vol. 35, No. 1. National Association of School Psychologists, 2006.

Figure 3: *Role of Community in School Mental Health Services*[7]

Consider asking for a report that assesses the school district's mental health system. Meet with school leaders and mental health experts to solicit their recommendations on ways the city can support their efforts to provide needed mental health services. For example, you may be able to advocate with elected officials, connect the district to needed resources and expertise, or help the district obtain funding. You can also advocate that schools contract with managing entities that are able to provide behavioral health services, rather than provide services in-house, which is not a core competency of schools and school districts.

Key Resource: Mental Health System Assessment Tool

The SHAPE (School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation) website: provides tools to help schools and districts assess and improve school mental health systems. http://www.theshapesystem.com/

Active Shooter Drills

Most states require schools to engage in safety training, which includes some form of active shooter drill.[8] However, the specifics of such drills are often left to school districts to determine. The COPS report provides resources to help schools develop age-appropriate drills,[9] as does the American Academy of Pediatrics.[10] It is worth noting that child mental health experts have warned that realistic or surprise active shooter drills can traumatize children.[11] The nation's two largest teachers' unions, the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association, have called for an end to realistic drills.[12]

A Word About the School Security Industry

According to press reports, the school security industry is now a $3 billion market, offering a range of products that may or may not increase the security of students in your school district.[13] Some experts argue most of these "security" systems are not worth the investment and may have negative effects on the school population.[14] Research has shown that investing in properly trained social workers and mental health professionals does more to create a healthy and safe school environment.[15]

Response

Communications

In the case of a school shooting, your primary role is "communicator-in-chief." You will likely serve as a trusted source of accurate information for parents and the school community, and as a comfort to them. See Chapter 1 on Communications.

Law Enforcement

You will need to engage with law enforcement officials, even if they do not report to you. Contact the lead law enforcement agency to form the communications strategy for press briefings and agree on a protocol to receive regular law enforcement briefings. In the case of a mass shooting elsewhere in the community, you (or law enforcement officials) may need to contact school officials to urge them to lockdown their schools to protect students. For example, as the shooting at the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino, CA unfolded, the nearby California State campus and public schools across the city were locked down for hours.[16] See Chapter 1 on Communications and Chapter 4 on Law Enforcement for additional guidance.

Encourage School Officials to Access Available Resources

School crisis teams can easily be overwhelmed during the response to a school shooting, both because of limited resources and because school officials may have personal relationships with the victims and their families. Therefore, as mayor you can help by encouraging school officials to accept outside assistance, including from local mental health providers and national organizations such as the American Red Cross.

Seek Advice from Those Who Came Before

Your city—especially if it is a small one—may lack the mental health, staffing, and financial resources needed to support your community in the aftermath of a school shooting. There may be community divisions or other challenges you must address that are unique to school shootings. Seek advice from mayors who have responded to a school shooting and from family members who lost children in a school shooting.[17]

Recovery

Mental Health and Recovery Needs

In all public mass shootings, the recovery phase is focused on helping victims, families, and the affected community heal from trauma. In the aftermath of a school shooting, however, unique issues can arise.

You may be dealing with traumatized children or teenagers whose futures may be drastically altered. The emotional toll of a shooting on children can be extreme. Close consultation with child trauma experts is strongly recommended.

The community may experience heightened anguish and outrage due to the age of the victims. Parents may be unwilling to send students back to the school where the shooting took place. Students may even become suicidal. Conspiracy theorists may emerge and torment family members. Your community may become divided on their views of how politicians should respond to school shootings.

You may know many of the affected families personally, so your compassionate leadership will be needed to help guide your community through the difficult grieving process. Working closely with the parents and school community, look for trauma-informed ways to honor the victims and comfort the survivors.

Hosting vigils and memorials and providing opportunities for grieving community members to volunteer and serve others are good starting points. The following information is drawn from press accounts of the first annual remembrance event in Parkland, by all accounts a moving and healing event that included a variety of avenues for people to grieve. See also Chapter 9 on Commemorations.

Mayors in Action: School Shooting Remembrance Events

Parkland community members and city staff organized events centered on unity and volunteerism for the first annual remembrance of the Parkland Shooting. The "Day of Service and Love" offered "something for everyone," recognizing that people process grief in different ways.

Notably, events were intentionally free of political messaging at the behest of the Mayor, who wrote a letter inviting elected officials to attend, but not to speak, at the city's remembrance ceremony on February 14, 2019.[18]



Throughout the day there were activities for students and community members, including painting stones for an outdoor memorial, playing with therapy dogs, and packing meals for children experiencing food insecurity.[19] The Broward County School Board hosted community service projects at a local park. The Coral Springs Museum of Art sponsored, outdoor music, art projects, and a petting zoo.[20] The school opened for a half day. Some students attended school events, participated in a moment of silence, or performed a community service project. Others chose to stay home.[21] There was a breakfast for first responders.

The city partnered with Coral Springs in a Bloomberg Philanthropies-funded art project called the Temple of Time. This project, which was popular in the community, was designed and constructed by the artist in collaboration with community members. It was completed on February 14 in time for the first remembrance ceremonies and ceremonially burned in May of 2019. Communal prayer vigils and candlelight ceremonies were held throughout the day.[22]

Funding for School Recovery

Eligibility for most funding opportunities, such as Project School Emergency Response to Violence (SERV) is limited to local educational institutions.[23] If needed, work with schools to determine whether the city can help them identify resources to meet specific needs. See also Appendix C, which provides links to other funding sources.

Endnotes

[1] National Public Radio, *Parkland Mayor Speaks About Shooting at Florida High School* (2018), *available at* https://www.nhpr.org/post/parkland-mayor-speaks-about-shooting-florida-high-school#stream/0.

[2] National Police Foundation, *Recovering and Moving Forward: Lessons Learned and Recommendations Following the Shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School* (2019).

[3] *Id.*

[4] *Id.*

[5] National Threat Assessment Center, *Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence* (2018).

[6] Office Of The Deputy Mayor For Health And Human Services, *School Mental Health Program and School Health Services Program* (2017), *available at* https://dmhhs.dc.gov/publication/school-mental-health-program-and-school-health-services-program (last visited April 14, 2020).

[7] Substance Abuse And Mental Health Services Administration, *Ready, Set, Go, Review: Screening for Behavioral Health Risk in Schools, available at* https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/ready_set_go_review_mh_screening_in_schools_508.pdf (last visited April 14, 2020).

[8] Everytown For Gun Safety, *The Impact of School Safety Drills for Active Shootings* (2020), *available at* https://everytownresearch.org/report/the-impact-of-school-safety-drills-for-active-shootings/.

[9] Cops Office School Safety Working Group Report To The Attorney General, *Ten Essential Actions to Improve School Safety* (2020).

[10] David J. Schonfeld, Marlene Melzer-Lange, Andrew N. Hashikawa, Peter A. Gorski, *Participation of Children and Adolescents in Live Crisis Drills and Exercises*. Pediatrics 146 (3) (September 2020), *available at* https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/146/3/e2020015503/ (last visited April 21, 2021).

[11] Sarah C. Peck, *Profiting from protecting kids is wrong. Halt active shooter drills in schools,* https://www.sun-sentinel.com/opinion/commentary/fl-op-com-peck-halt-active-shooter-drills-schools-20191120-fbtyyjfutvf4zlyue5ghebi7gm-story.html (last visited May 4, 2021).

[12] Associated Press and Elizabeth Chuck, *Two Largest Teachers Unions Call For Schools to Revise or End Active Shooter Drills,* Nbc News (February, 2020), *available at* https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/two-largest-teachers-unions-call-schools-revise-or-end-active-n1136271 (last visited April 14, 2021).

[13] Gary Younge, The New York Times, *The (Way Too Many) Kids Whose Lives Have Been Upended by Gun Violence*, The New York Times (March 2021), https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/books/review/children-under-fire-john-woodrow-cox.html.

[14] James Alan Fox and Aviva M. Rich-Shea, *Don't Defund All Police, But Keep Police Out of Schools. Kids Will Do Better Without Them*, Usa Today (June 2020), https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2020/06/12/defund-school-police-obstacles-to-student-success-column/5336791002/.

[15] Final Report of the Federal Commission on School Safety - U.S. Dept. of Education (pages 120 & 126), https://www2.ed.gov/documents/school-safety/school-safety-report.pdf

[16] Neil Nisperos, *San Bernardino City Unified Schools Back in Session Following Mass Shooting*, The San Bernardino Sun (December, 2015), *available at* https://www.sbsun.com/2015/12/02/san-bernardino-city-unified-schools-back-in-session-following-mass-shooting/.

[17] Belinda Luscombe and Haley Sweetland Edwards, *'The World Moves On And You Don't.' Parents Who Lost Children in School Shootings Find Comfort in a Group No One Wants to Join*, Time (November 2018), *available at* https://time.com/longform/school-shooting-parents/.

[18] *Id.*

[19] Amy Held, *'We Live With It Every Day': Parkland Community Marks 1 Year Since Massacre*, National Public Radio, Feb. 2019, *available at* www.npr.org/2019/02/14/694688365/we-live-with-it-every-day-parkland-community-marks-one-year-since-massacre.

[20] *Id.*

[21] *Id.*

[22] *Id.*

[23] U.S. Dep't Of Education, https://www2.ed.gov/programs/dvppserv/eligibility.html (last visited April 14, 2021).

SCHOOL SHOOTINGS CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Schedule a tabletop exercise to determine roles, communication channels, school security protocol, and the location of a Family Reunification Center in the event of a school mass shooting.
- ☐ Establish relationships with school officials and law enforcement leaders.
- ☐ Propose and participate in a planning team for school safety.
- ☐ Suggest a periodic assessment of school district mental health systems.
- ☐ Advocate for appropriate school-based trainings, exercises, and drills.

Response

- ☐ Establish communications channels with school officials and law enforcement.
- ☐ Consider whether a declaration of emergency is needed to activate further resources. If a state declaration is also needed, call the governor to request.

Recovery

- ☐ Research funding opportunities to help defray the costs of school recovery and student services, improved security, etc.
- ☐ Work with school officials to determine the role of the city in supporting the school's recovery and supporting student mental health and resilience.
- ☐ Consult with mental health experts, as well as mayors and family members who have been affected by a school shooting.

Chapter 7: Community Partnerships

"Existing partnerships is what matters on that day."
– Chief of Staff Heather Fagan, Orlando FL

Chapter Summary

Mayors told us existing partnerships in a crisis really matter: you can't call someone in the middle of the night if you don't already have a contact established. This chapter describes some of the partnerships you may want to cultivate.

During the **preparedness** phase, identify partners that may be needed in the response and recovery phases of a mass shooting. Arrange a tabletop exercise with these partners to understand the services they can provide and develop a protocol for a Family Resilience Center. Identify gaps in relationships, such as mental health providers, and cultivate relationships with them. You can discuss the security needs of religious or minority groups that may be targeted by an active shooter. Establish a relationship with school officials. Consider establishing a Community Crisis Response Team of concerned community members.

During the **response**, call on your partners to provide support and services to affected communities. Consult with partners that provide mental health services to shape your messaging. Ask for help arranging vigils. Seek partners needed for long-term recovery.

During the **recovery**, work with partners to ensure the long-term needs of families and the affected community and met, and for help securing funding.

Preparedness

Identify Community Partners Needed to Respond to a Shooting

Mayors told us relationships with community leaders mattered in significant, and sometimes unexpected, ways when a mass shooting happened in their communities. Cultivate these relationships and consider who else you may need to meet. Engage with key community leaders from time to time to discuss their security needs and understand the services they could provide in the event of an emergency. As discussed in Appendix A on Training, you may want to include some of them in a tabletop exercise to explore the role they could play after a shooting.

Examples of partnerships that may be important during the response include:

- Police chief
- American Red Cross
- FBI Victim Services Division
- The National Compassion Fund
- United Way
- School District officials
- Mental health professionals
- Victims' advocacy groups
- Religious communities and faith leaders
- Minority and underserved populations
- Hospitals and blood banks
- Business community organizations
- Grassroots and community organizations representing groups at risk for gun violence, such as organizations that employ street outreach workers
- Local bar association

Key Resource: OVC Checklist for Partnership Planning



The Office for Victims of Crimes provides a "Partnerships and Planning" checklist in its Mass Violence Toolkit. The checklist can help you develop a victim assistance plan using the local resources in your community. Free training and technical assistance related to the Mass Violence Toolkit are available through the OVC Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC). Contact TTAC@ovcttac.org or 1–866–682–8822. https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/pubs/mvt-toolkit/PartnershipsPlanningChecklist.pdf

Local Mental and Behavioral Health Experts

Several mayors told us they lacked existing relationships with mental health providers. Take the time to cultivate relationships with the county public health department, mental health and behavioral health services experts, and victims' advocates working in the district attorney's office. Your staff should have regular contact with the state agency providing VOCA support for victim service agencies and advocacy for victims in your state. In the aftermath of a shooting, these organizations can advise on effective messaging to reduce trauma and provide services (or timely referrals to services) to the families of the victims.

However, be aware that not all mental health service providers are qualified to counsel a victim or witness to a public mass shooting. In the immediate aftermath of a shooting, psychological first aid (PFA) is needed to stabilize emotions and prevent later post-traumatic stress is needed. See the Chapter 10 on Mental Health for more information and resources.

Local Faith-Based Organizations

Religious groups and faith-based organizations are key partners, not only because they may provide services to victims and families in the aftermath of a mass shooting, but also because they are potential targets for hate crimes. Your engagement with them should include:

- Safety and security: arrange for law enforcement officials to help these organizations with threat assessment, building security, alert systems, and partnerships with law enforcement.
- Response and recovery: discuss the services and community response that faith-based organizations can provide after instances of violence, such as vigils, funerals, and spiritual guidance.
- Cultural understanding: seek information about their cultural norms, death and burial practices, and language needs.

Importantly, remind faith-based organizations that provide services in the aftermath of a public mass shooting that they must offer their services to all victims and families, regardless of religious affiliation.

Mayors in Action: Faith-Based Partnerships in Pittsburgh

Before the Tree of Life Synagogue shooting, the Pittsburgh police department had performed threat assessments with the Jewish community and knew the phone numbers and locations of every synagogue in the city. Because the shooting took place on the Sabbath, other synagogues could not be reached by phone. Because of the preexisting relationship with the Jewish community, police were able to go to every synagogue and warn them of the threat as the law enforcement response was ongoing.



Key Resources: Faith-Based Organizations and Preventing Hate Crimes

Department of Justice, Preventing Hate Crimes in Your Community: https:/www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/preventing-hate-crimes-your-community

Department of Justice, Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships (SPCP) Program Fact Sheet: https://www.justice.gov/file/1059716/download

Overview of the FBI's Victim Assistance Resources: https://www.fbi.gov/resources/victim-services

Department of Justice, Protecting Places of Worship: https://www.justice.gov/file/1058496/download

Department of Justice COPS Office, Stop Hate: Action Steps for Local Communities: https://cops.usdoj.gov/html/dispatch/05-2016/action_steps_for_local_communities.asp

Department of Justice, Understanding Trends in Hate Crimes Against Immigrants and Hispanic-Americans: https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/244755.pdf

Minority and Underserved Communities

Within U.S. cities, Black and Hispanic neighborhoods often experience high levels of gun violence, yet these crimes rarely receive the level of attention or resource allocation that public mass shootings do. Partnering with community leaders from these neighborhoods can help you develop effective violence interrupter and other evidence-based programs to reduce "everyday community gun violence." For more information, see the Afterword: A Note About Urban Community Gun Violence.

Understand the security concerns of these communities and arrange for law enforcement agencies to meet with them. Identify language translation services where needed. Understand the cultural norms of these communities. Document the locations of their schools, community centers, and places of worship.

It's important to note that a pre-existing relationship with community leaders based on trust is vital in the aftermath of a racially motivated hate crime or officer-involved shooting. These leaders can play an important advisory role and serve as credible messengers to their communities to help prevent social unrest.

Mayors in Action: Community Partnerships in Orlando

In the case of the Pulse shooting, the Mayor's office had longstanding relationships with organizations serving the LGBTQ+ and Hispanic communities. The ability to work with these groups to host vigils and provide services to the affected communities would not have been possible without these relationships built on trust and respect.

School Communities and Districts

As described in Chapter 6 on school shootings, develop relationships with the broader school community: the school board, parent groups, and leaders of the schools and universities in your city. Schedule meetings with your school superintendent to discuss the school district's violence prevention plan and security needs.

Local Business Community

The local business community should also be included in preparedness planning. As the EL Paso shooting illustrates, businesses and workplaces can be targeted. Urge businesses to develop their own security protocols informed by local law enforcement guidance. Additionally, the business community may play a vital role in a recovery by providing resources, raising money for victims and families, and planning events.

Community Crisis Response Team

In the preparation phase, consider establishing a Community Crisis Response Team. The CCRT model involves inviting a variety of community partners to form a crisis response team that can be mobilized after a mass shooting. For more information, see Chapter 10 on Mental Health.

Engage National Partners

While this chapter is focused on community partners, you should also engage national partners directly, through state agencies or through their local chapters. Obtain the name and contact information for the local representative of each organization should you need to reach them during a crisis.

The FBI, especially the Victim Services Division and Critical Incident Response Group, can provide significant law enforcement and victims assistance resources. You should take the time to meet your regional Special Agent in Charge (SAC). Beyond its tactical and law enforcement capabilities, the FBI may also be able to leverage other partnerships that you don't have the ability to activate. For instance, FBI agents with victim services expertise are likely already connected to community-based victim service providers in your community and can activate them if you don't already have your own relationships in place. Additional information about FBI resources is provided in Chapter 3 on Victims and Families and Chapter 4 on Law Enforcement.

The American Red Cross can provide significant resources for the victims and families. However, the ARC can only respond to incidents if they are invited, so, when needed, you will need to make a call to activate its resources. The ARC has psychological first aid expertise. It can provide "just in time" training to other victim service providers and mental health service providers on psychological first aid and related topics such as stabilizing victims and witnesses. The ARC may be able to mobilize volunteers from other networks such as the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), a network of over 5 million volunteers.[i] Additional information about the ARC is provided in Chapter 3 on Victims and Families.

[i] For more information, please see https://www.nvoad.org/.

The National Compassion Fund, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), and the United Way also bring significant resources to the response and recovery. Initiate contact with each of these national organizations to discuss the services and funding they can provide, and to learn how to contact them when you need them. Additional information about The National Compassion Fund is provided in Chapter 5 on Donations and Volunteer Management.

Response & Recovery

Direct Partners Where They Are Needed Most

The first 24 hours after a shooting can be quite chaotic. Take the time to activate your partners and direct them to where they can be most helpful. For example, partners can be directed to provide services at the Family Reunification Center in accordance with any protocols you may have. Others may be directed to help plan a vigil. Still others might help out at the scene of the shooting to manage the items left to honor the victims or deliver food to first responders. Decide whether to invite the FBI, the ARC, or other national partners to join in the response.

Examples of the varied roles community-based partners can play include:

- Mental health services: Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) of Montgomery County, Ohio provided coordination of service delivery and helped shape Dayton's messaging.
- Family and victim assistance: In El Paso and Orlando, the Family Assistance Centers had over 40 community-based organizations present to serve the needs of victims, their families, and first responders.
- Unity and healing via spiritual leaders: A local Imam amplified Orlando's message of unity and healing. Faith leaders united in San Bernardino to host vigils and services in the immediate aftermath of the attack.
- Organizing events and donations management: The business community helped fund victims' assistance funds and permanent memorials in many cities. For example, in Orlando, Disney and other local business partners donated millions to the OneOrlando Fund. In Dayton, the Downtown Dayton business community organized a vigil and contributed to managing the fund for victims.
- Victims' fund management: Community foundations have also played a role in donations fund management and oversight.
- Legal services: in Orlando, the local bar association provided a range of pro bono legal services for victims and their families.
- Memorials: In El Paso, Walmart partnered with the city to establish a "Grand Candela" memorial, a 30-foot-tall obelisk honoring the victims with a "beacon of light." The city conducted focus groups with the families to understand how they wanted to memorialize the shooting.

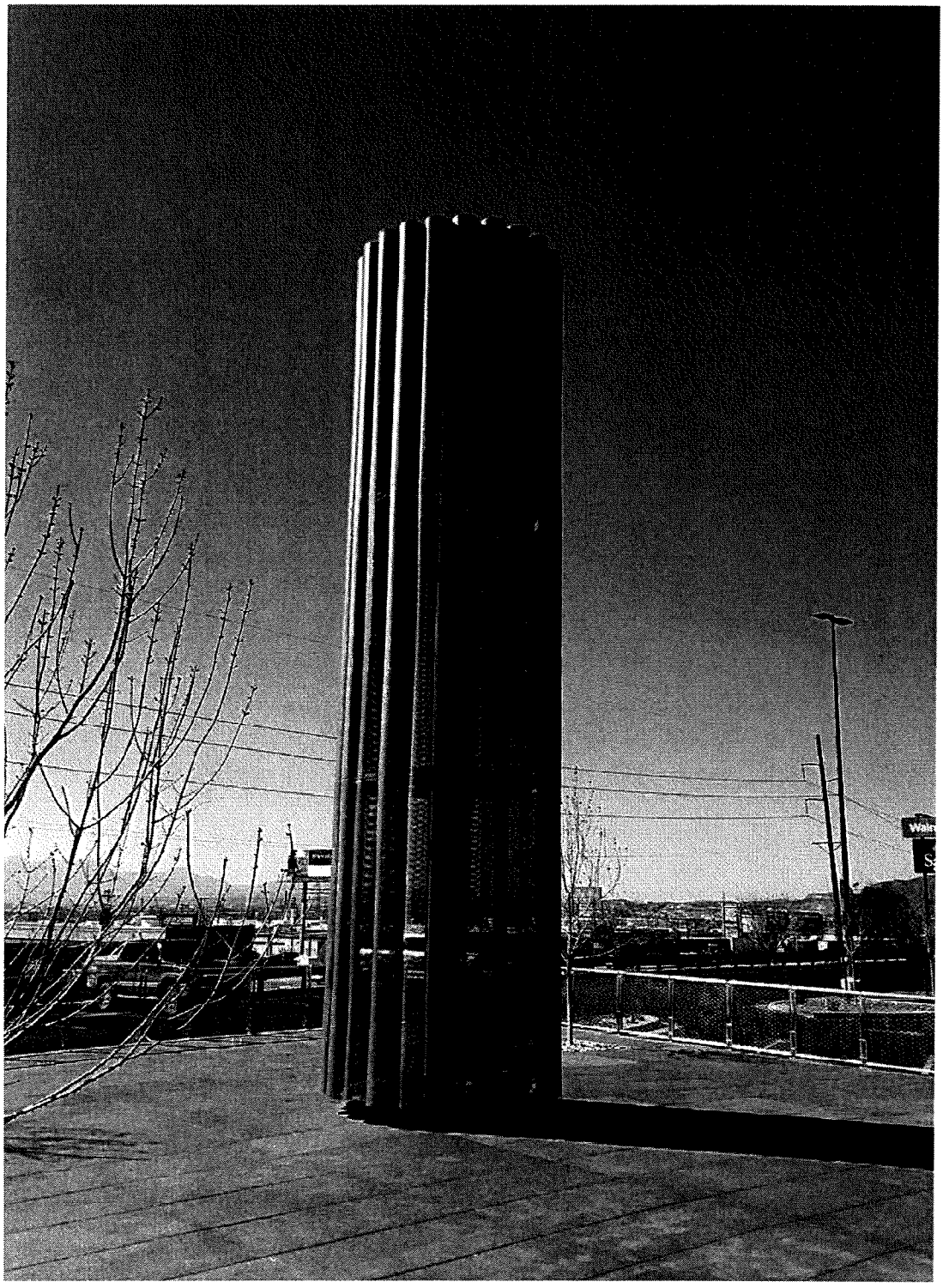


Image 9: *Grand Candela memorial at the Ciela Vista Walmart in El Paso (TomStar81).*

Mayors in Action: Community Partnerships

After the mass shooting in El Paso, local, state, and federal agencies collaborated to establish the El Paso United Family Resiliency Center (FRC) to help victims and families recover from the trauma they experienced. Opened three months after the shooting, the FRC is run by county and city governments, with funding from the Office of the Governor and United Way El Paso.



The FRC disseminates information and connects victims and families to services provided by nearly 40 community-based organizations. These services include individualized case management, referrals for counseling, financial planning, legal guidance, spiritual care, and more, based on an individual's specific needs. Without the engagement of so many community-based partners, the center would not have been able to meet the changing needs of the community, facilitate programs tailored for specific populations, and reduce stigma around receiving mental health care through outreach and education.

One Fund El Paso also involved collaboration with multiple community-based partners. While the fund was administered by the National Compassion Fund, it was established in collaboration with the City of El Paso and local foundations (the Paso del Norte Community Foundation and the El Paso Community Foundation). Importantly, the fund partnered with at least seven community organizations to help victims and family members apply for compensation. Communications about the fund were made in both English and Spanish. Community partners were also instrumental in providing representatives to oversee the donations. They developed the final distribution protocol that disbursed $11.8 million to 355 victims and family members.

Endnotes

[1] El Paso United Family Resiliency Center, "What We Do," *available at* https://www.elpasounitedfrc.org/what-we-do (last visited Apr 15, 2021).

[2] El Paso United Family Resiliency Center, "About," *available at* https://www.elpasounitedfrc.org/about (last visited Apr 15, 2021).

[3] El Paso United Family Resiliency Center, "What We Do," *available at* https://www.elpasounitedfrc.org/what-we-do (last visited Apr 15, 2021).

[4] El Paso United Family Resiliency Center, "About," *available at* https://www.elpasounitedfrc.org/about (last visited Apr 15, 2021).

[5] National Compassion Fund, *One Fund El Paso, available at* https://nationalcompassionfund.org/fund/one-fund-el-paso/ (last visited April 14, 2021).

[6] National Compassion Fund, *Local Agencies Assisting With One Fund Applications, available at* https://nationalcompassionfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Local-Agencies-Assisting-with-One-Fund-Applications.pdf (last visited April 14, 2020).

[7] *Id.*

[8] Vic Kolenc, *$11.8M El Paso Mass Shooting Fund Makes Last 2 Payouts, Audit Still To Be Done* (July, 2020), *available at* https://www.elpasotimes.com/story/news/2020/07/21/el-paso-mass-shooting-fund-makes-last-two-payouts-audit-next/5453190002/.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Identify community partners that may be needed in the response and recovery phases of a shooting. Identify and fill gaps.
- ☐ Initiate contact with national partners, such as FBI, American Red Cross, and the National Compassion Fund.
- ☐ Using a tabletop exercise or other form of planning, engage with partners to discuss their role in responding to a mass shooting or similar crisis. Include partners that can provide mental health services for the recovery phase.
- ☐ Consider establishing a Community Crisis Response Team (CCRT).

Response

- ☐ Contact partners to request help filling the unmet needs of families and victims.
- ☐ Consult with partners that provide mental health services to shape messaging.
- ☐ Cultivate partnerships that are lacking as you move to the recovery phase.

Recovery

- ☐ Work with partners to ensure that the long-term needs of families and the community are met, and for help securing funding.

Chapter 8:
Legal Considerations

**"We obtained legal advice right away.
As it turned out, the legal work was extensive."**
– COS Heather Fagan, Orlando FL

Important: This chapter does not offer legal advice, nor is it a comprehensive legal resource. Instead, it provides an overview of some of the legal issues you may wish to discuss during your consultations with counsel and provides useful resources.

Chapter Summary

If a public mass shooting takes place, some litigation may be inevitable. The grounds for lawsuits against cities following a public mass shooting may include negligence, code enforcement, access to information, and the role of off-duty police. As of this writing, courts have not held city governments or local law enforcement liable for injuries or deaths in connection with public mass shootings or the law enforcement response to such shootings, but the cost of responding to lawsuits is potentially high. In addition, cities must respond to public records requests from the media, potential litigants, and the public. There are steps you may consider taking, in consultation with counsel, to potentially reduce the city's legal risk.

During the **preparedness** phase, consult with your legal counsel to understand and minimize legal risks. Counsel should form a crisis team that includes the city's counsel, the city administrative officer (CAO), the Mayor's Chief of Staff (COS), and the city's Chief Financial Officer (CFO). This "C4" crisis team should meet for "extreme emergency" planning, as detailed below. They can ensure that the necessary agreements, protocols, and charitable entities are negotiated and in place and that all governing statutes relevant to an extreme emergency have been identified.

During the **response**, this C4 team should be called immediately. They can help you activate "mutual aid" (aka "interagency") agreements that will provide additional resources, guide the decision of whether to declare an emergency, and ensure the city's primary administrative functions are coordinated. They can also play a support role in establishing the victims' fund, managing the public record request process, and ensuring the city's response to the crisis complies with applicable law.

During the **recovery** phase, your counsel will oversee the resolution of any legal action filed after the shooting.

Preparedness

Assemble a Crisis Leadership Team ("C4")

Consult with your legal counsel to understand and minimize legal risks. Counsel should form a crisis team (*e.g.*, the city's legal counsel, the city administrative officer (CAO), the Mayor's Chief of Staff (COS), and the city's CFO, or the functional equivalents). The role of the "C4" team is to ensure that the city has mitigated areas of potential liability, and that the city's response to a mass shooting complies with applicable law and is coordinated across all agencies.



Best Practice Tip

Develop protocols to govern the operations of the coroner's office during a mass casualty event, the Family Reunification and Assistance Centers, and the victims' fund.

C4 Public Mass Shooting Preparedness Training

The C4 team should periodically conduct a practice exercise to ensure all agreements and protocols needed by the city in the event of a mass shooting have been identified, negotiated, and are in place. In the case of a small city, the C4 team may want to invite the county's chief administrative officer (CAO) to discuss how the county will be involved in the response.

The C4 team should begin assembling a file that contains, at a minimum:

- The names and contact information of key people and organizations that should be contacted immediately in case of a public mass shooting or similar extreme emergency. In addition to the obvious, the list should include the local U.S. attorney, the State's attorney general, the coroner, the senior operations official at the local trauma center, and the in-house counsel of local press outlets.
- Statutes and regulations that could be applicable on issues such as emergency declarations, victim compensation, police overtime, public record requests, code compliance, and deceased casualties who are unclaimed.
- Mutual aid agreements (aka interagency agreements) with surrounding communities, county and state law enforcement agencies, the FBI, trauma centers, etc., that govern mutual assistance in the event of an emergency.
- Protocols to govern the operations of the coroner's office during a mass casualty event, the Family Reunification and Assistance Centers, and the victims fund, among others.
- A draft executive order form.

The C4 team members should understand that they are always "on call" and should carry a cell phone at all times so that they can be reached immediately. See Chapter 1 on Communications for a best practice tip on preparing a "go bag."

C4 Internal Review

While courts have generally not held cities liable for the response to a mass shooting, the legal costs incurred from defending the city and/or law enforcement from claims brought by affected parties can be significant. Therefore, the C4 team should conduct an internal review to assess and minimize potential liability and consider other issues, summarized below, that could arise in the event of a mass shooting.

Assess and Minimize Legal Risks

The C4 team's legal review should ensure city agencies, including law enforcement, have procedures in place to protect the city from potential liability. Previous claims against local governments or law enforcement after a mass casualty incident include:

- Failure to follow up on identified threats, assess threats, or activate an extreme risk protection order against a perpetrator.[1]
- Failure to inspect a building or property where a mass shooting occurs such that victims are trapped inside or the event is more fatal than it would have been otherwise.[2]
- Failure to properly train law enforcement for active shooter events or provide the right equipment.[3]

Other areas of potential liability include code infractions involving the exits of buildings, the management of off-duty police officers, the response to public record requests, and the unofficial actions of well-meaning city employees who act in their individual capacity during a crisis and inadvertently create legal problems. The C4 team may recommend steps to remediate any liability identified, which should be implemented as quickly as possible.

Evaluate Agreements to Ensure Resource Needs are Met During a Shooting

Most cities have mutual aid agreements to ensure that additional emergency response resources, such as law enforcement and trauma care services, are available in the event of an emergency (see Chapter 4 for more on this topic). The C4 team should evaluate these agreements in view of projected resource needs during an extreme emergency and determine whether these agreements will meet the city's needs without posing undue legal risk. For example, the CFO of Orlando mentioned the value of negotiating an agreement with the city's private contractor that provides security for City Hall to also provide security for a Family Reunification Center or Assistance Center if either is established. Consider whether similar agreements (or lack thereof) expose the city to additional risk and how that risk can be properly managed.

Review Coroner Office Protocol

Notifying family members as soon as possible that their loved one is deceased is a top priority. However, existing regulations governing the responsibilities of the coroner's office could have the unintended effect of delaying death notifications. Your C4 team should meet with the coroner's office to develop a protocol that can speed the release of information in the case of a mass shooting, or to seek legislative change if necessary.

Best Practice Tip

Establish a 501(c)(3) charitable entity.

Orlando established a 501(3)(c) charitable entity well before the Pulse shooting. Orlando's attorney recommends every city, even small ones, establish such an entity.

Establish a 501(c)(3) Charitable Entity

Consider establishing a 501(c)(3) charitable entity as part of your preparedness planning. The cost is minimal (the cost of retaining tax counsel is an estimated $5k). While formation is straight forward, the process can be time-consuming; it can take months to obtain the necessary IRS certification. Therefore, it's best to form the 501(c)(3) early in your planning and before an emergency. Once established, the 501(c)(3) entity can be quickly structured to receive donations for a victim's fund. Importantly, it can also be used for other important functions, such as to receive funds donated for the families of fallen officers, victims of natural disasters, and for city initiatives such as parks or events.

As a related matter, the City may wish to establish a separate bank account for the 501(c)(3) charitable entity. You should appoint an individual, perhaps from the C4 team, to serve on the 501(c)(3) board to handle financial matters, and if necessary, to structure the 501(c)(3) to accept donations for victims and their families (see Chapter 5).

Prepare for Public Records Requests

After a mass shooting incident, there will be extensive public records requests from the media and potential litigants. Therefore, the C4 team should review the state's public records statute. It should develop a protocol for handling public records requests after determining what the law requires, whether there are deadlines or penalties for failure to promptly respond, and whether deadlines may be suspended in the case of an extreme emergency. The team should evaluate the city's document destruction policy and ensure the systems used to maintain public documents are up to date and accessible. The city's staff should be briefed on the public record request protocol.

The C4 team should be familiar with the differences between the Federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the state public records law. FOIA applies only to federal records, such as law enforcement documents generated by the FBI, but there may be times when it is unclear whether FOIA or state law applies (*e.g.*, local law enforcement bodycam footage generated during response led by the FBI).

Issues unique to a mass shooting may require the C4 team's urgent attention. For example, sensitive items like photos of the dead and recordings (audio and video) of their deaths could be subject to public records requests. (It is generally desirable to withhold these records if the law permits, as their release risks traumatizing the families of the victims and the public). If state law would require the release of these records, the C4 team may consider advocating in advance for an amendment to the law to prevent the release. Additionally, victims' home addresses may need to be immediately sealed by the county's property assessor as soon as names are released in order to protect victims' privacy and shield them from the news media and from people who would seek to harm them.

Insurance: Consult with a Risk Management Expert

The C4 team should meet with an official from the city's risk management agency or office. In light of the complex liability issues, unusual risks, and potential for dramatic damages, risk management experts should proactively explore ways to mitigate potential liability in connection with a mass shooting. Their assessment should consider applicable state law governing sovereign liability and personal liability exposure for you and your staff. They should report their recommendations to you and the C4 team.

In addition to liability coverage, it's worth noting that a policy can provide coverage for services the city may need in an emergency. For example, one city's liability insurance provided coverage for the cost of engaging a crisis communications consultant (*e.g.*, a public relations expert with the appropriate expertise) during an emergency. As the need to manage large amounts of information can be overwhelming after a shooting, this coverage may benefit your city.

One additional point related to limiting liability: there is no guarantee that establishing a victims' fund will reduce the risk of a lawsuit against the city. However, because there *may* be a liability reduction component to such a fund, the city should take the lead establishing a victim's fund rather than waiting for another entity to establish one.

Consult with Experienced Legal Experts

The experience of others can help your C4 team assess the legal issues outlined above. After the Pulse shooting, the Orlando C4 team contacted the legal counsel of ten cities that had recently responded to a public mass shooting or mass casualty event to solicit their guidance.

Understand State Preemption Laws

Following the Tree of Life Shooting, Mayor Peduto urged the Pittsburgh City Council to pass local regulations relating to firearms. These actions were met with lawsuits that exposed the city and the mayor to liability. During the preparedness phase, your city's C4 team can review the state preemption laws to help you understand the limits to your ability to regulate firearms before or after a shooting.

Response

Contact the C4 Team

Involve your C4 team immediately. They should meet daily to ensure the city's primary administrative functions are coordinated, and that the city's response to the crisis complies with applicable law. They can help you activate mutual aid agreements to provide additional resources, advise on your decision of whether to declare an emergency, and help you implement applicable protocols. They can also play a support role in establishing the victims' fund, managing the public record request process, and managing outside counsel. Orlando City Counsel Mayanne Downs said her C4 team spoke at 6:30 every morning after the Pulse shooting to discuss urgent issues. This prescheduled call promoted efficiency and helped coordinate the response across city offices. As a result, the daily C4 call is now part of the city's standard emergency protocol.

Consider Whether to Make an Emergency Declaration

Consider whether to declare a local emergency or local disaster. According to Attorney Downs, there is no downside to making the declaration immediately. Declaring an emergency may protect the city from some of the legal risks described above and has the potential to defray costs relating to police overtime costs. The implications of the declaration vary state by state, but the declaration may authorize you to:[4]

- Activate local emergency response plans and mutual aid agreements with nearby jurisdictions, trauma centers, and the FBI.
- Activate local emergency operations center and national incident management system (NIMS).
- Suspend or temporarily waive union rules or other labor laws and deploy responders for longer work shifts.
- Activate immunities and liability protections for staff that respond.

Local declarations of emergency may require you to assess whether local emergency response resources would be exhausted before allowing the declaration of an emergency and/or requesting state aid. This determination can be made in consultation with your C4 team. You may also ask the governor to declare a statewide emergency if state resources are needed.

A state or federal emergency declaration for an incident that meets the criterion of a "major disaster" may provide access to federal funding, including SBA disaster loans and FEMA funding authorized by the Stafford Act.[5] However, to be eligible for FEMA funding a city must provide evidence of extensive property damage, such as damage caused by fire or an explosion, or demonstrate exhaustion of local resources. See Appendix C on Funding Opportunities for more information.

Respond to Open Government and Public Record Requests

Your staff may need to assist with responding to public record requests from the media and potential litigants. One best practice is to post all public records relating to the shooting on a city website to reduce repetitive requests. Outside counsel may need to be retained during the response phase to form the policy for meeting the intense demand for information and to manage litigation, if any.

Mayors in Action: Public Records Requests

In Orlando, a dedicated staff responded to hundreds of requests, in consultation with the C4 team and coordinated with FBI. The city promoted transparency and reduced the impact of repetitive public record requests by hosting a webpage on which all public documents relating to Pulse Nightclub and the shooting were published and regularly updated. Instead of responding to individual requests, city staff directed inquiries to the website. The website also specified information that would not be released, usually for privacy or law enforcement reasons. A dedicated police official reviewed all law enforcement records before they were posted. The city also sought clarification from a court about the ability to release 911 calls and transcripts. The city released this information within one week of receiving a court order that clarified which calls and transcripts needed to be redacted to protect victims' personal information.



The website is still available for viewing. See, "Pulse Tragedy Public Records" at https://www.orlando.gov/Our-Government/Departments-Offices/Executive-Offices/City-Clerk/Pulse-Tragedy-Public-Records.

Establish a Victims' Fund

This topic is covered in the preparedness section above and, in greater depth, in Chapter 5 on Donations and Volunteer Management. However, it is worth noting here that your counsel should be involved in the establishment of the victims' fund. Once the city establishes a fund (using a pre-existing 501(c)(3) entity or in collaboration with another organization such as the National Compassion Fund), the best practice is to combine all victims' funds into one. This will help prevent fraud and ensure transparent and equitable distributions to the victims and their families. If other funds were established, your counsel can assist by contacting competing funds (ideally, within a week) to urge them to transfer funds they raise to the city's designated fund. Counsel can explain to these operators that they lack both the necessary 501(c)(3) status to accept tax-deductible charitable donations and a process for making the distributions.

Engage the Local Bar Association

Victims and their families will need legal services. You or your legal counsel should contact your local bar association. They can identify qualified attorneys willing to volunteer their time to help victims and family members handle the probate, immigration, and other legal issues triggered by the shooting. They can even find mediators to help resolve intrafamily disagreements that can arise.

Recovery

Litigation and Trial Considerations

Depending on circumstances unique to the shooting and to the city's response, lawsuits may be filed by victims, media outlets, or advocacy groups against the city, the venue, the police department, or you. Additionally, if the shooter is arrested and prosecuted, there could also be legal considerations relating to a trial. For example, an ongoing criminal case could limit what you can say about the attack. Your counsel will advise you on these legal matters and manage the services of outside counsel retained to defend the city.

Key Resources: Legal Summaries of Potential Claims Arising from Mass Shootings



American Bar Association, survey of legal actions and related issues stemming from a mass shooting:
https://www.americanbar.org/groups/tort_trial_insurance_practice/publications/the_brief/2019-20/winter/liability-mass-shootings-are-we-a-turning-point/

Sherman Howard, Insurance Law Coverage of Mass Shootings:
http://shermanhoward.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Mass-Shootings-and-Insurance-Coverage.pdf

Endnotes

[1] Chen v. Cty. of Santa Barbara, 2015 WL 1262150 (C.D. Cal. 2015) (alleging law enforcement "created a dangerous condition" by failing to reasonably investigate the shooter as part of "wellness check" despite being aware of his online postings and violent intentions). https://www.americanbar.org/groups/tort_trial_insurance_practice/publications/the_brief/2019-20/winter/liability-mass-shootings-are-we-a-turning-point/

[2] *E.g.*, Lawsuits were filed in connection with the Oakland ghost ship fire. The city ultimately settled with survivors, https://www.mercurynews.com/2020/11/11/oakland-ends-ghost-ship-fire-lawsuit-paying-victims-33-million-for-deadliest-fire-in-citys-history/ (last visited July 18, 2021).

[3] *E.g.*, Case against city arguing failure to properly train police officer, among other things, properly dismissed, https://www.police1.com/legal/articles/appeals-court-court-was-right-to-dismiss-pulse-nightclub-victims-lawsuit-against-city-police-D7sKXU2LK7wunByK/ (last visited July 18, 2021).

[4] Ass'n Of State And Territorial Health Officials, Emergency Declarations and Authorities Fact Sheet, ASTHO (2011), https://astho.org/Programs/Preparedness/Public-Health-Emergency-Law/Emergency-Authority-and-Immunity-Toolkit/Emergency-Declarations-and-Authorities-Fact-Sheet/ (last visited May 27, 2021).

[5] Congressional Research Service, Stafford Act Assistance and Acts of Terrorism, 2019, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/R44801.pdf.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Establish a C4 team and ask them to engage in "extreme emergency" planning. They should ensure the necessary agreements, protocols, and funding entities are negotiated and in place, and that all governing statutes are identified.
- ☐ Assess need for enhanced liability protection.
- ☐ Understand the limits to regulatory action imposed by state laws.
- ☐ Establish a public records request strategy and, if needed, advocate for a change in state law if records that could cause trauma (such as photos or recordings of the dying or the dead) would need to be released.

Response

- ☐ Consider whether to declare a local or state emergency.
- ☐ Activate mutual aid/interagency agreements to meet additional resource needs.
- ☐ Respond to public record requests; consider posting public records online.
- ☐ Engage the local bar association to provide volunteer services for victims.

Recovery

- ☐ Work with city legal counsel and C4 team to manage litigation and trial issues.

Chapter 9: Commemorations

"People need to grieve."
– Mayor William Peduto, Pittsburgh PA

Chapter Summary

After a public mass shooting, community members will want to gather for many reasons: to show support for victims and families, thank first responders, process their grief and anger, and demand change. These feelings can be especially raw in the immediate aftermath and may linger for years beyond the tragedy.

Mayors told us that nothing will **prepare** you for the grief caused by a public mass shooting. The best you can do is include the hosting of a vigil in your preparedness planning so that you and other city agencies know what to expect. Meet with mental health experts for guidance on how to promote community healing (see Chapter 10 on Mental Health). Strengthen relationships with faith groups and other community partners who can help you quickly organize a vigil should the need arise (see Chapter 7 on Community Partnerships).

During the **response**, community gatherings often begin with impromptu memorials and vigils shortly after the shooting occurs. Your staff or community partners may host a vigil within a few days of the shooting. Here, your compassion and connection to the community will guide your planning. Note that police security may be required for large gatherings, which could delay when the first vigil can be scheduled.

During the **recovery** phase, as the community takes stock of the loss, other events—benefit concerts, community meetings, religious gatherings, political assemblies, and other forms of remembrance—will be planned. Mayors and their staffs say that one-year remembrances are particularly difficult because some members of the community have returned to a sense of normalcy while others are still very much traumatized by the shooting. Thus, it is important to consult with mental health experts and the families of the victims when planning or participating in these events.

Mayors offered the following advice for these gatherings: (1) take steps to avoid politicizing the shooting at remembrances, as it can retraumatize the families, (2) consider scheduling a variety of events that offer different avenues for people to grieve (including by staying home if that is what they need), and (3) speak from your heart.

Preparedness

No amount of preparation can diminish the grief you will experience and witness after a public mass shooting. The best you can do is include the hosting of a vigil in your preparedness planning so that you and other city agencies know what to expect. Consider potential venues for vigils and other commemorations and develop protocols for managing in-kind donations. Learn about messaging to traumatized communities. Finally, meet with faith groups, mental health experts, and other partners who can offer their guidance on how to promote community healing.

Response

Vigils

Vigils—perhaps organized by the city, the business community, local organizations, or faith groups—happen spontaneously shortly after the shooting. Whether or not the city hosts the vigil, the city may need to provide police security and designate the event's location. Issues to consider for planning a vigil are those you would address for any large public gathering: traffic control, security needs, crowd control, parking, issuing the necessary permits for use of public spaces, among others.

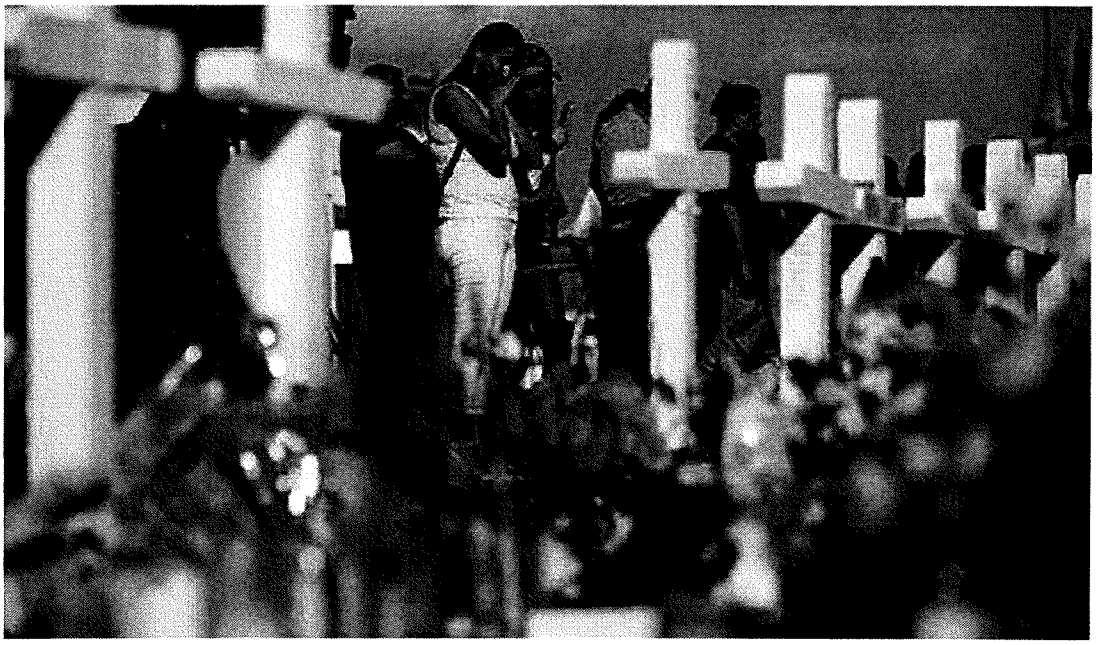


Image 10: *Vigil and memorial following the Walmart shooting in El Paso (Ruperto Miller).*

If the city is involved in organizing a vigil, consider whether any elected officials (including yourself) should be authorized to speak at the event. At one event, one mayor decided to prevent elected officials from speaking to avoid politicizing the tragedy. Other mayors have addressed this concern by advising elected officials and dignitaries to deliver a coordinated message of healing and unity.

When planning a vigil, seek input from the victims and families (through the victim advocates) and from mental health experts. If the shooting targeted an ethnic or religious community, consult with leaders from that community for help crafting culturally appropriate messages of loss and to understand appropriate dress and customary practices. Determine whether interpreting services are needed at the vigil.

Timing may be an important consideration. Although the community will want to have a vigil as soon as possible, law enforcement officials may still be working overtime on the investigation. The vigil may need to be delayed until sufficient police staffing is available to provide for adequate security.

Mayors in Action: The First Vigils

Faith communities organized a vigil the afternoon after the mass shooting in Dayton. A candlelight vigil was held that evening, organized by the "Downtown Dayton" business community group and several City Commissioners. The Mayor said she asked the Commissioners for help planning the vigil so that they could demonstrate their concern for the victims and their families in a concrete way. Their support in this way also allowed the Mayor to concentrate on other aspects of the response. These vigils allowed the community to come together to safely "reclaim" the Oregon District, where the shooting took place. The Dayton Police provided security for the candlelight vigil in the business district.



In Orlando, city staff coordinated with faith leaders and organizations that serve the LGBTQ+ community to host an interfaith vigil. Because the event was declared a terrorist attack after the shooter swore allegiance to the Islamic State, Mayor Dyer felt it necessary to invite a respected Imam to speak out against the attack in order to prevent retaliation against the local Muslim community. At the vigil, Imam Muhammad Musri declared the support of the Muslim community for the victims of the tragedy, and condemned the ideology of hate and death expressed by the shooter.[1]

Funerals

All the mayors we interviewed told us they attended as many funerals as they could. In some cases, they were invited to speak. Familiarize yourself with any faith and cultural traditions that may be part of the funerals you attend. In some cases, state and community-based partners may offer to pay for funerals. Your office can ensure that victims' families are connected with these resources.

Security may also be needed at funerals, especially if the shooting was a hate crime and the affected community is gathering at a large funeral or memorial service. One mayor mentioned that police also provided security for family members' homes while they were at funerals to protect against potential theft while they were away from their homes. These security needs must be balanced with ongoing demands for law enforcement personnel at the scene, at the family reunification center, and at vigils or other events.

Victims' home addresses may need to be sealed by the county's property assessor as soon as names are released in order to protect victims' privacy and prevent people from going to the homes of victims and family members during the funerals.

Recovery

First Annual Remembrance Event & Commemorations

Mayors and their staff told us that the one-year mark is one of the most difficult times in the recovery from the shooting. Right after the shooting, you will be working around the clock to attend to the urgent demands of the response, and you may sense that the community is united in its shared feelings of grief and loss. A year later, those feelings may have changed. The community may become divided over issues such as pending litigation, a criminal trial for the shooter, payouts from funds and foundations, and political views. The first annual remembrance event is therefore both a terrible reminder of an event that is still raw for many, as well as a time to heal for others.

Many mayors told us their city took the lead in planning that first remembrance event (or series of events). They called it a "remembrance" rather than an "anniversary" because the latter is a word with happy connotations. Some families wanted to participate in planning and tell their stories, while others did not. The mayors recommend consulting with victims' advocates and mental health professionals.

It is important to prevent the event from becoming politicized to avoid re-traumatizing family members and the community. That may involve requiring elected officials to use messaging focused on healing or not inviting elected officials to speak.



Image 11: *Location of the Pulse Nightclub Shooting in Orlando (WalterPro).*

The City of Orlando worked with Orange County and the onePULSE Foundation to host Orlando United Day on June 12, 2017, one year after the shooting. Buildings throughout Orlando and central Florida were lit in rainbow colors. Events were also hosted by the University of Central Florida and other colleges. Community members were invited to Lake Eola Park Amphitheater for an evening of prayer, live music, inspirational dance, and a moment of reflection for the victims. There were tens of thousands of attendees. The City was involved in planning and provided the security for the Lake Eola event.

The Covid-19 pandemic made it difficult to organize vigils and remembrance events. In 2020, remembrance events in Dayton and El Paso had to be virtual. Dayton Mayor Whaley told us that a "virtual event is not the same, people need to come together." Nevertheless, the city found ways to engage mourners. #DaytonShines events included physical activities, such as a memorial tree placed in the Oregon District on which notes of remembrance could be placed along with seed packets, and an online event that featured a photo mosaic and nine minutes of silence.

See Chapter 6 on schools for a description of Parkland's first annual remembrance events, which included activities for students and the broader community.

Key Resources: Resources for Helping Victims and Planning Vigils

Office for Victims of Crime, Helping Victims of Mass Violence & Terrorism, Recovery Phase: Office for Victims of Crime Training & Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC), Planning How to Cope with Commemorations, Special Events, and Timeframes that Activate Trauma Memories
https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/pubs/mvt-toolkit/recovery.html

Permanent Memorials

Permanent memorials honor the victims and testify to the community's united response. When planning a memorial:

- Engage victims and families, community partners, and local businesses. Consider forming an independent board or commission with stakeholders that are committed to advancing a shared vision.
- Consult with mental health partners.
- Recognize that the process will take time.

[1] Karni A. Biden signs bill creating National Pulse Memorial and commemorates Pride Month. The New York Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/us/politics/biden-national-pulse-memorial.html. Published June 25, 2021. Accessed July 7, 2021.

Memorials may take years of planning due to the need to find an appropriate site, address the wishes of the families (some express a desire not to be reminded daily of their loss), and coordinate partners that can realize the community's vision (such as architects and donors). In San Bernardino, for instance, the groundbreaking ceremony for a memorial honoring the victims took place five years after the tragedy, with construction scheduled to be competed in summer of 2021. Likewise, President Biden signed legislation creating a permanent memorial and reflecting pool at the site of the Pulse shooting in 2021, five years after the shooting.[1]

In Newtown, Connecticut, planning has taken even longer, with voters approving a referendum to construct a memorial pond nearly a decade after the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012.[2] According to press reports, the memorial will be completed in December 2021.[3]

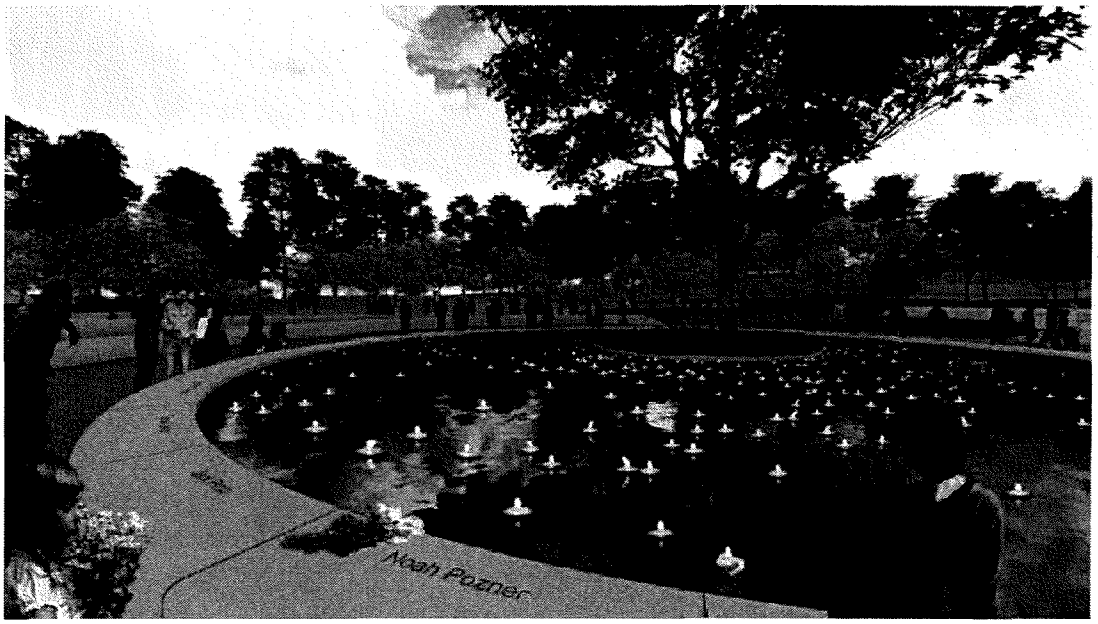


Image 12: *Rendering of the Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial reflecting pool (Courtesy of SWA San Francisco).*

Archival Considerations

Documenting and archiving items left at the scene—the spontaneous memorials created by the community—or donated after the shooting is a monumental task. These items may include flowers, candles, notes, teddy bears, art, and items of personal significance and sentimental value. In Orlando, this massive effort involved a large number of staff working against the clock to prevent items from being soaked by rain.

Deciding when and how to preserve these items can be a challenge. One approach is to partner with a local museum or historical society to properly archive them. One mayor recommended informing the public about these preservation efforts to prevent confusion when they are removed from the site. Consider reaching out to other cities who have endured a public mass shooting to make connections with staff that have expertise in this area.

For example, Pamela Schwartz of the Orange County History Center in Florida has developed best practices for museums and historical centers to curate and display art and artifacts from impromptu memorials assembled after a public mass shooting.[4] She has reached out to historians in other cities to offer archival guidance after public mass shootings.

Depending on the volume of items received, you may need to get creative. Newtown, CT received 65,000 teddy bears after the Sandy Hook Elementary school shooting and thousands of letters, Origami paper cranes, and other items. Storage capacity and staff were overwhelmed. Stuffed animals had to be diverted to recipients such as children's hospitals and orphanages across the country.[5] First Selectman Patricia Llodra suggested "cremating" letters and other items for use as "sacred soil" for a permanent memorial—staff simply could not read all of the letters received from around the world.

It may not be possible, or even desirable, to save every item: Newtown converted many of the tons of teddy bears, letters, and ephemera that were donated into bricks that could be used when a permanent memorial was built.[6]

Key Resources: Permanent Memorials and Archiving

Los Angeles Times, Archiving grief: Museums learn to preserve memorials left at mass shootings: https://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-museums-mass-shootings-20180225-story.html

Lisa M. Moore, (Re)Covering the Past, Remembering Trauma: The Politics of Commemoration at Sites of Atrocity: https://jpia.princeton.edu/sites/jpia/files/2009-3.pdf

Judy Barsalou and Victoria Baxter, The Urge to Remember: The Role of Memorials in Social Reconstruction and Transitional Justice: https:/www.usip.org/sites/default/files/resources/srs5.pdf

Oklahoma City Memorial Museum: https://memorialmuseum.com/

9/11 Memorial Museum: https://www.911memorial.org/

National Mass Violence and Victimization Resource Center, best practices: https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/cf2f54yj/tipsheet15.pdf

Endnotes

[1] BBC News, *Orlando Shooting: Vigils Held Around World to Honour Victims* (June 2016), *available at* https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-36524095.

[2] Elizabeth Williamson, *A Search for Remembrance After the Sandy Hook Massacre*, The New York Times, May 1, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/01/us/politics/newtown-sandy-hook-elementary.html (last visited May 4, 2021).

[3] Amanda Blanco, *After Years of Planning, 'The Clearing' is a Memorial That Will Honor the 26 Victims Who Died at Sandy Hook Elementary School*, The Courant (December 2012), *available at* https://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-news-connecticut-sh-memorial-20191214-gxfbdkbbyza6xbh7iammnpxbfu-story.html.

[4] Matthew Peddie, *Intersection: Pulse Memorial Plans; Gun Safety Activism; Curating Pulse Items; Former Pro Surfer CJ Hobgood*, National Public Radio (June 2019), *available at* https://www.wmfe.org/intersection-pulse-memorial-plans-gun-safety-activism-curating-pulse-items-former-pro-surfer-cj-hobgood/115908.

[5] Paul Kix, *65,000 Teddy Bears for Newtown, and One Man to Sort the World's Grief*, The Trace (December, 2015), *available at* https://www.thetrace.org/2015/12/sandy-hook-shooting-donations/.

[6] WCVB, *Newtown Finds a Way to Dispose of Victim Mementos* (December, 2012), *available at* https://www.wcvb.com/article/newtown-finds-a-way-to-dispose-of-victim-mementos/8176565.

COMMEMORATIONS CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Include commemorations in any emergency management planning or victim assistance planning for a public mass shooting.
- ☐ Develop protocols for donations management.
- ☐ Learn about how communities heal from trauma.

Response

- ☐ Activate partners to begin documenting and cataloguing items left at the scene.
- ☐ Activate partners for help planning a vigil and other events.
- ☐ Cultivate partnerships that are lacking as you move to recovery phase.

Recovery

- ☐ Attend funerals when invited, plan security for the families of the victims.
- ☐ Consult families when planning for vigils, the one-year remembrance, and any permanent memorial.
- ☐ Make staff available to assist with archival and documentation needs or revise protocols for use with community partners and volunteers.

Chapter 10:
Mental Health

"When something like this happens, people feel vulnerable. They feel unsafe. They worry, their children worry, grandparents worry, and it has a mass effect. We can't send in equipment to help fix that. We can just give our support."
— Mayor William Peduto, Pittsburgh PA

Chapter Summary

The invisible impact of a mass shooting is the widespread trauma it causes, starting with survivors, their families, and first responders, extending to you and your staff, and deep into the community. As one mayor said, every person who was in the city on the day of the shooting will be affected in some way. And evidence shows that those watching media coverage from afar are also emotionally affected. Perhaps your most important role, after being the "communicator-in-chief," is to ensure mental health resources are available to the community in the days, months, and years that follow.

In the **preparedness** phase, consider mental health in every aspect of emergency planning, including victim and family assistance, training, and communications. This is your chance to identify mental health resources of both local and national organizations for the response and recovery phase. All the protocols you develop, such as those for victim and family assistance, should include input from mental health and behavioral health service providers. Consider establishing a Community Crisis Response Team that can be mobilized in response to a shooting. You may request an assessment of the school district's mental health resources for students.

During the **response**, move quickly to establish mental health services for the victims and family members, and also the broader community and first responders. Shape your messaging in consultation with mental health experts. Representatives from the American Red Cross, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), and the FBI Victim Services Division can help you identify community-based mental health resources and share their own considerable expertise.

Finally, your focus during the **recovery** phase should be to ensure that the long-term mental health needs of the victims and the wider community are met. This may involve establishing a Resiliency Center. In addition, urge first responders, your staff, and others directly affected by the shooting to seek help (including yourself).

Preparedness

Consult Mental Health Experts in Preparedness Efforts

Mayors told us their planning did not focus on the recovery phase, and some lacked preexisting relationships with mental health experts and victims' services organizations. To aide your planning, identify and cultivate relationships with these experts now. Invite them to your tabletop exercise and discuss the mental health services that will need to be offered at the Family Reunification Center (aka Family Reception Center) (FRC) and Family Assistance Center (FAC). See Chapter 3 for additional information and resources (*e.g.*, the OVCTTAC Mass Violence Toolkit).

Understand the Traumatic Impact of a Mass Shooting

As part of your planning, learn about the traumatic impact of a mass shooting on different populations. The exposure levels below, adapted from The Wiley Handbook of The Psychology of Mass Shootings, illustrate how widespread the traumatic impact can be:

- Survivors (extreme exposure): witnessed shooting, saw others injured or killed or wounded, maybe was wounded but survived.
- Indirectly exposed: physically present at location, heard gunfire, etc.
- Others who are members of the community that was targeted but did not witness the shooting firsthand.
- Bereaved family members who lost someone in the shooting.
- Law enforcement and first responders.
- Journalists covering the issue (they can experience both acute stress and long-term occupational health impacts).
- Broader public (exposed via media coverage or knowing victims and their families).
- Yourself and your staff.

Community Crisis Response Team

Consider establishing a Community Crisis Response Team. The CCRT model involves inviting a variety of community partners to form a crisis response team that can be mobilized after a mass shooting. The CCRT's role is to analyze a request, identify gaps in resources, design and implement a culturally appropriate response, and evaluate the response that was delivered. The CCRT can also assist in the response to natural disasters and everyday mental health crises in your communities.

The following professional affiliations are represented on most CCRTs:

- Law enforcement representative
- Psychologist or psychiatrist

- Victim service professional
- Member of the clergy
- Member of a medical profession
- Child counselor or teacher
- Representatives of grassroots organizations serving diverse sectors of the community
- Person experienced with media relations

Consider who else might be included in your community. For instance, artists and art organizations often volunteer to help affected community members give expression to pain, outrage and a search for justice and healing.

Key Resources: Community Crisis Response

National Organization for Victim Assistance, Crisis Response Team Training: Ideally, all members of the Community Crisis Response Team should be trained in trauma mitigation, psychological first aid, and education protocols so that they are prepared to deliver or coordinate the delivery of these services if a public mass shooting occurs. https://www.trynova.org/crisis-response-program/crtregistration/



National Organization for Victim Assistance and Office for Victims of Crime, Community Crisis Response Training Manual: The current version used in the above training is the fourth edition, which can be ordered ($85 per copy) from NOVA (the hyperlink is to the second edition which remains available free of charge). This training manual is for individuals and organizations interested in responding to crisis, providing an overview of trauma responses, crisis intervention techniques, media management techniques, and discussion of organizational roles in crisis preparedness, response, and recovery. https://www.ncjrs.gov/ovc_archives/reports/crt/welcome.html

Student Mental Health Services

Consider requesting a report that assesses the school district's mental health system. There are many tools available to help with this assessment. Ask school leaders and mental health experts for their recommendations on ways the city can support their efforts to provide needed mental health services.

Also, encourage school officials to consult with the American Red Cross as part of their security planning to understand the mental health resources the ARC can provide in the event of a school shooting. For more information and resources, see Chapter 6 on school shootings.

Response

Ensure Mental Health Services are Available

Quickly establish the FAC to provide for the immediate mental health needs of victims and family. You may also need to consult mental health experts to ensure that a range of mental health services are made available to meet the needs of the broader community. Your planning should include community-based services for people who face barriers to seeking mental health services, such as childcare obligations, limited time off from work, stigma, language barriers, or unemployment. For more information, see Chapter 3 on Victims and Families.

Crisis Communications Informed by Mental Health Experts

To inform your messaging during the response phase, familiarize yourself with the crisis communications resources provided by the CDC and consult with mental health experts. The CERC manual is a useful tool. For more information on crisis communications and resources, see Chapter 1 on Communications.

Promptly and consistently announce the location and services of the Family Reunification Center—and later the Family Assistance Center (FAC)—so that victims and family members know where to go for mental health support and care. Clearly communicate who is eligible to receive services at the FAC, which may only serve those who are directly impacted by the tragedy. Offering mental health services as quickly as possible in a central location will ease the burden of seeking care for families when they are at their most vulnerable psychologically.

Share information about mental health resources available to the broader community and encourage people to seek help if they need it and to lend a hand where they can. You can let everyone know "it's okay to not be okay." Community members should know that their initial reactions and feelings (whatever they are) are a predictable response to a shocking and disruptive tragedy. This message is not only important for the public, but also for first responders and your own staff and colleagues.

Familiarize yourself with concepts from psychological first aid (PFA) resources so that you can include them in your crisis communications during the response phase.

Psychological First Aid

Psychological first aid (PFA) is a counseling technique developed by the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (NC-PTSD). According to the NC-PTSD, PFA is an evidence-informed approach that first responders and others can use to assist people in the immediate aftermath of a traumatic event to reduce initial distress, foster adaptive functioning, and prevent later post-traumatic stress. PFA includes non-intrusive care and assessment of needs (like medical triage). It does *not* include discussion of the underlying traumatic event like traditional therapy.

The American Red Cross and other partners can help your staff identify local organizations that can appropriately serve the psychological needs of the victims, family members, witnesses, and first responders.

Key Resource: NC-PTSD Psychological First Aid (PFA) Manual

NC-PTSD Psychological First Aid (PFA) Manual:
https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/type/psych_firstaid_manual.asp

Recovery

Communications: Shifting from Response to Recovery

Your messaging will gradually shift from a "response" to a "recovery" frame. As you begin to develop recovery messages, consult with mental health experts to understand how to avoid exacerbating or resurfacing trauma for the community. For example, in Dayton, Mayor Whaley consulted with a countywide mental health services network with whom she had previously partnered to understand how to effectively communicate about the opioid crisis.

Continue to share information about mental health resources available to victims, families, and the broader community. Your communications may also include messages to bolster long-term community resilience and restore hope. Your messages will depend on the situation, but common themes to promote resiliency include unity ("OneOrlando"), strength (Pittsburgh's "Stronger than Hate"), and healing ("Dayton Shines"). Note, however, that the well-intentioned hashtags and messages that organically arise in the wake of a shooting can be emotionally



Image 13: *"Hate and terror will never divide us" poster at Christchurch mosque shooting memorial (Natecull).*

harmful to those who were most directly impacted. Some victims and families have shared negative reactions to some of these themes due to the impossibility of feeling strong in the face of unspeakable loss.

Vigils, remembrances, and memorials are important tools for helping your community grieve and increase their psychological wellbeing. Plan these events in consultation with mental health experts in addition to victims and their families. For more information about planning these events, see Chapter 6 on Commemorations.

Provide Services to Address Ongoing Trauma

Mental health services may be needed for months, and even years, following a public mass shooting. The role of a Resiliency Center (RC) is to provide these services to the survivors and their families. Ideally, the RC should also provide referrals to mental health services for the broader community. For more information on establishing a RC, see Chapter 3 on Victims and Families. For information on funding an RC, see Appendix C on Funding Opportunities.

Include Information on Mental and Behavioral Health in After Action Reports

Information on mental health, behavioral health, and victim services is rarely included in after action reports, but could benefit victim service agencies and community organizations. Feedback from victim service providers, victims and families themselves, and first responders that receive mental health and behavioral health services, should be included in after action Reports. For more best practices and a useful template, see the key resource below.

Key Resource: After Action Report Recommendations and Templates



National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center, Victim-Centric Mass Violence Incident After Action Report: Recommendations and Template: https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/obkbblid/victimcentricmviaarrecommendationsandtemplate-final-07-14.pdf

First Responders' Mental Health

First responders often experience trauma and post-traumatic stress syndrome following a mass shooting. Yet, Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl told us there are inadequate mental health resources for police officers and first responders. You can work in partnership with your Police Chief to ensure first responders in your city receive the mental health support they need and deserve. As noted above, first responders are eligible for services that are funded by AEAP (see Appendix C).

Similarly, in the event of a serious injury of death of an officer, there are concrete actions you can take to ensure that the officer is recognized for his or her heroism. Beyond advocating on behalf of the officer's family for the services and benefits they will need, you could also use an existing 501(c)(3) organization to receive public donations intended for the officer's family. See Chapter 5 for more information on donations and fund management.

Key Resources: Mental Health Services and Benefits for First Responders

COPS Office resource center, Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Programs: Eleven Case Studies: The COPS Office publishes materials for law enforcement and community stakeholders to address crime and disorder challenges. This link features a book entitled Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Programs: Eleven Case Studies, which describes agencies' programs that protect the mental and emotional health of law enforcement officers, their nonsworn colleagues, and families.
https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ric.php?page=detail&id=COPS-P371

Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act—Funding opportunities available through the COPS office:
https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ric.php?page=detail&id=COPS-P371

National Alliance on Mental Illness, Preparing for the Unimaginable: Report describing actions to take within police departments to safeguard officers' mental health, promote resilience, and prevent secondary trauma.
https://www.nami.org/Support-Education/Publications-Reports/Public-Policy-Reports/Preparing-for-the-Unimaginable/Preparing-For-The-Unimaginable

Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program (PSOB): PSOB provides death and educational benefits to the survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other first responders, and disability benefits to officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty.
https://psob.bja.ojp.gov/

Community Conflict

Be aware of the "dark side of solidarity," when people feel pressured to participate in shared mourning or collective expressions of unity that may not reflect their own emotional reactions. Although community solidarity provides an opportunity to increase psychological wellbeing or buffer against mental health symptoms, it may also be undermined by differing views about the "readiness to move on." Conflict can arise within community groups and in affected workplaces, as people experience grief in different ways, or as the shooting becomes politicized.

As Mayor, you can try to balance these tensions by providing high levels of support and assistance in the immediate aftermath (generally, the first six months), being a source of credible and accurate information, and being attentive to the differing needs of various groups as they attempt to "find meaning" of the event.

In the aftermath of a "public mass shooting" (the focus of this Playbook), communities that deal with daily "urban gun violence" (including gang- and drug-related shooting involving multiple victims) are understandably upset that so much more attention and funding is paid to this type of shooting. Please see the afterword, "A Note on Urban Gun Violence" for guidance on how to address this issue in your community.

Taking Care of Yourself and Your Staff

Mayors and their staff report that adrenaline carried them through a week or so of the response, as the stress of hosting VIP visits, attending funerals, speaking to the national media, and managing city agencies prevented them from processing their own emotional reactions to the public mass shooting. Then many experienced a "crash" once safety was established. Grief haunted them for years after the event.

You and your staff will be affected for months or years, just like other members of the community. You need to engage in self-care and encourage others to do so. Mayors spoke of their own coping strategies and emphasized the importance of modeling self-care to other members of the community. For example, El Paso Mayor Dee Margo spoke of taking time for prayer while he was traveling from Austin back to El Paso on the day of the shooting. Other mayors spoke publicly about receiving therapy, thereby modeling self-care for their staff and the community.

Mayors also described their conversations with other mayors as "therapeutic" and emphasized the importance of reaching out to their social support systems.

Encourage your staff to seek help as well. In the immediate aftermath, look around and notice which staff members are struggling and need to take time away from the response. Encourage staff to take time off to recover. Ensure there are systems in place to document and meet employees' needs. Some actions mayors have taken to help their staff include:

- Group therapy sessions
- Providing time off work
- Reassigning them from their response or recovery work
- Checking in personally to see if they need anything you can provide

Endnotes

[1] The Wiley Handbook Of The Psychology Of Mass Shootings, (Laura C. Wilson ed., 1st edition ed. 2016).

[2] The difference between CCRT and CERT: The focus of a local Community Crisis Response Team (CCRT) team is trauma mitigation, mental health recovery, and community resilience. The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is a national program that educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. CERT offers a consistent, nationwide approach to volunteer training and management that professional first responders can rely on during disaster situations, allowing them to focus on more complex tasks. See https://www.ready.gov/cert. Your community may establish both to offer opportunities for residents to serve their community and to leverage their expertise and manpower.

[3] Mary R. Harvey, Anne V. Mondesir & Holly Aldrich, *Fostering Resilience in Traumatized Communities*, 14 J Of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma 265–285 (2007).

[4] *See e.g.*, School Health Assessment And Performance Evaluation System, *available at* https://www.theshapesystem.com/ (last visited June 10, 2021).

[5] Ctrs For Disease Control And Prevention, Cerc Manual, 2018, https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/manual/index.asp.

[6] Amy Novotney, *What happens to the survivors?*, 49 Monitor On Psychology, 2018, at 36.

[7] *Id.*

[8] *Id.*

[9] *Id.*

[10] Stephen A. Scaffidi, Six Minutes In August: A Story Of Tragedy, Healing And Community 155 (2015).

MENTAL HEALTH CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Identify mental health resources. Include mental health experts in your preparedness planning and exercises and ensure they have the proper training for crisis response, which is different from "everyday" talk therapy.
- ☐ Consider establishing a Community Crisis Response Team.
- ☐ Request an assessment of the school district's mental health resources.

Response

- ☐ Ask the American Red Cross and other partners for help identifying mental health resources; work with them to establish the Family Assistance Center.
- ☐ Establish access to mental health services for the broader community.
- ☐ Seek the guidance of victim's assistance and mental health experts to develop trauma-informed messaging.
- ☐ Encourage school districts to accept help from outside resources.
- ☐ Understand Psychological First Aid (PFA) basics.

Recovery

- ☐ Focus your messaging on encouraging people to seek help if they need it, bolstering long-term community resilience, and restoring hope.
- ☐ Establish a long-term Resiliency Center to provide mental health services.
- ☐ Ensure mental health services are available for first responders.
- ☐ Take care of yourself and your staff.

Afterword & Appendices





Afterword:
A Note About Community Gun Violence

This Playbook focuses on shooting rampages in public places resulting in four or more victims killed by the assailant because of the extraordinary challenges these extreme emergencies pose to mayors. While horrifying, this type of mass shooting is exceedingly rare, averaging about six per year since 2006. Only three mass shootings met this definition in 2020, largely as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic that forced closure of schools, restaurants, and other public venues. However, over the first five months of 2021, as the nation moved toward a more normal way of life, there have already been five public mass killings.

The Associated Press/USA Today/Northeastern University database takes a broader approach, defining a "mass shooting" as any incident in which at least four people are killed by gunfire. Using this definition, there were 21 mass shootings in 2020. Most of this community gun violence occurs in U.S. cities, often in specific areas within neighborhoods. The perpetrators are usually young men and are often gun violence victims themselves. Their crimes upend promising lives, often of young people, and create a ripple effect of collective trauma in otherwise vibrant Black and Hispanic communities.

There are, of course, hundreds of large-scale shootings in the U.S. every year in which, fortunately, most of the victims survive their gunshot wounds. According to an alternative definition of a mass shooting used by the Gun Violence Archive, there were more than 600 cases in 2020. Although half of these incidents resulted in no fatalities and another quarter involved but one death, surviving victims still endure painful and debilitating injuries. Like the deadly mass shootings discussed above, this form of mass violence frequently occurs in city neighborhoods with high concentrations of racial and ethnic minorities.

This Playbook does not address the everyday toll of community gun violence because the root causes (including poverty,[1] racism, underresourced schools, and ineffective public safety strategies and social services) differ from the root causes of the indiscriminate rampages committed by active shooters (often motivated by a perceived grievance, hate, or terrorist ideology).[2] There is no known way to prevent the latter attacks; therefore, mayors need to prepare for them.

In contrast, research has shown that community gun violence *can* be reduced by (a) implementing programs that focus on known perpetrators (*e.g.*, violence interrupter programs), (b) making improvements in gun tracing, (c) providing needed social services (*e.g.*, through hospital-based interventions), as well as (d) building community-based support for at-risk youth (including after-school programs). These evidence-informed programs have proved effective across the nation regardless of socioeconomic neighborhood contexts. Partner with your police chief and leaders of the affected communities to plan and implement intervention programs (and improve existing programs) that are appropriate for your community. More needs to be done to combat community gun violence with the urgency and funding that the issue requires.

---

[1] Note that some communities of high poverty have low crime rates. These communities demonstrate what criminal justice researchers describe as "community collective efficacy," which is characterized by social cohesion, shared identities and social norms, and a willingness to take action to defend norms particularly when the interests of vulnerable populations are at stake.

[2] We use the term "public mass shooting" or the shortened "mass shooting" to refer to these crimes.

At the same time, many of the recommendations in this Playbook *do* apply to community gun violence. For starters, you should publicly acknowledge when instances of community gun violence rise to the level of a "mass shooting" (with a large number of victims even if fewer deaths than the usual threshold) and use that term when speaking about the violence. New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio learned this lesson after he was criticized for waiting more than three days to acknowledge that a Brownsville shooting in 2019 that left one dead and another 11 injured was, in fact, a mass shooting. He later announced $9 million in funding for programs to help the affected community.

The trauma described in this Playbook is, of course, experienced by the victims of community gun violence and their families. Yet when a shooting kills multiple partygoers or people on the street in an city neighborhood, there is scant press coverage, no POTUS visit or attention from elected officials, and no victims' fund or Family Assistance Center established in response. This disparity is not lost on the affected communities, and local advocates frequently note that the families and victims affected by community gun violence deserve the same attention and resources they would if the shooting occurred at a festival, a theater, or a school in an affluent neighborhood.

Drawing on the recommendations elsewhere in this Playbook, you can:

- Schedule a press conference to inform the public of law enforcement actions taken in response to the shooting.
- Your trauma-informed messaging can promptly identify the victims, convey messages of unity and healing, highlight local mental health resources, and announce services available to families and victims.
- Describe violence intervention programs that you have established—or plan to implement—to reduce community gun violence. (The federal government has made additional funding available for this type of program.)
- Reach out to the families to comfort them and ensure their needs are met. Coordinate with your Police Chief and/or prosecutor's office to ensure they connect families to victims' advocates and state victim compensation programs.
- Meet with affected community leaders and local partners to listen to their concerns. Determine what else your office can do to address the challenges experienced by the affected community.
- Be innovative: Is there is a Resiliency Center already established in your community? If so, could the victims and families of other forms of gun violence access its concierge services? If not, could you establish one for them? It could serve as an on-demand resource should the *other* kind of mass shooting take place in your community. Cities such as Washington D.C. and San Francisco are taking this approach to adapt infrastructure developed for victims of mass violence to support victims of urban gun violence.
- There are approximately forty Family Justice Centers located in the United States and other countries. The concept is to create a family-friendly environment in which a multi-disciplinary team of professionals work together in one, centralized location to provide coordinated services to victims of family violence. Could the services in an existing Family Justice Center in your community be broadened to assist families recovering from the loss of a loved one to gun violence, whether from suicide, domestic violence, or urban gun violence? If your community lacks one of these centers, could you work with community partners to establish one?

Key Resources: Community Gun Violence Prevention

Cities United: supports a national network of mayors who are committed to reducing the epidemic of homicides and shootings among young Black men and boys. https://citiesunited.org

Everytown for Gun Safety: The City Gun Violence Reduction Insight Portal (CityGRIP) is an online clearinghouse of data-informed gun violence reduction strategies, and the Mayors Against Illegal Guns coalition provides a host of resources to member mayors to support local gun violence reduction efforts. https://citygrip.org/

Giffords Law Center: this report summarizes effective intervention strategies to reduce urban gun violence. https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/other-laws-policies/intervention-strategies/

Conclusion

Obviously, all victims of gun violence deserve your compassion and support. All the neighborhoods in your city deserve to be safe from gun violence. Fortunately, we know how to reduce community gun violence, and most of the evidence-informed actions must be implemented at the local level. Therefore, mayors like you are in the best position to reduce community gun violence, even as you work to implement the recommendations in this Playbook to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a public mass shooting.

Endnotes

[1] Anthony A. Braga, David M. Hureau & Andrew V. Papachristos, *Deterring Gang-Involved Gun Violence: Measuring the Impact of Boston's Operation Ceasefire on Street Gang Behavior*, 30 J Quant Criminol 113–139 (2014).

[2] City of Chicago, Gun Trace Report 2017, 5(2017), https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/depts/mayor/Press%20Room/Press%20Releases/2017/October/GTR2017.pdf (last visited May 20, 2021).

[3] Carnell Cooper, Dawn M. Eslinger & Paul D. Stolley, *Hospital-based violence intervention programs work*, 61 J Trauma 534–540, 535 (2006).

[4] Sara B. Heller, *Summer jobs reduce violence among disadvantaged youth*, 346 Science 1219–1223, 1219 (2014).

[5] Noah Goldberg, *Mayor calls Brownsville tragedy a "mass shooting" after days of hesitation*, Brooklyn Eagle (2019), https://brooklyneagle.com/articles/2019/07/31/mayor-calls-brownsville-tragedy-a-mass-shooting-after-days-of-hesitation/ (last visited May 26, 2021).

[6] City of New York, *Mayor de Blasio Announces Nearly $9 Million in Funding to Support Brownsville*, City of New York (2019), http://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/381-19/mayor-de-blasio-nearly-9-million-funding-support-brownsville-following-mass (last visited May 20, 2021).



Appendix A:
Training and Preparedness Recommendations

"Training is important. And it shows."

– Former FBI Special Agent in Charge Robert Jones, Pittsburgh PA

Overview

This appendix compiles the trainings, best practices, and resources described elsewhere in this Playbook. It is intended to put them all in one place to help you plan the steps you and your team can take to be prepared to respond to a mass shooting. We suggest that you also review the six Case Briefs as part of your planning, as they provide key takeaways from the six mass shootings we researched.

The mayors we interviewed stressed the need for training. They were unaware of trainings specifically for mayors to prepare them to respond to a mass shooting. Our research revealed that this remains an unmet need. Nevertheless, many mayors had engaged in related trainings or had experience handling other types of emergencies that helped prepare them for responding to a mass shooting. While you will rely on trained professionals in many aspects of the response, there are still things you can do to prepare yourself and support your staff in their continuing education efforts.

Training options you can consider as part of your emergency preparedness include:

- Tabletop exercises focused on responding to a mass shooting.
- Crisis communications training.
- Emergency preparedness training, such as FEMA emergency operations training (see below).
- Observing or participating in active shooter training (including scenarios involving a shooter that targets municipal staff).
- Continuing education is available for every discipline: encourage your staff to participate in trainings that could help them respond to an emergency.

Training typically happens in advance of a crisis, but there are training-related actions you can take during the response and recovery phase. For example, you can consult with mayors who have responded to a public mass shooting at any stage to benefit from their experience. One mayor recommended documenting the decisions you make during the response for use by the response team to help coordinate their efforts (particularly when standing up something as complex as the Family Assistance Center), and for use in the recovery phase by the team that develops the after-action report. This documentation in turn can guide your future trainings and are vital for other communities seeking to better prepare for an evolving threat environment.

Also, during the recovery phase, you can review the after-action report to determine best practices for training your staff to respond to future disasters, whether mass shootings, civil uprisings, terror attacks, or natural disasters. You can share your findings with other mayors. You can also use them when advocating for policy and program changes to address challenges you encountered.

Finally, you can benefit from your experience responding to other emergencies in your community, such as tornados, fires, gas main leaks, police-involved shootings, and civil disobedience. Documenting best practices from those responses can help you plan the response to a mass shooting.

Mayors in Action: Training and Experience That Were Helpful

Mayor Nan Whaley, Dayton OH: "Responding to a natural disaster, in our case a tornado, proved to be good experience for responding to a mass shooting."



Public Safety Director Wendell Hissrich, Pittsburgh PA: "Pittsburgh's public safety personnel received active shooter training. The Mayor's chief of staff attended one to understand what is involved."

Heather Fagan, Chief of Staff to Mayor Buddy Dyer, Orlando FL: "The mayor hosts a tabletop exercise every year. The year before the Pulse shooting, the theme for the tabletop was civil disobedience. That tabletop provided an opportunity for agencies to think through how they would respond to a crisis similar to a mass shooting."

Preparedness Actions and Trainings

Tabletop Exercises

Hosting a tabletop exercise with the appropriate city and county agencies is perhaps the most important thing you can do to prepare yourself and your city for a mass shooting. The tabletop exercise will give you and your team an idea of what to expect and prepare agencies about their role in responding to a public mass shooting.[1]

Best Practice Tip: Organizing a Tabletop Exercise

Whom to include:



- At a minimum, key elected officials, chief of police or county sheriff, legal counsel and "C4" team (see Chapter 8 on Legal Considerations), and department heads responsible for decision-making during an emergency.
- If your city is a commission-manager form of government, include your city manager, city commissioners, and county officials.
- If you are planning a tabletop focused on a school mass shooting, include school officials.

- Always include local public health officials.
- Consider including a representative of the American Red Cross.

Issues to be considered:

- Define roles of elected officials, agencies, county officials, and potential partners (including the FBI and the American Red Cross).
- Develop a communication protocol for press briefings.
- Develop other protocols that will be needed: *e.g.*, social media, family reunification, coroner's protocol for identifying victims in an extreme emergency, victims' fund and distribution, hosting vigils, VIP visits, and managing public records requests.
- Identify key points of contact for each mass shooting scenario.
- Identify potential locations for a Family Reunification Center (it should have a secured perimeter and separate from the press).
- Discuss the services that may be required by victims and families and how the city will provide them.
- Identify potential liability for the city and develop a plan to address.
- Consult chapters in the Playbook for best practices and resources for each of these topics.



The mayors who did engage in tabletop exercises told us they did not plan the recovery phase, which left them unprepared to address community trauma when a shooting took place. Therefore, consider including trauma and mental health experts—including public health officials, victim services providers, and the American Red Cross—in your planning exercises to assist you with appropriate messaging and to help you better understand what victims, family members, first responders, and members of the greater community will need during the recovery phase.

A tabletop exercise will also help you identify mutual aid agreements and protocols you may need (such as protocols for managing the victims' fund, establishing the family reunification and assistance centers, and making timely death notifications). It will help you identify relationships you may need to cultivate or strengthen. Ideally, the exercise will reveal areas where you or your staff could benefit from additional training.

Crisis Communications Training

You will rely on your communications experience when speaking to the public during an emergency. However, if you have limited experience speaking to the national and international press, you may benefit from media training. The National Press Club, the FBI Academy (in Quantico, VA), local universities, and consultants may be able to direct you to—or provide—training appropriate to your individual needs.

In addition, crisis communications training can help you understand how to communicate effectively to a traumatized community. As described in Chapter 1 on Communications, the CDC has prepared a manual and trainings to help you.

Emergency Preparedness Training

Training is an important component of emergency preparedness. Consider completing the trainings FEMA recommends for elected officials.

Key Resource: Recommended FEMA training

G-402 Incident Command System (ICS) Overview for Executives/Senior Officials: FEMA recommends elected officials complete this course, which covers the basics of what you need to know about the National Incident Management System, Multiagency Coordination Groups, Incident Command Systems, and Emergency Operations Centers. The course also summarizes the chief elected official's role in emergency preparedness, which may be applied to preparedness for a public mass shooting.
https://training.fema.gov/gstate/downloadmats.aspx?rd=1&course=G0402%20-%20ics-402%20-%20incident%20command%20system%20(ICS)%20overview%20for%20executives%20and%20senior%20officials

G-191 Incident Command System/Emergency Operations Center Interface: According to FEMA, this course reviews Incident Command System and Emergency Operation Center responsibilities and functions and provides an opportunity for participants to begin developing an interface between an Incident Management Team and EOC personnel. FEMA recommends this course for elected officials. The course is not available online as of this writing, but more information is available here: https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/trainingmaterials/

Active Shooter Trainings

Observe an Active Shooter Training for Law Enforcement

Some mayors have observed or participated in active shooter trainings arranged for law enforcement agencies. They report this observation helped them understand the law enforcement tactics used during active shooter containment. One mayor recommended doing this as a best practice, noting he wished he had seen an active shooter training before the shooting that took place in his city.

Arrange Active Shooter Trainings to Defend Municipal Buildings and Staff

The 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol and mass shootings at governments buildings in San Bernardino, Virginia Beach, and the Washington Navy Yard highlight the need for preparedness and security for government buildings. Consult with your chief of police about arranging appropriate training for security staff that work for the city, including contracted security and/or local police that protect municipal buildings.

Municipalities such as Jersey City, NJ have also contracted active shooter drill training to prepare city staff for a potential attack on a municipal target.[2] Consider whether to arrange active shooter training for your staff to prepare them for a potential attack in their offices, in consultation with law enforcement.

Key Resource: FBI Training Materials

***The Coming Storm*, an FBI-produced film to help prepare officials to respond to an active shooter event:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9jgS7jBXZU4

Other FBI resources: FBI, "Run. Hide. Fight." video:
https://www.fbi.gov/about/partnerships/office-of-partner-engagement/active-shooter-resources

Active Shooter Drills for Schools

Realistic active shooter training for law enforcement personnel is necessary and appropriate. Note, however, that the Public Health Advocacy Institute, teachers unions[3], and mental health experts recommend against unannounced or realistic active shooter drills for children (such as the type offered by ALICE (which stands for "Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate"). These drills can be traumatizing for children and may do more harm than good; better approaches are available.[4] See Chapter 6 on School Shootings for more information about the mental health needs of students.

Learn from Other Mayors

Look for opportunities to benefit from the experience of other mayors. For example, the U.S. Conference of Mayors hosted an excellent panel discussion that featured the insights of mayors who responded to a mass shooting (see link below). Other mayors have written books, such as Mayor Steve Scaffidi, who shared his experience responding to the Sikh Temple shooting in Oak Creek, Wisconsin in 2012. Trainings that were helpful to other mayors are mentioned below.

If a public mass shooting takes place in your community, you can count on other mayors to immediately contact you to share their advice and condolences. While their advice will be invaluable, in the immediate aftermath of a shooting your focus will necessarily be on the investigation, the press, and the victims and families. Therefore, feel free to contact experienced mayors or their staff before a crisis to solicit their advice on planning a tabletop exercise and developing the recommended protocols.

Finally, we hope you will find this Playbook—which highlights the advice of experienced mayors, staff, first responders, health care professionals, and other experts—a useful tool for planning your response to a mass shooting.

Key Resources—Mayors Share Their Experience

U.S Conference of Mayors, 88th Winter Meeting: Lesson Learned - Preventing, Preparing for, and Responding to Mass Shootings, 2020: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hijqn9q1rQg

Six Minutes in August: A Story of Tragedy, Healing and Community, Steve Scaffidi. The book tells the story of the murder of six members of a Sikh Temple, and the aftermath of that day's events on the community of Oak Creek, its newly-elected mayor, and the families of the Sikh Temple: https://www.amazon.com/Six-Minutes-August-Tragedy-Community/dp/057816714X

Endnotes

[1] U.S Conference of Mayors, 88th Winter Meeting: Lesson Learned - Preventing, Preparing for, and Responding to Mass Shootings, 2020, 21:40 *available at* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hijqn9q1rQg (last visited Apr 8, 2021).

[2] Leah Asmelash, *Nation's largest teachers unions call to end active shooter drills over fears they're traumatizing students*, CNN (2020), https://www.cnn.com/2020/02/12/us/active-shooter-drills-teacher-union-trnd/index.html (last visited May 6, 2021).

[3] Sarah C. Peck, *Halt active shooter drills in schools*, South Florida Sun-Sentinel (2019), https://www.sun-sentinel.com/opinion/commentary/fl-op-com-peck-halt-active-shooter-drills-schools-20191120-fbtyyjfutvf4zlyue5ghebi7gm-story.html (last visited May 6, 2021).

Appendix B:
Managing Visits from Elected Officials

Overview

This Appendix is intended to supplement Chapter 1 on Communications by providing best practice tips for managing visiting VIPs. All the mayors we interviewed spoke of the influx of elected officials in the aftermath of a mass shooting. These visitors included the U.S. President (POTUS), U.S. senators, state representatives, governors, local officials from the region, and city counselors. These elected officials often want to speak at press conferences, meet victims, and visit the crime scene. Their arrival may burden your overstretched staff and pose a messaging challenge. Without advance planning, their very presence can politicize the shooting and divide victims and their families when unity is most important. Nevertheless, hosting these visitors is an important part of your role and can provide an excellent opportunity to communicate your city's needs and advocate for action. Directed properly, elected officials can contribute to healing the community.

Advance Planning

As part of preparedness planning for a mass shooting, think about how your city will manage a POTUS or high-level VIP visit. Your planning can include communications, staffing, security, accommodations, itinerary, and advocacy. Consider the messages the VIP could deliver, or actions the VIP could take, that would benefit your community. Engage with community partners (e.g., school officials, victim services providers, and others) to solicit their input (and notify them immediately if a visit is scheduled). Evaluate resource, funding, and staffing needs.

Communications

The question of whether visiting VIPs will be permitted to speak to the press should be part of any communication protocol you develop. As elected officials, they will naturally want to speak to the press. As "communicator-in-chief," you should determine whether that would be appropriate. Above all, your goal is to prevent the remarks of elected officials from politicizing the tragedy. Your communications team can work with the VIP's staff to help set their expectations, coordinate messaging, and identify ways the VIP can serve the needs of your community.

Mayors in Action: Managing VIPs at a Press Conference

Pennsylvania's Governor Tom Wolf, U.S. Senator Toomey, and other senior elected officials happened to be in Pittsburgh on the day of the Tree of Life shooting.[1] Mayor Peduto decided city officials should be the primary speakers at the first press conference. He spoke first, followed by law enforcement officials who spoke about the response and the investigation. The city PIO decided when visiting officials could speak at later press conferences. Visiting elected officials were invited to attend the first vigil the next day but were not invited to speak. Mayor Peduto spoke, as did Jewish community leaders and a visiting Israeli dignitary.



The mayors spoke of decisions they made to manage the communications challenges posed by visiting elected officials. These included:

- Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto chose not to allow state and national elected officials to speak at the first press conference and vigil.
- Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer recommended securing the site of press conferences to control the access of local elected officials to the press pool (they can still speak to the press one-on-one).
- Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley recommended that President Trump not visit the site of the shooting because she was concerned his remarks would be divisive.
- After witnessing the distress to family members caused by remarks given by elected officials at the city's first vigil, one mayor invited elected officials to the city's first annual remembrance but did not invite them to speak. The mayor explained, "if you let one speak, you have to let everyone speak."

Itinerary: Help the VIP to be Helpful

Political polarization around gun violence is a reality in the United States. It is therefore important to consider how to prevent a VIP from sensationalizing the shooting for political gain. Mayor Whaley recommended focusing the VIP's visit on activities that could be healing to the victims or the greater community.

It may be prudent to manage the VIP's expectations before meeting with victims. Deputy Chief of Venues Officer Craig Borkon, who helped establish and operate Orlando's Family Assistance Center, spoke of the importance of preparing officials to meet with families. In Orlando, the American Red Cross briefed VIPs to help them understand what to expect and how to speak appropriately with victims' families.

Managing a POTUS Visit

We heard from several mayors that a Presidential visit poses unique challenges. These visits require massive coordination and logistical support between city hall, local law enforcement, the White House Advance Team, and the U.S. Secret Service. This comes at a time when local law enforcement officers are working overtime on the investigation and fulfilling security needs and traffic control related to the shooting. In addition, the arrival of POTUS can be polarizing and bring unwelcome political attention.

If your city has previously hosted a presidential visit, you may have protocols and systems in place. If not, the following checklist summarizes what to expect and offers suggestions on how to manage a visit.

- Appoint a team to manage the visit. Its members should coordinate with White House staffers who are planning the visit. Involve your public safety and citywide emergency management team in the planning process.
- Assign a "control officer" to be the primary point of contact for the city.
- Discuss the city's needs with the White House Advance staffer to help set expectations for the visit.
- Propose activities you assess will be useful to the city's recovery, which could include meeting with families, staging a press conference, visiting the site, and/or meeting with local elected officials or community representatives.
- Assess possible venues where meetings or press conferences can take place. Start planning for crowd control, security, traffic planning, and free speech zones for protesters outside any site POTUS will visit.
- If overnight accommodations are required, identify hotels with adequate space and perimeter control.
- Significant police overtime may be required. Ask about reimbursement of security and other costs.
- Your communications team will need to coordinate with the press.
- Brief community leaders about plans for the visit. Ensure meetings with POTUS are as inclusive as possible. Invite victims and family members, representatives of impacted communities, other community leaders, and first responders, but first consult with them to determine whether they wish to meet the VIP.

Key Resource: Preparing for a Presidential Candidate Visit

Sarah E. Moss, "Local Government Preparation for Presidential Candidate Visits" Webinar: (July 2021) a webinar describing how to prepare for a POTUS visit. Although the focus is on a campaign stop, the information may also be useful for planning a POTUS visit in response to a mass shooting. Presenter Sarah E. Moss, MPA, is a former public servant and former advance staffer for three presidential campaigns and the White House. Her co-presenter is Kerry O'Grady, a former Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Secret Service Denver field office, has protected presidential candidates and presidents.
https://elgl.org/event/webinar-local-government-preparation-for-presidential-candidate-visits/

During a time of heightened political division, anticipate that some of your constituents will be angry if you host a POTUS visit. El Paso Mayor Dee Margo said President Trump's visit triggered death threats against the Mayor. He explained his choice to welcome the President to El Paso as the "right thing to do" after a tragedy and felt he had little choice in the matter. Mayor Whaley's decision to host President Trump likewise fueled anger from constituents on both the political left and the political right.

Mayors in Action: Managing a Presidential Visit

President Trump's visit to Dayton after the Oregon District shooting posed a challenge because it prolonged the intense media pressure and politicized the shooting. The Mayor later told the press her decision to join the President during his Dayton visit was not an easy one. She believed the President was a divisive figure whose presence could fracture her grieving city. Come residents protested the visit, holding signs that read, "Not Welcome Here."[2] On the other hand, the Mayor considered it her duty to greet him. She met briefly with the President and directed him to activities she believed would be healing, such as meetings with victims and medical staff at the hospital and with first responders.[3] She also used the opportunity to urge the President to "do something" to prevent gun violence. Illustrating the challenges mayors may encounter when handling the visit of a controversial leader, the President criticized the Mayor's handling of the visit[4] and the Mayor received death threats following his visit."

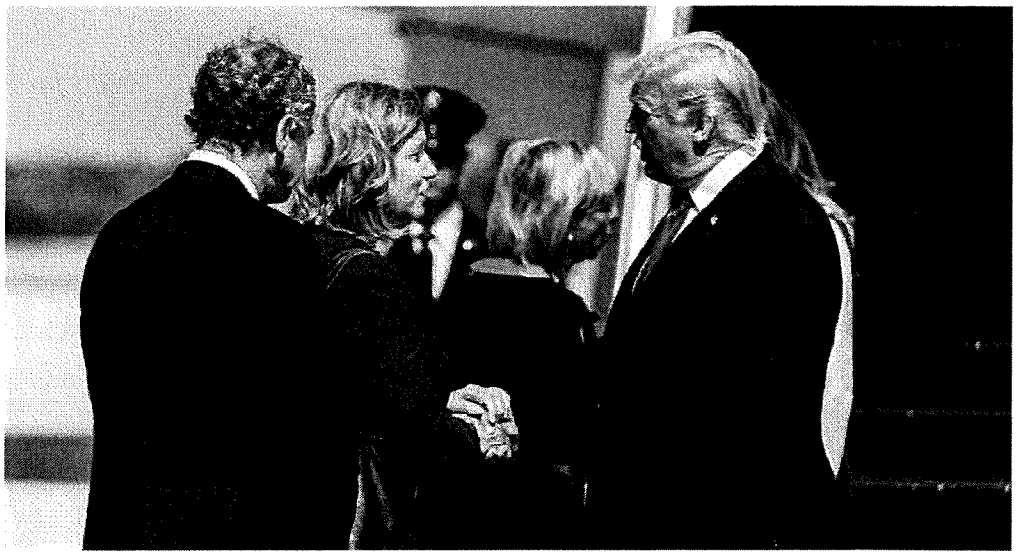


Image 14: *President Donald J. Trump and First Lady Melania Trump are greeted by Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley Wednesday, Aug. 7, 2019, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, and other state and local officials. (Official White House Photo by Shealah Craighead).*

Security Cost Recovery

There will likely be significant police overtime costs associated with providing security for a POTUS visit. You may be able to negotiate an agreement to recover these costs with adequate documentation.

Endnotes

[1] Amanda Reed, *Thousands gather at Sunday vigil honoring Tree of Life Synagogue shooting victims,* Pittsburgh Current (2018), https://www.pittsburghcurrent.com/thousands-gather-at-sunday-vigil-honoring-tree-of-life-synagogue-shooting-victims/ (last visited May 25, 2021).

[2] John Seewer, *Dayton's pain: 'Do something'*, The Lima News (2019), https://www.limaohio.com/news/368343/daytons-pain-do-something (last visited May 25, 2021).

[3] Emily Davies, *How Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley became a national voice for gun control*, The Washington Post, August 25, 2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/the-mayor-of-dayton-should-matter-how-nan-whaley-became-a-national-voice-for-gun-control/2019/08/24/a7abd752-bf5f-11e9-aff2-3835caab97f6_story.html (last visited May 25, 2021).

[4] Rebecca Morin, *Trump's Ohio visit: Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley confused by Trump tweet*, USA Today (2019), https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2019/08/07/trumps-ohio-visit-dayton-mayor-nan-whaley-confused-president-tweets/1946291001/ (last visited May 25, 2021).



Appendix C:
Funding Sources for Cities

The cost of responding to a mass shooting can be enormous. This appendix provides an overview of funding sources that cover the following categories of potential expenses faced by the community:

- Crime Victim Compensation
- Law Enforcement Expenses
- Emergency Response Costs
- Family Assistance and Resiliency Centers
- School Shooting Response

This list is necessarily incomplete, especially where state resources are concerned, but provides pointers to guide your research.

Crime Victim Compensation

Both federal and state agencies provide direct financial support to victims of crime, including victims of a public mass shooting. Victim advocates or your staff can help connect victims to these compensation sources, which are summarized below.

State Funding

Each state's victim assistance program is different, but most are funded by VOCA grants to states. The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Compensation program provides grants to every state, the District of Columbia, and every territory to fund eligible crime victim compensation programs. Victim advocates can help the victims and family members understand whether they are eligible for payment and identify any barriers to receiving compensation. Generally speaking, crime victim compensation programs pay for out-of-pocket expenses, including medical care, mental health counseling, lost time at work, and funerals.

Note that these funds are often capped for each victim. If a victim accepts funds from another source (such as from a victims' fund) to cover an expense the state funds would have covered, they cannot also receive those funds from their state program.

Key Resources: Crime Victim Compensation and VOCA Funding

National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards, Compensation Protocol: A guide to Responding to Mass-Casualty Incidents: This manual provides managers and staff of crime victim compensation programs with an updated mass casualty protocol that reflects newly identified practices and lessons learned from those who have responded to mass casualty events. https://ovc.ojp.gov/library/publications/compensation-protocol-guide-responding-mass-casualty-incidents

Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) and American Red Cross (ARC), Responding to Victims of Terrorism and Mass Violence Crimes: Coordination and Collaboration Between American Red Cross Workers and Crime Victim Service Providers. OVC and ARC fill critical and complementary roles in assisting victims of terrorism and mass violence. This publication discusses the emotional and psychological effects of a disaster, the disaster's effects on targeted groups, and the effects of media coverage. It also discusses the importance of knowing state and local crime victim assistance and compensation agencies that may be able to help in the wake of disaster.
https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/publications/infores/redcross/ncj209681.pdf

For more information, see the VOCA website:
https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/victims-crime-act-voca-administrators/welcome
VOCA grants to states: https://ovc.ojp.gov/help-for-victims/help-in-your-state and https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/victims-crime-act-voca-administrators/welcome

Federal Funding

AEAP

The Antiterrorism Emergency Assistance Program (AEAP) of the U.S. Department of Justice provides technical assistance and compensation to institutional applicants such as state victim assistance and compensation programs, public agencies, Indian tribal governments, U.S. Attorneys' Offices, and higher education institutions. Grants are by invitation only, but you may contact your state agency to learn whether you might be invited to access AEAP funds for victim services.

FEMA

In the event of a major disaster declaration, as in the case of a hurricane or major terror attack (like 9/11), the Stafford Act authorizes funding through the FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) program, which offers reimbursement to individuals for emergency services like shelter and medical expenses. See FEMA Individual Assistance for more information.

To be eligible for general FEMA funding to reimburse costs related to a mass shooting, a city must provide evidence of extensive property damage, such as damage caused by fire or an explosion, or demonstrate exhaustion of local resources. At the time of this writing, general FEMA funds have not

been granted to any city to cover the cost of responding to a mass shooting as they have for other "major disasters."[1] In the case of the Pulse shooting, the request for FEMA funding was denied based on failure to show an "unmet need" not covered by state/local response.

SBA Disaster Loan Program

However, FEMA also offers the SBA Disaster Loan Program to provide low-interest loans for costs incurred by municipalities or businesses that are not covered by insurance or other sources. Orlando obtained a number of SBA loans, totaling $353k, to assist local businesses that were impacted by the Pulse shooting.

Key Resource: Congressional Research Service Report on FEMA funding

A report explaining the applicability of Stafford Act Assistance to acts of terrorism and public mass shootings is available at this link: https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/R44801.pdf

Information about the SBA Disaster Loan Program is available at this link.
https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance

Law Enforcement Expenses

Police Overtime

Police overtime pay is a major expense following a public mass shooting. There are two federal sources of funding to consult.

EFLEA

The Emergency Federal Law Enforcement Assistance (EFLEA) Program can help municipalities and law enforcement agencies mitigate the cost of responding to a mass shooting, including to cover emergency costs borne by police departments. Note that it is often by invitation only.

JAG Program

The Justice Department's Byrne Justice Assistance Grants (JAG) program provides grants to public safety organizations for overtime or other "precipitous" increases in expenses resulting from mass violence. Both state agencies and local governments are eligible to apply, so you may need to coordinate your plans for an application with your state's law enforcement agency. After the school shooting in Parkland, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement received a JAG grant of $1 million to defray overtime costs for police from 18 different agencies that responded to the shooting.[2]

Death or Injury of a Law Enforcement Officer

The Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program (PSOB) provides death and educational benefits to the survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other first responders, and disability benefits to officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty. For more information, please see the Bureau of Justice Assistance website.

Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness

There are funding opportunities are available through the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office that cover mental health expenses for law enforcement agencies. More information is available at this link.

Emergency Response Costs

Federal Funding: AEAP

In addition to providing crime victim compensation as mentioned above, the Office for Victims of Crime offers three other funding streams through its Antiterrorism and Emergency Assistance Program (AEAP): (1) crisis response (2) consequence management, and (3) criminal justice support. While applications are by invitation only, local governments are among eligible applicants. Note that the office encourages applications to be coordinated with state agencies and local chapters of organizations such as the American Red Cross and United Way. Consultants at the Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Program can help you determine whether your city may be eligible to apply for AEAP funding and prepare you to meet application requirements if invited.

State Funding

States employ a variety of strategies to mitigate the costs of disasters within their jurisdictions. In many ways, state agencies are the front line of disaster response, paying upfront for costs that may later be reimbursed by the federal government. For example, Texas released $5.5 million in funding after the El Paso shooting to pay for psychological first aid, state behavioral health services, county reimbursements related to the prosecution, school-based mental health services, a resiliency center, and more.3 Therefore, consult state public health agencies, emergency response agencies, and state law enforcement to identify potential grant opportunities, which may include:

- Disaster account or flexible contingency funds that can be used to cover costs from natural disasters or emergencies (guidelines vary by state).
- Rainy day or reserve funds (nearly half of the states allow these funds to be used for emergencies).
- Moving funds between state agencies (transfer authority) or authorizing funds within an agency's budget to be used for disaster relief (sometimes made possible by the state declaration of emergency).
- Note that some of these funding resources may only be used to cover the costs borne by the state in responding, rather than expenses incurred by the city's response.

Family Assistance and Resiliency Centers

The Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC) consultants can help you write a grant proposal for OVC funding to help fund a Resiliency Center (RC) for a limited period. Other potential funding sources include state funds, the United Way, and private foundations. For example, the state of Florida and Heart of Florida United Way partnered to fund the Orlando United Assistance Center. In Texas, the state provided funding for the RC in El Paso.

School Shooting Response

There may be additional costs unique to a school shooting. in addition to those covered by the other funding sources listed in this Appendix. Eligibility for most funding opportunities is limited to local educational institutions. Work with the affected school to determine if the city can help identify resources to meet specific needs.

One possible resource is the Project School Emergency Response to Violence (SERV), which is usually limited to local educational institutions but may be relevant for municipalities. Local education agencies (LEAs) and institutions of higher education (IHEs) that have experienced a traumatic event of "such magnitude as to severely disrupt the teaching and learning environment" are eligible to apply.

Endnotes

[1] Congressional Research Services, *Stafford Act Assistance and Acts of Terrorism*, 2019, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/R44801.pdf.
[2] Dep't of Justice, *Justice Department Announces $1 Million to Florida Law Enforcement and First Responders who Supported the Parkland High School Shooting*, 2018, https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-announces-1-million-florida-law-enforcement-and-first-responders-who.
[3] Office of the Texas Governor | Greg Abbott, *Governor Abbott Meets With Lawmakers Following El Paso Shooting*, 2019, https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-meets-with-lawmakers-following-el-paso-shooting.



Appendix D:
To Prevent Mass Killings, Prevent Suicides

There is no known way to completely prevent public mass shootings. However, we do know that 40 percent of public mass shooters commit suicide during their rampage, according to the Associated Press/USA Today/Northeastern University Mass Killing Database. This fact provides hope that some of these horrific crimes can be prevented by focusing specifically on suicide prevention.

Evidence-Based Approaches to Suicide Prevention

Although the common perception is that homicides and mass shootings predominate, about two-thirds of the nearly 40k gun deaths annually in the U.S. are suicides.[1] Reducing suicides will not only save the lives of loved ones in crisis, but may also avert some public mass shootings, the focus of this Playbook.

What can be done at the local level to prevent suicides? Research has shown that the risk a household member will commit suicide is increased threefold when there is a gun in the home.[2] That is not to say that responsible gun owners should give up their guns. However, lives could be saved by a public education campaign recommending that gun owners: (1) temporarily remove a firearm when a household member is in crisis, and (2) safely secure handguns and long guns bought for sport or protection, especially if there is a minor in the home.

As "communicator-in-chief," you could advocate for these evidence-based approaches when appropriate, such as when a beloved community member has died by suicide, during national suicide awareness week, or on Veteran's Day. You could initiate public education campaigns in partnership with community-based organizations, medical associations, gun owners, and mental health service providers in your community. For example, gun shops have worked in partnership with the National Shooting Sports Foundation to provide information about suicide to gun owners.[3]

You could join forces with other mayors to adopt measures to reduce veteran suicide.[4] You could look for other innovative approaches your city could adopt. For example, recognizing that out-of-home gun storage can prevent suicide, Colorado has partnered with gun shops, businesses, law enforcement agencies, and public health departments to provide a network of places that offer voluntary, temporary gun storage.[5]

ERPO Laws Prevent Suicide and May Help Prevent Mass Shootings

In cases where a family member is concerned that a gun owner appears suicidal or at risk of harming others, Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) laws (aka "Red Flag Laws") give police a tool to remove guns temporarily. Researchers have found that Indiana's ERPO law reduced suicides by 7.5%.[6] To date, research has focused on suicide prevention, not mass murder. But there are documented cases where an ERPO was used to remove a gun from someone who planned to commit a mass shooting.[7] If your state has passed an ERPO law, work with law enforcement and judicial officials to ensure the law is implemented effectively and that the public is aware of the law.

Key resource: Improving Implementation of ERPO Laws

Researchers at Northeastern University School of Law examined ERPO implementation challenges and made recommendations to improve ERPO laws. https://www.phaionline.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Extreme-Risk-Protection-Orders-Implementation-in-a-Social-Justice-Context.Final_.pdf

Safe Storage May Prevent School Shootings and Accidental Deaths

Securing guns is another evidence-based strategy for preventing suicides, and may prevent some mass murders, particularly school shootings. The majority of school shootings, like the Sandy Hook massacre, were committed using guns taken from a parent, grandparent, or neighbor.[8] If these shooters had been unable to access a gun at home, some of these tragedies could have been prevented. Partnering with law enforcement officials, public health officials, gun owners, and other credible voices to promote the benefits of safe storage could potentially prevent a school shooting.

Urging gun owners to secure their guns if there are children in the home can also prevent accidental gun injuries and deaths. According to the Nationwide Children's Hospital, nearly 1,300 children die from guns every year and many more are seriously injured.[9] The American Academy of Pediatrics advises the best way to prevent gun-related injuries to children is to remove guns from the home or store them properly.[10]

Endnotes

[1] Heath Druzen, *Majority Of U.S. Gun Deaths Are Suicides, But A New Poll Suggests Few Americans Know It*, WAMU, https://wamu.org/story/19/10/02/the-majority-of-u-s-gun-deaths-are-suicides-but-a-new-poll-suggests-few-americans-know-it/ (last visited Jun 16, 2021).

[2] APHA Policy Statement (#20184): Reducing Suicides by Firearms, (2018), https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2019/01/28/reducing-suicides-by-firearms (last visited Jun 16, 2021).

[3] NSSF & American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, *Suicide Prevention Program for Retailers and Ranges*, NSSF, https://www.nssf.org/safety/suicide-prevention/ (last visited Jun 16, 2021); *see also* Harvard School of Public Health, Gun Shop Project, Means Matter (2012), https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/gun-shop-project/ (last visited Jun 16, 2021).

[4] SAMHSA has partnered with Veterans Affairs (VA) to bring the *Governor's and Mayor's Challenges to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families* to states and communities across the Nation. https://www.samhsa.gov/smvf-ta-center/mayors-governors-challenges

[5] Colorado Firearm Safety Coalition, *Gun Storage Map*, Colorado Firearm Safety Coalition (2019), https://coloradofirearmsafetycoalition.org/gun-storage-map/ (last visited Jun 16, 2021).

[6] Aaron J. Kivisto & Peter Lee Phalen, *Effects of Risk-Based Firearm Seizure Laws in Connecticut and Indiana on Suicide Rates*, 1981–2015, 69 Psychiatric Services 855–862 (2018).

[7] Garen J. Wintemute et al., *Extreme Risk Protection Orders Intended to Prevent Mass Shootings*, 171 Annals of Internal Medicine 655–658 (2019).

[8] Tawnell D. Hobbs, *Most Guns Used in School Shootings Come From Home*, Wall Street Journal, April 5, 2018, https://www.wsj.com/articles/in-school-shootings-most-guns-come-from-home-1522920600 (last visited Jun 16, 2021).

[9] Nationwide Children's, "Gun Safety," https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/research/areas-of-research/center-for-injury-research-and-policy/injury-topics/general/gun-safety (last visited Jun 16, 2021).

[10] American Academy of Pediatrics, "*Guns in the Home*," https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Handguns-in-the-Home.aspx (last visited July 21, 2021).

Appendix E:
Additional Resources from the National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center

The National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center, based at the Medical University of South Carolina, serves to provide communities access to evidence-based information and resources needed to effectively prepare for and respond to mass violence incidents. A primary focus of the National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center (NMVVRC) is to address the mental health and victim assistance needs of victims, survivors, family members, and communities impacted by a mass violence incident. In the aftermath of a public mass shooting in your community, we encourage you to reach out to NMVVRC to learn more about best practices and to ask your staff and partners to consult the following recommended resources from the Center.

Preparation

- NMVVRC, "The Role of Victim Assistance Professionals in Preparing for Mass Violence Incidents," is a tip sheet that will help you understand the resources and roles of your partners that provide victim assistance. https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/0ddft0pn/tipsheet11.pdf
- NMVVRC, "At-a-Glance: The Role of Victim Service Professionals," provides an overview of the services and aid that victim services professionals bring to a mass violence incident response, for those in your community and/or staff that may need a background/primer on the subject. https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/pobdrf1n/role-of-vsps-rrr-matrix.pdf

Response

- FBI and Penn State, "We Regret to Inform You: Providing Sensitive Death Notifications with Professionalism, Dignity and Compassion." This is a training course for law enforcement professionals, medical examiners, and victim assistance professionals outlining a four-step process for compassionate delivery of death notifications to family members and other loved ones. https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/pghaczss/tipsheet6.pdf
- NMVVRC, "After the Death Notification: Ten Guidelines for Assisting Victims & Survivors of Mass Violence" describes a continuum of quality care for families whose loved one was murdered in a mass violence incident. https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/fmcb5jxo/tipsheet10.pdf
- NMVVRC, "After a MVI: Helpful Hashtags and Social Media Accounts," provides information to reference via the City's social media accounts. https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/fu2j4is3/tipsheet7.pdf
- NMVVRC, "Tips for Community Leaders: Establishing a Family Assistance Center (FAC)," provides best practices for establishing an FAC in the immediate aftermath of a mass shooting. https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/tkgfidqq/tipsheet19.pdf

Recovery

- NMVVRC, "Rebuild Your Community," is a webpage providing links to resources that will be helpful throughout the recovery phase.
  https://www.nmvvrc.org/community-leaders/rebuild-your-community/
- NMVVRC, "Unexpected Challenges for Communities in the Recovery Phase of a Mass Violence Incident," provides a list of 17 challenges you will likely face along with helpful solutions for preventing or mitigating each challenging circumstance.
  https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/00tbio4n/tip-sheet-unexpected-challenges-for-communities-in-recovery-phase.pdf
- NMVVRC, "Resilience Following Hate Crimes: Information and Tips" provides five tips for your response to a hate-motivated incident in your community.
  https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/hcnphst3/tipsheet16.pdf
- NMVVRC, TRANSCEND, a self-Help app for victims and survivors), is available here:

  https://www.nmvvrc.org/survivors/self-help/

About the Public Health Advocacy Institute

The Public Health Advocacy Institute

In 2019, the Public Health Advocacy Institute at Northeastern University School of Law (NUSL) launched UnitedOnGuns, a nonpartisan initiative to unite professionals from different disciplines (health, law enforcement, law, and government) to promote public health approaches to reduce gun violence, while respecting the rights of responsible gun owners. This Playbook is the culmination of our first major research project in fulfillment of our mission to develop evidence-based tools that mayors can use to prevent gun violence in their communities.

The UnitedOnGuns Team

Sarah C. Peck, J.D., Director, UnitedOnGuns

Ms. Peck is the Director of UnitedOnGuns. Before co-founding this initiative, Ms. Peck served as a U.S. diplomat for fifteen years, including service in Afghanistan and Iraq, where she advised senior policy makers on national security issues and promoted democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Prior to her diplomatic career, Ms. Peck practiced law as a litigator at Goodwin Procter and Sunstein in Boston, and as corporate counsel in Paris. She is a graduate of the University of Florida and NUSL.

Emily Nink, MS, CPH, PHAI Policy Associate

Ms. Nink assists local governments pursuing public health policies. Ms. Nink provides legal and policy research for public health topics, including tobacco regulation, regulations of packaged beverages, interventions to improve safe drinking water, and school nutrition. Ms. Nink was the lead researcher for the mass shooting project. She earned her M.S. through the Agriculture, Food and Environment program at the Tufts Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy in Boston. Prior to joining PHAI, she provided research assistance at the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future, at the Friedman School, and at The Food Think Tank.

Mark Gottlieb, J.D., PHAI Executive Director

Mr. Gottlieb joined PHAI in 1993 after graduating from NUSL. His efforts have focused on researching tobacco litigation as a public health strategy as director of the Tobacco Products Liability Project, reducing the harm caused by secondhand tobacco smoke through a variety of legal and policy approaches, fostering scholarship using tobacco industry documents, examining legal and policy approaches to address obesity, and, more recently, researching public health approaches to reducing gun violence. Mark is an adjunct professor at NUSL where he teaches and operates the Public Health Legal Clinic.

About the Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook

The **Protocol** is a four-page overview of a mayor's role during the first 24 hours after a mass shooting. It highlights the key decisions the mayor will need to make and refers to the playbook chapters that can provide additional information as needed. A one-page checklist highlighting immediate action steps is also included.

The **Playbook** is a resource guide that is informed by the recommendations and experience of mayors who have responded to a mass shooting. It is organized into ten topic areas: communications, emergency management, victims and families, law enforcement, donations, school shootings, community partnerships, legal considerations, commemorations, and mental health. Each chapter includes the actions and training that a mayor can take in advance of a mass shooting; actions a mayor should take during the response phase; and guidance for providing services to victims, family members, and the broader community as they recover. The Playbook features case briefs of the six mass shootings researched for the project, with key takeaways. These case briefs may be useful to mayors for planning and training purposes, as well as to researchers and law enforcement officials. Finally, the Playbook includes appendices that contain additional resources, such as a compilation of all training resources, funding resources, and information about community gun violence and suicide prevention to save lives and possibly prevent mass shootings.

Published in the United States of America by
Public Health Advocacy Institute
Northeastern University School of Law
360 Huntington Ave, 117CU
Boston, MA 02115
www.phaionline.org

© 2021 by Public Health Advocacy Institute. "Public Health Advocacy Institute" and "UnitedOnGuns" are registered trademarks of the Public Health Advocacy Institute.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of Public Health Advocacy Institute, or as expressly permitted by law, by license, or under terms agreed with the appropriate reproduction rights organization. Inquiries regarding use or reproduction should be sent to the address above.



UNITEDONGUNS

From: nrotering@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:14 PM
To: acivitello@cityhpil.com
Subject: Fwd: MSNBC Request Tomorrow 7/5, between 12-2pm CST

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Weiss2, Michael (NBCUniversal)" <Michael.Weiss2@nbcuni.com>
Subject: MSNBC Request Tomorrow 7/5, between 12-2pm CST
Date: July 4, 2022 at 11:03:21 PM CDT
To: [redacted]

Hello Mayor Rotering,

Can you join anchor Chris Jansing tomorrow between 12-2pm CST for a live, televised interview, from Highland Park, regarding today's mass shooting?

I will have camera location details tomorrow (should you have availability).

Many thanks,

Michael Weiss
MSNBC Booking Producer
Katy Tur Reports *(2pm ET Weekdays)*
Cell: [redacted]
Michael.Weiss2@nbcuni.com

From: Nancy Rotering <nrotering@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:16 PM
To: Michelle Holleman
Subject: Fwd: NBC News national inquiry

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

This seems to keep coming up

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Romero, Dennis (NBCUniversal)" <Dennis.Romero@nbcuni.com>
Subject: NBC News national inquiry
Date: July 4, 2022 at 6:26:20 PM CDT
To: "nrotering@cityhpil.com" <nrotering@cityhpil.com>

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Mrs. Mayor:

We're sorry about what happened today. I hope it stops.

We're digging into the person of interest's background and appears that his father, Bob Crimo, ran against you and lost in 2019.

If you want to confirm or respond to this piece of the story, including any details regarding the campaign and the elder Crimo's standing in the community as the owner of a convenience store, we'd like to include that in our story.

Any response would be appreciated.

Thanks,
Dennis Romero
NBC News Digital
310-623-7097

From: nrotering@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:17 PM
To: ljogmen@cityhpil.com; CONeill@cityhpil.com
Subject: Fwd: Robert Crimo

Begin forwarded message:

From: Pam Hill [redacted]
Subject: Robert Crimo
Date: July 4, 2022 at 6:07:54 PM CDT
To: "nrotering@cityhpil.com" <nrotering@cityhpil.com>

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Please release the results of his toxicology reports once he is in custody. I have been trying to get these records released to the public for quite some time with no help from our elected representative. I have been in the field of addictions for over 30 years. This person (photos) is clearly a person that uses/abuses substances. This is also the case with many many shooters.

Sent from Mail for Windows

From: nrotering@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:18 PM
To: ljogmen@cityhpil.com; CONeill@cityhpil.com
Subject: Fwd: Robert Crimo Info

Begin forwarded message:

From: [redacted]
Subject: Robert Crimo Info
Date: July 4, 2022 at 5:40:13 PM CDT
To: <council@cityhpil.com>

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

https://youtube.fandom.com/wiki/Awake

I found this about Robert Crimo

Regards,

[redacted]

From: Melissa Kerpel <melissa@visagroup.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:18 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Thank you for your email Re: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Thank you for your email. I am out of the office and will return July 6.

If this is an emergency and you require the immediate assistance of an attorney, please contact:

Attorney Cyrus Rab
CMR Law Group
Rab & Khan, LLP
1658 N. Milwaukee Ave., Suite 432
Chicago, IL 60647
cyrus@cmralaw.com
312.612.5719 d
855.600.5786 F
www.cmralaw.com

Thank you,

Melissa Garber Kerpel, Esq.

Kerpel & Kerpel P.C.
1954 First Street, #115
Highland Park, Illinois 60035 USA
phone: (847) 433-9300
fax: (847) 433-9302

www.visagroup.com

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This email and any attachments are for the exclusive and confidential use of the intended recipient. If you are not the intended recipient, please do not read, distribute or take action in reliance upon this message. If you have received this in error, please notify us immediately by return email and promptly delete this message and its attachments from your computer system. We do not waive attorney-client or work product privilege by the transmission of this message.

From: nrotering@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:18 PM
To: ljogmen@cityhpil.com; CONeill@cityhpil.com
Subject: Fwd: are you awake? (Robert Crimo) on Vimeo

Begin forwarded message:

From: [redacted]
Subject: are you awake? (Robert Crimo) on Vimeo
Date: July 4, 2022 at 5:32:34 PM CDT
To: Undisclosed recipients:;

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Just found this.
It was on social media a year ago, but apparently nobody notified authorities.

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S10+, an AT&T 5G Evolution capable smartphone

https://vimeo.com/633103236

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:18 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:18 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

This is the Email Security Gateway at host spam1.cityhpil.com.

I'm sorry to inform you that the message below could not be delivered.
When delivery was attempted, the following error was returned.

<[redacted]: host mx1a1.comcast.net[96.103.145.165] said: 550 5.2.0 <e[redacted]- Recipient unavailable (in reply to RCPT TO command)

Reporting-MTA: dns; spam1.cityhpil.com
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Queue-ID: 06D1538F476
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Sender: rfc822; LFrey@cityhpil.com
Arrival-Date: Mon, 4 Jul 2022 23:18:22 -0500 (CDT)

Final-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Original-Recipient: rfc822[redacted]
Action: failed
Status: 5.2.0
Remote-MTA: dns; mx1a1.comcast.net
Diagnostic-Code: smtp; 550 5.2.0 <[redacted]> - Recipient unavailable

From: Frey, Laura <LFrey@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 10:18 PM
Subject: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

Dear Members and Friends,

On behalf of the Senior Center staff, we are devastated and heart-broken over the senseless act of violence against our community, that occurred during today's 4th of July parade. Our hearts go out to those who lost their lives and those who were injured - and to their families and loved ones as well.

After thoughtful consideration, we have decided that the Senior Center will be open tomorrow, and that all classes and activities will be held as scheduled. We hope this decision will allow us to grieve together and just maybe we can begin to heal together as well.

As a life-long resident of Highland Park who lives and works in this beloved community – the pain is palpable – and we are experiencing this pain together. The outpouring of love and support our community has shown – is one of the reasons I love Highland Park. Together, we will get through this.

If you are seeking support after today's tragic events, you are invited to participate in a coordinated effort to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available for community members in need of support. Counseling will be available at the Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Avenue tomorrow (Tuesday) from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM; please enter through the Vine Avenue entrance. Anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services, will need to present a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school; no appointments are necessary.

Message from Mayor Rotering

Today was the bloodiest day that we have ever experienced in Highland Park. This morning at approximately 10:14 AM a shooter opened fire with an assault weapon on a crowd attending our 4th of July parade. We know at this time that six individuals lost their lives and at least 24 were injured. Our hearts go out to the victims, families, and our community.

The attack prompted an immediate and well-coordinated response from multiple law enforcement agencies at the Federal, State, County, and local levels. A suspect, Robert "Bobby" Crimo III (age 22 of Highwood, Ill.) was identified and a massive manhunt ensued.

At approximately 6:30 p.m., the suspect was apprehended on Route 41 at Westleigh Road. He was taken into custody without incident and is currently being processed through the Highland Park Police Department.

Throughout the day we have received offers of support and resources from public officials and agencies including President Biden. Fellow mayors have reached out from across the country, many who lead communities that have experienced this pain and tragedy. We thank Governor J.B. Pritzker, Senator Richard Durbin, Senator Tammy Duckworth, Congressman Brad Schneider, Illinois State Senator Julie Morrison, and Illinois State Representative Bob Morgan for coming to support our community and for providing every available resource.

I want to thank our first responders for their bravery and extraordinary efforts today. Our police and firefighters saved countless lives with their responses -- running into danger and taking immediate action to save others. We are grateful for these selfless acts. We know there were members of our community who rendered aid and assistance as well, and we thank each and every one of you for those efforts.

I also want to acknowledge and thank numerous agencies for their support including American Red Cross, World Central Kitchen, Lakeshore Country Club, Northmoor Country Club, Soul and Smoke food truck, Catering by Michaels, Northern Illinois Critical Incident Stress Management, local clergy and many other individuals and agencies have stepped up to provide food and support for our first responders. We are grateful for their generosity.

Our community, like so many before us, is devastated. It's impossible to imagine the pain of this kind of tragedy until it happens in your backyard. Gun violence - a mass shooting such as this casts a much wider net of agony than what the public is typically exposed to; it's a crisis that devastates entire families and communities in a single moment and we know will take time to heal.

Tomorrow the President will order our flags to fly at half-mast, and many public programs have been canceled. Please check with your camps and activities to see if they are operating. In the days and weeks ahead we will come together as a community to mourn and begin the path of healing. I will share more information as it is available.

Road and Business Closures

Numerous roads will remain closed in central downtown Highland Park for the FBI investigation, and many businesses will remain closed. The area closure spans Laurel Avenue from First Street to Elm Place and Green Bay Road from First Street to Elm Place (map below). Detours will be established, but please limit your travel only to essential business in Highland Park. The City is reaching out to business owners to share information, and will work with them to reopen as soon as possible.

Counseling Resources

A coordinated effort is also being made to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available at Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Ave., for community members in need of assistance, tomorrow from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. No appointment is necessary. The Vine Ave. entrance will be open and anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services will need to have a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school.

The theme of this year's parade was community -- and while we are hurting -- we know that we will come together and support each other, as we always do, in difficult times. We are Highland Park strong.

Nancy R. Rotering, Mayor
City of Highland Park, IL

Sincerely,

Laura Frey, CPRP

Manager of Senior Services

847.432.4110

www.cityhpil.com

Highland Park Senior Center
1201 Park Avenue West – Highland Park

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:19 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:19 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

This is the Email Security Gateway at host spam1.cityhpil.com.

I'm sorry to inform you that the message below could not be delivered.
When delivery was attempted, the following error was returned.

<[redacted]host mxb-00143702.gslb.pphosted.com[148.163.141.77]
said: 550 5.1.1 User Unknown (in reply to RCPT TO command)

Reporting-MTA: dns; spam1.cityhpil.com
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Queue-ID: 6846C38F477
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Sender: rfc822; LFrey@cityhpil.com
Arrival-Date: Mon, 4 Jul 2022 23:18:36 -0500 (CDT)

Final-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Original-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Action: failed
Status: 5.1.1
Remote-MTA: dns; mxb-00143702.gslb.pphosted.com
Diagnostic-Code: smtp; 550 5.1.1 User Unknown

From: Frey, Laura <LFrey@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 10:18 PM
Subject: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule
Attachments: image002.png

Dear Members and Friends,

On behalf of the Senior Center staff, we are devastated and heart-broken over the senseless act of violence against our community, that occurred during today's 4th of July parade. Our hearts go out to those who lost their lives and those who were injured - and to their families and loved ones as well.

After thoughtful consideration, we have decided that the Senior Center will be open tomorrow, and that all classes and activities will be held as scheduled. We hope this decision will allow us to grieve together and just maybe we can begin to heal together as well.

As a life-long resident of Highland Park who lives and works in this beloved community – the pain is palpable – and we are experiencing this pain together. The outpouring of love and support our community has shown – is one of the reasons I love Highland Park. Together, we will get through this.

If you are seeking support after today's tragic events, you are invited to participate in a coordinated effort to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available for community members in need of support. Counseling will be available at the Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Avenue tomorrow (Tuesday) from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM; please enter through the Vine Avenue entrance. Anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services, will need to present a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school; no appointments are necessary.

Message from Mayor Rotering

Today was the bloodiest day that we have ever experienced in Highland Park. This morning at approximately 10:14 AM a shooter opened fire with an assault weapon on a crowd attending our 4th of July parade. We know at this time that six individuals lost their lives and at least 24 were injured. Our hearts go out to the victims, families, and our community.

The attack prompted an immediate and well-coordinated response from multiple law enforcement agencies at the Federal, State, County, and local levels. A suspect, Robert "Bobby" Crimo III (age 22 of Highwood, Ill.) was identified and a massive manhunt ensued.

At approximately 6:30 p.m., the suspect was apprehended on Route 41 at Westleigh Road. He was taken into custody without incident and is currently being processed through the Highland Park Police Department.

Throughout the day we have received offers of support and resources from public officials and agencies including President Biden. Fellow mayors have reached out from across the country, many who lead communities that have experienced this pain and tragedy. We thank Governor J.B. Pritzker, Senator Richard Durbin, Senator Tammy Duckworth, Congressman Brad Schneider, Illinois State Senator Julie Morrison, and Illinois State Representative Bob Morgan for coming to support our community and for providing every available resource.

I want to thank our first responders for their bravery and extraordinary efforts today. Our police and firefighters saved countless lives with their responses -- running into danger and taking immediate action to save others. We are grateful for these selfless acts. We know there were members of our community who rendered aid and assistance as well, and we thank each and every one of you for those efforts.

I also want to acknowledge and thank numerous agencies for their support including American Red Cross, World Central Kitchen, Lakeshore Country Club, Northmoor Country Club, Soul and Smoke food truck, Catering by Michaels, Northern Illinois Critical Incident Stress Management, local clergy and many other individuals and agencies have stepped up to provide food and support for our first responders. We are grateful for their generosity.

Our community, like so many before us, is devastated. It's impossible to imagine the pain of this kind of tragedy until it happens in your backyard. Gun violence - a mass shooting such as this casts a much wider net of agony than what the public is typically exposed to; it's a crisis that devastates entire families and communities in a single moment and we know will take time to heal.

Tomorrow the President will order our flags to fly at half-mast, and many public programs have been canceled. Please check with your camps and activities to see if they are operating. In the days and weeks ahead we will come together as a community to mourn and begin the path of healing. I will share more information as it is available.

Road and Business Closures

Numerous roads will remain closed in central downtown Highland Park for the FBI investigation, and many businesses will remain closed. The area closure spans Laurel Avenue from First Street to Elm Place and Green Bay Road from First Street to Elm Place (map below). Detours will be established, but please limit your travel only to essential business in Highland Park. The City is reaching out to business owners to share information, and will work with them to reopen as soon as possible.

Counseling Resources

A coordinated effort is also being made to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available at Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Ave., for community members in need of assistance, tomorrow from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. No appointment is necessary. The Vine Ave. entrance will be open and anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services will need to have a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school.

The theme of this year's parade was community -- and while we are hurting -- we know that we will come together and support each other, as we always do, in difficult times. We are Highland Park strong.

Nancy R. Rotering, Mayor
City of Highland Park, IL

Sincerely,

Laura Frey, CPRP

Manager of Senior Services

847.432.4110

www.cityhpil.com

Highland Park Senior Center
1201 Park Avenue West – Highland Park

From: nrotering@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:20 PM
To: acivitello@cityhpil.com
Subject: Fwd: ABC News/GMA3/Tomorrow Morning

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Nalty, Ariane" <Ariane.Nalty@abc.com>
Subject: Re: ABC News/GMA3/Tomorrow Morning
Date: July 4, 2022 at 4:40:22 PM CDT
To: "Ahmed, Rahma" <Rahma.Ahmed@abc.com>, "nrotering@cityhpil.com" <nrotering@cityhpil.com>, "gneukirch@cityhpil.com" <gneukirch@cityhpil.com>
Cc: "Hester, Jada" <Jada.Hester@abc.com>

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Hi there--

Checking in on this request as we'd love to have The Mayor join us tomorrow.

We record at 8:40am Central and can do this via Zoom.

Thank you so much,
Ariane

From: Ahmed, Rahma <Rahma.Ahmed@abc.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 10:50 AM
To: nrotering@cityhpil.com <nrotering@cityhpil.com>; gneukirch@cityhpil.com <gneukirch@cityhpil.com>
Cc: Nalty, Ariane <Ariane.Nalty@abc.com>; Hester, Jada <Jada.Hester@abc.com>
Subject: ABC News/GMA3/Tomorrow Morning

Hi,

Hope all is well. I'm emailing to see if Mayor Nancy Rotering can join us on our third hour of *Good Morning America*, GMA3: What You Need To Know, for a 3-5 minute interview with Amy Robach and TJ Holmes. We record at 9:40 am EST via Zoom, or we can arrange a studio.

We interview leaders from across the country--Senators, Representatives, Mayors, health industry experts, White House officials, and half of our nation's Governors and would like to include Mayor Nancy Rotering to discuss todays shooting on tomorrows show.

We have had multiple White House Officials join us, most recently Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh, Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona, and Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm along with members of Congress. We

have had 38 Governors on our program including California Governor Newsom, Rhode Island Governor McKee, and New Jersey Governor Murphy.

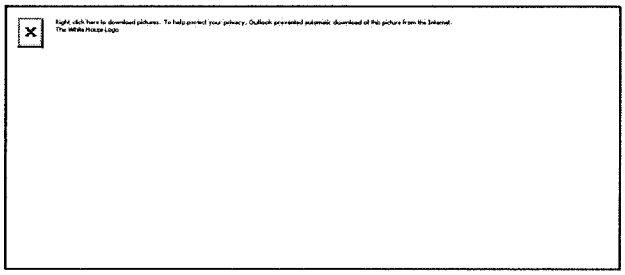
We are currently the fastest-growing show in daytime television and our program was nominated for the 2021 and 2022 Daytime Emmy. We are happy to accommodate any requests you may have. Please feel free to send any questions or concerns my way. Thank you and looking forward to your response.

All the best,
Rahma

Rahma Ahmed | *ABC News* | [redacted]

From: nrotering@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:25 PM
To: council@cityhpil.com; gneukirch@cityhpil.com; ljogmen@cityhpil.com
Subject: Fwd: Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois

Subject: Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 4, 2022

Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois

Jill and I are shocked by the senseless gun violence that has yet again brought grief to an American community on this Independence Day. As always, we are grateful for the first responders and law enforcement on the scene. I have spoken to Governor Pritzker and Mayor Rotering, and have offered the full support of the Federal government to their communities. I also surged Federal law enforcement to assist in the urgent search for the shooter, who remains at large at this time. Members of the community should follow guidance from leadership on the ground, and I will monitor closely as we learn more about those whose lives have been lost and pray for those who are in the hospital with grievous injuries.

I recently signed the first major bipartisan gun reform legislation in almost thirty years into law, which includes actions that will save lives. But there is much more work to do, and I'm not going to give up fighting the epidemic of gun violence.

###

Privacy Policy | **Unsubscribe** | press@who.eop.gov

White House Press Office · 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW · Washington, DC 20500-0003 · USA · 202-456-1111

From: gneukirch@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:33 PM
To: nrotering@cityhpil.com
Cc: ljogmen@cityhpil.com
Subject: Re: Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois

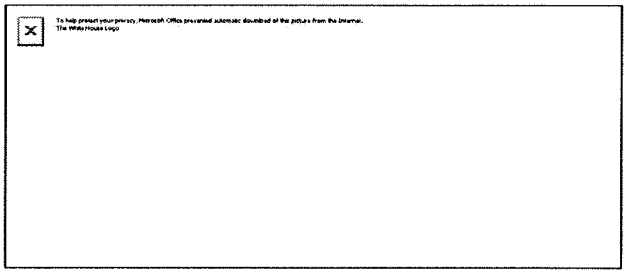
Thanks. We will retain for our records

Ghida S. Neukirch
City Manager
City of Highland Park

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 4, 2022, at 11:24 PM, Rotering, Nancy <nrotering@cityhpil.com> wrote:

Subject: Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 4, 2022

Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois

Jill and I are shocked by the senseless gun violence that has yet again brought grief to an American community on this Independence Day. As always, we are grateful for the first responders and law enforcement on the scene. I have spoken to Governor Pritzker and Mayor Rotering, and have offered the full support of the Federal government to their communities. I also surged Federal law enforcement to assist in the urgent search for the shooter, who remains at large at this time. Members of the community should follow guidance from leadership on the ground, and I will monitor closely as we learn more about those whose lives have been lost and pray for those who are in the hospital with grievous

I recently signed the first major bipartisan gun reform legislation in almost thirty years into law, which includes actions that will save lives. But there is much more work to do, and I'm not going to give up fighting the epidemic of gun violence.

###

Privacy Policy | **Unsubscribe** | press@who.eop.gov

White House Press Office · 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW · Washington, DC 20500-0003 · USA · 202-456-1111

From: gneukirch@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:34 PM
To: acivitello@cityhpil.com
Cc: ejason@cityhpil.com
Subject: Fwd: Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois

Erin,
Pls retain for our records

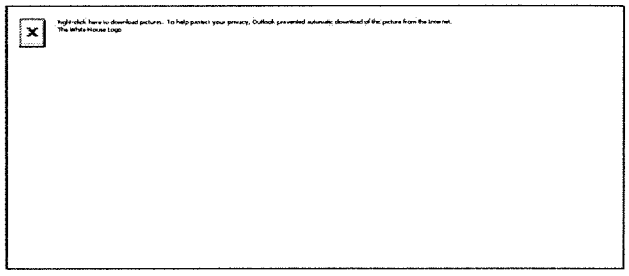
Ghida S. Neukirch
City Manager
City of Highland Park

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Rotering, Nancy" <nrotering@cityhpil.com>
> **Date:** July 4, 2022 at 11:24:32 PM CDT
> **To:** Mayor and City Council <council@cityhpil.com>, "Neukirch, Ghida" <gneukirch@cityhpil.com>, "Jogmen, Lou" <ljogmen@cityhpil.com>
> **Subject: Fwd: Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois**

Subject: Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 4, 2022

Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois

Jill and I are shocked by the senseless gun violence that has yet again brought grief to an American community on this Independence Day. As always, we are grateful for the first responders and law enforcement on the scene. I have spoken to Governor Pritzker and Mayor Rotering, and have offered the full support of the Federal government to their communities. I also surged Federal law enforcement to assist in the urgent search for the shooter, who remains at large at this time. Members of the community should follow guidance from leadership on the ground, and I will monitor closely as we learn more about those whose lives have been lost and pray for those who are in the hospital with grievous injuries.

I recently signed the first major bipartisan gun reform legislation in almost thirty years into law, which includes actions that will save lives. But there is much more work to do, and I'm not going to give up fighting the epidemic of gun violence.

###

Privacy Policy | **Unsubscribe** | press@who.eop.gov

White House Press Office · 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW · Washington, DC 20500-0003 · USA · 202-456-1111

From: Kalman Slater [redacted]
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:34 PM
To: ahyndman@cityhpil.com
Subject: Kind regards from Evanston

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Officer Hyndman,

Good evening. Firstly, my thoughts are with you and the Highland Park community and first responders. Please accept my sincerest well-wishes and know that I will have you all in mind as you continue to respond to and recover from today's horrific incident.

If possible, I'd appreciate if you could relay this message to the Highland Park CERT membership, especially those members who were staffing the parade today.

Your presence in your community and response to help them today have been honorable and brave. You made a difference in all the ways that you could, living out the CERT motto by doing the greatest good for the greatest number. You made all CERTs proud as you leaped into action, saving lives and caring for your community when they needed you most. I was certainly proud to see CERT vests being worn by responders working this incident.

Do not forget that we all have our own experiences of and reactions to traumatic events like these. As first responders, which you undoubtedly were today, you are especially vulnerable to the aftershocks of such an incident. Know that you are not alone, and be in touch with one another. We all process these events differently, but they take a toll on everyone. Don't hesitate to seek out the help that you need if and when you need it.

Thank you for being the exemplary community members and CERT responders that you are; you showed your excellence today and there is much to be applauded in your actions.

Take good care.

Sincerely,
Kalman Slater
NREMT, Wilderness EMT
Member, Evanston Community Emergency Response Team

From: Justin Bobo [redacted]
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:34 PM
To: nrotering@cityhpil.com
Subject: Augmenting security for large events - surveillance drones?

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Mayor Rotering,

Like many, I'm shattered by the news of the horrific shooting in Highland Park. I don't reside in Highland Park but have family and friends that do. It's a wonderful community and it's unimaginable that such tragedy could unfold there. America is dealing with a mass shooting epidemic and while the recent federal legislation may help prevent some shootings, it, of course, won't prevent all. I've thought a lot about how to help reduce the possibility of mass shootings in the absence of federal law and I've pondered how surveillance drones can help more quickly identify shooters or potential shooters. The links below provide a few options. There's no perfect fix but any solution that can save at least 1 life is worth exploring.

https://www.zdnet.com/article/best-surveillance-drone/

https://www.droneshield.com/events-stadiums-venues

From: gneukirch@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:36 PM
To: nrotering@cityhpil.com
Subject: Re: Mass shooting playbook and protocol
Attachments: massshootingplaybookprotocol.zip

Thank you. What time is good for you?

Ghida S. Neukirch
City Manager
City of Highland Park

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 4, 2022, at 11:13 PM, Rotering, Nancy <nrotering@cityhpil.com> wrote:

> Let's go over tomorrow if we can.
>
> Begin forwarded message:
>
> **From:** Denyse Stoneback <denyse@repdenysestoneback.com>
> **Subject: Mass shooting playbook and protocol**
> **Date:** July 4, 2022 at 6:54:54 PM CDT
> **To:** Nancy Rodkin Rotering <nancy.rotering@northwestern.edu>

UNITEDONGUNS

Mass Shooting Protocol
FIRST 24 HOURS

A RESOURCE FOR U.S. MAYORS AND CITY MANAGERS



PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY INSTITUTE

Sarah C. Peck
Emily Nink
and
Mark Gottlieb

The Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook is a two-part resource intended for mayors, city managers, and their staff. The Protocol covers the first 24 hours of the response. The supplemental Playbook provides best practices and resources city officials can use to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a public mass shooting.

Mass Shooting Protocol:
The First 24 hours

This Protocol is the result of research involving mayors, first responders, and others who have responded to a public mass shooting. Below you will find key decisions that you, as mayor, will need to make during the first 24 hours of the response. There are also links to the companion guide, the **Mass Shooting Playbook**, for additional information and resources to help with ongoing crisis management. Additionally, best practices for preparedness actions can be found in the Playbook. To obtain a copy of the Playbook, please visit www.UnitedOnGuns.org.

1. Communications

- Your primary role during the response is as the "communicator-in-chief." Decide in consultation with your police chief who will speak about what. Often law enforcement officials communicate details about the investigation. The public will look to you for messaging about public safety, updates about the victims, referrals to mental health resources, and messages of unity and healing. Secure the press area to prevent unauthorized officials from speaking to the press pool.
- Your first challenge is to get as much information as possible, as often as possible, from law enforcement. Ask for a dedicated police official whose sole responsibility is to keep you informed.
- Schedule early and regular press briefings, even when there isn't much new information to share, to prevent the development of rumors and misinformation.
- Release information relating to the shooting via one social media account (ideally operated by the public safety office), to be amplified by the city and other agencies. Direct all press inquiries to this single, monitored account.
- Host a dedicated webpage where all public information about the shooting is posted and updated, along with names of the victims. This will reduce the intense pressure to respond promptly to public record requests.
- Consider including a "How You Can Help" section for the public in press releases and all social media and online messages.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 1 on Communications.

2. Emergency Operations

- Confer with your City Counsel, Chief Administrative Officer, Chief of Staff, and Chief Financial Officer. This "C4 team" should meet daily to coordinate emergency operations and reduce legal exposure to the city and its employees.

- Consider making a local declaration of emergency. There is no downside to making the declaration immediately; it triggers mutual aid agreements, has the potential to defray costs relating to police overtime costs, and may protect the city from legal risks.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 2 on Emergency Management.

3. Victims and the Families

- Prioritize the needs of victims and family above all else. Designate a member of your staff to serve as family liaison to keep you updated on their needs.
- Ensure the location of the Family Reunification Center (also called the Family and Friends Reception Center) is separate from the press center. It should be scalable and have a secure perimeter to prevent the press from approaching grieving family members.
- The families of victims should receive death notifications in the most timely, humane, private way possible. Applicable law can slow the process. You may need to engage with the coroner's office and law enforcement to urge them to find a way to speed the release of victims' names to their families.
- Confirm there are dedicated victim advocates assigned to the families.
- After the families are notified, quickly establish the Family Assistance Center to ensure the immediate needs of victims and families are met, including appropriate mental health services.
- Spend time with the victims and families. Take their calls (including calls from families from previous shootings who have invaluable insights to share). Visit victims in the hospital. Attend their funerals if invited. Consult the families when planning vigils and developing the distribution protocol for public donations.
- Activate national resources. The American Red Cross can help you establish the Family Assistance Center. The FBI Victim Services Division has significant family assistance resources and expertise you can tap into even if the FBI is not the lead law enforcement agency in the case. However, the city must initiate the request for assistance from both organizations.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 3 on Victims and Families.

4. Donations

- Arrange a funding mechanism to accept donations immediately. If the city has a 501(c)(3) charitable entity already established, you can use it for this purpose (forming a new one may take too long). Alternatively, the National Compassion Fund (www.nationalcompassionfund.org) or a trusted community foundation can receive the funds. Whichever funding mechanism you choose, establish the fund as soon as possible after the shooting and encourage the public to give to only one, trusted fund to avoid fraud.

- The distribution of the fund should be developed in close consultation with the survivors and families of the victims. Families of victims of previous shootings strongly recommend that 100% of the funds go to the victims and their families. However, some cities have set aside a small portion of the funds raised for education initiatives, mental health services for affected communities, and the restoration of a place of worship damaged during an attack.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 5 on Donations.

5. Vigils

- The community needs to grieve and will want to arrange a vigil immediately following the shooting. Security may be required, which could delay the vigil if the law enforcement response is ongoing.
- Take steps to avoid politicizing the shooting. Doing so will further traumatize the families of the victims. This may mean limiting the speaking roles of elected officials (including visiting VIPs).
- If the shooting is a hate crime or perpetrated by a member of a marginalized faith or ethnic group, the risk of retaliation against that group may become an issue. Consult with faith leaders to host an interfaith vigil if relevant.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 9 on commemorations.

6. VIP Visitors and Elected Officials

- Federal, state, and local elected officials may converge on the city. Direct them to activities that will be helpful to victims and their families.
- For more information, see Playbook Appendix B on VIP Visits.

7. Mental Health

- Trauma is a major issue. You will be affected, as will your staff, first responders, families of the victims, and nearly everyone in the city at the time of the shooting. Consult with your local public health agency, victim assistance experts, and local mental health providers as soon as possible to develop trauma-informed messaging.
- Provide information about available mental health resources in your press briefings. Take the time to learn about psychological first aid to ensure that victims and families receive appropriate services.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 10 on Mental Health.

Mass Shooting Protocol: Checklist

(Selected actions from the comprehensive checklists found in the Playbook)

Communications

- ☐ Establish a regular schedule for communicating with the press and follow it.
- ☐ Decide which officials will speak and in what order at press conferences.
- ☐ Keep messages simple, credible, and consistent. Correct misinformation.

Emergency Operations

- ☐ Activate the Emergency Operations Center. Request regular briefings from a designated law enforcement official.
- ☐ Assemble your "C4" team to provide coordination and legal compliance.
- ☐ Consider whether to make a declaration of emergency.

Establish Family Reunification and Assistance Centers

- ☐ Work with law enforcement, the American Red Cross, the FBI, and local partners to establish the Family Reunification Center (FRC) and the Family Assistance Center (FAC).
- ☐ Ensure both centers are located separately from the Joint Information Center (away from the press), have a secure perimeter, and are scalable.
- ☐ Communicate FRC and FAC locations and services in press briefings.
- ☐ Urge the coroner to release victim's names to families as soon as possible.

Establish the Victims Fund

- ☐ Establish a victims' fund right away using city-operated 501(c)(3) charitable entity, the National Compassion Fund, or a local foundation.

Begin Planning for Recovery

- ☐ Seek the guidance of mental health experts to develop trauma-informed messaging and to ensure appropriate mental health services are available.
- ☐ Plan vigils in consultation with families and the affected community.



UNITEDONGUNS

About the Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook

This **Protocol** is a four-page overview of a mayor's role during the first 24 hours after a mass shooting. It highlights the key decisions the mayor will need to make and contains links to the Playbook that can provide additional information as needed. A one-page checklist highlighting immediate action steps is also included.

The **Playbook** is a resource guide that is informed by the recommendations and experience of mayors who have responded to a mass shooting. It is organized into ten topic areas: communications, emergency management, victims and families, law enforcement, donations, school shootings, community partnerships, legal considerations, commemorations, and mental health. Each chapter includes the actions and training that a mayor can take in advance of a mass shooting; actions a mayor should take during the response phase; and guidance for providing services to victims, family members, and the broader community as they recover. The Playbook features case briefs of the six mass shootings researched for the project, with key takeaways. These case briefs may be useful to mayors for planning and training purposes, as well as to researchers and law enforcement officials. Finally, the Playbook includes appendices that contain additional resources, such as a compilation of all training resources, funding resources, and information about urban gun violence and suicide.

For more information or to obtain a copy of the Mass Shooting Playbook, please visit www.UnitedOnGuns.org.

Published in the United States of America by
Public Health Advocacy Institute
Northeastern University School of Law
360 Huntington Ave, 117CU
Boston, MA 02115
www.phaionline.org

© 2021 by Public Health Advocacy Institute. "UnitedOnGuns" is a registered trademark of the Public Health Advocacy Institute. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of Public Health Advocacy Institute, or as expressly permitted by law, by license, or under terms agreed with the appropriate reproduction rights organization. Inquiries regarding use or reproduction should be sent to the address listed above.

UNITEDONGUNS

Mass Shooting PLAYBOOK

A RESOURCE FOR U.S. MAYORS AND CITY MANAGERS



PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY INSTITUTE

Sarah C. Peck
Emily Nink
and
Mark Gottlieb

The Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook is a two-part resource intended for mayors, city managers, and their staff. The Protocol covers the first 24 hours of the response. The supplemental Playbook provides best practices and resources city officials can use to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a public mass shooting.

Mass Shooting Playbook

A Resource for U.S. Mayors and City Managers

Public Health Advocacy Institute
Sarah C. Peck, Emily Nink, and Mark Gottlieb

This Playbook may be downloaded
for official use by mayors, city managers, and their staff.
Visit UnitedOnGuns.org

Public Health Advocacy Institute
UnitedOnGuns Initiative
Northeastern University School of Law
360 Huntington Ave, 117CU
Boston, MA 02115
www.phaionline.org



UNITEDONGUNS

Public Health Advocacy Institute

The Public Health Advocacy Institute (PHAI), founded in 1979, is a legal research and advocacy center focused on public health law. It is an independent 501(c)(3) organization located at Northeastern University School of Law. PHAI is committed to researching public health law; advancing public health policy development; providing legal technical assistance; and leading collaborative work at the intersection of law and public health. In 2019, PHAI launched an initiative called UnitedOnGuns to promote public health approaches to reduce gun violence, while respecting the rights of responsible gun owners.

"Public Health Advocacy Institute" and "UnitedOnGuns" are
registered trademarks of
Public Health Advocacy Institute.

Published in the United States of America by
Public Health Advocacy Institute
Northeastern University School of Law
360 Huntington Ave, 117CU
Boston, MA 02115

www.phaionline.org

© 2021 by Public Health Advocacy Institute

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of Public Health Advocacy Institute, or as expressly permitted by law, by license, or under terms agreed with the appropriate reproduction rights organization. Inquiries regarding use or reproduction should be sent to the address above.



UNITEDONGUNS



We are indebted to Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto, who responded with inspiring leadership and compassion to the tragic Tree of Life Synagogue Shooting on October 27, 2018. He proposed this protocol and playbook project to help mayors prepare for, respond to, and recover from a public mass shooting in their communities.

We are grateful to all the mayors, staff, first responders, and experts who generously contributed their time, experience, and expertise to this project. We are also grateful for the support of Northeastern University, our funders, and our advisors, especially Professor James Alan Fox, who generously contributed his time and expertise throughout the project.

Finally, we acknowledge the tragic loss of life and the widespread trauma caused by mass shootings in our country. It is our hope that the Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook will help mayors save lives and comfort grieving families and community members.



UNITEDONGUNS

Foreword

In the early morning hours of August 4, 2019, a disturbed young man fatally shot nine people and wounded 27 others with an AR-15 style pistol outside a bar in my city's downtown entertainment area. Our outstanding police responded in less than a minute of the first shot and killed the attacker. I received the news no mayor wants to receive in the early hours of the morning, when the city attorney knocked on my door.

Of course, every mayor must be prepared to handle a crisis, whether snowstorms in the Northeast, wildfires in the West, hurricanes in Florida, or flooding along the Mississippi. Less than three months before the attack, my team and I responded to a tornado that ripped through Dayton. But these are familiar challenges. We know how to plow our streets even if there is a record amount of snow.

Mass shootings are a different kind of crisis. They are sudden, unexpected, and extremely traumatic to large numbers of people in your community. As mayors, we are not responsible for the law enforcement response, but we are responsible for the aftermath. How we handle this crisis will permanently affect the lives of our residents and could be the most important work of our tenure in office.

Having lived through the experience, I now tell other mayors, "it isn't if, but when" a mass shooting happens in your community. You need to prepare. The best way to start is by planning a tabletop exercise with your staff and the relevant stakeholders.

Fortunately, you have in your hands a resource that can help you to be as ready as you can be. Researchers at Northeastern University's Public Health Advocacy Institute interviewed me, Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl, and 13 others including mayors, law enforcement officials, and city staffers who responded to a public mass shooting. The hard-earned experience of those interviewed is consolidated in this Protocol, which can help you get through the first 24 hours of a shooting, and the Playbook, which is filled with the best practices you can use to prepare, respond, and help your community recover from a mass shooting.

I am proud to have been a part of this important project.

Mayor Nan Whaley
Dayton, OH
July 15, 2021

Timeline of Mayoral Response to a Public Mass Shooting

This timeline illustrates an aspirational mayoral response to a hypothetical public mass shooting. The time frames are based on interviews with mayors, first responders, and subject matter experts. In response to actual mass shootings, many mayors did not take these actions within the suggested time frames. However, with advance planning (as recommended in this playbook), the timeline shown is achievable and would improve public safety and public health outcomes.

Day 1

- Shooting occurs
- Law enforcement response begins
- Family and Friends Reception Center (FRC) opens
- Death notifications made within hours (ideally)
- Emergency Operation Center (EOC) and Joint Information Center (JIC) established
- State of Emergency declared (optional)
- First press conference held
- First vigil takes place

Day 2

- Victim's Fund is launched to accept donations
- Key partners are contacted, including American Red Cross and FBI Victim Services Division
- Meeting is held to determine Family Assistance Center needs
- Family Assistance Center (FAC) opens
- Presidential/VIP visits may take place
- Regular press conferences begin
- Regular updates from law enforcement continue
- Social media policy is implemented

Week 1

- Funerals and vigils are scheduled
- Visit victims and families in FAC and hospital
- Meet with mental health experts
- Messaging transitions from factual updates to messages of healing
- Begin responding to public record requests
- C4 team meets daily
- Establish city website for regular updates

Week 2

- FAC closes and Resiliency Center opens to provide services to families and community
- Community board is formed to oversee victims' fund management
- Meeting is held to determine Family Assistance Center needs

Later

- Potential criminal trial
- Ongoing victim and family services
- Apply for funds to defray costs of response
- Plan first annual remembrance
- Begin planning permanent memorial
- Conduct after-action review of response
- Update training and protocols for future emergencies

Table of Contents

Introduction

Timeline of a Mayoral Response to a Public Mass Shooting viii
Overview: How to Use this Playbook 1
Research Methods and Contributors 3

Case Briefs

Case Study: Dayton Oregon District Shooting (Ohio) 11
Case Study: El Paso Walmart Shooting (Texas) 15
Case Study: Orlando Pulse Nightclub Shooting (Florida) 19
Case Study: Parkland School Shooting (Florida) 23
Case Study: Pittsburgh Tree of Life Shooting (Pennsylvania) 29
Case Study: San Bernardino Terrorist Attack (California) 33

Mass Shooting Protocol

Public Mass Shooting Protocol: The First 24 hours 39
Mass Shooting Protocol Checklist 42

Playbook Chapters

Chapter 1: Communications

Strategies for engaging with the press, social media management, and developing trauma-informed messaging

Chapter Summary 45
Preparedness 46
- **Crisis Communications Planning** 46
  - Protocol for Press Briefing 46
  - Joint Information Center 47
  - **Key Resources: Joint Information Center** 48
  - Alert Systems and Capacities 48
  - Social Media Protocol 48
  - **Key Resource: FEMA Social Media in Emergency Management Training** 49
- **Crisis Communications Techniques and Training** 49
  - Learn the Basics of Crisis Communications 49
  - **Key Resource: CDC Crisis Communications Training and Manual** 50
  - **Key Resource: ATSDR Communications Toolkit** 50

Crisis Communications Media Training 50
"Go-Kits" for Yourself and Key Staff 51
Response 51
Initial Communications Decisions 51
Your First Public Statements 52
Key Resource: Full Press Conference, Indianapolis Federal Express Shooting 53
Managing the Press 54
Prioritize the Needs of Victims and Families 55
Managing Visits from Elected Officials 55
Recovery 56
Messaging: Shifting from Response to Recovery 56
Consult Mental Health and Behavioral Health Experts 56
Engage Community Partners in Interfaith or Hate Prevention Work 57
Engage Schools 57
Suicide Prevention 57
Advocacy 58
Communications Checklist 59

Chapter 2: Emergency Management

Operationalizing the emergency response to a mass shooting through municipal preparedness plans and systems

Chapter Summary 61
Preparedness 62
Emergency Operations Planning 62
Key Resource: National Incident Management System (NIMS) Guidance 62
Alert Systems and Capacities 62
Emergency Preparedness Training 63
Key Resources: Recommended FEMA Training 63
Public Health Resources 64
Key Resources: The Public Health Agency Role 64
Response 65
Emergency Operations Center (EOC): Activation and Access 65
Emergency Declarations 65
Receive Briefing on Emergency Response 66
Recovery 66
Obtain Funds to Cover Costs of Emergency Response 66
Program Evaluation of Emergency Response 66
Emergency Operations Checklist 68

Chapter 3: Victim and Family Assistance

Key considerations for providing services to victims and their families

Chapter Summary 69
Background 70
Overview of Centers for Victims, and Families and Friends 70
Family Reunification (or Reception) Center (FRC) 70
Family Assistance Center (FAC) 71
Resiliency Center (RC) 71
Agencies and Organizations that Provide Victim Services 71
Preparedness 72
Convene Partners to Plan Victim Reunification and Assistance Services 72
Key Resource: Office of Victims of Crime (OVC) Toolkit 72
Key Resource: Family Assistance Center 73
Other Considerations 74
Response 75
Work with Law Enforcement to Establish the Family Reunification (aka Reception) Center (FRC) 75
Track Victims 76
Engage with Hospitals 76
Establish Family Assistance Center (FAC) 76
Connect with Victims and Families 78
Visit the FAC 78
Visit the Hospital 78
Recovery 79
Transition from the FAC to the Resiliency Center (RC) 79
Victim Services During a Trial 80
Key Resources: Victim Services During a Trial 80
Crime Victim Compensation 80
Ongoing Engagement with Family Members 81
Victims and Family Assistance Checklist 82

Chapter 4: Collaborating with Law Enforcement

Best practices for effective engagement with law enforcement agencies

Chapter Summary 83
Preparedness 84
Partnerships with Law Enforcement 84
Mutual Aid Agreements 84
Key Resource: Mutual Aid Agreements 85
Understanding and Activating FBI Resources 85
Critical Incident Response Group (CIRG) 85
Victim Services Division (FBI-VSD) 85
Key Resources: FBI Services 86

Response 86
Your Role During the Critical Incident Response 86
Key Resource: Role of Law Enforcement in Assisting Victims of Mass Violence 87
Recovery 87
Recovery for Police First Responders 87
Key Resources: Mental Health Services and Benefits for First Responders 88
Police Overtime Pay 88
After-Incident Review 89
Law Enforcement Checklist 90

Chapter 5: Donations and Volunteer Management

Best practices for establishing the victims' fund and managing volunteers

Chapter Summary 91
Preparedness 92
Develop a Victims' Fund Strategy 92
Key Resource: The National Compassion Fund and Kenneth Feinberg 93
Establish Protocols for Volunteer and In-Kind Donations Management 93
Response 93
Establish a Fund Right Away 93
Keep the Public and City Officials Informed About the Fund 94
Direct Volunteers to Where They Can Help 95
Key Resources: Volunteer Management 97
Recovery 98
Fund Distribution to Victims and Families 98
Donations and Volunteers Checklist 100

Chapter 6: School Shootings

Issues and resources specific to school shootings, including school security considerations and student mental health and wellness

Chapter Summary 101
Preparedness 102
Cultivate Relationships with Law Enforcement 102
Cultivate Relationships with School Officials 102
Schedule a Tabletop Exercise Focused on a School Shooting 102
Key Resource: FEMA Campus Resilience Toolkit 103
Ensure School District Has Developed a Violence Prevention Plan 103
School Safety Information and Resources 103
U.S. Department of Justice Community-Oriented Policing Services Office Report 103
Key Resources: COPS School Safety Planning Recommendations 104
Role of Law Enforcement in School Safety Planning 104

Role of City in School Safety Planning 104
Student Mental Health Services 105
Key Resource: Mental Health System Assessment Tool 106
Active Shooter Drills 106
A Word About the School Security Industry 106
Response 106
Communications 106
Law Enforcement 106
Encourage School Officials to Access Available Resources 106
Seek Advice from Those Who Came Before 107
Recovery 107
Funding for School Recovery 108
Schools Shootings Checklist 111

Chapter 7: Community Partnerships

Strategies for engaging local and national partners in the preparation, response, and recovery phases (especially important for victims' services)

Chapter Summary 113
Preparedness 114
Identify Community Partners Needed to Respond to a Shooting 114
Key Resource: OVC Checklist for Partnership Planning 114
Local Mental Health and Behavioral Health Experts 115
Local Faith-Based Organizations 115
Key Resources: Faith-Based Organizations and Preventing Hate Crimes 116
Minority and Underserved Communities 116
School Communities and Districts 117
Local Business Community 117
Community Crisis Response Team 117
Engage National Partners 117
Response & Recovery 118
Direct Partners Where They Are Needed Most 118
Community Partnerships Checklist 121

Chapter 8: Legal Considerations

Issues that should be reviewed by the city's attorneys to reduce potential liability

Chapter Summary 123
Preparedness 124
Assemble a Crisis Leadership Team ("C4") 124
C4 Public Mass Shooting Preparedness Training 124
C4 Internal Review 125
Assess and Minimize Legal Risks 125
Evaluate Agreements to Ensure Resource Needs are Met During a Shooting 125

Review Coroner Office Protocol 125
Establish a 501(c)(3) Charitable Entity 126
Prepare for Public Records Requests 126
Insurance: Consult with a Risk Management Expert 127
Consult with Experienced Legal Experts 127
Understand State Preemption Laws 127
Response 128
Contact the C4 Team 128
Consider Whether to Make an Emergency Declaration 128
Respond to Open Government & Public Record Requests 129
Establish a Victims' Fund 129
Engage the Local Bar Association 129
Recovery 130
Litigation and Trial Considerations 130
Key Resource: Legal Summaries of Potential Claims Arising from Mass Shootings 130
Legal Considerations Checklist 131

Chapter 9: Commemorations

Guidance for commemorating the victims, planning permanent memorials, and preserving artifacts

Chapter Summary 133
Preparedness 134
Response 134
Vigils 134
Funerals 135
Recovery 136
First Annual Remembrance Event & Commemorations 136
Key Resources: Resources for Helping Victims and Planning Vigils 137
Permanent Memorials 137
Archival Considerations 138
Key Resources: Permanent Memorials and Archiving 139
Commemorations Checklist 141

Chapter 10: Mental Health

Information and resources related to trauma recovery and community resilience

Chapter Summary 143
Preparedness 144
Consult Mental Health Experts in Preparedness Efforts 144
Understand the Traumatic Impact of a Mass Shooting 144
Community Crisis Response Team 144
Key Resource: Community Crisis Response 145

Student Mental Health Services 145
Response 146
Ensure Mental Health Services are Available 146
Crisis Communications Informed by Mental Health Experts 146
Psychological First Aid 146
Key Resource: NC-PTSD Psychological First Aid (PFA) Manual 147
Recovery 147
Communications: Shifting from Response to Recovery 147
Provide Services to Address Ongoing Trauma 148
Include Information on Mental and Behavioral Health in After Action Reports 148
Key Resource: After Action Report Recommendations and Templates 148
First Responders' Mental Health 148
Key Resources: Mental Health Services and Benefits for First Responders ... 149
Community Conflict 149
Taking Care of Yourself and Your Staff 150
Mental Health Checklist 152

Afterword & Appendices

Afterword: A Note About Community Gun Violence 155

Appendices

Appendix A: Training Opportunities 159
Appendix B: VIP Visits 165
Appendix C: Funding Opportunities 171
Appendix D: To Prevent Mass Killings, Prevent Suicides 177
Appendix E: Additional Resources from the National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center 179

About the Public Health Advocacy Institute 181

Overview:
How to Use This Playbook

"It's not if, but when, a mass shooting happens in your community."
– Mayor Nan Whaley, Dayton OH

When a mass public shooting takes place, it falls on our nation's mayors to respond. Though supportive state and federal resources are available, there is no coordinated national response, and the response largely falls to local governments to coordinate. The Protocol and Playbook are intended for mayors, city managers, and their staff to help them prepare for, respond to, and recover from a public mass shooting.[1] The best way to use this Playbook is to organize a tabletop exercise and use the Playbook as a reference to inform your planning.

About this Playbook

The **Protocol** is a four-page overview of a mayor's role during the first 24 hours after a mass shooting. It highlights the key decisions the mayor will need to make and contains links to the Playbook that can provide additional information as needed. A one-page checklist highlighting immediate action steps is also included.

The **Playbook** is a resource guide that is informed by the recommendations and experience of mayors who have responded to a mass shooting. It is organized into ten topic areas: communications, emergency management, victims and families, law enforcement, donations, school shootings, community partnerships, legal considerations, commemorations, and mental health. Each chapter includes the actions and training that a mayor can take in advance of a mass shooting; actions a mayor should take during the response phase; and guidance for providing services to victims, family members, and the broader community as they recover. Each chapter includes a checklist and is intended to stand alone, so there is some intentional duplication of resources and information.

Throughout the Playbook, **key resources** (prepared by the CDC, FEMA, the FBI, the Office of Victims Assistance, and other agencies) are highlighted. So are best practices shared by the mayors who participated in the research. Many chapters include a "mayors in action" vignette to illustrate how mayors handled a particular challenge during their response to a shooting. Some of the chapters are cross cutting, including the mental health and legal considerations chapters.

The Playbook also includes **case briefs** of the six shootings we researched. These case briefs may be useful for planning and training purposes. There are also appendices that contain additional resources, such as a compilation of all the training resources we found, funding resources, and information about urban gun violence and suicide.

[1] We use "Mayors" and "Police Chiefs" throughout the Protocol and the Playbook to refer to the senior constitutional and primary law enforcement officers in the jurisdiction, which may also include City Managers, Sheriffs, and other officials.

We note that local government structure and charters in the United States are not uniform. Some cities have a "weak mayor" system in which a city manager directs most city agencies. Other cities have a "strong mayor" who acts as the city executive. We interviewed mayors from both structures. Whether you are the mayor of a small town or the mayor of a large city with complex executive functions, this Playbook provides insights and resources that will assist you in the event of a public mass shooting.

We also note that this project focused on responding to public mass shootings. However, many of the best practices may apply to other extreme emergencies, such as a terrorist attack or other mass casualty incident, such as a building collapse or fire.

Mayors Helping Mayors

This Playbook was made possible by the generous support of the mayors who participated in this research. They contributed generously of their time. They relived the emotional pain of their experience. They freely shared their staff, their protocols, and their best practices with us. They did all this to help other mayors.

Please share these resources with other mayors. Email the Protocol, along with your condolences, if a public mass shooting happens on the watch of a mayor you know. Share the Playbook with members of your staff and encourage them to plan a tabletop exercise. Encourage organizations that support mayors, city managers, and other officials to share it with their members.

If you have experience you want to share, or have ideas, resources, or feedback that could improve this Playbook, please contact: Sarah C. Peck at speck@phaionline.org.

Research Methods and Contributors

In fall 2019, a year after the horrific Tree of Life Synagogue Shooting took place in Pittsburgh, Sarah Peck met with Mayor William Peduto. She asked what he, as mayor, had needed, but lacked, when called upon to respond to the shooting. Mayor Peduto said that he would have benefitted from having a "mass shooting protocol" to help guide his response to the shooting, but one did not exist. He suggested working with mayors and other experts to develop such a protocol.

Together with colleagues at the Public Health Advocacy Institute (PHAI), Mark Gottlieb and Emily Nink, Ms. Peck launched a research project under the aegis of Northeastern University. As detailed below, a semi-structured interview schedule was developed to derive input from mayors and officials who have responded to a public mass shooting. The mayors' experiences and existing public health resources were then used to create the Mass Shooting Protocol and a supplemental resource guide, the Mass Shooting Playbook. These resources can be used by mayors, city managers, and their staffs to prepare for, respond to, and help their communities recover from the trauma of a mass shooting.

Methodology

The news organization Mother Jones has compiled a list of mass shootings in the U.S. dating back to 1982.[1] Mother Jones originally defined "mass shooting" as "indiscriminate rampages in public places resulting in four or more victims killed by the attacker," but in 2013 lowered the threshold to three killed. Mother Jones excluded "shootings stemming from more conventionally motivated crimes such as armed robbery or gang violence," domestic violence-related murders, and rampages that resulted in fewer than the threshold number of victim fatalities. We selected potential research cases from the Mother Jones database using the criteria described below. Note that other databases define "mass shooting" differently (see footnote ii).

Inclusion Timeframe

We chose cases that took place between January 1, 2011 and December 31, 2019. We selected this timeframe based on technological developments relevant to crisis response (*e.g.*, use of social media by public safety officials) and our ability to assess recovery efforts (for this reason, we excluded mass shootings in 2020 and 2021).

Exclusion Factors

We excluded cases with a deceased mayor, that involved sprees across multiple jurisdictions, or that happened in unincorporated areas for which a local leader was not identifiable as the primary responder to the incident. We also excluded cities that do not have a mayor as part of their government structure, such as Newtown, CT, site of the December 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School massacre.

Selected Cases	Population in Year of MCI	Shooting Category	Location of Shooting	Total Victims (Fatalities)[i]	Year of Shooting	Interview Participants
Washington, D.C.	619,371	Airport / Military / Government	Washington Navy Yard	20 (12)	2013	0
Roseburg, OR	21,937	School	Umpqua Community College	18 (9)	2015	0
San Bernardino, CA	214,112	Workplace[ii]	Inland Regional Center	35 (14)	2015	2
Orlando, FL	263,306	Indoor Public Accommodation	Pulse Nightclub	102 (49)	2016	5
Pittsburgh, PA	303,587	Place of Worship	Tree of Life Synagogue	17 (11)	2018	4
Parkland, FL	30,471	School	Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School	34 (17)	2018	1
Dayton, OH	140,569	Outdoor event / Entertainment	Oregon District—Ned Peppers Bar	36 (9)	2019	3
El Paso, TX	679,813	Indoor Public Accommodation	Wal-Mart Store	48 (22)	2019	1

N=16

[i] We report the total victims and total fatalities that Mother Jones reports as of May 27, 2021. Note that these counts do not include perpetrators who died or were wounded during the attack. Note also that there are many databases tracking mass killings and some report different victim counts, depending on the interpretation of a victim and methods used for gathering information. For more information, see James Fox & Jack Levin, *Mass confusion concerning mass murder*, 40 THE CRIMINOLOGIST (2015).

[ii] The victims of the San Bernardino shooting were county government employees, thus this case also has "government" aspects.

Diversity Factors

To ensure that the research results would be broadly useful to mayors across the country, we sought a diverse group of possible respondents to interview. We invited women and men, mayors from across the political spectrum, and mayors representing all major areas of the country: the East and West Coasts, the Midwest, the South, and the Southwest regions. We selected both large and small cities. We also sought racial diversity, although we were ultimately unable to recruit a Black mayor to participate in our sample.

We then re-categorized the Mother Jones list into six location categories of shootings: (1) airport, military, and government; (2) workplace; (3) school; (4) place of worship; (5) outdoor event or entertainment; and (6) public accommodation (indoor). These categories were defined to highlight the unique challenges that different mass shooting settings present to mayors and their staff.

Research Participants

Finally, within each category we chose the cases with the highest number of victims because they most likely required a complex municipal response and ongoing recovery services for the victims, their families, and the community as a whole. This selection process produced the eight public mass shooting cases listed in the table below. We invited the mayors who had responded to these shootings to participate in this research. Six agreed to be interviewed: the former and current mayors of Dayton, El Paso, San Bernardino, Orlando, Parkland, and Pittsburgh.

To understand perceptions and observations of actions taken by the mayors, we also interviewed "key informants" from each of the cities selected, including law enforcement officials, city staffers, and others who were identified by these informants during interviews. In total, we interviewed 16 individuals between December 2020 and March 2021. The number of respondents from each city is listed below.

Review Process

To ensure the accuracy and inclusivity of the content in the protocol and playbook, and to ensure they become useful tools for mayors and their staff in the event of a tragedy, we requested multiple rounds of review by members of our advisory group. First, at least one of our advisors reviewed each of the chapters of the playbook (see list of advisors below). We then asked the following mayors' chiefs of staff to review the entire playbook: Torey Hollingsworth from Dayton, Heather Fagan from Orlando, and Dan Gilman from Pittsburgh. Next, we invited each of the participating mayors to review the playbook. The playbook in your hands incorporates the input, feedback, and experience of many who had to respond to a mass shooting, as well as our advisors.

A Word About Community Gun Violence

Our focus for the Mass Shooting Playbook & Protocol is on "public mass shootings" because of the extraordinary challenges they pose to mayors. However, we note these mass shootings account for only 0.4% of the victims killed in gun violence in the United States.[2] Many more people are killed each year in gang- and drug-related homicides in U.S. urban centers. These shootings also traumatize the communities where they take place. This violence—often referred to as community gun violence—poses serious challenges that all mayors must address. Importantly, there are research-based approaches that mayors can and should employ to reduce the scourge of these shootings, save lives, and improve the lives of the people who live in urban communities. Please see the Afterword on Community Gun Violence for more information.

Research Advisors

Richard A. Daynard, J.D., Ph.D., PHAI President

Professor Daynard holds a J.D. from Harvard Law School, an M.A. in Sociology from Columbia University, and a Ph.D. from M.I.T. in Urban Studies and Planning (specializing in Law and Social Policy). He is a University Distinguished Professor of Law at Northeastern University and the founder of the Public Health Advocacy Institute (PHAI) at Northeastern University School of Law. Professor Daynard is devoted to combating the epidemics caused by tobacco and, more recently, obesity and gun violence. He has published over 80 articles, appeared in or been interviewed by major international media programs, and spoken on these issues in more than 50 countries.

Dr. Matthew Miller, MD, MPH, ScD, Public Health and Firearm Injury Prevention Expert

Dr. Miller, a physician, is Professor of Health Sciences and Epidemiology at Northeastern University, Adjunct Professor of Epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health, and Co-Director of the Harvard Injury Control Research Center. Dr. Miller is an expert in injury and violence prevention. His research encompasses intentional and unintentional injury, with an emphasis on firearm-related violence and suicide prevention. Dr. Miller is also Assistant Editor of the journal Injury Epidemiology and a recipient of the Excellence in Science Award from the American Public Health Association.

Dr. Peter T. Masiakos, MS, MD, FACS, FAAP, Surgeon, Massachusetts General Hospital

Dr. Masiakos is a pediatric and thoracic surgeon at Mass General and an Associate Professor at Harvard Medical School. He is the director of the pediatric trauma surgery service at Mass General and an injury-prevention advocate. Dr. Masiakos has focused on educating lawmakers on the risks certain products pose to children. He is the co-founder of Mass General's Center for Gun Violence Prevention, a multidisciplinary initiative dedicated to preventing firearm-related violence and promoting safety in the homes and communities of the hospital serves.

Robert A. Jones, Executive Director of Security, former FBI senior official

Mr. Jones is a 24-year veteran of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. His distinguished career includes domestic and international assignments, and expertise in the areas of counterterrorism, intelligence, and weapons of mass destruction. Notably, Mr. Jones was the Special Agent in Charge of the Pittsburgh Field Office, where he led the law enforcement response to the Tree of Life Synagogue shooting. He is currently the Executive Director of Security for a professional sports team. Mr. Jones received a BA in Administration of Justice from the Pennsylvania State University and a master's degree in social science from Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Public Affairs. Prior to joining the FBI, Mr. Jones served as a U.S. Marine Corps infantry officer.

James Alan Fox, Ph.D., The Lipman Family Professor of Criminology, Law, and Public Policy at Northeastern University

Professor Fox is a widely recognized expert on mass shootings. He has published 18 books, dozens of journal and magazine articles, and hundreds of freelance columns in newspapers around the country, primarily in the areas of mass murder, youth crime, school and campus violence, workplace violence, and capital punishment. He is a member of USA Today's Board of Contributors, where his column appears regularly. In addition, he was the founding editor of the Journal of Quantitative Criminology.

Mary Harvey, Ph.D., Director, Violence Transformed, Community Trauma Expert

Mary R. Harvey, Ph.D. is the Founding Director of Violence Transformed, a unique arts, public health and social justice initiative. In addition, Dr. Harvey is an Associate Clinical Professor of Psychology in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and founding director (now retired) of the Victims of Violence (VOV) Program of the Cambridge Health Alliance. A community and clinical psychologist, she has lectured widely and written extensively about the ecological context of interpersonal and sexual violence, the treatment of psychological trauma, and expressions of recovery and resiliency in trauma survivors. She continues to serve as a Senior Psychologist at the Victims of Violence Program and, as an emerging artist, has exhibited her work at both Violence Transformed and other area venues.

Endnotes

[1] Mark Follman, Gavin Aronsen & Deanna Pan, *US mass shootings, 1982–2021: Data from Mother Jones' investigation*, MOTHER JONES (2021), https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2012/12/mass-shootings-mother-jones-full-data/ (last visited MAY 27, 2021).

[2] *The Patterns and Prevalence of Mass Public Shootings in the United States, 1915–2013*, in THE WILEY HANDBOOK OF THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MASS SHOOTINGS 20–35, https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/9781119048015.ch2 (last visited Aug 18, 2021).



Case Briefs



UNITEDONGUNS



Case Brief:
Dayton Oregon District Shooting

Introduction

In the early morning hours of August 4, 2019, a young man fatally shot nine people and wounded 17 others with an AR-15 style pistol outside a bar in the "Oregon District," Dayton's downtown entertainment area.[1] The shooter was fatally shot by law enforcement officers, who responded within one minute of the first shot.

This case brief highlights the preparedness actions taken by Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley in advance of the Oregon District shooting, immediate actions she took in response, and further actions she took to help her community recover from the trauma.[2] PHAI researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with Mayor Whaley, Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl, and Chief of Staff Torey Hollingsworth.

Dayton's mayoral response is noteworthy for the Mayor's effective communication strategy, her close relationship with the Chief of Police that aided in the response and recovery, and for her handling of the visit of President Donald J. Trump, who was a divisive figure for many in her community.

City and Mayor Profile

Dayton is the sixth largest city in Ohio with more than 140,000 residents. Mayor Whaley, a Democrat elected in 2013, serves alongside four other City Commissioners. Together they appoint a City Manager to lead the city's executive functions (a "Council-Manager" form of local government). The Mayor announced she would not seek re-election in 2021. She is now running for governor of Ohio.

Preparation

Training and Experience

Dayton officials cited a range of training and experience that was useful during their response to the Oregon District Shooting. The Dayton Police Department participated in active shooter trainings through the National Tactical Officers Association and the Ohio Tactical Officers Association, though the Mayor and her staff were not involved. The Fire Department/EMS conducted tabletop exercises to prepare the Mayor's staff to respond to municipal emergencies such as water main breaks and natural disasters. Though helpful in coordinating key emergency support functions after the shooting, these exercises did not include planning relevant to the recovery phase of a public mass shooting. However, the Mayor said crisis communications training she received through a private group helped prepare her for effectively communicating with the public after the shooting. She also mentioned that a previously established a relationship with the Montgomery County Alcohol Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS), one of 50 boards formed to oversee alcohol/drug treatment and behavioral health services in the state, was helpful in crafting the city's messaging.

---

[1] We report the total victims and fatalities that Mother Jones reports as of May 27, 2021. Note there are many databases tracking mass killings; some report different victim counts. See James Fox & Jack Levin, *Mass confusion concerning mass murder*, 40 THE CRIMINOLOGIST (2015).

[2] Dayton is one of six cities researched by the Public Health Advocacy Institute in 2020-21 to inform a Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook PHAI developed for mayors, city managers, and their staff. PHAI classified the Oregon District Shooting as an outdoor public mass shooting.

Response

Communication

Mayor Whaley considered communication her primary responsibility after the shooting. She scheduled regular updates to the media every three hours and conducted the briefings on schedule even if no new information was available. She explained this is important to prevent the development of misinformation. From the Joint Information Center (JIC) located at the Dayton Convention Center, the Mayor's Chief of Staff and city communications professionals coordinated their messages with police and FBI Public Information Officers (PIOs). The PIOs and the Mayor's team agreed to hold press conferences jointly: the Chief of Police and law enforcement officials communicated about the investigation while the Mayor communicated messages of resilience and unity. Additionally, the Mayor managed the speaking roles and duties of other elected officials, as well as the visits of dignitaries including the President. The communications team worked overtime for a prolonged period after the shooting responding to the high volume of media requests.

Victim and Family Assistance

The Family Reunification Center (which later served as the Family Assistance Center) was co-located with the JIC at the Dayton Convention Center. This proved to be a problem because the press and city staff in the JIC could hear the cries of grief as family members were notified of the deaths of their loved ones. Further, family members were not adequately protected from the media. Therefore, the Mayor emphasizes the importance of separating the Family Reunification and Assistance Centers from the JIC and the press.

The Victim's Advocates Team at the County's Prosecutor office provided victim and family assistance services at the Family Assistance Center. Unlike in other cities, the FBI Victim Services Division and American Red Cross were not the lead coordinators of victim services in Dayton. The Mayor's staff coordinated services initially and directed victims and families to the responding organizations as they reached out. Everytown For Gun Safety provided "lighter touch" services for those who were not ready to seek formal mental health services or grief counseling. The Mayor kept a respectful distance from victims and families but called those who contacted her office.

Collaboration with Law Enforcement

The Mayor and the City Manager benefitted from a close working relationship with each other and with the Police Chief. This relationship was fortified through previous initiatives to combat opioid use, respond to natural disasters, and address local immigration issues. The Dayton Police had primary jurisdiction over the shooting, with the FBI providing additional support. The Mayor said she trusted both agencies during the response and investigation based on her previous experience working with them. The effective flow of information between law enforcement officials and the Mayor and her staff is noteworthy. Based at the JIC, the City Manager received tactical updates from Dayton Police via the law enforcement PIO and relayed those to the Mayor's communications staff to craft messaging for press conferences.

Vigils

Faith communities privately organized a vigil on the afternoon of August 4, 2019, the day of the shooting. The "Downtown Dayton" business association, in partnership with several City Commissioners, organized a candlelight vigil that evening. Mayor Whaley said she invited the Commissioners to participate in the organization of the second vigil to ensure they played a substantive role in the response. The Dayton Police provided security for the event. A crowd of several hundred mourners at the candlelight vigil sang songs, participated in prayers, and chanted "do something." Mayor Whaley spoke at the candlelight vigil.

Presidential Visit

President Trump visited Dayton on August 7, 2019 before traveling to El Paso, where another mass shooting had occurred just hours after the Dayton shooting. The Mayor discouraged the President from visiting the Oregon District, anticipating his visit would be divisive in her community. Instead, she welcomed the President at the tarmac and directed him to visit with victims in the hospital, where his presence might have a healing effect. Though the visit was short, the planning and coordination responsibilities for the visit were a heavy lift for Mayor Whaley's small staff, who worked overtime in the days following the shooting.

Recovery

"The Tragedy Fund"

Within 12 hours of the shooting, Mayor Whaley asked a private charity, the Dayton Foundation, to establish a fund to receive donations from the public. Relying on the best practices of other cities that have responded to mass shootings and terror attacks, the Foundation established the "Tragedy Fund." The Mayor was not directly involved in overseeing the Fund. The Foundation appointed a community oversight board, which determined how to allocate payouts to victims and family members. The Mayor designated a city staffer to serve as a non-voting member on the Board; this staffer kept the Mayor informed.

The Fund collected nearly $4 million and distributed 100 percent of the donations to 47 applicants (victims and family members). The Dayton Foundation waived all administrative fees associated with the Fund. The allocation was: approximately 70 percent of the funds went to the families of the deceased, 20 percent went to injured victims who were hospitalized for 48 hours or more, and the remaining 10 percent went to victims who were treated and released from the hospital in less than 48 hours.

State Crime Victim Compensation

The Ohio Attorney General's office paid $102,731 in state crime victim compensation to 29 victims of the shooting. However, at least 19 victims who applied did not receive victim compensation from the state. These victims were denied assistance due to past felony charges having nothing to do with the shooting or because they had drugs in their system when they were injured. Mayor Whaley advocated for changes to state law to ensure all victims of mass shootings receive the compensation and services they need. Recent legislative proposals in Ohio aim to expand the definition of "victim" to cover more affected individuals, increase the maximum claim for grief counseling, and lower barriers to receiving compensation.

Funerals and Benefit Events

The Mayor further supported victims by attending all the funerals to which she was invited and supporting events to benefit victims and families. Singer John Legend (in coordination with Everytown) hosted a private event for families and survivors in the Oregon District a week after the shooting. The Mayor met with him to discuss advocacy for gun violence prevention but did not attend the private event. She spoke publicly when Dave Chapelle gave a public benefit concert a few weeks after the shooting. Volunteers helped staff the event and the Dayton Chamber of Commerce raised funds for event security. The Mayor issued a proclamation declaring August 25 "Dave Chapelle Day" in Dayton.

Mental and Behavioral Health

Mayor Whaley emphasized the importance of understanding the long-term mental health needs of victims and family members, law enforcement officers, city staff, and the broader impacted community. The Mayor worked with ADAMHS to ensure the city's messaging was trauma-informed and healing, building on past work with this group developing an approach to the opioid crisis. Mental health resources for victims and families were provided through the County Prosecutor's office. The Mayor worked to secure services for first responders as well. She also modeled the importance of seeking mental health care by personalizing her messages and explaining that she was visiting a therapist in the aftermath of the shooting.

One Year Remembrance and Permanent Memorial

The one-year remembrance of the event was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The city and community partners offered socially distant and virtual activities under the banner of #DaytonShines. Activities included a memorial tree planted in the Oregon District on which notes of remembrance and seed packets could be placed, an online photo mosaic, and nine minutes of silence starting at 8:04 PM, during which the city shared a video tribute live on Facebook (no elected officials spoke). Community partners and the city continue to collaborate on a potential permanent memorial.

Dayton: Key Takeaways

- The Family Assistance Center and Joint Information Center/press area should be separate. The perimeter of the Family Assistance Center should be secure.
- Advocate for adequate state crime victim compensation for all affected victims and family members.
- Schedule regular and frequent press briefings and conduct the briefings on schedule even if you do not have all the answers.
- Develop partnerships in advance with mental health experts and seek their guidance for help crafting trauma-informed messaging during a crisis.
- Establish a victim's fund as quickly as possible, ideally on the day of the shooting.
- Direct VIP visitors to activities that can promote healing in the community and avoid situations in which VIP visitors could be divisive for the community.
- Ensure first responders obtain appropriate mental health support.

Case Brief:
El Paso Walmart Shooting

Introduction

On August 3, 2019, a shooter entered a Walmart in El Paso, Texas and fatally shot 22 people and injured 26 others with a WASR-10 AK-47–style semi-automatic rifle.[1] The victims were mostly Hispanic residents of El Paso and Mexico. The FBI is investigating the shooting as a hate crime and an act of domestic terrorism. The shooting has been described as the deadliest attack on the Hispanic community in modern U.S. history.

This case brief discusses the City of El Paso's preparation for, response to, and recovery from the Walmart shooting in 2019, with an emphasis on Mayor Dee Margo's role in all three phases.[2] The brief is based on a semi-structured interview with Mayor Margo, background conversations with national partners, and information gathered from online resources.

El Paso's mayoral response is noteworthy for the Mayor's ability to mobilize corporate and community partners, as well as the public, in key aspects of the response and recovery. Mayor Margo relied on his significant national media experience gained through the focus on El Paso as part of the debate about border security policy to advocate for the residents of El Paso. He also advocated for the speedy release of death notifications to grieving family members. The El Paso United Family Resiliency Center exemplifies an important public health resource and best practice.

City and Mayor Profile

El Paso is a border city of more than 650,000 residents situated on the Rio Grande across from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. Mayor Margo, a Republican, served as Mayor from 2017 to 2021. Under El Paso's council-manager form of government, the Mayor is a voting member of the City Council and presides over Council meetings and official city events and ceremonies. The City Manager oversees day-to-day operations of the city.

Preparation

Training and Experience

The El Paso police and fire departments participated in active shooter trainings prior to the shooting. The local hospital also conducted an exercise involving mass casualties just before the shooting. The Mayor cited the active shooter trainings and medical exercise as instrumental in the response.

In addition, El Paso's Office of Emergency Management (OEM)—a joint effort between the city and the county—maintains the Emergency Management Basic Plan and conducts regular trainings and exercises to test emergency response capabilities.

---

[1] We report the total victims and fatalities that Mother Jones reports as of May 27, 2021. Note there are many databases tracking mass killings; some report different victim counts. See James Fox & Jack Levin, *Mass confusion concerning mass murder*, 40 The Criminologist (2015).

[2] El Paso is one of six cities researched by the Public Health Advocacy Institute in 2020-21 to inform a Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook PHAI developed for mayors, city managers, and their staff. PHAI classified the Walmart Shooting as an "indoor public accommodation" mass shooting.

The Mayor and his staff did not participate in any trainings relevant to the response to the Walmart shooting. The Mayor recommends that mayors should observe a law enforcement active shooter drill. Without such training, the Mayor admitted he had to devise his response as he went along. However, he had significant national media experience due to El Paso's border city status that he relied on during the response.

Response

Communication

Mayor Margo was in Austin at the time of the shooting. He made immediate arrangements to fly back to El Paso, arriving about three hours after the shooting. From the airport, the Mayor went directly to the Emergency Operations Center at the 9/11 Fusion Center, which was also the location of the Joint Information Center for the incident. The Mayor was briefed there by local police, the FBI, Public Safety, and Department of Justice officials. He then spoke with these officials outside the Fusion Center at a press conference that took place about seven hours after the shooting.

The Mayor's messaging emphasized the theme of love over hate. He contrasted the fact that the killer drove 700 miles to commit his hate crime with the peace-loving nature of El Paso's residents. He later explained in a press interview, "I've said from day one this [shooting] will not be a defining moment in our history. ... I want to relegate it to an asterisk footnote." After the first press conference, the Mayor delivered daily press briefings with the Chief of Police to update the public about the status of the investigation.

Victim and Family Assistance

The El Paso OEM, the FBI, the American Red Cross (ARC), the Salvation Army, and the United Way collaborated to open a Family Reunification Center at a local middle school on the afternoon of the shooting. Mayor Margo communicated with the governor and the assistant police chief, urging law enforcement officials to expedite crime scene processing so that the families could receive death notifications quickly.

The El Paso Independent School District staffed the cafeteria to offer food to the families and community members who arrived. The FBI Victim Services Division took witness statements and handled death notifications. They also maintained contact with area hospitals and trauma centers to update families about the location of their loved ones. The Mayor visited the Family Reunification Center the evening of the shooting and visited injured victims in the hospital the next day.

OEM and ARC opened the Family Assistance Center (FAC) three days later at a nearby convention center. It offered victims and families extensive services, including referrals to crime victim compensation, grief counseling, and legal services. Immigration and travel services were of particular importance given that seven fatalities were Mexican nationals (an additional resident of Ciudad Juarez who died was a German national). The FAC closed after 10 days. The El Paso United Family Resilience Center (RC) opened shortly thereafter to offer ongoing support to survivors (see below).

Blood donations were critically needed. Residents lined up for hours to donate in 100-degree heat, requiring a response by volunteer organizations to distribute water and sunscreen. The Mayor donated blood the day after the shooting and met with donors standing in line. He described the overwhelming response to the request for blood donations as a moving demonstration of the community's unity in the face of crisis.

Collaboration with Emergency Response

The EOC was located at the 9/11 Fusion Center, an all-crimes and all-hazards tactical information and intelligence hub for the El Paso Police Department and the region. The Center is a collaborative between local, state, and federal agencies in El Paso and Dona Ana County, New Mexico. The EOC was set up within an hour of the shooting and a countywide emergency alert was issued about 77 minutes after the shooting.

The OEM operates a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) to educate volunteers about disaster preparedness and train them in basic response so they can help support first responders during a disaster. However, the CERT was not activated as the emergency response needs were met by responding organizations.

Vigils

Many vigils were held in the days following the shooting, but were not hosted by the city. The largest vigil was a bilingual service held at the baseball stadium attended by 8,000 community members from both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. Mayor Margo spoke at this vigil and focused his remarks on the victims, "They represent generations of El Pasoans and Mexicans that have lived in unison and harmony throughout our 350-year history." He reprised his healing message, telling mourners, "hate will never overcome our love."

Presidential Visit

President Donald J. Trump visited El Paso four days after the shooting. The visit was opposed by some elected officials and residents. Nevertheless, Mayor Margo met with the President at the 9/11 Fusion Center, taking the opportunity to ask for "any and all federal resources available" to aid with response and recovery. Although he received substantial criticism and even death threats for welcoming the President, he considered hosting the visit an essential part of his duties. President Trump did not speak publicly. Instead, he met with first responders to thank them and visited with families of three survivors who agreed to meet him at the University Medical Center of El Paso (despite a petition signed by 1,000 medical staff opposing his visit).

Recovery

"One Fund El Paso"

The National Compassion Fund administered the victims' fund, One Fund El Paso. The Fund was a collaboration between the city and local foundations: the Paso del Norte Community Foundation and the El Paso Community Foundation. The Mayor promoted transparency in fund administration through weekly updates in city council meetings. The fund organizers partnered with at least seven community organizations to help victims and family members apply for funds. Information about the Fund was provided in both English and Spanish. Community partners provided representatives to serve on a task force to oversee the donations and create the distribution protocol. The Fund ultimately disbursed $11.8 million to 355 victims and victims' family members. An additional $50,000 was donated to the Resiliency Center (see next section).

Family Resiliency Center

Local and state agencies collaborated to establish the El Paso United Family Resiliency Center (RC) to help survivors and families recover from trauma caused by the attack. Initially funded by a Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) grant, the RC opened three months after the shooting. As of 2021, the RC is still open and funded by the Office of the Governor and United Way El Paso. Notably, the RC provides services to community members beyond the victims of the 2019 shooting. To promote long-term community healing, the RC uses "resiliency navigators" to direct people to the resources of nearly 40 community-based organizations to provide individualized case management, referrals for counseling, financial planning, legal guidance, spiritual care, and more. The support of these partners made it possible for the RC to meet the changing needs of the community, facilitate programs tailored for specific populations, and reduce stigma around receiving mental health care through outreach and education.

Remembrances and Permanent Memorials

The items left by the community at a makeshift memorial at the Walmart were preserved at a local history museum. The city conducted focus groups with community members (including some family members of victims) to understand how they wanted to memorialize the shooting. The families wanted to concentrate the memorial in one location so as not to have a constant reminder of the tragedy. After these listening sessions, Walmart held a private event to unveil its "Grand Candela" memorial, a 30-foot obelisk honoring the victims with a "beacon of light." At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic limited the City's ability to host the one-year remembrance of the shooting. An online event in August 2020 was described as "not ideal" for healing because of the lack of in-person contact.

State Crime Victim Compensation and Reimbursement for Recovery Costs

The State of Texas provided $5.5 million in funding to the City of El Paso for a range of services, including psychological first aid, state behavioral health services, county reimbursements related to the prosecution, school-based mental health services, and the Family Resiliency Center to meet the ongoing mental health needs of survivors.

Funerals

The Mayor attended every funeral except those in Mexico. He took care to emphasize that many of the victims and grieving family members were Mexican citizens.

El Paso: Key Takeaways

- Crisis communications should focus on the unique characteristics of the community to help residents overcome trauma and unite in solidarity.
- Community partners can play a vital role in fund establishment, vigils, family assistance and resilience centers, and memorials.
- Promote transparency and inclusivity when establishing the victims' fund.
- Blood donations need to be well-organized to protect the wellbeing of donors.
- States are an important source of funding for the response and recovery costs.
- The El Paso Resiliency Center is a model for other cities.

Case Brief:
Orlando Pulse Nightclub Shooting

Introduction

On June 12, 2016, a shooter fatally shot 49 people and wounded 53 at Pulse, a gay nightclub celebrating Latin night.[1] The shooter, who declared allegiance to ISIS, used a Sig Sauer MCX semi-automatic rifle and a Glock 17 semi-automatic pistol. He took hostages and engaged police in a three-hour standoff before he was killed by law enforcement officials. FBI investigators declared the event a terrorist attack.

This case brief highlights preparedness actions taken by Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer and his staff before the Pulse shooting, and actions they took during the response and recovery phases.[2] PHAI researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with Mayor Dyer, Chief of Staff Heather Fagan, City CFO Christopher McCullion, Deputy Chief Venues Officer Craig Borkon, and Director of Strategic Partnerships Kathy Devault. The researchers also arranged background conversations with subject matter experts and reviewed online resources.

The Mayor's response to the Pulse shooting illustrates a well-coordinated response by a large city with sophisticated policing and municipal resources. The Mayor's tabletop exercise before the attack is noteworthy, as is his management of key operations, including the OneOrlando fund, the Family Assistance Center, and the Orlando United Assistance Center (a Resiliency Center). The Mayor empowered his staff to act while focusing on his role as a voice for unity and healing on the international stage. Recognizing the challenge of responding to a mass shooting, the Mayor sent city staff to aid other mayors in their response to mass shootings in Las Vegas and Parkland.

City and Mayor Profile

Orlando is Florida's third largest city with over 263,000 residents. Mayor Dyer is a registered Democrat and has served as Mayor since 2003. The city government is of the "strong mayor" structure, in which the Police Chief and city agencies report to the chief executive, the Mayor, who also sits on the City Council.

Preparation

Training and Experience

The Mayor hosts an annual tabletop exercise. Prior to the shooting, the Mayor and city officials conducted a tabletop exercise on the theme of civil disobedience. The Fire Department operated the exercise; city staff from emergency support functions (ESFs) participated. During the tabletop, the team developed a social media protocol that was used during the response to the shooting. The Mayor and his staff cited this exercise as highly instructive for the coordinated interagency response to the shooting.

---

[1] We report the total victims and fatalities that Mother Jones reports as of May 27, 2021. Note there are many databases tracking mass killings; some report different victim counts. See James Fox & Jack Levin, *Mass confusion concerning mass murder*, 40 THE CRIMINOLOGIST (2015).

[2] Orlando is one of six cities researched by the Public Health Advocacy Institute in 2020-21 to inform a Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook PHAI developed for mayors, city managers, and their staff. PHAI classified the Pulse shooting as an indoor public accommodation mass shooting.

Additionally, city staff participated in joint exercises with the county, as emergency management is a function of county government in Florida. Local law enforcement participated in tactical trainings involving active shooting scenarios, including at school sites and the football stadium. Finally, city officials had significant experience responding to natural disasters, such as hurricanes. They relied on their emergency communications experience during the Pulse shooting response.

Response

Communication

Because the shooting took place in the middle of the night and there were concerns about explosives, the Mayor and law enforcement officials postponed the first press conference until the scene was secured. The Mayor then negotiated with the FBI about who would take the lead at the initial press conference. The Mayor felt the first message about the attack and security status should come from the Mayor, because he is trusted by the community, rather than an unrecognized FBI agent. After the Mayor spoke, law enforcement officials provided details about the investigation. The press area was moved after elected officials from outside Orlando spoke to the press even though they lacked information about the attack. Recognizing the importance of coordinated and accurate messaging, the Mayor recommends securing the press area.

Public Records Requests

City staff received hundreds of public records requests. The city promoted transparency and reduced the impact of repetitive requests by hosting a webpage on which all public documents relating to Pulse Nightclub and the shooting were published and regularly updated. The city also sought clarification from a court before releasing 911 calls and transcripts. ThecCity released these within a week of receiving a court order that clarified which calls and transcripts needed to be redacted to protect victims' personal information. Pulse-related records remain online today.

Victim and Family Assistance

Family reunification was initially provided at a nearby hospital but was soon overwhelmed and moved to a nearby community center. Recognizing that the site could not accommodate the large number of victims, family members, and friends, the Mayor asked city staff to stand up a Family Assistance Center (FAC) at Camping World Stadium. The FAC opened the next morning. The stadium was chosen for its size, secure perimeter, and ample parking. Both the American Red Cross and the FBI Victim Services Division helped city staff establish and operate the FAC. Nearly 40 community-based organizations and businesses provided services. Local law enforcement provided security. Services included mental health care, immigration and travel services, child and pet care, and funeral services. Volunteer lawyers from the local bar association provided pro bono legal services. Importantly, service providers were received at an intake area that was separate from the entrance for victims and families. After operating the FAC for six days, the city transitioned services to the Orlando United Assistance Center (OUAC) in collaboration with Orange County and Heart of Florida United Way. The OUAC continues to support survivors with referrals to mental health care and other services five years after the shooting.

Collaboration with Law Enforcement

The Orlando police, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, FBI, and hostage negotiators were involved in the response. Mayor Dyer based himself in the mobile Command Center with his Chief of Staff Heather Fagan and kept an appropriate distance from law enforcement operations. This uncommon arrangement (mayors are often based on the Joint Information Center) allowed the Mayor to stay informed in real time and base his communications on firsthand knowledge of the response. The mayor's station in the Command Center was made possible by pre-established personal relationships and mutual trust with law enforcement officials.

Emergency Declaration and Disaster Aid

In consultation with the Mayor, Governor Rick Scott declared a state of emergency in Orange County and Orlando following the shooting. According to the Mayor, this declaration relaxed rules related to police overtime and allowed full deployment of emergency response staff. Due to the Mayor's experience responding to hurricanes, he believed the declaration would also make FEMA funding possible for excess costs incurred by the city during the response. However, the Governor's request for $5 million was denied, in part because the state failed to demonstrate the response was beyond the capacity of state and local government. However, the Small Business Administration (SBA) approved $353,000 for an Economic Injury Disaster Loan, which provided support for small businesses impacted by the shooting. The declaration of emergency was necessary for the city to be eligible for this loan.

Vigils

City staff coordinated with faith leaders and community organizations that serve the LGBTQ+ and Latinx communities to host an interfaith vigil. Because the event was declared a terrorist attack, Mayor Dyer invited a respected local Muslim leader—Muhammad Musri, senior Imam of the Islamic Society of Central Florida—to attend the vigil and press conferences to speak about his community's rejection of hate crimes. This was done to prevent possible retaliation attacks against the Muslim community. At the vigil, Musri declared the support of the Muslim community for the victims of the tragedy, saying "we condemn the ideology of hate and death and destruction and we call for all Muslim leaders and communities across this nation and across the world to stand up and to deal with this cancer and to remove it once and for all."

Recovery

The "OneOrlando" Fund

The city had an existing 501(c)(3) charitable entity. After receiving offers of sizable donations from local corporate donors, including Disney, city staff quickly made adjustments to that entity so it could receive donations from the public. On the advice of Boston officials who established the victims' fund following the Marathon bombing, city staff contacted attorney Kenneth Feinberg. He offered *pro bono* services on the condition that existing funds be consolidated into one, unified fund. City staff heard from family members of previous shootings that 100 percent of the money donated should go to victims and families; the city followed that recommendation. The fund's distribution protocol prioritized the families of deceased victims for the highest payouts, injured victims for payouts in accordance with the length of their hospital stay, and victims present at the scene but not physically injured for the lowest amounts.

Mental and Behavioral Health

The Mayor recognized the far-reaching mental health impact of the shooting. In addition to the trauma experienced by families and survivors, city staff were also traumatized by the event. For example, staff who operated the Family Assistance Center were not prepared for the emotional impact of providing services and had difficulty transitioning back to their normal duties after the Family Assistance Center closed. The Mayor advocated for group therapy sessions for them and the use of therapy animals in City Hall.

Remembrances and Permanent Memorials

Immediately following the shooting, the city hosted vigils and events that prompted local, national, and international participation and mourning. The Pulse Foundation was established to provide a place for reflection and to preserve photographs and items left at the site of the shooting. Staff from the History Center worked around the clock to archive items left at the site by community members, such as flowers, candles, and photographs. One year after the shooting, city staff worked with Orange County and the onePULSE Foundation to host Orlando United Day. Buildings throughout Orlando and central Florida were lit in rainbow colors. Events were also hosted by the University of Central Florida and other colleges. Tens of thousands of community members attended Lake Eola Park Amphitheater for an evening of prayer, live music, inspirational dance, and a moment of reflection for the victims. The city was involved in planning and provided the security for the Lake Eola event. In June 2021, five years after the shooting, the city and its partners again planned a week of remembrance events to honor the victims. The former site of the Pulse Nightclub was designated as a permanent memorial in 2021, five years after the shooting.

Orlando: Key Takeaways

- Conduct a tabletop exercise to plan the interagency response to a mass shooting.
- Secure the press area to prevent the spread of misinformation by uninformed speakers and elected officials.
- Post public information online to efficiently respond to intensive and repetitive public records requests.
- Venues used for family reunification and assistance need to be scalable and secured to accommodate the potentially large number of affected victims, family members, and (importantly) friends of the victims.
- Public mass shootings may not be eligible for FEMA funds.
- Establish a 501(c)(3) in advance. It can be used for many things, including for a victims' fund following a mass casualty event or natural disaster, or to receive donations for the families of fallen first responders.
- Family members from previous shootings advocate that 100% of the money raised should go to the victims and their families.
- Mental health services and other forms of support may be needed by survivors, family members and friends for years after the shooting. In addition, plan to provide mental health services for city employees who work on the response.

Case Brief:
Parkland School Shooting

Introduction

On February 14, 2018, a troubled student opened fire on his classmates with an AR-15 rifle at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL, killing 17 people and injuring 17 others.[1] The shooter was arrested an hour later in nearby Coral Springs. He was charged with 17 counts of murder and 17 counts of attempted murder.

This case brief discusses the City of Parkland's preparation for, response to, and recovery from the Parkland shooting, with an emphasis on Mayor Christine Hunschofsky's role in all three phases.[2] The case study is based on findings from one semi-structured interview, background information obtained via phone calls with experts and review of online materials, and a review of the National Police Foundation's after-action report on lessons learned from the incident and recommendations, which involved comprehensive information gathering.

The Parkland case illustrates the unique issues posed by a school mass shooting, which command national attention and are especially traumatizing for children and families. PHAI's research found that advance preparation is especially important in smaller cities that lack the resources of larger cities for comprehensive emergency management planning, and where school shootings are more likely to take place. Smaller cities responding to a school shooting may also face the challenge of coordinating multiple divisions of government that do not report to the Mayor. Parkland's mayoral response is noteworthy for the Mayor's compassionate leadership during a tragedy that affected community members she knew personally. The city's planning for the first annual remembrance event is also noteworthy as a best practice.

City Profile

Parkland is a small, suburban city in Florida with 30,471 residents at the time of the shooting. The city has a Commission-Manager form of local government. The City Commission has five voting members: Mayor, Vice Mayor, and three Commissioners. Unlike the "strong mayor" form of local government, the Mayor's authority is limited and co-equal to that of the other Commissioners. The Mayor cannot direct staff or city resources. That is the role of the professional City Manager, who has operational authority for city functions. Mayor Hunschofsky, a Democrat, served as mayor from 2016-2020. In 2020, she was elected to the Florida House of Representatives.

---

[1] We report the total victims and fatalities that Mother Jones reports as of May 27, 2021. Note there are many databases tracking mass killings; some report different victim counts. See James Fox & Jack Levin, *Mass confusion concerning mass murder*, 40 THE CRIMINOLOGIST (2015).

[2] Parkland is one of six cities researched by the Public Health Advocacy Institute in 2020-21 to inform a Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook PHAI developed for mayors, city managers, and their staff. PHAI classified the Parkland shooting as a school shooting.

Preparation

Training and Experience

The City of Parkland contracts with the Broward County Sheriff's Office for law enforcement services and the Coral Springs Fire Department for fire/EMS services. Law enforcement and EMS officials report to the City Manager, who in turn reports to the Mayor and the City Commission. The National Police Foundation (NPF) found that Broward County and the city had comprehensive emergency management plans, but these plans did not include provisions for managing the response to an active shooter incident. The Mayor, the City Manager, and the City Commissioners had not participated in a tabletop exercise or other training related to a mass shooting.

Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School is operated by Broward County Public Schools (BCPS), which is independent from both the city and the county. BCPS is overseen by a superintendent and school board. BCPS had a district-wide safety plan and each school had a safety plan and emergency code procedures, but these plans were not accessible for review by the NPF. Though city officials had engaged with individual schools and attended PTA and other public meetings related to school security, they had no direct authority over the schools nor input on issues such as threat assessment, active shooter drills, or student mental health services.

Response

Communication

Because no communication protocol had been established between city public information officers (PIOs) and law enforcement PIOs in advance, the Mayor, the City Commission, and staffers had difficulty obtaining real-time information about the law enforcement response. In fact, according to press reports, officials at City Hall received updates from television coverage and Twitter. The Mayor was not included in press conferences, which instead were handled by State andstate officials, Broward County officials, and school officials. However, individual reporters contacted the Mayor directly. She focused her messages to the community rather than to national audiences and emphasized the importance of mental health and community support. According to the NPF's after-action report, the city's lack of unified messaging with all involved agencies created a vacuum filled by divisive messages that at times "overshadowed messages of unity and resilience, which also hampered the ability of the entire Broward community to focus on a collaborative recovery process."

Victim and Family Assistance

A Family Reunification Center (FRC) was quickly established by local law enforcement agencies at a nearby Marriott Hotel after the Coral Springs City Manager called the hotel to see whether it was available. Over eight hundred people signed into the FRC and made statements to law enforcement officials. Parkland's City Manager deployed city staff to support the FRC. The Mayor visited the FRC the evening of the shooting to comfort families waiting for information about their loved ones. The operation was reportedly uncoordinated and chaotic, as multiple community-based organizations showed up to offer blankets, water, and other resources. The process for issuing death notifications was drawn out by law enforcement protocols, adding to the anguish experienced by the families at the FRC. According to the NPF, "Increased, regular communication with families awaiting reunification or notification may have helped to ease the chaotic environment at the FRC."

The City of Parkland, assisted by the American Red Cross and local organizations, established a Family Assistance Center three days after the shooting to provide comprehensive mental health and other services. On February 24, 2018, services for survivors and family members were transferred to the Broward County Resiliency Center (see below). The Mayor attended all public meetings about victim and family services to keep herself informed, to provide oversight, and to communicate the needs of family and community members with whom she stayed in regular contact.

Collaboration with Law Enforcement and Emergency Response

Multiple law enforcement agencies responded to the scene, including Coral Springs and the Broward County Sherriff's office, agents from Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and the FBI. Unified command was not established at the scene for about an hour, which negatively impacted communication and later compromised the operations of the Family Reunification Center. According to the NPF report, "Broward County partially activated the County Emergency Operations Center (CEOC) and the City of Parkland [referring to the City Manager] activated a modified municipal EOC (MEOC) during the response to the MSD shooting, but both played a minimal role during the response and in the immediate aftermath because they did not receive timely information from the scene."

Unlike in other mass shooting cases, where mayors were either physically present in the incident command post or operating with their staffs out of the emergency operations center or joint information center, Mayor Hunschofsky did not have access to the initial response infrastructure and therefore learned the details of the investigation at the same time as the public. Notably, the Mayor, who personally knew many impacted families and members of the school community, stationed herself at the school to offer comfort to them and direct them to the FRC.

Vigils

The initial candlelight vigil in Pine Trails Park was organized by City of Parkland staff. The event was described as traumatizing to the families of the victims because some elected officials delivered divisive/political messages rather than messages of unity and healing. There were also traffic control issues due to the thousands of attendees. Many other vigils, marches, and events were held in the days and weeks following the shooting, which the under-resourced city staff did their best to support. Partnerships were established with community-based organizations and the American Red Cross to assist with volunteers and logistics.

Recovery

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Victims' Fund

Within two days of the shooting, the Broward Education Foundation started a fund using GoFundMe. The National Compassion Fund helped establish the distribution protocol, which was based on thoughtful engagement with survivors and families. The Mayor attended listening sessions to stay updated so that she could share information about the fund with the affected families and members of the school community and amplify their views. According to press reports, 100 percent of the $10.5 million was distributed to survivors and family members of the victims.

Mental and Behavioral Health Services

The Mayor attended meetings about students' mental and behavioral health needs after the shooting. The Broward League of Cities established a school and community public safety task force with stakeholders including the Children's Services Council, Broward Behavioral Health Coalition, law enforcement, representatives from other cities, and representatives from the school system. The Children's Services Council's Executive Director helped raise funding and obtain grants for initiatives to promote mental health in Broward County public schools.

In the immediate aftermath of the shooting, a campus wellness center with a range of services was established at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. (Additional services were offered to the broader community at a separate location.) However, concerns remain that the services offered to students were not appropriate for those experiencing severe trauma. For example, services were offered in a setting that lacked privacy and utilized talk therapy (generally not indicated for people who have recently experienced trauma). As a result of this mismanagement, in-home services later offered by the Broward Behavioral Health Coalition were under-utilized by those in need of care, despite efforts by the Mayor and others in the community to promote the availability of the services. Although not a substitute for appropriate, trauma-informed therapy, therapy dogs were used successfully at schools, community sites, and City Hall. The dogs were important for those who were not yet ready to talk about their experience and became an important and lasting aspect of community care.

The Broward County Resiliency Center was later established to provide grief counseling, referrals to community resources, and specialized group counseling for those impacted by the shooting. The Center is no longer operating, but family counseling is offered at two school-based sites in the community. Online mental health resources are also available through the Broward County Public Schools website.

One Year Remembrance

Parkland community members and city staff organized events centered on unity and volunteerism for the first annual remembrance of the shooting. The "Day of Service and Love" offered "something for everyone," recognizing that people process grief in different ways.

Notably, events were intentionally free of political messaging at the behest of the Mayor, who wrote a letter inviting elected officials to attend, but not to speak, at the City's remembrance ceremony on February 14, 2019. Throughout the day there were activities for students and community members, such as painting stones for an outdoor memorial, playing with therapy dogs, and packing meals for children experiencing food insecurity. There were art projects, including a Temple of Time project created by an artist in collaboration with the community. The school opened for a half day: some students attended school events, participated in a moment of silence, or performed a community service project. Others chose to stay home. There was a breakfast for first responders. Communal prayer vigils and candlelight ceremonies were held throughout the day.

Parkland: Key Takeaways

- City emergency management plans should include active shooter events.
- A tabletop exercise is recommended to plan for a school shooting. In a city with a Commission-Manager form of government, the City Manager, the Mayor, the other City Commissioners, and City staff should all attend and clarify their roles during the response. County, school, and law enforcement officials should be included to promote intra-agency cooperation.
- As part of this exercise, potential locations for a Family Reunification Center (FRC) in different parts of the city should be identified. Each potential location should have a secure perimeter and space for private meetings.
- A communication protocol should be developed in advance with POIs and law enforcement that ensures that the City Manager, Mayor, and City Commission are all regularly briefed by law enforcement officials during the response to a mass shooting.
- As the city's official representative to the state, the nation, and internationally, the Mayor should be included in press briefings.
- Schools, cities, and counties should work together on school security issues, including threat assessment, active shooter drills, and student mental health services.
- Commemorations should be in the spirit of unity and healing. Elected officials should be discouraged from making divisive remarks.
- Compassionate city leadership and trauma-informed messaging can help promote trauma recovery for victims, families, and the affected community.
- After action-reporting and evaluation can lead to system improvements and better emergency planning practices.



Case Brief:
Pittsburgh Tree of Life Shooting

Introduction

On the morning of October 27, 2018, a shooter opened fire during Shabbat services at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh's Squirrel Hill neighborhood. He used a Colt AR-15 SP1 semi-automatic rifle and three Glock .357 SIG handguns to kill 11 victims and wound six others.[1] The shooter was apprehended by law enforcement officials and will stand trial for murder. The attack was declared a hate crime and is one of the deadliest attacks on the Jewish community in U.S. history.

This case brief highlights the City of Pittsburgh's preparation for, response to, and recovery from the Tree of Life shooting, with an emphasis on the role Mayor William Peduto played in all three phases.[2] PHAI researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with Mayor Peduto, Pittsburgh Public Safety Director Wendell Hissrich, FBI Special Agent in Charge Robert Jones, and the Mayor's Chief of Staff, Daniel Gilman.

The response to the Tree of Life shooting illustrates the benefits of advance planning and deployment of federal resources. The City's Emergency Management Agency (OEMHS) organized active shooter training for first responders and at risk-communities. Multiple law enforcement agencies, led by the FBI, marshalled a well-coordinated, multi-layered response to the attack. The Mayor's response is noteworthy for his singular focus on meeting the needs of the victims and family members, his effective communications management, and for the relationships established in advance with the Jewish community that made it possible for law enforcement officials to warn synagogues throughout the city of the attack even when phone contact could not be established because it was the Jewish Sabbath.

City and Mayor Profile

Pittsburgh is the second largest city in Pennsylvania with over 300,000 residents. The Mayor manages the city's executive functions (a "strong mayor," Mayor-Council form of local government). The Chief of Staff serves as de facto Deputy Mayor and plays a key role advising the Mayor. The Police Chief is appointed by the Mayor, approved by the City Council, and reports to the Chief of Staff. Mayor Peduto, a Democrat, served on the City Council from 2002 to 2014 and as Pittsburgh's Mayor from 2014 to 2021.

---

[1] We report the total victims and fatalities that Mother Jones reports as of May 27, 2021. Note there are many databases tracking mass killings; some report different victim counts. See James Fox & Jack Levin, *Mass confusion concerning mass murder*, 40 THE CRIMINOLOGIST (2015).

[2] Pittsburgh is one of six cities researched by the Public Health Advocacy Institute in 2020-21 to inform a Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook PHAI developed for mayors, city managers, and their staff. PHAI classified the Tree of Life shooting as a "place of worship" mass shooting.

Preparation

Training and Preparedness Actions

The Pittsburgh Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (OEMHS) is responsible for the city's emergency management. OEMHS works with city, county, regional, state, and federal government partners to develop all hazards plans for natural disasters and human-caused events. In advance of the Tree of Life shooting, OEMHS organized active shooter trainings for Public Safety staff and police. The Mayor's Chief of Staff (COS) observed one of these trainings. Training for the Mayor's office was also scheduled but had not taken place at the time of the shooting.

OEMHS coordinates with community organizations, businesses, and schools to help them develop plans to respond to an active shooter. As part of this preparedness planning, the police department, in coordination with the FBI, did walk-throughs with the Jewish Community Center to assess its security and make recommendations. Lines of communication were established for use in the event of a shooting or other emergency. As a result, the Public Safety Staff had a list of all the locations of synagogues and Jewish sites in the city. Because the attack took place on the Jewish Sabbath, these sites could not be contacted by telephone. The police used the list to go physically to each site to warn of the attack and secure the site.

According to COS Gilman, the Mayor's role in these activities was to provide budget priority, clear vision for OEMHS responsibilities, and effective oversight of police department operations.

Partnerships

The Mayor's staff emphasized the importance of personal relationships during the response and recovery. Important local partners included the Jewish Community Center, the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh, and Pittsburgh's universities and medical centers. National partners included the FBI and the American Red Cross.

Response

Communication

The FBI Public Information Officer (PIO) assembled the Mayor, the FBI Special Agent in Charge (SAC), and the Chief of Police to define their speaking roles at the press conferences. Visiting officials, including the Governor and a U.S. Senator, were not initially given speaking roles. At the first press conference, the Mayor spoke about public safety and what the city was doing to meet the needs of victims and families. Law enforcement officials spoke about the investigation. Throughout the response, the COS filtered media requests and coordinated calls between the Mayor and elected officials. On social media, the public safety PIO released updates. The Mayor's account and other city accounts amplified these updates. This disciplined, coordinated approach allowed the City to communicate to the public with a unified voice.

Victim and Family Assistance

Initially, the FBI set up a Family Reunification Center (FRC) at Chatham University, but the Jewish Community Center also provided similar services. COS Gilman recommended locating the FRC at one location to prevent confusion. The Jewish Community Center was ultimately chosen because it was a

familiar place to the affected community. Its perimeter was secured so that its staff could protect families from the media. Specialists from the U.S. Attorney's Office and FBI's Victim Services Division provided services ranging from the return of personal effects, to death notifications, to referrals to local mental health resources. The Mayor met with the families at the FRC, visited the victims in the hospital, and attended funerals upon request. He prioritized meetings with families over other commitments, including interviews with the press.

Collaboration with Law Enforcement

Multiple law enforcement agencies responded to the attack. It was soon apparent that the incident fit the definition of a federal hate crime. Therefore, the FBI was given jurisdiction and took over the crime scene and investigation. The County began a parallel investigation because the shooter was shot by law enforcement responding to the scene. Law enforcement leaders relied on established working relationships to coordinate the investigation and communicate with the Mayor and elected officials. However, at times the Mayor's staff had difficulty obtaining the updates they needed. Therefore, COS Gilman recommends requesting that a law enforcement official based in the command unit or Emergency Operations Center be designated as the point person whose sole function is to regularly brief the mayor and elected officials.

Vigils

On the night following the shooting, the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh hosted a large community vigil at the Soldiers and Sailors War Memorial. Mayor Peduto, the Governor, and other officials spoke at that event. The Mayor also attended an event with Tom Hanks at Point State Park a week later, organized by the city. Vigils were also organized by Jewish communities and took place around the country.

Recovery

"Victims of Terror" Fund

The Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh established a fund to collect donations for the victims. The Federation appointed an independent committee to oversee the distribution of the fund. According to press reports, $6.3 million was raised. Most of the money, $4.8 million, was distributed to victims and family members. However, $500,000 was provided to injured police officers and their families, $450,000 went to the Tree of Life congregation to rebuild the severely damaged building, and some funds went toward memorials and education connected to the massacre. The Mayor was not involved in the establishment or administration of the victims' fund but helped establish a separate trust fund for large donations from sports teams and other institutions. He obtained City Council approval for this step.

Mental and Behavioral Health

City officials and the FBI anticipate that victims and family members will need mental health care during the upcoming criminal trial, which has the potential to retraumatize them and the affected community. The FBI Victim Services Division will return to Pittsburgh before the trial begins to liaise with family members and connect them to local mental health services and other resources as needed.

The Mayor spoke of the need to ensure mental health services are available for first responders and city officials. In Pittsburgh, the Public Safety Department has its own peer program, established because its employees are believed to be less likely to seek professional help. Services for FBI agents are available via an FBI Employee Assistance Program. Mayor Peduto urged other mayors to take care of themselves

so that they can take care of their constituents. He recommended seeking counseling and learning how to manage when one chooses to reflect on the incident. For example, in the post-recovery phase it may be necessary to turn down interviews about the shooting.

Funerals and Burials

Jewish burial customs require someone to stay with a body until it is buried, and that all remains (including blood) must buried with the body. Once informed, law enforcement officials worked to balance these faith customs with standard crime scene procedures. The FBI also requested the coroner to make positive identification at the scene rather than at the morgue after autopsy. This helped speed the process of victim identification and ease the burden on family members and volunteers from the Jewish community who stayed in vigil with the bodies. The Public Safety Department provided security for the funerals, which in some cases involved thousands of people who turned out and participated in outdoor processions.

Remembrances and Permanent Memorials

Discussions about a permanent memorial remain underway, in parallel with discussions about reopening the Tree of Life Synagogue for in-person services. In partnership with the Jewish Community Center, the Mayor's office has tried to coordinate planning discussions between the city, the Jewish community, a person representing the interests of the victims and families, and the wider community.

Pittsburgh: Key Takeaways

- A mayor's primary role is to focus on meeting the needs of the victims, their families, and the affected community.
- Active shooter training for law enforcement and the mayor's office is a best practice, as is working with community organizations, schools, and businesses to help them assess threats and develop security plans consistent with the city's Emergency Operations Plan.
- The mayor should meet with law enforcement officials and public information officers before the first press conference to define roles. It is important to speak with a unified voice.
- Another best practice is to designate a point of contact within the Emergency Operations Center or command unit whose sole responsibility is to keep the mayor's office informed of the investigation in real time.
- When minority and religious groups are targeted, it is important to understand their customs related to funerals and burials and to balance them with law enforcement protocols.
- The FBI successfully negotiated a way to bypass coroner's office procedures to speed death notifications.
- Established relationships with leaders of the affected community, local service providers, and national organizations such as the FBI and the American Red Cross proved to be essential during the response and recovery.

Case Brief:
San Bernardino Terrorist Attack

Introduction

On December 2, 2015, a married couple carried out a mass shooting and an attempted bombing at the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino, California. The shooters targeted a San Bernardino County Department of Public Health training event, killing 14 County employees and injuring 22.[1] Weapons used during the attack included AR-15 style rifles, 9mm semi-automatic pistols, and pipe bombs. Four hours later, police killed the shooters in a shootout that left two officers injured.

This case brief discusses the City of San Bernardino's preparation for, response to, and recovery from the San Bernardino terrorist attack at the Inland Regional Center, with an emphasis on Mayor R. Carey Davis' role in all three phases.[2] The brief is based on findings from semi-structured interviews with two participants and a review of three comprehensive reports that assessed the response.

The response to the San Bernardino shooting illustrates a case in which the Mayor took a background role to the county response, which was the employer of the victims of the attack. While mayors always have a role to play as the face of their community and voice for unity and healing, there may be less city involvement in a shooting that targets a workplace capable of a strong organizational response. This response is also notable for the challenging coordination between city, county, and federal authorities.

City and County Profile

The County of San Bernardino is geographically the largest county in the country with more than 22,000 employees. The chief county official is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The City of San Bernardino had 214,112 residents in 2015. At the time of the shooting, the City was rebuilding from bankruptcy and had recently transitioned to a Mayor-Council form of local government with the City Manager heading most city functions. The County Sherriff is an elected position that does not report to the CEO or the Mayor, while the city's Police Chief reports to the City Manager. Mayor Davis, a Republican, served as Mayor from 2014 to 2018.

Preparation

Trainings and Experience

The city completed its Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) about six months before the shooting occurred. As part of the process, the Mayor participated in tabletop exercises and meetings to delineate emergency management roles and educate city staff about the operations of an Emergency Operations Center. The final plan was approved by the Mayor in October 2016 (10 months after the shooting). Having a certified EOP in place allowed the city to access emergency funds, which it did to recover some of the cost of responding to the mass shooting.

---

[1] We report the total victims and fatalities that Mother Jones reports as of May 27, 2021. Note there are many databases tracking mass killings; some report different victim counts. See James Fox & Jack Levin, *Mass confusion concerning mass murder*, 40 THE CRIMINOLOGIST (2015).

[2] San Bernardino is one of six cities researched by the Public Health Advocacy Institute in 2020-21 to inform a Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook PHAI developed for mayors, city managers, and their staff. PHAI classified the San Bernardino Shooting as a workplace mass shooting.

The County of San Bernardino has its own emergency management functions and personnel and maintains its own EOP. In addition, each department within the county maintains a Departmental EOP and each facility owned/operated by the county has an EOP. The organizational report highlights the lack of (and need for) a mass notification system at the county level as a key lesson learned.

The city had a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), which consists of trained volunteers that can supplement the emergency response. However, the CERT was not activated during the shooting, perhaps because dozens of probation officers from a nearby county facility were available to assist with evacuation, triage, and transportation of victims.

Response

Communication

Mayor Davis focused on coordinating messaging from City Hall and responding law enforcement agencies to ensure a unified message. He worked with the city's communications staff to field media inquiries and receive information from the police Public Information Officer (PIO). He visited the command post to receive briefings but operated out of City Hall. There, he focused on coordinating messaging with other city departments, explaining, "it was important that we were speaking with one voice."

Notably, the city staff convened an emergency City Council meeting the night of the shooting to allow the Police Chief to brief Council members on appropriate messaging. The goal was to prevent inflammatory statements that could motivate retaliation against the Muslim community. As a result of this briefing, City Council members and staff took care to avoid making statements that could be misinterpreted by the media or that could damage the investigation. For this reason, the Mayor's office was cautious about using social media.

Victim and Family Assistance

Victim and family assistance was provided by both the county and the FBI's Victim Services Division. The city was not involved in establishing family assistance services because of the role the county played as employer of the victims and lead responder.

An initial Family Reunification Center was established by the unified command of various law enforcement agencies at the Hernandez Community Center. However, problems with media access and lack of amenities plagued this Center and an alternate location was established ten miles away at a Hampton Inn, which was underutilized by the families. The FBI established a Family Assistance Center, which the FBI operated for two days. According to a subsequent organizational report, tensions arose between the FBI and the county concerning next-of-kin notifications and Family Assistance Center operations. Because of these problems during the response, the county's Office of Emergency Services later negotiated a memorandum of understanding with the FBI field office and the two agencies are now working more collaboratively.

According to the retired CEO of San Bernardino County and the organizational report, the county, as the employer of the victims, exercised strict control over victims' and family members' contact information. It appointed victim liaisons to help victims and their families navigate the complexities of available services administered by the county. These services included counseling, crime victim compensation services, employee benefits, workers' compensation, death benefits, short-term disability, and payouts from the victims' fund of public donations. The Mayor attended some funerals but did not make any hospital visits per the privacy restrictions imposed by the county.

Collaboration with Law Enforcement

Local law enforcement from multiple jurisdictions responded to the incident, as well as agents from the Sherriff's office and the FBI. Existing mutual aid agreements in the region were activated. Unified command was quickly established, but incident command was not transferred from the local Police to the FBI until two days after the attack, when it was confirmed to be an act of terror. The Mayor briefly visited the command unit to receive communications briefings, but was otherwise uninvolved in the law enforcement response.

The law enforcement response to a mass shooting or terror attack is costly. Mayor Davis informed the City Manager and Police Chief about the need to document law enforcement overtime and other costs associated with the response to enable the city to apply for federal funds for reimbursement. The Mayor also briefed the City Council on the overall cost of the response. Under the Mayor's leadership, the city applied for and received a DOJ grant for $500,000, a fraction of the overall cost of the response.

Emergency Declaration

Both the city and county declared local states of emergency following the shooting, mostly to activate mutual aid agreements and state assistance with the response. The state also declared a state of emergency in the county to authorize assistance from the State Department of Health and to suspend some fees associated with disposition of victim remains and issuance of copies of death certificates. Despite these emergency declarations, federal disaster funds were not accessible because the threshold for state-level expenditures was not exceeded. The county's declaration was continually renewed through August 2017 so that the county could continue to access mutual aid, emergency contracts, and recovery coordination.

Vigils and Commemorations

After the shooting, a member of the City Council organized a nondenominational candlelight vigil at a local baseball stadium. For the one-year remembrance, community groups organized an event at Cal State San Bernardino with victims, religious leaders, and community members. The Mayor spoke at this event, at which a Peace Garden to honor the victims was announced. He also spoke at a candlelight vigil held by a Catholic church. At the fourth year remembrance event, a city staff member rang a bell in the Peace Garden 14 times, once for each victim. The bell remains silent for the rest of the year. At the fifth year remembrance event, plans for a memorial to honor the victims were announced. The memorial should be completed Summer 2021.

Recovery

"SB United Relief Fund"

Multiple funds and crowdfunding pages were established immediately after the shooting. Two days later, the county partnered with Arrowhead United Way to establish an official victims' fund, the "SB United Relief Fund," for victims and families. The city supported this effort by setting up a GoFundMe page where the Mayor solicited donations for the fund. Former San Bernardino Mayor Pat Morris was involved in establishing the distribution protocol, but Mayor Davis abstained from participating as the sitting Mayor. The fund raised $2.5 million and distributed 100 percent of the money raised to the victims and families, in consultation with national experts and victims of previous tragedies.

Mental and Behavioral Health Services

The trauma from the attack radiated beyond the victims and their families to all county employees, who were coworkers of the victims and deeply affected by the shooting. Nearly half of county employees in the Environmental Health Services department that was targeted chose not to return to work or were no longer employed as of June 2018.

The county used multiple approaches to provide mental health support to the victims, families, and the larger workplace community. Team building became a primary focus of the organization, with support and recommendations from clinical psychologists. The county made sizable investments to upgrade security and renovate facilities. The goal was to help employees feel safe and to prevent triggering memories by providing workspaces that felt completely different from the previous facilities. The county also paid S1.7 million in employment benefits to the victims and survivors, including $300,000 for contracted counseling services. According to the retired CEO of the county, it was important to be flexible when managing employees after the attack. He explained that department policies could not be applied in a uniform manner because traumatized employees were experiencing different needs and recovery timelines.

San Bernardino: Key Takeaways

- Communicating with a unified voice is crucial and requires focused effort to coordinate between multiple law enforcement, city, and county agencies.
- Briefing the City Council on appropriate messaging can ensure unified messaging, promote healing, and prevent retaliation.
- Mass shootings that occur in a workplace necessitate a comprehensive response by the employer organization and may raise unique issues relating to workplace morale and workers' compensation.
- The Mayor's role may change when an employer or other responders, such as the county, are available to provide resources and services.
- The FBI Victims Services Division is an important resource for victims' assistance, but tensions can arise during a response. It is important to establish a relationship with the FBI Special Agent in Charge in advance. A best practice is to negotiate a memorandum of understanding with the FBI to ensure seamless cooperation when administering victim services.
- Police overtime and other costs need to be timely documented in order for the city to apply for a DOJ grant or other funding sources for reimbursement.
- Having mutual aid agreements in place contributes to the effectiveness of a regional emergency response.
- It is a best practice to establish an official victims' fund the day of the shooting so that competing funds are not established by others.

Mass Shooting Protocol





Mass Shooting Protocol:
The First 24 hours

This protocol is the result of research involving mayors, first responders, and others who have responded to a public mass shooting. Below you will find key decisions that you, as mayor, will need to make during the first 24 hours of the response. Please consult the relevant chapters of the **Mass Shooting Playbook** for additional information and resources to help with ongoing crisis management.

1. Communications

- Your primary role during the response is as the "communicator-in-chief." Decide in consultation with your police chief who will speak about what. Often law enforcement officials communicate details about the investigation. The public will look to you for messaging about public safety, updates about the victims, referrals to mental health resources, and messages of unity and healing. Secure the press area to prevent unauthorized officials from speaking to the press pool.
- Your first challenge is to get as much information as possible, as often as possible, from law enforcement. Ask for a dedicated police official whose sole responsibility is to keep you informed.
- Schedule early and regular press briefings, even when there isn't much new information to share, to prevent the development of rumors and misinformation.
- Release information relating to the shooting via one social media account (ideally operated by the public safety office), to be amplified by the city and other agencies. Direct all press inquiries to this single, monitored account.
- Host a dedicated webpage where all public information about the shooting is posted and updated, along with names of the victims. This will reduce the intense pressure to respond promptly to public record requests.
- Consider including a "How You Can Help" section for the public in press releases and all social media and online messages.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 1 on Communications.

2. Emergency Operations

- Confer with your City Counsel, Chief Administrative Officer, Chief of Staff, and Chief Financial Officer. This "C4 team" should meet daily to coordinate emergency operations and reduce legal exposure to the city and its employees.
- Consider making a local declaration of emergency. There is no downside to making the declaration immediately; it triggers mutual aid agreements, has the potential to defray costs relating to police overtime costs, and may protect the city from legal risks.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 2 on Emergency Management.

3. Victims and the Families

- Prioritize the needs of victims and family above all else. Designate a member of your staff to serve as family liaison to keep you updated on their needs.
- Ensure the location of the Family Reunification Center (also called the Family and Friends Reception Center) is separate from the press center. It should be scalable and have a secure perimeter to prevent the press from approaching grieving family members.
- The families of victims should receive death notifications in the most timely, humane, private way possible. Applicable law can slow the process. You may need to engage with the coroner's office and law enforcement to urge them to find a way to speed the release of victims' names to their families.
- Confirm there are dedicated victim advocates assigned to the families.
- After the families are notified, quickly establish the Family Assistance Center to ensure the immediate needs of victims and families are met, including appropriate mental health services.
- Spend time with the victims and families. Take their calls (including calls from families from previous shootings who have invaluable insights to share). Visit victims in the hospital. Attend their funerals if invited. Consult the families when planning vigils and developing the distribution protocol for public donations.
- Activate national resources. The American Red Cross can help you establish the Family Assistance Center. The FBI Victim Services Division has significant family assistance resources and expertise you can tap into even if the FBI is not the lead law enforcement agency in the case. However, the city must initiate the request for assistance from both organizations.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 3 on Victims and Families.

4. Donations

- Arrange a funding mechanism to accept donations immediately. If the city has a 501(c)(3) charitable entity already established, you can use it for this purpose (forming a new one may take too long). Alternatively, the National Compassion Fund (www.nationalcompassionfund.org) or a trusted community foundation can receive the funds. Whichever funding mechanism you choose, establish the fund as soon as possible after the shooting and encourage the public to give to only one, trusted fund to avoid fraud.
- The distribution of the fund should be developed in close consultation with the survivors and families of the victims. Families of victims of previous shootings strongly recommend that 100% of the funds go to the victims and their families. However, some cities have set aside a small portion of the funds raised for education initiatives, mental health services for affected communities, and the restoration of a place of worship damaged during an attack.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 5 on Donations.

5. Vigils

- The community needs to grieve and will want to arrange a vigil immediately following the shooting. Security may be required, which could delay the vigil if the law enforcement response is ongoing.

- Take steps to avoid politicizing the shooting. Doing so will further traumatize the families of the victims. This may mean limiting the speaking roles of elected officials (including visiting VIPs).
- If the shooting is a hate crime or perpetrated by a member of a marginalized faith or ethnic group, the risk of retaliation against that group may become an issue. Consult with faith leaders to host an interfaith vigil if relevant.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 9 on Commemorations.

6. VIP Visitors and Elected Officials

- Federal, state, and local elected officials may converge on the city. Direct them to activities that will be helpful to victims and their families.
- For more information, see Playbook Appendix B on VIP Visits.

7. Mental Health

- Trauma is a major issue. You will be affected, as will your staff, first responders, families of the victims, and nearly everyone in the city at the time of the shooting. Consult with your local public health agency, victim assistance experts, and local mental health providers as soon as possible to develop trauma-informed messaging.
- Provide information about available mental health resources in your press briefings. Take the time to learn about psychological first aid to ensure that victims and families receive appropriate services.
- For more information, see Playbook Chapter 10 on Mental Health.

MASS SHOOTING PROTOCOL CHECKLIST

(Selected actions from the comprehensive checklists found in the Playbook)

Communications

- ☐ Establish a regular schedule for communicating with the press and follow it.
- ☐ Decide which officials will speak and in what order at press conferences.
- ☐ Keep messages simple, credible, and consistent. Correct misinformation.

Emergency Operations

- ☐ Activate the Emergency Operations Center. Request regular briefings from a designated law enforcement official.
- ☐ Assemble your "C4" team to provide coordination and legal compliance.
- ☐ Consider whether to make a declaration of emergency.

Establish Family Reunification and Assistance Centers

- ☐ Work with law enforcement, the American Red Cross, the FBI, and local partners to establish the Family Reunification Center (FRC) and the Family Assistance Center (FAC).
- ☐ Ensure both centers are located separately from the Joint Information Center (away from the press), have a secure perimeter, and are scalable.
- ☐ Communicate FRC and FAC locations and services in press briefings.
- ☐ Urge the coroner to release victim's names to families as soon as possible.

Establish the Victims Fund

- ☐ Establish a victims' fund right away using city-operated 501(c)(3) charitable entity, the National Compassion Fund, or a local foundation.

Begin Planning for Recovery

- ☐ Seek the guidance of mental health experts to develop trauma-informed messaging and to ensure appropriate mental health services are available.
- ☐ Plan vigils in consultation with families and the affected community.

Playbook Chapters



Chapter 1: Communications

"You are communicator-in-chief."
– Mayor Nan Whaley, Dayton OH

Chapter Summary

Your primary role after a mass shooting is to share facts with the community, correct misinformation, and communicate messages of safety, unity, and empathy. Your public speaking experience will guide your messaging. However, a public mass shooting is traumatizing and presents unique challenges. This chapter presents crisis communications resources and best practices from mayors that you can use to prepare for and respond to a mass shooting.

In the **preparedness** phase, you can develop a crisis communications plan in partnership with your chief of police, plan the location and operations of a Joint Information Center (JIC) (separate from the family reunification center), arrange crisis communications training for yourself and your team if needed, review communications systems and capacities, and learn about trauma-informed messaging.

During the first 24 hours after the shooting (the **response** phase), your goal is to stay ahead of the news cycle. Communicate early and often to prevent the spread of inaccurate information. Coordinate with law enforcement to get regular updates, deliver the facts as they become available, proactively correct misinformation, and coordinate your message with other agencies to present unified leadership. As "communicator-in-chief," you decide who will speak, about what, and when. You may opt not to be the lead spokesperson, instead allowing law enforcement officials to deliver information about the investigation. Your messages might instead highlight safety, unity, and healing. Above all, transparency is the goal.

You may be responsible for managing a stream of dignitaries. One mayor advised directing visitors to where they can provide comfort to the victims and their families. During visits of elected officials, you may need to work closely with them to prevent remarks that could politicize the shooting.

As you enter the **recovery** phase, your messaging may shift from providing facts about the shooting to messages of healing and availability of mental health resources. Consult with victims' assistance agencies for help crafting these messages.

Preparedness

Your primary role after a mass shooting is to share facts with the community, correct misinformation, and communicate messages of safety, unity, and empathy. You will develop these messages in response to the specific circumstances of the shooting. However, you can develop a crisis communications plan, form relationships with mental health experts, and obtain crisis communications training, if needed, in advance.

Crisis Communications Planning

In collaboration with your Police Chief and municipal communications staff, develop a crisis communications plan. It should be informed by the concepts developed by FEMA for responding to a crisis, as described in the National Incident Management System (NIMS). If you already have a crisis communications plan that covers natural disasters or other types of emergencies, review the plan for its applicability to a mass shooting. Elements of a crisis communications plan should include:

- A protocol for press briefings
- The operations and location of a Joint Information Center (JIC)
- A policy for the city's emergency alert system, if the city has one
- A protocol for managing social media accounts



Figure 1: *Best practices in risk and crisis communication.*[1]

Protocol for Press Briefings

Meet with your Police Chief and determine the roles you will each play during press briefings. Often law enforcement officials take the lead communicating details about the investigation. You may opt to speak about public safety, the victims, and offer messages of unity and healing. Also, develop a system for receiving regular briefings from law enforcement officials. One staffer recommended appointing a dedicated law enforcement official in the Emergency Operations Center whose sole responsibility is to keep you informed.

Best Practices Tips for Press Conferences from a Law Enforcement Public Information Officer (PIO)

1. Speak with one voice. Assign one media contact.
2. No "off the record" remarks. Make sure everyone follows this guidance, even people who answer phones.
3. Plan in advance where your press conferences will be held.
4. Have some prepared remarks on hand so that you don't have to start from scratch.
5. Initial remarks should include answers to "who, what, when, where (but not why), and what you are doing about it.
6. Think about the questions the media will ask and find the answers (*e.g.*, did the shooter have a record?)
7. Include directions to the families of victims (location of the reunification center) and to the public (road closures, lockdowns, etc.)
8. For the speakers: agree in advance on a signal for when you are ready to end your remarks so that your PIO can end the briefing for you. Keep your remarks short. Avoid redundancy.
9. Determine speaker order, length of remarks. Practice.
10. For speakers who like to read remarks: memorize your most important points and look up at the camera when you make them. That's what the media will cover.



Joint Information Center

The Joint Information Center (JIC) coordinates interagency communication and manages the press during a mass shooting. Your planning should identify where the JIC can be located, as well as locations for the press pool and their vehicles. Brainstorm potential locations ahead of time, based on where a shooting could happen in your community. Ideally, the JIC should be located quite close to the site of the shooting. If a mass shooting happens, you may want to station yourself at the JIC to facilitate the flow of accurate information. Review with your staff the information technology (IT) systems and digital communications resources that are needed for activating the JIC.

The mayors we interviewed strongly recommended locating the JIC separately from the Family Reunification and Assistance Centers so that family members are protected from the press, and so that people working in the JIC are not distracted by the sounds of grief. (For other considerations for planning the Family Reunification and Assistance Centers, see Chapter 3.)

Key Resources: Joint Information Center

National Response Team Joint Information Center Model: this resource explains the JIC model, how to establish a JIC, functional responsibilities for staff, and worksheets/ other sample materials for use by JIC staff.
https://www.nrt.org/sites/2/files

FEMA basic guidance for Public Information Officers:
https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_nims-basic-guidance-public-information-officers_12-2020.pdf

Alert Systems and Capacities

If your city lacks an Emergency Notification System (ENS), determine whether to implement one. These systems send mass notifications via phone, text, social media, and email to the public in an emergency. In the case of a mass shooting, they can alert the public of immediate safety concerns, and order the public to shelter in place or to avoid a specific area if a shooter is still at large. For example, in the aftermath of the Boston Marathon bombing, shelter in place messages were sent multiple times during the manhunt for suspects that spanned days.[2]

Your plan should consider how an ENS will be operated, and who will be responsible for maintaining it (*e.g.*, the public safety office, emergency response office, or law enforcement organization). If the city has an ENS, it should be tested periodically. Review with your staff the IT needs (including materials and staff) that are needed for effective management of the ENS.

Similarly, familiarize yourself with hotlines operated by the city, or decide whether to establish a new hotline to provide information to the public in case of emergency. Emergency alert messages and hotline recordings can be recorded ahead of time.

Social Media Protocol

Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer conducted a tabletop exercise prior to the Pulse shooting. During that exercise, his team developed a social media protocol that they used in response to the shooting. The elements of that protocol include:

- Use the social media account of the public safety office or a law enforcement agency to provide regular updates to the public. Direct the press to this account, and retweet/share the content from mayor's office accounts and other agency accounts to amplify the messages. The advantage of this approach is two-fold: (1) messaging is unified, and (2) messages sent through public safety channels may be seen as more legitimate and less politicized.
- Normally scheduled social media messages on other topics may need to be cancelled across city accounts during the crisis.
- Use social media to directly and proactively correct misinformation.
- You can also include "how you can help" guidance to the public through social media channels (*e.g.*, identify the official victim's fund, where to donate blood, how to volunteer, what not to donate.)

- Post updates as quickly as is feasible, balanced with the need to clear posts through your internal review. Using a sole account reduces the number of clearances needed and ensures the messaging is consistent.

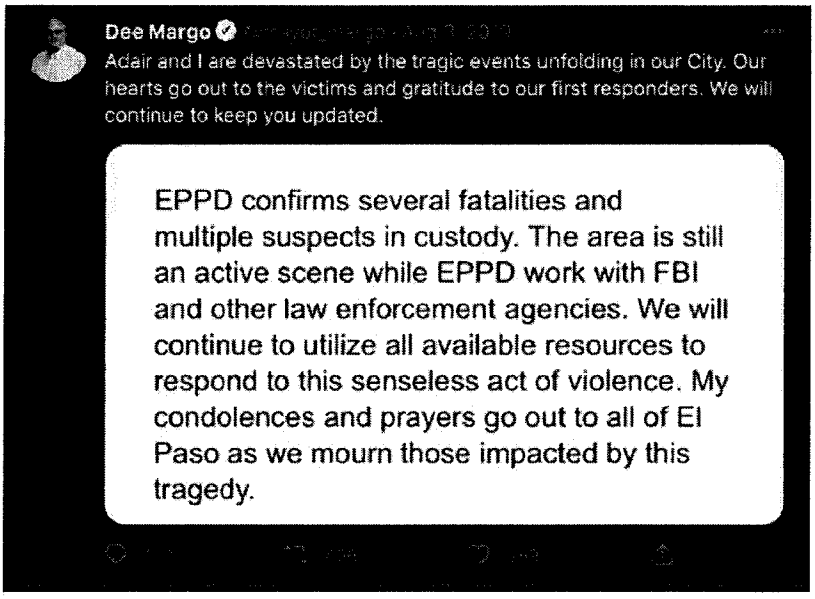


Image 1: *Example of initial social media messaging used by a mayor following a mass shooting, amplifying a statement from law enforcement (Retrieved from: https://twitter.com/mayor_margo/status/1157730991265345536)*

Key Resource: FEMA Social Media in Emergency Management Training

FEMA, Social Media in Emergency Management: This online training course (IS-42) covers the use of social media in emergency response plans. The course is for state, local, tribal, and territorial emergency managers and their staff. https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-42

Crisis Communications Techniques and Training

Learn the Basics of Crisis Communications

Establish relationships with your local victims' assistance office, mental health experts, and public health officials. Meet with them in advance to discuss how to craft messages for a traumatized community. These mental health experts can also help should you need to establish a Family Assistance Center, direct community members to local mental health services, or organize vigils or other commemorative events.

Review available resources to understand the psychology of trauma. One excellent resource is the CDC's Crisis and Emergency Response Communication (CERC) manual. The chapter on the psychology of crisis is short and informative. According to the CERC manual, to be effective during a crisis your messages should be simple and:

- Be repeated
- Come from multiple credible sources
- Be specific to the emergency being experienced
- Offer a positive course of action that can be executed

Key Resource: CDC Crisis Communications Training and Manual



CDC Crisis and Emergency Response Communication (CERC) program: includes trainings, presentations, and the CERC Manual.
https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/manual/index.asp

CDC CERC: Crisis Communications Plan:
guide to integrating a crisis communications plan into the local emergency operations plan.
https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/ppt/CERC_Crisis_Communication_Plans.pdf

Key Resource: ATSDR Communications Toolkit



The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) protects communities from harmful health effects related to exposure to natural and man-made hazardous substances. The ATSDR Communications Toolkit is a simple "Message mapping" tool your PIO can use to develop simple messaging to help the public respond to a crisis.
https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/communications-toolkit/documents/12_message-mapping-tool-final-111015_508.pdf

Crisis Communications Media Training

In addition, consider crisis communications training for yourself or your staff if you have limited experience handling the national press. Training can give you confidence in front of the cameras and help you craft appropriate messaging, properly handle information related to the investigation, and understand privacy laws.

Best Practice Tip

Assemble a duplicate supply of essential equipment, such as extra cell phones and chargers for you, your staff and visitors.
— Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto

During the response to the Tree of Life shooting in Pittsburgh, phones were waterlogged due to rain and backup phones were not available, interfering with the ability to provide social media updates to the public.

"Go-Kits" for Yourself and Key Staff

The core emergency response team (*e.g.*, you, your Chief of Staff, City Manager, Chief Administrative Officer, and City Attorney) should carry a cell phone at all times so they can be reached immediately in the event of an emergency. The team should consider assembling a "go-kit," as described by FEMA's guidance for Public Information Officers.[3] The go-kit can be left in the car or office. Include extra cell phones and chargers, a jacket if you must unexpectedly appear before the press, snack bars, basic sundries, a sweater, etc.

Response

Initial Communication Decisions

During the first hours and days after the shooting, you will likely spend much of your time in the JIC, gathering information, planning and scheduling press conferences, managing visiting elected officials and dignitaries, and responding to requests from the press. The first decisions you will need to make include:

- Decide locations of the JIC and the Family Reunification Centers, if that hasn't already been determined. It is important to keep them separate (see Chapter 3).
- Schedule your first press briefing with your Police Chief. Deliver the first press conference at the predetermined hour and announce the schedule for the following press conferences at the conclusion of the first.
- Determine your roles through a pre-conference "huddle" that takes place 30-60 minutes before the first press conference. Often law enforcement officials take the lead communicating details about the investigation. You may opt to speak about public safety, the victims, and offer messages of unity and healing.
- Limit the number of speakers to the minimum required. Too many speakers (especially elected officials), can be redundant and runs the risk of creating confusion or politicizing the tragedy.
- Consider whether to send out an emergency notification on the city's ENS and/or declare a state of emergency (see Chapters on the Emergency Operations Plan and Legal Considerations).

- Consider including a "How You Can Help" section in your social media strategy, on the city's web site, and in every press release or other communications issued during the response. Direct the public to where they can donate money, volunteer, give blood, or provide assistance to the response operations.
- Implement the protocol for receiving regular information from law enforcement officials. Best practice: ask for a dedicated police official whose sole responsibility is to keep you informed. Request regular meetings with your chief.
- Direct your communications team to proactively correct misinformation.
- Initiate your social media strategy. As noted above, a best practice is to release information relating to the shooting via a single social media account (operated by your public health office or the police PIO), which is retweeted by the city and other agencies. Direct all press inquiries to that account.

In some cases, law enforcement or the FBI may take the lead in a press conference (the decision is joint). To avoid bruised egos and hard feelings, focus on the needs of the victims and families. Remind the speakers and their staffers that you are on the same team and should present a unified front in the immediate aftermath of the crisis.

Mayors in Action: Negotiating the Order of Speakers



Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer: "We had a discussion with the FBI about who should take the lead in the first press conference. We felt strongly we should lead the press conference. Our rationale was that our community and the families of victims should hear first from somebody that they know and trust. They did not know the FBI Special Agent in Charge, so we felt he would be unable to convey the message of safety and unity we thought was needed. That message needed to come from the Mayor of Orlando. Eventually the FBI deferred to us."

Your First Public Statements

Mayors told us their top priority at the first press conferences was to convey that the situation was under control and provide information about the victims. Be mindful that law enforcement considerations may limit what you can say and when you can say it. Work with the coroner's office and law enforcement officials to identify the victims as quickly as possible so that you can convey that critical information to their families and to the public.

Keep messages simple, credible, and consistent. Your messages should express empathy and show respect and sensitivity for victims and families. Act quickly to correct misinformation. Provide actions the public can take to be helpful.

Messages that will be necessary to convey following the shooting:

- Where families and members of the affected community should gather.
- The status of the coroner's office investigation to identity the victims.
- Reliable sources of information, such as a dedicated social media account, a city web site where public information about the shooting will be posted regularly, and hotlines established for this purpose.
- Include "how you can help" guidance for the public (*e.g.*, identify the official victim's fund, where to donate blood, how to volunteer, what not to donate).

One mayor said he avoided naming the shooter at all press conferences. Research has shown that naming the shooter repeatedly can contribute to a media focus on the perpetrator instead of the victims, contributing to a desire among some individuals to imitate the shooter's actions and/or to glorify the violence.[4] For this reason, the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training team and the FBI established a "Don't Name Them" campaign.[5]

Mayors in Action: Remarks at the First Press Conference

Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley: "If you are the family or friend of a victim, we invite you to come to the convention center or call [local helpline number]. And if you have any information on the incident, if you were in the Oregon District today and have information, please call [police tip-line]. Red Cross, the Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association, ADAMHS and support for our police and first responders are on the scene to help the situation. Of course we are incredibly grateful for our partners in this very sad incident."[6]

Key Resource: Full Press Conference, Indianapolis Federal Express Shooting

Full press conference from Indianapolis FedEx Ground Facility shooting in April 2021:
https://www.wsls.com/news/2021/04/16/watch-live-press-conference-on-mass-shooting-at-fedex-facility-in-indianapolis/.

Best Practice Tip

Coordinate messaging from every agency and office.
"It is important to speak with one voice."
– Former San Bernardino Mayor R. Carey Davis

Managing the Press

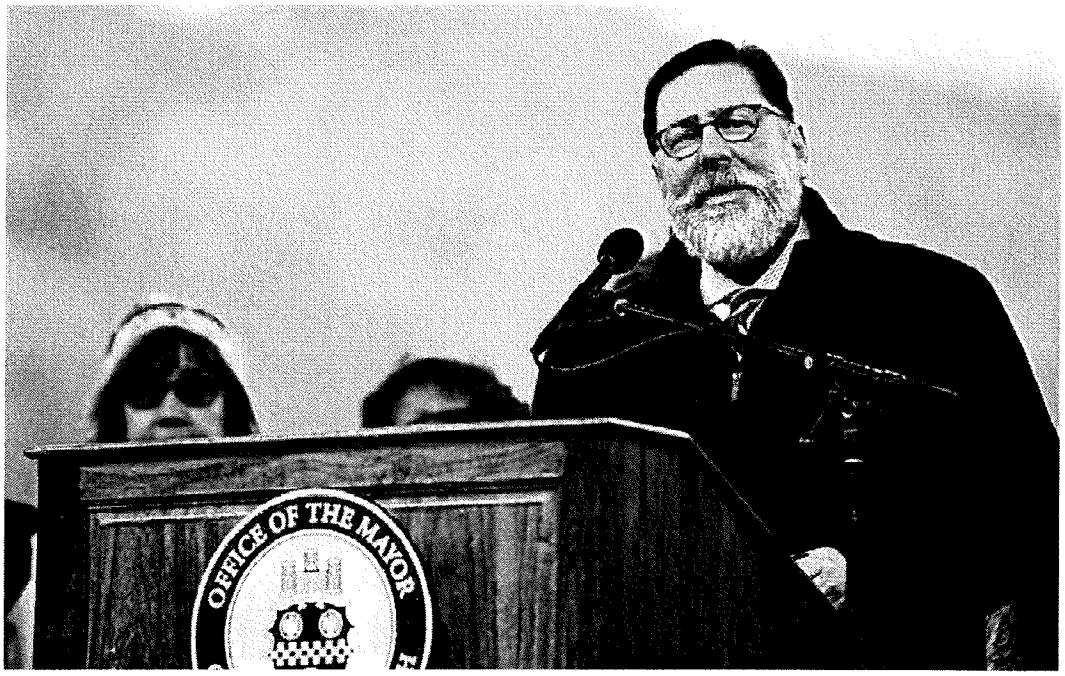


Image 2: *Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto speaks to the press following the Tree of Life Synagogue shooting (Photo by Alexandra Wimley, Copyright ©, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 2021, all rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.)*

Schedule the first press conference as soon as possible, even if you don't have much information to share. Inform the press that you will schedule regular press conferences and deliver them when you say you will. Tips for managing press conferences include:

- Secure the press conference site: many will want to speak but you need to control the messaging. You may need to restrict access to the press area.
- Provide all journalists and types of media equal access to information.
- Find a balance between local media (to provide relevant information to affected residents) and national media (to reach a broader public audience). One mayor suggested reserving time for press meetings with local press only.

Note that journalists from the same network compete with each other for your interview. Feel free to decline multiple interviews requests from the same network and provide access to other networks and local news.

Also, due to the newsworthiness of a mass shooting, press briefings, even with local media, may be aired nationally. Prepare yourself and your remarks accordingly. That said, one mayor chose to deliver messages intended for the local community, leaving messages geared to the national audience to others.

Prioritize the Needs of Victims and Families

One mayor recommended prioritizing the needs of the victims and their families in your communications strategy. Strategies for establishing effective communication with victims and families include:

- Designate a media liaison for victims and families at the JIC to facilitate the exchange of messages and information between the families and your office.
- Do what you can to speed the release of the names of the victims to their families and loved ones (the public's need to know is secondary).
- Tailor messaging to be respectful to the families.
- Visit the families at the Family Reunification Center as soon as possible so that you can communicate face-to-face.
- Prioritize your time. If faced with a choice between an interview and an invitation to meet with family members, for example, feel free to pass on the interview. The press will still be there when you are free.

Mayors in Action: Remarks About FAC Services

Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer: "It's important to remember that these victims are having normal reactions to a very abnormal event...Services at the family assistance center range from grief counseling to financial assistance to obtaining visas...we can't thank these organizations enough for their tireless efforts in this difficult situation...If you don't feel comfortable coming down to the site, we would still encourage you to call us...and we will reach out to you. The Family Assistance Center will remain open throughout the weekend."[7] (Video of full remarks available at endnote 7.)



Managing Visits from Elected Officials

In the immediate aftermath of a mass shooting, elected officials may converge on your city, from the U.S. President ("POTUS"), to your governor, to national and state legislators and officials from neighboring districts. Some of these visits could be controversial. They may burden your already overstretched staff and police force. Yet, hosting these visitors provides the opportunity to communicate your city's needs to policymakers who may be able to help. Mayors who welcomed VIPs following a shooting offered these tips:

- Decide whether to invite them to speak at press conferences.
- Give them something to do that can help victims and survivors.
- Help them develop appropriate messages to avoid politicizing the shooting or traumatizing the affected community.

For best practices for managing VIP visits, see Appendix B.

Recovery

Messaging: Shifting from Response to Recovery

As the public begins to process what has happened, your messaging will gradually shift from the "response" to the "recovery" phase. This process may begin within hours of the shooting and continue for months or even years. Your recovery messaging will focus on fostering long-term community resilience, restoring hope, and healing from trauma. Common themes include solidarity, unity, resilience, and strength (*e.g.*, "Dayton Shines," "Boston Strong," and Pittsburgh's "Stronger Than Hate").

Use this opportunity to highlight the many caring actions taken by members of the community, from volunteers who bring meals to first responders, to community members who donate blood, to companies that make financial and in-kind donations and provide needed services to victims and families, to groups who contribute art and culture to lift the spirits of victims and their families. These people are "ambassadors of hope." Their selfless actions and compassion can help make a tragedy bearable.

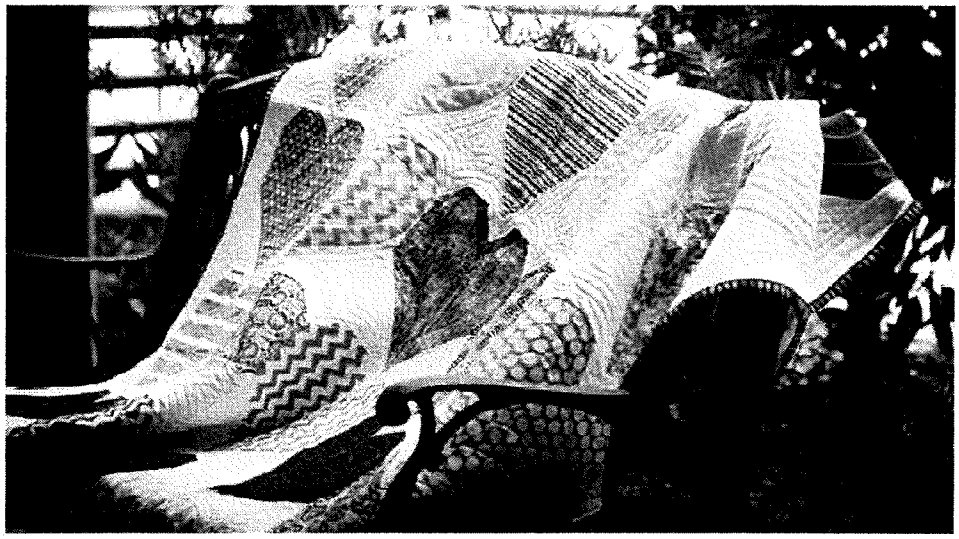


Image 3: *1500 quilts were handmade and distributed to victims, family members, first responders, and city officials who responded to the Pulse shooting (Photo by Paula Kennedy).*

Consult Mental Health and Behavioral Health Experts

Your communications should include messages about available mental health services. Consult with mental health experts to understand the mental health impact on your community and for guidance developing trauma-informed messages. For example, to prepare messaging after the shooting in Dayton, Mayor Whaley consulted a countywide mental health services network with whom she had previously partnered to communicate about the opioid crisis.

Best Practice Tip

Whether promoting healing, planning vigils, or arranging services for victims and family members, remember to consult with mental health experts.

Engage Community Partners in Interfaith or Hate Prevention Work

In the wake of a hate-motivated shooting, it is especially difficult for the community to process and understand the event. Retaliation against the group associated with the shooter may be a risk. Consult with trusted community leaders to develop messages of religious pluralism, respect for minority groups, and unity across cultures.

For example, reflecting on his response to the shooting at the Sikh temple in Oak Creek, WI, Mayor Steve Scaffidi wrote, "The messages of diversity, mutual respect, and acceptance are important, and I began to talk about them in earnest at the vigil [three days after the shooting]."[8] Other mayors also spoke of the importance of interfaith messaging, engaging the leaders of the groups targeted in a hate crime, and developing respectful relationships with these groups long before any attack happens.

Some religious groups have prepared prayers for victims of mass shootings, which may provide comfort to members of the community who turn to their faith for comfort.[9]

Engage Schools

If you are responding to a school shooting, you may need to include messages about school safety, mental health and counseling services for troubled students, and threat assessment. Work with the relevant partners, including school boards, superintendents, parent advocacy groups, and school nurses to understand your role in the school's recovery and how to include relevant and timely messages to the school community as well as the broader public. See Chapter 6 for more information on school shootings.

Suicide Prevention

Research has shown that many public mass shooters were suicidal. If the shooter in your city died or took his own life while committing the attack, you might use this opportunity to speak generally about suicide prevention resources in your community, and the importance of preventing access to firearms when a member of the household is suicidal or in crisis. Doing so could help prevent suicides (two-thirds of gun deaths are suicides, over 25,000 annually). Additionally, educating the public about suicide may help prevent a future public mass shooting. See Appendix D for more information.

Advocacy

As communicator-in-chief, you may use your access to the press to educate the public about gun violence prevention topics of relevance to your community. Public health-related measures include calling for increased mental health resources, school safety measures, crime victim compensation, and more. It could be helpful to advocate for additional state or federal funding to help other cities respond to mass shootings.[10]

According to the CDC's CERC manual, it is appropriate to inform the public of ways they can give, volunteer, or advocate for change. Helping grieving community members play a positive role can promote healing.

Endnotes

[1] National Center For Food Protection And Defense, *Best Practices in Crisis Communication: An Expert Panel Process*, Journal of Applied Communication Research. 232-244, 2006.

[2] Homeland Security Office Of Emergency Communications, *Emergency Communications During the Response to the Boston Marathon Bombing*, 2013, *available at* https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/oec-case%20study-support%20for%20response%20to%20boston%20marathon%20bombing-2013_0.pdf.

[3] Federal Emergency Management Agency, *National Incident Management System Basic Guidance for Public Information Officers*, 2020, https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_nims-basic-guidance-public-information-officers_12-2020.pdf.

[4] James N. Meindl & Jonathan W. Ivy, *Mass Shootings: The Role of the Media in Promoting Generalized Imitation*, 107 Am J Public Health 368–370 (2017).

[5] *Id.*

[6] City Of Dayton, *7 AM Press Conference, Mass Shooting Incident of Aug 4* (1:40-2:35), *available at* https://www.facebook.com/cityofdayton/videos/841566729577954 (last visited Jun 3, 2021).

[7] Jeff Weiner, Rene Stutzman & Del Quentin Wilber, *Pulse nightclub security video recovered by agents*, Orlando Sentinel (2016), https://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/breaking-news/os-shooting-developments-friday-20160617-story.html (last visited Jun 3, 2021).

[8] Stephen A. Scaffidi, Six Minutes In August: A Story Of Tragedy, Healing And Community 66 (2015).

[9] Michelle Boorstein, *Denominations have begun creating special prayers for fatal mass shootings*, Washington Post (2021), https://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/2021/07/16/mass-shooting-newtown-parkland-pulse-new-prayer-litany-episcopal-mass-shooting/ (last visited July 16, 2021).

[10] Sarah C. Peck and James Alan Fox, *Proposed policy would help mayors respond to a mass shooting* (April 6, 2021), Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, https://www.post-gazette.com/opinion/Op-Ed/2021/04/06/Proposed-policy-would-help-mayors-respond-to-a-mass-shooting-Pittsburgh-Boulder-Colorado/stories/202104060012 (last visited Jun 3, 2021).

COMMUNICATIONS CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Develop a crisis communications plan with your Chief of Police and Public Information Officer. Review and update as needed.
- ☐ Establish relationships with your local victims' assistance office, mental health experts, and public health officials.
- ☐ Assess whether to establish an Emergency Notification System. Develop a policy for its use and request regular testing and operation of the system.
- ☐ Review the CDC's Crisis and Emergency Risk Communications (CERC) Manual. If you have limited experience speaking to the national media, consider crisis communications training.
- ☐ Ask your PIO to assemble messages that you can use in a crisis, and practice delivering them.
- ☐ Prepare a "go-kit." Program contacts into your phone and assemble supplies.

Response

- ☐ Establish a schedule for communicating with the press.
- ☐ Decide who will speak and in what order at press conferences.
- ☐ Seek the guidance of victims' assistance and mental health experts to develop trauma-informed messaging.
- ☐ Keep messages simple, credible, and consistent. Express empathy, show respect for victims and families. Act quickly to correct misinformation.

Recovery

- ☐ Focus your messaging on bolstering long-term community resilience, restoring hope, and healing from trauma.

Chapter 2: Emergency Operations and Public Health

"This can happen anywhere. Think about your plan."
– Mayor Buddy Dyer, Orlando FL

Chapter Summary

Emergency preparedness is the creation of organizational structures within government agencies that enable them to provide support, resources, and services needed during and after emergencies. Although you may never be fully prepared for a public mass shooting, you can take steps to ensure your agencies are equipped to handle the specific challenges posed by a mass casualty incident.

In consultation with public safety and emergency management staff and your public health agency, you can review and update your emergency management plans and determine whether a supplemental plan for a mass casualty incident is needed. You can participate in tabletop exercises and training to practice emergency operations specific to a mass shooting. You should ensure your communications infrastructure is equipped to handle such an emergency.

Include public health officials in **preparedness** planning, as they play an essential role in coordinating mental health services and other crisis response in the aftermath of a mass shooting. During this phase, assess emergency alert systems and review or revise emergency operations plans to prepare for a potential mass shooting in your city.

During the **response** phase, law enforcement will establish an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) that coordinates first responders and law enforcement operations. This might be a mobile command unit or a permanent EOC that may have been established in the city. Collecting information will be a top priority. You will monitor all aspects of the emergency response while you work with your staff to coordinate unmet needs.

Emergency management continues after the situation is contained and the crime scene is processed. You can direct a formal evaluation of the emergency response to inform your own agencies and other localities of lessons learned. You can also work with the appropriate agencies to transition from emergency operations to long-term services to help the community "return to normal" during the **recovery**.

Preparedness

Emergency Operations Planning

It is critically important to review your emergency operations plan (EOP) with your public safety director or emergency manager. This plan, often required by law, generally designates authority among agency directors and specifies operational procedures for crisis management, including by coordinating emergency responders. It may not, however, cover specific incidents and hazards such as a public mass shooting. In consultation with your public safety and emergency management staff, determine whether a supplemental plan for emergency operations during a public mass shooting is needed.

In some cases of mass shootings, the all-hazards EOP was never officially activated, nor did elected officials declare a state of local emergency. However, many of the functions described by the local EOP—including establishment of unified command among multiple response agencies, establishment of communications channels between elected officials and law enforcement, and activation of mutual aid agreements with other jurisdictions—will occur. For this reason, it is crucial that you understand your local EOP and its applicability to a public mass shooting.

Emergency operations planning usually utilizes the National Incident Management System (NIMS), which was prepared by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for elected officials. One aspect of the NIMS model is Emergency Support Functions (ESFs), a structure used to coordinate between multiple federal agencies to provide support, resources, program implementation, and services needed during an emergency. Review the NIMS guidance and resources below to understand your role as mayor in the NIMS model and guide your planning.

Key Resource: National Incident Management System (NIMS) Guidance

FEMA, National Incident Management System (2017, 3rd edition): guidance for using the National Incident Management System (NIMS) at all levels of government, including commentary on the roles of local elected officials in incident management. https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/is700b/6ho/national_incident_management%20system_third%20edition_october_2017.pdf

Alert Systems and Capacities

Emergency Notification Systems (ENS) send mass notifications via phone, text, social media, and email to the public in an emergency. In the case of a mass shooting, they can alert the public of immediate safety concerns, order the public to shelter in place, or to avoid a specific area if a shooter is still at large. As part of your preparedness planning, you should consider whether your city would be best served by establishing an ENS. See Chapter 1 on Communications for more information and resources.

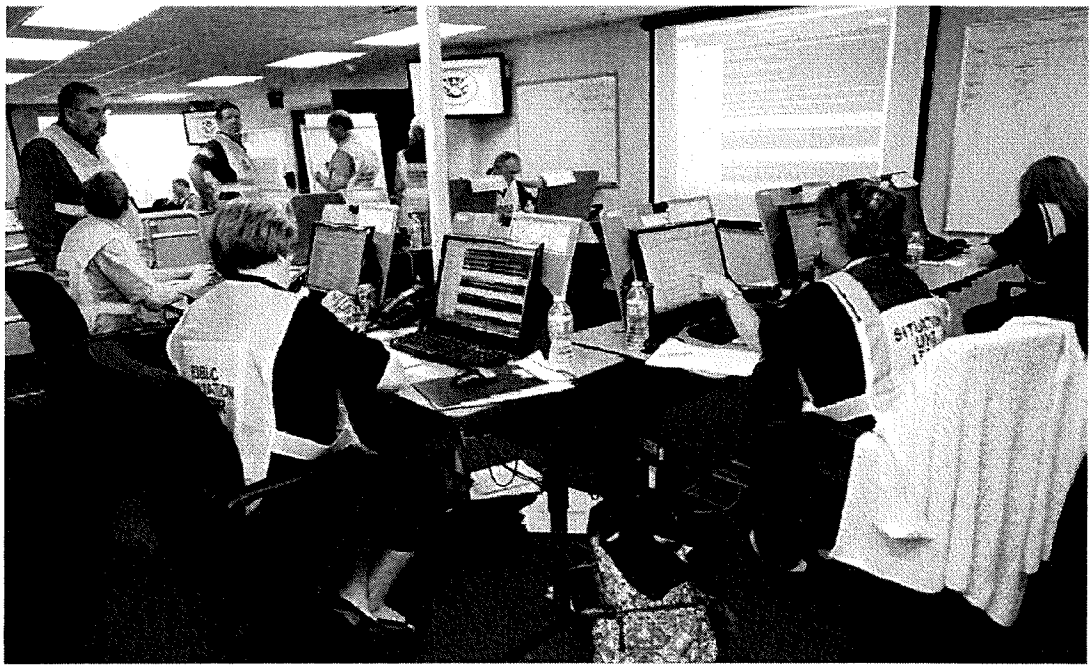


Image 4: *An example of an Emergency Operations Center in action, showing coordination among a Public Information Officer and officials during a simulated mass casualty incident (Photo by Shannon Arledge, The U.S. National Archives).*

Emergency Preparedness Training

Training is an important component of emergency preparedness. The trainings FEMA recommends for elected officials are detailed below. In addition, mayors we interviewed strongly recommend tabletop exercises. Make time to schedule a tabletop exercise for your staff and relevant agencies and attend tabletop exercises and trainings (such as active shooter trainings) conducted by city officials and/or law enforcement. These may cover crisis communications, emergency operations, IT systems and needs, and other actions, usually in the context of a specific scenario. For more on tabletop exercises and a compilation of all training opportunities and recommendations, see Appendix A.[1]

Key Resources: Recommended FEMA Training

G-402 Incident Command System (ICS) Overview for Executives/Senior Officials: FEMA recommends elected officials complete this course, which covers the basics of what you need to know about the National Incident Management System, Multiagency Coordination Groups, Incident Command Systems, and Emergency Operations Centers. The course also summarizes the chief elected official's role in emergency preparedness, which may be applied to preparedness for a public mass shooting. https://training.fema.gov/gstate/downloadmats.aspx?rd=1&course=G0402%20-%20ics-402%20-%20incident%20command%20system%20(ICS)%20overview%20for%20executives%20and%20senior%20officials

G-191 Incident Command System/Emergency Operations Center Interface: According to FEMA, this course reviews Incident Command System and Emergency Operation Center responsibilities and functions and provides an opportunity for participants to begin developing an interface between an Incident Management Team and EOC personnel. FEMA recommends this course for elected officials. The course is not available online as of this writing.
https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/trainingmaterials/ https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/trainingmaterials/

Public Health Resources

Public health officials, especially mental health and behavioral health experts, should help plan emergency operations for a mass shooting. They provide mental health communications expertise and can assist in the delivery of emergency response functions, such as providing psychological first aid (PFA) to victims, witnesses, and first responders. In some cases, they can activate large groups of volunteers such as the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC). They can also help plan for the recovery phase, which is often overlooked.

Key Resources: The Public Health Agency Role

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Public Health Emergency Response Guide for State, Local, and Tribal Public Health Directors: Actionable and accessible guidance for local public health agency staff in all phases of an emergency incident. The guide explains how to coordinate with existing emergency operations plans and management frameworks and does not replace or duplicate these plans. The checklists for each phase are easy to follow and are geared toward public health staff specifically.
https://emergency.cdc.gov/planning/responseguide.asp

National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) Resource list for PHAs: A list of active shooter trainings and psychological first aid resources tailored to be especially relevant for local public health agencies.
https://www.naccho.org/blog/articles/san-bernardino-shooting-incident-community-preparedness-resources-for-active-shooter-incidents

NACCHO, Public Health's Roles in Active Shooter Events (Webinar): Speakers from local public health agencies discuss their roles in responding to public mass shootings in Las Vegas, NV and Aurora, CO, and provide lessons learned for other public health agencies as well as further resources. Access slides and handouts in addition to the webinar recording using the above hyperlink.
https://www.pathlms.com/naccho/courses/13368

NACCHO blog:
https://www.naccho.org/blog/articles/the-role-of-public-health-in-terrorism-and-active-shooter-preparedness-and-response

Response

Emergency Operations Center (EOC): Activation and Access

Law enforcement staff provide information management, resource allocation and tracking, as well as advanced planning support at the EOC.[2] The EOC may be a mobile command unit set up by law enforcement (as happened in Orlando), or located in a permanent structure that also integrates the Joint Information Center (JIC). In Dayton, the EOC was located at the Convention Center.

Best Practice Tip



Request a designated law enforcement officer in the EOC whose sole responsibility is to provide updates to the mayor and city manager.

In many cities, the EOC is reserved for law enforcement personnel. Elected officials operate from the JIC and receive briefings from the EOC or command unit. The challenge can be obtaining timely information from the EOC. Daniel Gilman, Chief of Staff to Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto, recommends having a law enforcement designee in the command unit whose sole job was focused "outward" to communicate the mayor and his or her chief of staff.

Emergency Declarations

Consider whether to declare a local emergency or local disaster. There is no downside to making the declaration, which can be terminated at any time. The implications of the declaration vary state by state, but the declaration may authorize you to[3]:

- Activate local EOP and mutual aid agreements with nearby jurisdictions, county law enforcement, the FBI, and other resources.
- Activate local EOC and national incident management system (NIMS).
- Suspend or temporarily waive union rules or other labor laws and deploy responders for longer work shifts.
- Activate immunities and liability protections for staff who respond.

You may also ask the governor to declare a statewide emergency, depending on the scope of the incident and whether state resources are needed. Local declarations of emergency may require you to assess whether local emergency response resources would be exhausted before allowing the declaration of a statewide emergency and/or requesting state aid.

A state or federal emergency declaration for an incident that meets the criterion of a "major disaster" may provide access to federal funding, including SBA disaster loans and FEMA funding authorized by the Stafford Act.[4] See Chapter 8 for more on the legal and financial considerations in making an emergency declaration, including opportunities for reimbursement of local costs. See Appendix C for more information about FEMA and other funding sources.



Mayors in Action: Emergency Declaration



In consultation with Mayor Buddy Dyer, Florida Governor Rick Scott declared a local state of emergency in Orange County and the City of Orlando following the Pulse Nightclub shooting. According to the Mayor, this declaration relaxed certain rules in Orlando related to police overtime and allowed full deployment of law enforcement and other emergency management staff for the response by suspending paid time off (PTO) during the emergency. In some cases, an emergency declaration may also help the city to obtain funding to defray the costs of response, such as law enforcement overtime, or obtain FEMA assistance for small businesses that were impacted.[5]

Receive Briefing on Emergency Response

During the first 24 hours, you should be briefed on the emergency response, including the operations of the EOC and any services delivered by first responders (*e.g.*, psychological first aid (PFA). For more information on PFA, see Chapter 10 on Mental Health). Based on this briefing, begin planning for the closeout of emergency services, the de-escalation of the EOC and incident response teams, and begin planning for recovery. Consult FEMA's NIMS, 3rd Edition and its resources cited earlier in this chapter to learn more about de-mobilizing first responders from other jurisdictions and deactivating mutual aid responses. Request regular updates from your emergency response staff until the mobilization of resources is complete.

Recovery

Obtain Funds to Cover Costs of Emergency Response

Federal and state funding sources are available to help your city cover some municipal costs incurred from response to a mass shooting incident. These expenses may include police overtime and costs of operating the EOC. See Appendix C for a detailed explanation of potential funding sources.

Program Evaluation of Emergency Response

A key aspect of emergency response is evaluating the response after the incident. While the police and/or the FBI will provide an "after action" report of the law enforcement response to the shooting, it is equally important to evaluate the emergency response of your office and other agencies. Doing so will help the city plan for future emergencies.

Response evaluation has other benefits: your report can justify resources allocated to emergency preparedness and response and demonstrate the contributions of emergency management to public safety, including the important role of public health agencies.[6] Your report could also be an invaluable resource for other mayors.

Endnotes

[1] Federal Emergency Management Agency, *NIMS Training Program FAQs*, 2011, https://www.fema.gov/pdf/emergency/nims/nims_training_program_faqs.pdf.

[2] Federal Emergency Management Agency, *National Incident Management System*, 2017, *available at* https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/is700b/6ho/national_incident_management%20system_third%20edition_october_2017.pdf (last visited Apr 8, 2021).

[3] Association Of State And Territorial Health Officials, *Emergency Authority & Immunity Toolkit*, https://astho.org/Programs/Preparedness/Public-Health-Emergency-Law/Emergency-Authority-and-Immunity-Toolkit/Emergency-Declarations-and-Authorities-Fact-Sheet/.

[4] Congressional Research Services, *Stafford Act Assistance and Acts of Terrorism*, 2019, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/R44801.pdf.

[5] Congressional Research Service, *Stafford Act Assistance and Acts of Terrorism*, 2019, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/R44801.pdf.

[6] Daniel Henstra, *Evaluating Local Government Emergency Management Programs: What Framework Should Public Managers Adopt?*, 70 Public Administration Review 236–246, 237 (2010).

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Review local EOP for applicability to a public mass shooting.
- ☐ Consider/complete supplemental EOP if needed.
- ☐ Review FEMA materials and consider training for yourself and team.
- ☐ Include public health agencies in your planning.

Response

- ☐ Activate Emergency Operations Center.
- ☐ Request regular briefings from designated EOC official.
- ☐ Consider whether to declare a local declaration of emergency.
- ☐ Consider whether a state declaration of emergency is needed to activate further resources. If so, call the governor to request.
- ☐ Consult emergency management staff from state agency about available resources.
- ☐ Receive briefing on emergency response, including psychological first aid.
- ☐ Begin planning for recovery phase.

Recovery

- ☐ Evaluate emergency response to complement police after action report.
- ☐ Apply for grants for reimbursement of response costs.

Chapter 3: Victim and Family Assistance

"Every mayor should have a family reunification plan."
– Kathy Devault, Orlando FL (established Family Assistance Center)

Chapter Summary

Following a mass shooting, victims and their family members have short- and long-term needs. Cities often establish specialized centers to meet these needs: the **Family Reunification Center** (aka Family Reception Center), followed by the **Family Assistance Center**, and then in many cases, the **Resiliency Center**. A background section on the role of these centers has been provided for your general information.

During the **preparedness** phase, develop a family reunification and assistance plan as part of your overall emergency management plan for mass casualty incidents. Convene the American Red Cross (ARC), mental health experts, and victim service providers—including local law enforcement and the FBI Victim Services Division (FBI-VSD), prosecutors, and community-based organizations—to determine and coordinate the victim services that will be needed in the event of a mass shooting.

In the **response** phase, focus your attention on meeting the needs of victims and families. Ensure that areas or centers where family reunification and assistance are provided have a secure perimeter and are separate from the Joint Information Center (JIC) where the press will be located. Work with law enforcement and the coroner's office to speed the process for notifying family members of deaths. Ensure all families have privacy when needed and are assigned an advocate to connect them to services and help them apply for crime victim compensation.

Contact the ARC and the FBI-VSD, as well as local partners, to help you establish victim and family services. Meet with victims and families directly to ensure their needs are being met, to solicit their input for vigils, and to comfort them.

As the response transitions to the **recovery** phase, continue your outreach to, and support of, victims and their families. You may need to establish—and find funds for—a Resiliency Center to meet their ongoing recovery needs. Separately, families and victims will need mental health and security services if the shooter is prosecuted and goes to trial. Consult with the families to solicit their input on remembrance events or memorials. For more information, see Chapter 9 on Commemorations.

Background

Overview of Centers for Victims, and Families and Friends

Victim and family assistance is usually provided in phases, as summarized below.

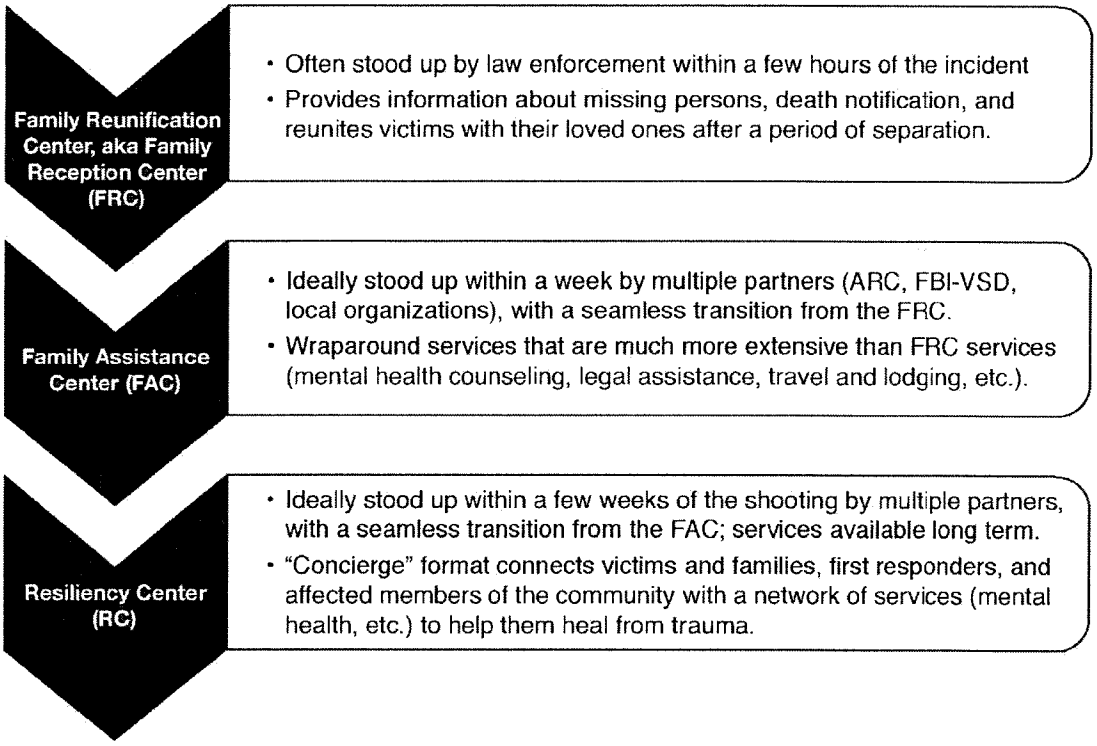


Figure 2: *Overview of Centers for Victims, Families, and Friends*

Family Reunification (or Reception) Center (FRC)

In the immediate aftermath, a Family Reunification Center (FRC) provides a place for families and friends to gather and receive updates, be reunified with their loved ones, and receive death notifications.[i] The FRC can also facilitate the return of some personal effects (those not part of the crime scene) and provide psychological first aid and other services. The FRC is often jointly operated by emergency management and law enforcement and is closed once a Family Assistance Center is ready to open.

[i] Note that the ICPTTA program recommends calling the FRC the "Family and Friends Reception Center" instead of the "Family Reunification Center" out of respect to families of victims that were killed, who have said the word "reunification" gave them false hope. However, we point out that "reception" has celebratory connotations that may also be inappropriate under the circumstances.

Family Assistance Center (FAC)

After the FRC closes, a Family Assistance Center (FAC) provides continuing assistance and wraparound services for victims, families, and affected members of the community. Ideally, the FAC should open within 24-48 hours of the shooting. The FAC may be collaboratively operated by the city, local agencies and businesses, law enforcement agencies, the ARC, and FBI-VSD. Plan for a seamless transition between the FRC and the FAC so that the families receive services without interruption.

Resiliency Center (RC)

Similarly, there should be a seamless transition from the FAC to the Resiliency Center (RC) during the recovery phase. The lasting effects of trauma are addressed by the RC, which often offers "concierge" services. The RC serves as "safe place" for victims and families, first responders, and the affected community to heal. It connects them to a network of mental health care and other services they will need over the long-term.

Agencies and Organizations that Provide Victim Services

Get to know the state and local organizations and agencies that provide services to victims of crime in your city. In addition to law enforcement agencies, these may include special offices or divisions within prosecutors' offices, regional or county agencies, and state agencies that distribute Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding. These state agencies offer victim advocacy and support services, support to nonprofit organizations serving victims, and referrals to services that may be needed in the aftermath of a mass shooting. There may also be community-based non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that specialize in trauma recovery and can provide mental health services to victims of crime or social services to their families.

Familiarize yourself with federal agencies and national organizations and their resources. The FBI's Victim Services Division (FBI-VSD), the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), and the American Red Cross (ARC) are almost always involved in a city's response to a mass shooting (see below for information about the role they can play).

Local organizations and businesses can provide essential services to victims and families, which can vary depending on the community and nature of the crisis. Examples of services that may need to be provided at the FAC include:

- Healthcare
- Behavioral health care services specific to disasters/mass violence
- Referrals for long-term behavioral health services
- Childcare and pet care
- Crime victim compensation
- Crime victim advocacy (victim advocates work directly with the victims to support them with services that meet their individual needs and may stay with them for years in some cases)

- Employee assistance
- Insurance and legal guidance
- Travel assistance
- Assistance with funeral and medical costs for victims (especially the uninsured)
- Assistance with funeral and medical costs for victims (especially the uninsured)

See also Chapter 7 on Partnerships for help identifying partnerships you may want to establish in advance of a crisis.

Preparedness

Convene Partners to Plan Victim Reunification and Assistance Services

Plan victim and family services for your community, which at a minimum should include protocols for family reunification and operating a FAC and potential locations for these operations. Convene a meeting with potential partners using the OVC toolkit below. This meeting should be part of your overall emergency management planning described in Chapter 2 so that victim and family services are integrated into city and regional emergency management plans.

The OVC funds a program called the ICPTTA (Improving Community Preparedness to Assist Victims of Mass Violence and Domestic Terrorism) to help you and your partners plan the services needed by victims and families and to integrate your planning into the emergency management plan and other protocols. The OVC Training and Technical Assistance Center and the ARC can also assist in the planning process.

Key Resource: Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) Toolkit

Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC), Helping Victims of Mass Violence & Terrorism Planning, Response, Recovery, and Resources: This publication is focused on victim assistance for a wide range of disaster events that require coordinated, cross-sector responses. Includes links to the following Toolkit materials: Partnerships & Planning, Response, and Recovery. Each section includes checklists, samples, a glossary, and victim assistance resources. https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/pubs/mvt-toolkit/index.html

Improving Community Preparedness to Assist Victims of Mass Violence and Domestic Terrorism: Training and Technical Assistance: https://icptta.com/

Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center website: https://www.nmvvrc.org/.

As part of the planning process, mayors and other experts we spoke to recommended:

- Identify potential locations for the FRC and FAC during the preparedness phase. Using a grid of the city, determine possible locations in different parts of the city near places an attack could take place. Look for buildings large enough to host victims and families (ideally scalable), in a secure area away from the press, with adequate parking. Examples include stadiums, hotels, and institutional buildings. Make a list of available facilities and update it regularly.
- Ask law enforcement agencies and victim service providers about their protocols for operating an FRC and FAC and keep these on file and accessible.
- Determine who may need to be contacted to provide mental health care and essential services in the event of a mass shooting (see examples of potential partners and essential services in the background section above).
- Plan to incorporate the command of the FAC into the existing Incident Command Structure so that the unified command stays intact and there is clear leadership.
- Make plans to secure the perimeter of the FRC and FAC using local law enforcement assets, private security contractors, or mutual aid agreements.
- Keep in mind that not all victims and family members will be from your city. To stay connected to them, you may need plan to offer remote services, hotlines, or partner with organizations with national reach.

Key Resource: Family Assistance Center

Mass Fatality Incident Family Assistance Operations: National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the FBI Office for Victim Assistance developed this guide for local and state agencies involved in the response to mass fatality events. It explains how to set up a family assistance center to provide services to victims and family members.
https://www.ntsb.gov/tda/TDADocuments/Federal-Family-Plan-Aviation-Disasters-rev-12-2008.pdf

OVC Bulletin on the role of the Medical Examiner and Family Assistance Center after a mass casualty event:
https://www.ncjrs.gov/ovc_archives/bulletins/prfmf_11_2001/188912.pdf



Examples of Family Assistance Center plans:
https://files.asprtracie.hhs.gov/documents/aspr-tracie-ta-facs-for-mass-fatality-incidents-092817-508.pdf

Other Considerations:

- Language: The FRC and FAC may need interpreters and/or translators. For example, some families and victims did not speak English in Oak Creek, WI. Community members stepped up as volunteer interpreters for both law enforcement and the media. After the Pulse Nightclub shooting in Orlando, the majority of victims and their families received services in Spanish.[1]

- Cultural practices: learn about the cultural practices of minority groups in your community so that services provided are culturally appropriate. In Pittsburgh, understanding Jewish traditions relating to caring for the dead was essential in responding to the Tree of Life shooting. In Oak Creek, vigil attendees covered their heads out of respect for Sikh traditions. In Orlando, service providers needed to understand that the LGBTQ+ community broadly defines "family member" to include close friends and partners, and some victims did not want to be "outed" by the media.[2]

- Residency status: Public mass shootings often affect undocumented residents and foreign citizens. This was the case in the Oak Creek, Orlando, and El Paso shootings. All victims of crime are eligible for victim services regardless of residency status, but some victims hesitate to access services due to fears of immigration consequences. Family members living abroad may need help gaining an emergency visa to come to your city. At the FRC and FAC, these issues pose unique legal challenges and may require immigration attorneys to provide victim services. If you suspect they will be needed, include immigration attorneys (contact your local bar association for volunteers) and organizations trusted by undocumented groups in the planning process.

- Online services: OVC recommends establishing an FAC website to provide services to those who cannot or will not visit the FAC in person.

- Advocacy: Designate a family liaison for each family to ensure they get the services they need and to facilitate communication with your office.

- Privacy: Some families will need a private, quiet space where resources are available but not intrusive. Plan for private rooms that offer beverages, informational pamphlets, soft toys for children, and above all—peace and quiet.

- Vetting: At the FRC and FAC, service providers and volunteers should use an entrance/intake area separate from the entrance used by families and victims.

Best Practices Tip

The Family Reunification and Assistance Centers should be:
1. **Separate** from Joint Information Center, volunteer intake process, and the press
2. **Scalable** to meet the needs of any number of victims and families
3. **Secure**, with access controlled by law enforcement and closed off to the press



Response

Work with Law Enforcement to Establish the Family Reunification (aka Reception) Center (FRC)

Emergency management and law enforcement officials typically establish the FRC, which operates for the first 24-48 hours or so. You have four primary roles:

1. Ensure the FRC is situated in an appropriate location away from the press and provides the protections and services families will require. This includes a secure perimeter and private rooms where family members can meet with counselors. If at all possible, ensure the meeting rooms are physically separate so that difficult discussions cannot be heard by others.

2. Work with law enforcement and the coroner's office to speed the process of victim identification to ensure families and friends can be notified as quickly as possible. See the Legal Considerations Chapter for more information.

3. Ensure that every family has a dedicated victims advocate to make sure they get the services and information they need immediately and over time.

4. Contact the ARC and FBI-VSD. The ARC has responded to nearly all public mass shootings in recent years but must be invited as it is not statutorily authorized to respond to mass shootings on its own. Therefore, instruct your Emergency Management staff to contact the ARC immediately to request assistance with the FRC and FAC. Basic services delivered by the ARC include health care, mental health services, and spiritual care. Your local ARC chapter can mobilize a response from the ARC national headquarters, including experts who have responded to similar incidents. Likewise, the FBI-VSD can provide comprehensive services (even if the FBI is not the lead law enforcement agency), but must be requested. Contact your state's FBI Special Agent in Charge (SAC).



Image 5: *An FBI Victim Assistance member carries a bag of personal effects from the site of the November 2018 mass shooting at Borderline Bar and Grill in Thousand Oaks, California, to the nearby Family Assistance Center for collection by its owner (Courtesy of FBI Multimedia Database).*

Track Victims

Experts recommend a centralized system for tracking victims as they are identified by law enforcement. This system should be made accessible to your staff if possible. The tracking system allows FRC and FAC officials to know which victims are being treated and released from which hospitals and communicate this information to families and friends. This may be a challenge due to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), but can often be accomplished through hospital consortiums and the ARC, which is HIPAA-exempt during disasters. In Orlando, Mayor Dyer called President Obama to discuss HIPAA regulations and request a waiver, which may have helped to speed the release the names in compliance with the law.

Engage with Hospitals

Hospitals may also establish limited victim and family services at their facilities, but families and victims need to be connected to the larger response. If needed, direct your staff to contact responding hospitals and medical facilities to request access for outside responders (*e.g.*, victim advocates or the ARC) to brief families and victims on which services will become available and how they should receive them. These families and victims should also be provided remote access to the family briefings that take place at the FAC.

Establish Family Assistance Center (FAC)

Meanwhile, you can oversee the establishment of the FAC. See the preparedness section of this chapter for planning steps, resources, and a list of essential services that may need to be provided at the FAC. During the response, you should take the following actions to establish the FAC:

- Convene law enforcement officials and victim services providers, the FBI, the OVC, and the ARC to develop a FAC protocol (or implement an existing one) and determine the services that will be provided at the FAC (see above).

- Identify the location for the FAC, make legal arrangements for its use, and arrange security.
- Coordinate with ARC and FBI-VSD to contact local partners to operate the FAC and provide services.
- Define who is eligible for services (typically the lead law enforcement agency or the District Attorney makes this call). Advocate for a broadly inclusive definition.
- Discuss the cost of services with partners, determine who can donate funds or provide pro-bono or in-kind services.
- Urge law enforcement to retain incident command for the FAC. It is recommended to transfer the incident command to the FAC.
- Assign roles for city staff, if needed. They can brief you regularly so that you can ensure victims' needs are being met and troubleshoot as needed.
- Document the elements of the plan for use by FAC service providers.
- Begin communicating the location and services of the FAC to the public.
- In the recovery phase, seek reimbursement from OVC and other sources.

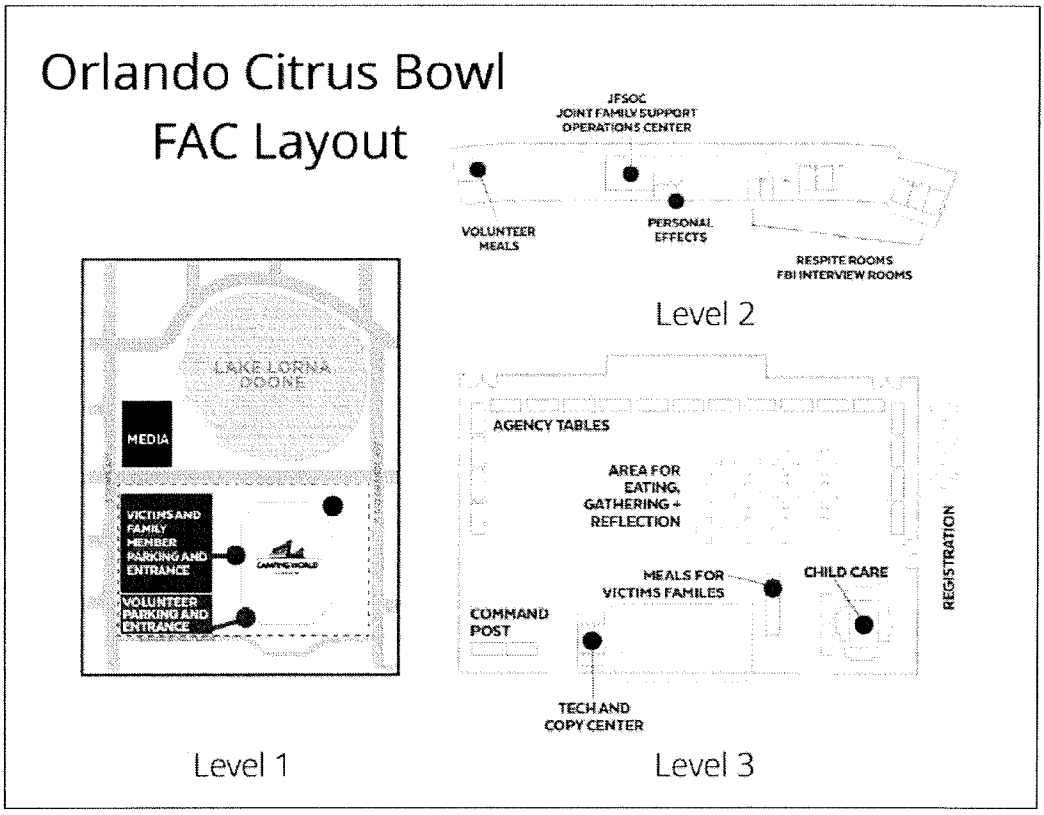


Image 6: *The layout of the Family Assistance Center in Orlando following the Pulse Shooting, showing separate entrances for victims/families and volunteers, private rooms, and a secure perimeter with a separate area for media. (Courtesy of City of Orlando staff).*

Connect with Victims and Families

One mayor told us, "nothing shows you care like showing up."

Mayors who have responded to a mass shooting emphasize that nothing can prepare you for the difficult conversations you will have with victims and family members.
Nevertheless, here are a few suggestions:

- Be composed and compassionate.
- Be well-briefed so that you can provide information about available resources.
- Anticipate anger, anguish, and pain, so know your limits.
- Be authentic: Draw on beliefs and trainings that give you strength and inspiration in difficult times. For example, one mayor spoke about relying on his faith when engaging with his community.

Visit the FAC

You may want to visit the FAC to speak to victims and family members, check on the operation of the FAC, and liaise with victims' services professionals. Request a briefing from FAC officials when you arrive. Expect to meet in a private area with victims and family members who have agreed to speak with you. Do not expect photo or video opportunities with them.

Visit the Hospital

All the mayors we interviewed said they visited victims in the hospital. Here are a few best practices:

- Contact the hospital's media relations department or office of community outreach to inform them of your visit and determine which victims you will visit (this may involve obtaining informed consent from patients).
- Your staff should coordinate with the hospital's media relations department about press coverage resulting from your visit, including compliance with patient privacy laws and hospital policies. Families and victims should be informed ahead of time about potential press coverage so that they are not taken by surprise. Press coverage of hospital visits should be limited to noting your visit but should not include live coverage that may be viewed as exploitative. As at the FAC, hospitals are not appropriate opportunities for photos or videos, out of respect to victims and families. (Remind visiting VIPs of this concern as well).
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, it was not possible to visit victims in the hospital. Some healthcare facilities established new systems for providing video conferencing software to allow remote patient "visits."[3]

Recovery

Transition from the FAC to the Resiliency Center (RC)

Most survivors of a public mass shooting show resilience over time. However, others experience ongoing mental health problems. Experts say that providing a place for collective healing does the most to strengthen families and communities during the recovery phase.[4] That's why a Resiliency Center (RC) may be needed.

While the FAC is still operational, plan what will happen when the national partners (*e.g.*, the FBI-VSD and ARC) pull out. Engage local partners to begin planning a RC to connect victims and families to ongoing services. Cities that established a RC after a public mass shooting or bombing include Orlando (see below), El Paso, Aurora, Newtown, Las Vegas, Parkland, and Boston. The Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC) consultants can help you write a grant proposal for OVC funding, which can help fund the RC for a limited period.

Given the long-term effects of trauma, RCs often operate for years following a mass shooting. For example, the Resiliency Center in Orlando (named the Orlando United Assistance Center, or OUAC) is still operating five years after the Pulse shooting.

Mayors in Action: Resiliency Center

Orlando launched the Orlando United Assistance Center (OUAC) immediately after the FAC closed. The OUAC is a collaboration with the City of Orlando, Orange County Government, and Heart of Florida United Way. Services available at the OUAC include:

- Case management working directly with an OUAC Case Manager
- Navigation of community resources
- Referrals for mental health and counseling services
- Referrals for housing assistance, emergency financial assistance, employment, training, and educational opportunities

OUAC is now managed by the LGBT+ Center of Orlando and continues to provide individualized care to those impacted by the Pulse tragedy. For more information about the OUAC: https://orlandounitedassistancecenter.org/.

Victim Services During a Trial

In cases where a shooter is prosecuted, victims and their family members will need support services throughout the legal proceedings. These will be coordinated by Victim Advocates connected to the prosecuting office (District Attorney or U.S. Attorney). Your office can collaborate with partners and agencies to ensure these services are comprehensive. The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) recommends establishing safe havens (physical locations) where families and victims can receive coordinated services. Also, you can develop a media plan to limit press contact with the families. You should also consider providing security for victims and families who attend trial proceedings.

Key Resources: Victim Services During a Trial



Providing Services to Victims Viewing a Trial at Multiple Locations: OVC provides a protocol for providing standardized services to victims of mass violence during the trial, sentencing, and other court proceedings.
https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/publications/infores/trials_cctv_for_victims/welcome.html

Prosecution-Based Mass Violence Response Toolkit: A Guide for Victim Advocates Responding to Mass Violence Incidents When the Offender will be Prosecuted: a guide for victim advocates who will provide standard services during court proceedings, including templates, considerations for advocates' self-care, and advocacy protocols.
https://www.trynova.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Mass-Violence-Prosecution-Victim-Advocate-Toolkit.pdf

Crime Victim Compensation

Both federal and state agencies provide financial support to victims of crime, including victims of a public mass shooting. The FAC team (or your staff) can connect victims to crime victim compensation. Note that state crime victim compensation programs are not the only source of victim assistance. Public donations supplement these programs. However, it is important to understand that families' access to donations may impact their eligibility for crime victim compensation.

A summary of crime victim resources is provided in Appendix C on Funding. See Chapter 5 on Donations for more information about establishing a victims' fund.

Mayors in Action: Victim Compensation

In Dayton, a state victim compensation fund made available through the Ohio Attorney General's office paid out $102,731 to 29 victims of the shooting.[5] However, at least 19 victims were denied state assistance.[6] The legislature later enacted reforms to address these victims' difficulties.[7] For instance, victims were denied assistance because of prior felony charges unrelated to the mass shooting, or because they had drugs in their system when they became victims.[8] The legislature also proposed to expand the definition of "victim" to cover more affected individuals, increase the maximum claim for grief counseling, and lower barriers to receiving compensation.[9] Mayor Nan Whaley advocated for these changes.



Ongoing Engagement with Family Members

Continue to meet with victims and families as appropriate or requested to ensure their needs are being met and to solicit their input for vigils and permanent memorials. El Paso Mayor Dee Margo recommended following up with victim's families every few months for the first year to inquire how they are doing. In El Paso, a caring staff member made the regular check-in calls and advised the Mayor when he needed to make a personal call.

Endnotes

[1] Olga Molina, Bonnie Yegidis & George Jacinto, *The Pulse Nightclub Mass Shooting and Factors Affecting Community Resilience Following the Terrorist Attack*, 15 Best Practices In Mental Health 1–15 (2019).

[2] *Id.*

[3] centers For Disease Control And Prevention, *Management of Visitors to Healthcare Facilities in the Context of COVID-19: Non-US Healthcare Settings*, September 15, 2020, *available at* https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/non-us-settings/hcf-visitors.html.

[4] Amy Novotney, *What happens to the survivors?*, 49 Monitor On Psychology 36 (2018).

[5] Josh Sweigart & Laura A. Bischoff, *State leaders looking at victim compensation reforms after Dayton Daily News investigation*, Dayton Daily News (2020), https://www.daytondailynews.com/news/state-leaders-looking-at-reforms-after-dayton-daily-news-investigation/AG6MO3NH4ZESBFY2GN76QSXHAU/ (last visited Jun 2, 2021).

[6] *Id.*

[7] Ohio S.B. 369, https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-documents?id=GA133-SB-369.

[8] Sweigart & Bischoff, *supra* note 6.

[9] Ohio S.B. 369, https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-documents?id=GA133-SB-369.

VICTIM AND FAMILY ASSISTANCE CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Meet with law enforcement, the FBI Victim Services Division, the American Red Cross, and community-based organizations to develop a plan for victim and family reunification and services.
- ☐ Identify potential locations for the Family Reunification and Assistance Centers.
- ☐ Review state and federal victim compensation and assistance funding sources.
- ☐ Identify potential service providers for victims and families.

Response

- ☐ Establish the FRC and FAC and ensure they are separate from the JIC and have a secured perimeter.
- ☐ Communicate FRC and FAC locations and services in press briefings and social media channels.
- ☐ Visit victims and family members at the FAC and hospital.
- ☐ Begin planning for the RC.
- ☐ Identify local resources that can address unmet needs of victims and families, such as translators, immigration attorneys, and/or religious services. Help connect them to the FAC.

Recovery

- ☐ Work with partners to establish the Resiliency Center.
- ☐ Ensure victim services related to a criminal trial are provided, if relevant. This may include providing victims security and protection from the press.
- ☐ Work with state and federal agencies to ensure all available funding is provided to victims (directly) and to victim assistance providers.
- ☐ Apply for funding to cover unreimbursed expenses relating to victim and family services, including police overtime to provide security.

Chapter 4: Collaborating with Law Enforcement

"Your role is to gather information, support the chief, and stay out of the way during the investigation."
– Mayor Buddy Dyer, Orlando FL

Chapter Summary

When a mass shooting happens, law enforcement officials—your local police, sheriff, or the FBI—are responsible for the initial response. Their top priorities will be to locate the shooter(s), eliminate the threat, ensure public safety, and identify victims.

In advance of a shooting (the **preparedness** phase), establish a strong, trusting relationship with your chief of police, even if he or she does not report to you. You can familiarize yourself with the jurisdiction and services provided by local, county, and state law enforcement agencies, and the FBI. Police Chief Richard Biehl of Dayton, OH advises that mayors should understand modern policing, including the threat environment and equipment needs. If your role includes police oversight, you can work to ensure the police force has adequate training, funding, and equipment to adequately respond to a public mass shooting. This may include negotiating mutual aid agreements.

While the law enforcement **response** to a mass shooting is taking place, your primary role will be to obtain the information you need from law enforcement to provide the answers the public will demand from you. This may be a challenge. Otherwise, as Orlando Mayor Dyer said, your role with law enforcement is to "stay out of the way."

During the **recovery** phase, work with your chief of police to ensure that the officers involved in the response receive the mental health services they need, that overtime pay is properly documented, and that police overtime costs are reimbursed. In addition, ensure that your police department has the resources needed to make needed policy or protocol changes recommended in an after-action report.

Preparedness

Partnerships with Law Enforcement

Develop a strong working relationship with your Police Chief.[i] Mayors and law enforcement officials told us their strong relationships came from partnering on other initiatives, such as addressing the opioid crisis in their communities, responding to natural disasters, and preventing "everyday gun violence." These partnerships established relationships built on trust. Mayors and law enforcement leaders later relied on this trust to present unified leadership during a mass shooting crisis.[i]

Best Practice Tip



Develop a strong relationship with your Police Chief even if he or she does not report to you.

-- **Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley:** "Imagine going through this kind of crisis if you don't have a good relationship with your Police Chief. You have to have that trust built-in before this crisis happens."

Schedule a training or tabletop exercise to define your respective roles during the response. Include the FBI Special Agent in Charge (SAC), U.S. Attorney's office, local law enforcement agencies to understand their respective jurisdictions and the victims' services they provide. As discussed in Chapter 1, determine key points of contact and include city and law enforcement PIOs to negotiate a communication protocol for press conferences. For more information about trainings, see Appendix A.

Police Chief Richard Biehl of Dayton advises that mayors should understand modern policing, including the threat environment and equipment needs. If your role includes police oversight, you can work to ensure the police force has adequate training, funding, and equipment to adequately respond to a public mass shooting.

Mutual Aid Agreements

Law enforcement agencies often have agreements in place to share resources with nearby jurisdictions in the event of a crisis. These "mutual aid agreements" or "interagency agreements" ideally should be in place before a mass shooting occurs.

Mutual aid agreements can be negotiated between local, county, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, as well as with medical centers and other kinds of emergency service providers. If you are mayor of a larger city, your police department may be called upon regularly to provide mutual aid, while in smaller cities your police force may require the assistance of neighboring agencies.

---

[i] Throughout the Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook, when we refer to Mayors and Police Chiefs, we mean the senior constitutional and law enforcement officers in the jurisdiction. In some jurisdictions these positions may have other titles, but we use those that are most common and familiar to readers.

As explained further in Chapter 8, your legal counsel and "C4 team" should review and update these agreements on an annual basis (at minimum). Participate in the review to ensure your law enforcement agency has access to the resources they will need to respond to, or participate in, a regional police response. According to one police chief, regional responses are becoming more common in the current threat environment, so it is vital that elected officials understand the nuances of mutual aid agreements.

Also, you may need to weigh in on how to resolve issues that could arise if a mutual aid agreement is activated, such as how to resolve different police union policies, police conduct policies and standards, and funding issues.

Key Resource: Mutual Aid Agreements

Department of Justice, Multi-jurisdictional Partnerships for Meeting Regional Threats: Department of Justice has prepared a resource to use when planning mutual aid agreements called Multi-jurisdictional Partnerships for Meeting Regional Threats. https://www.policefoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Bureau-of-Justice-Assistance-2005-Mutual-Aid-Multijurisdictional-Partnerships-for-Meeting-Regional-Threats.pdf



Understanding and Activating FBI Resources

It is important to establish a working relationship with your regional FBI Special Agent in Charge (SAC). The FBI may be the lead law enforcement agency if the mass shooting is a violation of federal law, such as in the case of a terrorist attack or hate crime. Even if the FBI does not take the lead, it can provide significant resources for the response and investigation far beyond what could be provided by local law enforcement. Two key FBI resources are the Critical Incident Response Group (CIRG) and the Victim Services Division (VSD).

Critical Incident Response Group (CIRG)

CIRG coordinates FBI assets for the immediate response, including a Hostage Rescue Team, command post vehicles that can be used as Emergency Operations Centers, aircraft for surveillance and transport, and evidence response resources. If the case involves major evidence response, the local field division of the FBI can quickly access and provide resources from around the country to support the effort.

Victim Services Division (FBI-VSD)

FBI-VSD coordinates more than 170 victim specialists located throughout the country. These specialists become liaisons to the victims and families, and they are available to support local and state police whether or not FBI is taking over the investigation. FBI-VSD's resources are unmatched when it comes to the task of analyzing personal effects and assessing which are evidence and which may be returned to family members.

FBI victim specialists can also help establish the Family Assistance Center, as discussed in Chapter 3. They can coordinate meals, pass information to the families, and activate local victim service providers/partners with whom they already have relationships. They also serve as a buffer between investigators and victims and families so that investigators can focus on the investigation and remain impartial.

While FBI-VSD resources can be invaluable, your staff should be aware of certain limitations. For example, Orlando staff were not permitted to access victim information obtained through intake forms processed by FBI-VSD at the Family Assistance Center due to an FBI protocol intended to protect the privacy of the victims. As a result, the city had to generate a parallel intake process that required families and victims to sign in twice. In some cases, the city was unable to obtain the names of people processed by the FBI, making it impossible to provide follow-up services to them. These bureaucratic pitfalls might be avoided through advance planning with your FBI SAC or victim specialists.



Key Resources: FBI Services

FBI Victim Services Division overview:
https://www.fbi.gov/resources/victim-services.

Critical Incident Response Group overview:
https://www.fbi.gov/services/cirg.

The Coming Storm, an FBI-produced film to help prepare officials to respond to an active shooter event:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9jgS7jBXZU4

Response

Your Role During the Critical Incident Response

Law enforcement agencies will handle the incident response, investigation, and security in accordance with police protocols. As mayor, your role will be to obtain regular law enforcement briefings so that you can keep the families and the public informed. Because law enforcement officials are understandably focused on the incident, it may be difficult to obtain the information you require. Law enforcement officials may also want to hold back information they deem sensitive to the investigation. Therefore, a best practice is to request a designated law enforcement official at the EOC whose sole function is to keep you and elected officials informed. In addition, having a strong relationship with your police chief and SAC in advance of a crisis will pay off through streamlined communication.

As noted in Chapter 1 on Communications, you will need to plan press conferences in collaboration with law enforcement officials. If additional support is needed for victim and family assistance, call the FBI SAC in the field division that covers your jurisdiction. This agent can activate national resources from the FBI's Victim Services Division and support local law enforcement. For more information, see Chapter 3.

Key Resource: Role of Law Enforcement in Assisting Victims of Mass Violence

Police Executive Research Forum, The Role of Police Executives in Assisting Victims of Mass Violence: Lessons from the Field:
https://www.policeforum.org/assets/AssistingVictimsMassViolence.pdf

Mayors in Action: Engaging with Law Enforcement

In the case of the Tree of Life shooting in Pittsburgh, multiple law enforcement agencies responded within an hour. The FBI Special Agent in Charge (SAC), the local District Attorney (DA), and the U.S. Attorney were all at the scene, and discussed which level of government should lead the investigation. The U.S. Attorney convinced the DA that the incident fit the definition of a federal hate crime. Once a decision was made to prosecute at the federal level, the FBI SAC took charge of the law enforcement response. Establishing the chain of command early on helped to coordinate the law enforcement response.

Once Mayor Peduto was informed of the jurisdiction decision, he focused on communications with the public and dignitaries who were visiting Pittsburgh that day. He also ensured that the gathered dignitaries remained "outside the tape" of the crime scene and appropriately distanced from the mobile command unit where law enforcement was engaged in tactical operations.

Recovery

Recovery for Police First Responders

Work with your police chief to ensure that officers who responded to the shooting receive the mental health care they need. According to Dayton Chief Richard Biehl, the lack of mental health resources for first responders is a national problem.

Similarly, in the event of a serious injury or death of an officer, there are concrete actions you can take to ensure that the officer is recognized for his or her heroism. Beyond advocating on behalf of the officer's family for the services and benefits they will need, you can also use an existing 501(c)(3) charitable entity operated by the city to receive public donations intended for the officer's family. See Chapter 5 for more information on donations and fund management.

Key Resources: Mental Health Services and Benefits for First Responders

COPS Office resource center, Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Programs: Eleven Case Studies: The COPS Office publishes materials for law enforcement and community stakeholders to address crime and disorder challenges. This link features a book titled *Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Programs: Eleven Case Studies*, which describes agencies' programs that protect the mental and emotional health of law enforcement officers, their nonsworn colleagues, and families. https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ric.php?page=detail&id=COPS-P371



Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act—Funding opportunities available through the COPS office: https://cops.usdoj.gov/lemhwaresources

National Alliance on Mental Illness, Preparing for the Unimaginable: this report describes actions to take within police departments to safeguard officers' mental health, promote resilience, and prevent secondary trauma. https://www.nami.org/Support-Education/Publications-Reports/Public-Policy-Reports/Preparing-for-the-Unimaginable/Preparing-For-The-Unimaginable

Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program (PSOB): PSOB provides death and educational benefits to the survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other first responders, and disability benefits to officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty. https://psob.bja.ojp.gov/

NC-PTSD, Psychological First Aid (PFA) Manual: https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/type/psych_firstaid_manual.asp

Police Overtime Pay

The cost of overtime pay for police departments that have responded to a public mass shooting can be significant. Overtime will be accrued providing services for the response, investigation, traffic control, and security needs for dignitaries, vigils, funerals, and the Family Reunification and Assistance Centers. For example, in response to the Las Vegas shooting, police overtime costs exceeded $3.5 million.

During the recovery phase, work with law enforcement to ensure that overtime costs are carefully documented so they can be reimbursed. For information about sources of funding that may cover the cost of police overtime pay, mental health benefits for first responders, and death and educational benefits for the survivors of fallen first responders, see Appendix C.

After-Incident Review

After a mass shooting, review with police leadership the tactical response and lessons learned. While law enforcement will take the lead on developing and submitting an after-action report, your staff should review its contents and determine with law enforcement whether there were resource gaps or unmet needs that hindered the law enforcement response to the shooting. The after-action report should be completed as quickly as possible to ensure the accurate recollections of all participants are included.

In particular, review existing mutual aid agreements and assess whether the agreements met the needs of the incident. Work with your chief of police, legal counsel, and City Council (if needed), to update mutual aid agreements with other jurisdictions to be better prepared in the future.

Endnotes

[1] U.S. Conference Of Mayors, 88th Winter Meeting: Lesson Learned - Preventing, Preparing for, and Responding to Mass Shootings, 2020, *available at* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hijqn9q1rQg (last visited Apr 8, 2021).

LAW ENFORCEMENT CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ With your chief of police, schedule a training or tabletop exercise to define your respective roles during the response.
- ☐ Ensure the police force has adequate training, funding, and equipment to adequately respond to a public mass shooting.
- ☐ Meet with the FBI SAC, local law enforcement agencies, and community-based organizations to understand the victim services they provide.
- ☐ Ensure adequate mutual aid agreements are in place.

Response

- ☐ Establish communications channels to obtain regular law enforcement updates.
- ☐ If needed, activate FBI resources via the Special Agent in Charge.

Recovery

- ☐ Work with your chief of police to ensure first responders get the mental health services and benefits they require.
- ☐ Ensure appropriate documentation of police overtime pay; seek reimbursement.
- ☐ Determine with law enforcement whether there were resource gaps or unmet needs that hindered the law enforcement response to the shooting.

Chapter 5: Managing Donations and Volunteers

"It's about the community having a place to put their pain."
– Mayor Nan Whaley, Dayton, OH

Chapter Summary

After a mass shooting, people want to help. Financial donations pour in from across the country and around the world. Community members show up to lend their support to the victims and families. People donate food, teddy bears, and other items, and leave flowers and letters at a makeshift memorial area to remember the victims. To be fully **prepared**, you should plan how you will manage donations and volunteers.

Despite the intense pressure in the first 24 hours following the shooting (**response**), mayors recommend establishing a fund right away for the benefit of the victims and families. Tell the public where they can safely direct their donations. Mayors offered the following lessons learned: (1) create a fund immediately, (2) establish a community oversight board for it, (3) encourage the public to give only to the established fund to avoid scams, and (4) determine a protocol (in advance, if possible) to guide the distribution of donations to victims and families.

Managing volunteers and non-financial donations can be another challenge. For example, after the shooting in Las Vegas, the local public health agency had to provide food inspectors to handle perishable items, which posed potential food safety concerns. After the Sandy Hook Elementary shooting, organizers had to ask the public to stop donating teddy bears after they filled a warehouse with 67,000 stuffed animals.[1] Yet some of the items left at the scene or other memorial sites may have value for future commemorations and historical purposes, so you may need to coordinate with community partners to document and catalog items left by the public.

In the long-term **recovery**, your staff may continue to coordinate donations and volunteers for events, including one-year remembrance events and donations for permanent memorials. While community organizations and foundations often take the lead, you may designate staff to serve on community boards or oversee key events.

Preparedness

Develop A Victims' Fund Strategy

Determine your strategy in advance so that you can immediately establish a victims' fund if a mass shooting takes place. The strategy will also be useful if you must respond to other extreme emergencies, such as a natural disaster or terror attack. Even though you have many other aspects of the response to attend to, do not leave the fund management to private organizations. You will want to ensure the city is doing everything it can to help the victims and families, including by ensuring the fund is properly managed (which may even reduce the city's potential liability).

As part of your strategy, determine the funding vehicle you will use to receive donations. In Orlando, the city already had a 501(c)(3) charitable entity for managing donations for events. With a few tweaks, the city was able to use that entity to accept donations for the Pulse victims right away. However, there are other good options. Dayton relied on a relationship with a community foundation to establish a fund. San Bernardino used a crowd-funding website (GoFundMe). El Paso used the National Compassion Fund, a national organization that provides pro bono services after mass shootings. Both Dayton and Orlando used the services of national expert Kenneth Feinberg for help setting up their funds and determining protocols for distributions.

In addition, you should determine who will manage the fund, how funds will be distributed, and who will provide oversight. Determine whether you will need authorization to establish a fund. For example, in Pittsburgh the mayor's office had to seek permission from the city council to establish a special trust fund where donations could be deposited. The National Compassion Fund can help you develop your strategy, whether or not it is done in advance.

Best Practice Tip



Plan how you will manage a victims' fund *before* a mass shooting happens.

– Heather Fagan, Chief of Staff to Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer: "Distributing the funds is a major process that required multiple community meetings and translation services. We established a board to manage the process. I think mayors in other cities need to consider how they would approach the establishment and management of a victims' fund ahead of time."

Key Resources: The National Compassion Fund and Kenneth Feinberg

The National Compassion Fund accepts public donations for victims of a mass casualty event. Developed by the National Center for Victims of Crime in partnership with victims and family members, it offers tax deductibility to donors, no administrative fees, and a transparent process for distributing the funds. Staff from the National Compassion Fund can provide technical assistance to your local community foundation or directly set up a fund to provide assistance to the victims and family members.
https://nationalcompassionfund.org/



Several mayors consulted with attorney/consultant Kenneth Feinberg, who provides *pro bono* assistance to establish a victims' fund so long as the envisioned fund meets certain conditions.

Establish Protocols for Volunteer and In-Kind Donations Management

In collaboration with public safety, public health, and emergency management staff, develop protocols for managing volunteers and in-kind donations in the event of a mass shooting. These protocols can be included in the city's emergency preparedness plan and tabletop exercises. Protocols can address where food and other types of donations might be stored, which staff are trained to accept and inspect donations, and which staff might manage volunteers in coordinating in-kind donations.

Response

Establish a Fund Right Away

Establish the victims' fund as quickly as possible in consultation with your C4 team. Mayor Whaley established the Dayton Oregon District Tragedy Fund the day after the shooting. Mayor Dyer used a pre-existing city-owned 501(c)(3) to establish the OneOrlando Fund. See Chapter 8 for information about the legal considerations involved in establishing the fund.

It is important to ensure there is only one fund. This will help prevent confusion, promote transparency, ensure consistency in the distribution of the money, and limit the opportunity for scammers to capitalize on the public's grief. In addition, because there *may* be a liability reduction component to such a fund, it may be in the best interest of the city to establish the fund rather than waiting for another entity to establish one. For these reasons, Mayor Dyer and his staff convinced other groups that had established their own funds to merge them with the OneOrlando Fund.

Best Practice Tip

Ensure that the establishment of the fund is transparent.

– **El Paso Mayor Dee Margo:** "Once the Fund was set up, I provided weekly status updates for city council members and the public. Every two weeks I brought members of the oversight committee to the council to answer questions and encourage eligible victims and family members to apply for funds."

Keep the Public and City Officials Informed About the Fund

As soon as the fund is established, make regular announcements at press conferences to inform the public how to make donations and warn of potential scams. Provide information about how victims can apply to receive compensation from the fund. Include the information in social media channels and in the languages most likely to reach the affected community.

Mayors in Action: Victims' Fund Management

In Orlando, donations poured in from around the world following the Pulse shooting on June 12, 2016. At first, city officials expected the fund to be managed by an external organization, but after receiving calls from Disney and Universal Studios pledging large donations, the City needed to find a way to accept these funds.

In consultation with the Mayor, Orlando's CFO Christopher McCullion opted to use the City's existing not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, Strengthen Orlando, as the repository for the donations. They quickly obtained a "doing business as" (DBA) license in order to prevent commingling of funds with other Strengthen Orlando monies. City staff acquired a website domain for the fund and activated online credit card processing and text-to-donate functions. Although the city did not have protocols for handling the donations, the fundamentals of funds management, record keeping, fraud prevention, and transparency were familiar to city officials.

McCullion sought guidance from Mitch Weiss, who served as Chief of Staff to Mayor Thomas Menino during the Boston Marathon bombing. Weiss advised McCullion to work with attorney Kenneth Feinberg on the distribution protocol. Feinberg agreed to assist pro bono on the condition that all donations would be directed to one funding vehicle.

Uniting the funding streams was needed because several organizations established funds in addition to the city's fund, including Equality Florida, the GLBT Community Center of Central Florida, and the National Compassion Fund. These organizations agreed to partner with the city to merge the funds into the OneOrlando Fund, "to ensure all funds collected for victims [were] disbursed in a unified process that [would] expedite funds, ensure transparency and safeguard against fraud."[2]

Mayor Dyer appointed a board to oversee the distribution of donation funds. Board members were selected to represent the LGBTQ+ and Hispanic communities affected by the tragedy, and also included leaders from local foundations and philanthropies, city staff, and Orlando Magic CEO Alex Martins.

The distribution board considered two strategies: give 100% of the donations directly to the victims and families or retain a portion of the funds to provide long-term services for victims, including mental health and rehabilitation.

A group of victims and families from other shootings closely aligned with the National Compassion Fund urged the board to give 100% of the funds to the victims and families of the Pulse shooting. They had seen other cities retain funds for service-providing nonprofits, only to lose a sizable portion of those funds to administrative costs. McCullion learned that "there's a strong feeling among past survivors that fundraising that uses pictures of the deceased and then directs the money to anything other than direct support re-victimizes people who have already been victimized."



On that basis, the board decided to follow the group's recommendation to give 100% of the donations to the victims and their families. There were no administrative costs relating to the fund itself: credit card companies waived their fees and all other services were provided pro bono or by the city. The city resolved to seek funding elsewhere to provide the long-term services needed by the survivors.

The distribution protocol was developed with public input from two town hall meetings and by circulating a draft distribution protocol for comment. The final protocol provided payments according to the extent of loss or injury: families of victims who died received the highest payments. Victims who sustained injuries received payments according to the length of their hospital stay. Victims who witnessed the attack but were uninjured received lower payments than the first two groups.

Using this approach, the OneOrlando Fund distributed more than $31 million to 308 claimants, representing 100% of the donations.[3]

Direct Volunteers to Where They Can Help

The American Red Cross and the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program provide aid after a disaster, including a public mass shooting. As mayor, you can recommend that these organizations be contacted immediately to help guide the establishment of the Family Assistance Center, advise on the services needed by the victims, and provide skilled volunteers trained in psychological first aid, grief counseling, and other first responder skills. These volunteers can be coordinated at the scene via the National Incident Management System and also provide services directly through the Family Assistance Center.



***Image 8**: Los Angeles Fire Department CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) Unit volunteers organized in Sylmar, CA in response to an earthquake (LAFD Photo by Cody Weireter).*

Community members and people from around the country may appear at the site of the shooting or the Family Assistance Center offering to help. It can be challenging to properly manage these untrained volunteers. To the extent possible, they should be directed to where they can provide the most benefit and have the least chance of inadvertently interfering with the investigation and efforts of first responders. In the past, untrained volunteers have helped set up public spaces for a vigil or public event, helped process in-kind donations such as food and flowers, and delivered food to first responders. See the resources listed below for suggestions on managing volunteers.

In your press conferences and on social media, tell the public how they can help, including by directing volunteers to where they are needed. You may need to announce that volunteers are *not* needed, and that people can best help by staying home, avoiding the area, or making a financial donation.

An important way the public can help is by donating blood. In Orlando, people began donating blood within hours after the Pulse shooting, with blood banks working overtime to ship the blood collected from other cities to Orlando.[4] The response was so great that the need was met the following day. El Paso Mayor Dee Margo spoke of blood donors standing in long lines for hours under the hot sun, which required the distribution of bottled water to those waiting in line. Consult with the American Red Cross or your local blood bank to ensure the safety of blood donors.

Key Resources: Volunteer Management

FEMA, Managing Spontaneous Volunteers in Times of Disaster: The Synergy of Structure and Good Intentions: This publication offers a basis for developing a national strategy on working with unaffiliated, often spontaneous, volunteers. It is an outgrowth of an earlier publication, *Preventing a Disaster Within the Disaster*, which outlined the challenges involved in working with unaffiliated volunteers and offered recommendations on how to develop a national strategy.
https://www.fema.gov/pdf/donations/ManagingSpontaneousVolunteers.pdf

National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters: This organization serves the volunteer-based organizations that respond to disasters, allowing them to share knowledge and resources during preparation, response, and recovery efforts.
https://www.nvoad.org/



Points of Light Foundation, Preventing a Disaster Within the Disaster: The Effective Use and Management of Unaffiliated Volunteers: This report addresses disaster volunteer management and provides recommendations for engaging volunteers more effectively in times of disaster.
https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/Archive/202852NCJRS.pdf

Strategies for Managing Volunteers during Incident Response: A Systems Approach: This article describes how to plan for and manage spontaneous volunteers using a systems-based approach. https://www.hsaj.org/articles/684

HandOn Network, Top 15 Things to Know When Managing Volunteers in Times of Disaster: This list outlines the basic steps involved in managing volunteers during a disaster.
https://www.kalhd.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Top_15_Things_to_Know_When_Managing_Volunteers_in_Times_of_Disaster.pdf

Recovery

Fund Distribution to Victims and Families

The process of developing a distribution protocol can be time-consuming. Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto emphasized the importance of consulting with family members of victims when determining how the funds will be distributed. Other mayors echoed his recommendation. Family members from other mass shootings offered their advice in some cases. Feedback was solicited from the public in community meetings and city council sessions. Although every case is different, it may help to consult with mayors and staffers who have established a victims' fund to avoid re-inventing the wheel.

Mayors told us they did not get involved in the actual distribution of funds to victims and families. However, they took actions to ensure the process was transparent. In some cases, a member of the mayor's staff participated on the board that oversaw these distributions. That allowed them to keep the mayor appraised of the process, liaise with victim services organizations to ensure victims were heard throughout the process, and keep the City Council, local agencies, and the public informed on the process and timeline of distributions.

Mayors in Action: Fund Distribution Protocol



In Dayton, the victims' fund established by the city distributed more than $3.8 million to victims and their families (47 applicants) in an initial payout[5] and around $150,000 in a second payout.[6] Approximately 70% went to families of the deceased, 20% went to injured victims who were hospitalized for 48 hours or more, and 10% went to victims who were treated and released in less than 48 hours.

Several of the funds researched for this Playbook distributed 100% of the funds to the victims and their families (as recommended by families of previous mass shootings). However, not all of them did. For example, in Pittsburgh, $6.3 million was raised according to press reports. Most of the money, $4.8 million, was distributed to victims and family members. However, $500,000 was provided to injured police officers and their families, $450,000 went to the Tree of Life congregation to rebuild the severely damaged building, and some funds went toward memorials and education connected to the massacre.

Although 100% of the donations to the OneOrlando Fund were distributed to the victims and their families (see vignette above), Orlando Mayor Dyer recommends that distribution boards consider withholding a small percentage of the donations to pay for mental health services, not only for the victims and their families, but also for other members of the community who were not directly affected but are traumatized.

The best practice is to closely consult with the survivors, families of the victims, and members of the affected community and use their input to establish a distribution protocol that is appropriate for your community.

Endnotes

[1] Chris Murphy, The Violence Inside Us, 128-129 (2020).

[2] Natalie Bednarz, *OneOrlando Fund Update*, OneOrlando Fund (2017), https://www.oneorlando.org/oneorlando-fund-update-april-7-2017/ (last visited May 27, 2021).

[3] *Id.*

[4] Paul Brinkmann, *How blood banks handled Pulse shooting, 28,000 donors*, orlandosentinel.com (2016), https://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/pulse-orlando-nightclub-shooting/os-oneblood-ceo-pulse-20160629-story.html (last visited Apr 15, 2021).

[5] Joshua Richardson, *Tragedy Fund distributes $3.8 million to Oregon District shooting victims*, WRGT (2019), https://dayton247now.com/news/local/tragedy-fund-distributes-38-million-to-oregon-district-shooting-victims (last visited Jun 2, 2021).

[6] John Bedell, *Disbursements of money in ODS Tragedy Fund to end Sept. 30*, WHIO (2020), https://www.whio.com/news/disbursements-money-ods-tragedy-fund-end-sept-30/L4IY5NNDV5AKTFKU4VTCHUIBOE/ (last visited Jun 2, 2021).

DONATIONS AND VOLUNTEERS CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Plan the vehicle needed to accept donations for a victims' fund. Meet with your local community foundation or establish a nonprofit for this purpose.
- ☐ Establish a victims' fund protocol.

Response

- ☐ Establish a victims' fund right away, ideally the day of the shooting.
- ☐ Communicate with the public about the fund and warn about possible scams.
- ☐ Direct volunteers as appropriate, understanding the distinction between trained volunteers and spontaneous, untrained volunteers.
- ☐ Work with the American Red Cross and local blood banks to direct blood donors and volunteers for blood drives.

Recovery

- ☐ Promote transparency. Consider appointing a member of you staff to serve on community oversight board for donations management.

Chapter 6:
School Shootings

"We're going to need a lot of support here to help those who've been affected by this tragedy ... get through it."[1]
– Mayor Christine Hunschofsky, Parkland FL

Chapter Summary

The best practices described elsewhere in this Playbook apply to a mass shooting that takes place in a school. However, school shootings merit special attention because, although exceedingly rare, they present unique challenges for mayors. Schools are usually governed and regulated by entities not under the control of a mayor, making it difficult to collaborate on safety planning. Also, school shootings often occur in smaller cities that lack the staff and resources large cities have to devote to the response and recovery. Most importantly, school shootings target children. The community may experience heightened anguish and outrage due to the age of the victims.

Preparedness is essential. Cultivate a strong professional relationship with your police chief or local sheriff, even if they do not report to you. Schedule a tabletop exercise with city leaders (including your city manager and city commissioners), and law enforcement, county, and school officials. Use the exercise to determine roles, communication channels, a school security protocol, and the location of a Family Reunification Center in the event of a school mass shooting. Familiarize yourself with the issues surrounding active shooter drills and school safety.

Your role during the **response** to a school shooting may include facilitating the flow of information between school leadership, parents, and law enforcement, as well as protecting families from the press. If a public mass shooting happens elsewhere in the community, you can alert school partners to activate lockdown procedures to keep students safe.

In the **recovery** phase, consult with school leaders to determine how your office and city agencies can best support the school community. It may also help to consult with child trauma experts, and mayors and groups of family members who have been affected by a school shooting in the past.

Preparedness

Cultivate Relationships with Law Enforcement

Maintain a working relationship with law enforcement leaders, even if they do not report to you. Request a briefing on school safety protocols currently in place. Your role is to understand these protocols and (if applicable) to provide budgeting priority and oversight to ensure police have the resources they need.

Mayors in Action: Challenges Working with Law Enforcement



In Parkland, FL, the city lacked its own police force. It contracted with the Broward County Sheriff's Office (BSO) for law enforcement services and the Coral Springs Parkland Fire Department (CSPFD) for fire/EMS. As a result, the emergency response to the Marjory Stoneham Douglas High School shooting was led by two agencies with different response protocols and tactics, which proved difficult.[2]

Because no communication protocol had been established between city public information officers (PIOs) and law enforcement PIOs in advance, the Mayor, the City Commission, and staffers had difficulty obtaining real-time information about the law enforcement response.[3] In fact, according to press reports, officials at City Hall did not even attempt to engage law enforcement because they did not want to contribute to the chaos of the response, leaving them to learn of updates from television coverage.[4]

Cultivate Relationships with School Officials

Even though you may not have authority over local schools, you should establish relationships with leaders of the schools in your city. This may include school board members, the county school superintendent, parent associations, college presidents, and organizations that provide school-based services. Use these relationships to work together to plan and promote school safety best practices in schools across the city.

Schedule a Tabletop Exercise Focused on a School Shooting

Consider organizing a tabletop exercise with law enforcement, county, and school officials to plan the city's response to a school shooting. This effort can help ensure each school has a violence prevention plan in place, and that schools, law enforcement officials, and city and county agencies understand their role in the unlikely event that a school shooting takes place. For more information, see Appendix A on Training, as well as Chapter 1 on Communications and Chapter 3 on Victims and Families.

Key Resource: FEMA Campus Resilience Toolkit

FEMA Campus Resilience Toolkit: This resource can be used to facilitate a tabletop exercise to plan a response to a school shooter.
https://educateiowa.gov/sites/files/ed/documents/Iowa Elementary School Active Shooter TTX SitMan2.docx

Ensure School District Has Developed a Violence Prevention Plan

The U.S. Secret Service recommends that school districts develop a comprehensive violence prevention plan.[5] The plan should identify threats, create a central reporting mechanism, and develop risk management options. Although you are not responsible for developing such a plan, you may want to ensure such a plan is developed and that you are familiar with it. The following section provides information and resources that may be useful to you and your staff, and can be shared with school district officials, if needed. We advise familiarizing yourself with these issues before meeting with school officials to discuss school safety.

School Safety Information and Resources

U.S. Department of Justice Community-Oriented Policing Services Office Report

In 2020, a working group of the Community-Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office at the U.S. Department of Justice produced a report that outlines ten essential actions schools and law enforcement agencies can take to prevent and respond to school shootings. The topic areas of these actions are:

- Comprehensive Needs Assessment
- School Climate
- Campus, Building, and Classroom Security
- Anonymous Reporting Systems
- Coordination with First Responders
- Behavior Threat Assessment and Management
- School-Based Law Enforcement
- Mental Health Resources
- Drills
- Social Media Monitoring

Key Resources: COPS School Safety Planning Recommendations

Department of Justice, Ten Essential Actions to Improve School Safety: a COPS Office School Safety Working Group Report to the Attorney General. The two-page Executive Summary can be accessed here (accessed February 24, 2021). https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/Publications/cops-w0891-pub.pdf

Role of Law Enforcement in School Safety Planning

Law enforcement agencies often work with schools to develop their plan. For example, in Pittsburgh, the police provide training to Community Resource Officers (CROs)[i] (based in schools) on threat assessment and active shooter situations. In coordination with the FBI, the Pittsburgh police perform walk-throughs with school officials to assess security, make recommendations for technology and emergency preparedness, and establish lines of communication for use in the event of a shooting.

Role of City in School Safety Planning

Florida law requires cities to maintain school security plans and the layout of every school, which can help law enforcement locate and isolate the shooter during the response. Consider implementing this practice even if your state does not require you to do so.

Also, even if you do not have authority over the schools in your city, you can advocate for student safety and ensure student and parent concerns are part of the process of planning active shooter drills and school violence prevention plans. You can also advocate for resources needed by the school district, such as funding for mental health resources for students (see *Image 1*).

Best Practice Tip

Keep school maps and security plans on file at city hall.

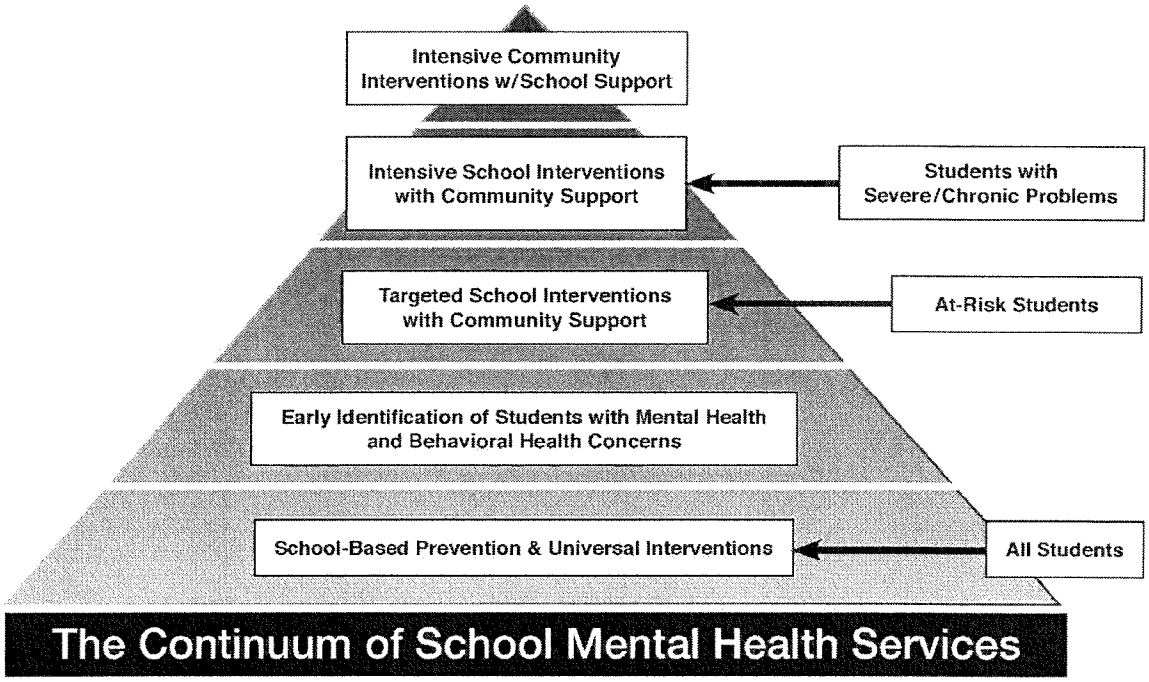
--**Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer:** "Florida has state legislation relating to school resource officers [and threat assessment]. We have plans, documents of all of the school locations that you can just pull up on your computer in the event you're having to respond to a school shooting."

[i] Note, there is some disagreement among researchers on the security value of CROs. See James Alan Fox and Aviva M. Rich-Shea, Don't defund all police, but keep police out of schools. Kids will do better without them., USA TODAY (2020), https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2020/06/12/defund-school-police-obstacles-to-student-success-column/5336791002/ (last visited May 27, 2021).

Student Mental Health Services

Most school shooters left behind evidence that they were victims of bullying or otherwise in crisis; for example, the majority were suicidal. Appropriate services might have helped some of them. Therefore, in addition to countering external threats, schools should address the mental health needs of their students.

As the diagram below highlights, the community has a role to play in developing appropriate mental health services for schools. For example, in Washington D.C., the Department of Behavioral Health and the Department of Health collaborated on a behavioral health plan for school-based services in the district's schools. The plan coordinated clinical care from both agency clinicians and other local resources.[6]



Adapted from "Communication Planning and Message Development: Promoting School-Based Mental Health Services" in Communique, Vol. 35, No. 1. National Association of School Psychologists, 2006.

Figure 3: *Role of Community in School Mental Health Services*[7]

Consider asking for a report that assesses the school district's mental health system. Meet with school leaders and mental health experts to solicit their recommendations on ways the city can support their efforts to provide needed mental health services. For example, you may be able to advocate with elected officials, connect the district to needed resources and expertise, or help the district obtain funding. You can also advocate that schools contract with managing entities that are able to provide behavioral health services, rather than provide services in-house, which is not a core competency of schools and school districts.

Key Resource: Mental Health System Assessment Tool

The SHAPE (School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation) website: provides tools to help schools and districts assess and improve school mental health systems. http://www.theshapesystem.com/

Active Shooter Drills

Most states require schools to engage in safety training, which includes some form of active shooter drill.[8] However, the specifics of such drills are often left to school districts to determine. The COPS report provides resources to help schools develop age-appropriate drills,[9] as does the American Academy of Pediatrics.[10] It is worth noting that child mental health experts have warned that realistic or surprise active shooter drills can traumatize children.[11] The nation's two largest teachers' unions, the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association, have called for an end to realistic drills.[12]

A Word About the School Security Industry

According to press reports, the school security industry is now a $3 billion market, offering a range of products that may or may not increase the security of students in your school district.[13] Some experts argue most of these "security" systems are not worth the investment and may have negative effects on the school population.[14] Research has shown that investing in properly trained social workers and mental health professionals does more to create a healthy and safe school environment.[15]

Response

Communications

In the case of a school shooting, your primary role is "communicator-in-chief." You will likely serve as a trusted source of accurate information for parents and the school community, and as a comfort to them. See Chapter 1 on Communications.

Law Enforcement

You will need to engage with law enforcement officials, even if they do not report to you. Contact the lead law enforcement agency to form the communications strategy for press briefings and agree on a protocol to receive regular law enforcement briefings. In the case of a mass shooting elsewhere in the community, you (or law enforcement officials) may need to contact school officials to urge them to lockdown their schools to protect students. For example, as the shooting at the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino, CA unfolded, the nearby California State campus and public schools across the city were locked down for hours.[16] See Chapter 1 on Communications and Chapter 4 on Law Enforcement for additional guidance.

Encourage School Officials to Access Available Resources

School crisis teams can easily be overwhelmed during the response to a school shooting, both because of limited resources and because school officials may have personal relationships with the victims and their families. Therefore, as mayor you can help by encouraging school officials to accept outside assistance, including from local mental health providers and national organizations such as the American Red Cross.

Seek Advice from Those Who Came Before

Your city—especially if it is a small one—may lack the mental health, staffing, and financial resources needed to support your community in the aftermath of a school shooting. There may be community divisions or other challenges you must address that are unique to school shootings. Seek advice from mayors who have responded to a school shooting and from family members who lost children in a school shooting.[17]

Recovery

Mental Health and Recovery Needs

In all public mass shootings, the recovery phase is focused on helping victims, families, and the affected community heal from trauma. In the aftermath of a school shooting, however, unique issues can arise.

You may be dealing with traumatized children or teenagers whose futures may be drastically altered. The emotional toll of a shooting on children can be extreme. Close consultation with child trauma experts is strongly recommended.

The community may experience heightened anguish and outrage due to the age of the victims. Parents may be unwilling to send students back to the school where the shooting took place. Students may even become suicidal. Conspiracy theorists may emerge and torment family members. Your community may become divided on their views of how politicians should respond to school shootings.

You may know many of the affected families personally, so your compassionate leadership will be needed to help guide your community through the difficult grieving process. Working closely with the parents and school community, look for trauma-informed ways to honor the victims and comfort the survivors.

Hosting vigils and memorials and providing opportunities for grieving community members to volunteer and serve others are good starting points. The following information is drawn from press accounts of the first annual remembrance event in Parkland, by all accounts a moving and healing event that included a variety of avenues for people to grieve. See also Chapter 9 on Commemorations.

Mayors in Action: School Shooting Remembrance Events

Parkland community members and city staff organized events centered on unity and volunteerism for the first annual remembrance of the Parkland Shooting. The "Day of Service and Love" offered "something for everyone," recognizing that people process grief in different ways.

Notably, events were intentionally free of political messaging at the behest of the Mayor, who wrote a letter inviting elected officials to attend, but not to speak, at the city's remembrance ceremony on February 14, 2019.[18]



Throughout the day there were activities for students and community members, including painting stones for an outdoor memorial, playing with therapy dogs, and packing meals for children experiencing food insecurity.[19] The Broward County School Board hosted community service projects at a local park. The Coral Springs Museum of Art sponsored, outdoor music, art projects, and a petting zoo.[20] The school opened for a half day. Some students attended school events, participated in a moment of silence, or performed a community service project. Others chose to stay home.[21] There was a breakfast for first responders.

The city partnered with Coral Springs in a Bloomberg Philanthropies-funded art project called the Temple of Time. This project, which was popular in the community, was designed and constructed by the artist in collaboration with community members. It was completed on February 14 in time for the first remembrance ceremonies and ceremonially burned in May of 2019. Communal prayer vigils and candlelight ceremonies were held throughout the day.[22]

Funding for School Recovery

Eligibility for most funding opportunities, such as Project School Emergency Response to Violence (SERV) is limited to local educational institutions.[23] If needed, work with schools to determine whether the city can help them identify resources to meet specific needs. See also Appendix C, which provides links to other funding sources.

Endnotes

[1] National Public Radio, *Parkland Mayor Speaks About Shooting at Florida High School* (2018), *available at* https://www.nhpr.org/post/parkland-mayor-speaks-about-shooting-florida-high-school#stream/0.

[2] National Police Foundation, *Recovering and Moving Forward: Lessons Learned and Recommendations Following the Shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School* (2019).

[3] *Id.*

[4] *Id.*

[5] National Threat Assessment Center, *Enhancing School Safety Using a Threat Assessment Model: An Operational Guide for Preventing Targeted School Violence* (2018).

[6] Office Of The Deputy Mayor For Health And Human Services, *School Mental Health Program and School Health Services Program* (2017), *available at* https://dmhhs.dc.gov/publication/school-mental-health-program-and-school-health-services-program (last visited April 14, 2020).

[7] Substance Abuse And Mental Health Services Administration, *Ready, Set, Go, Review: Screening for Behavioral Health Risk in Schools, available at* https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/ready_set_go_review_mh_screening_in_schools_508.pdf (last visited April 14, 2020).

[8] Everytown For Gun Safety, *The Impact of School Safety Drills for Active Shootings* (2020), *available at* https://everytownresearch.org/report/the-impact-of-school-safety-drills-for-active-shootings/.

[9] Cops Office School Safety Working Group Report To The Attorney General, *Ten Essential Actions to Improve School Safety* (2020).

[10] David J. Schonfeld, Marlene Melzer-Lange, Andrew N. Hashikawa, Peter A. Gorski, *Participation of Children and Adolescents in Live Crisis Drills and Exercises.* Pediatrics 146 (3) (September 2020), *available at* https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/146/3/e2020015503/ (last visited April 21, 2021).

[11] Sarah C. Peck, *Profiting from protecting kids is wrong. Halt active shooter drills in schools,* https://www.sun-sentinel.com/opinion/commentary/fl-op-com-peck-halt-active-shooter-drills-schools-20191120-fbtyyjfutvf4zlyue5ghebi7gm-story.html (last visited May 4, 2021).

[12] Associated Press and Elizabeth Chuck, *Two Largest Teachers Unions Call For Schools to Revise or End Active Shooter Drills,* Nbc News (February, 2020), *available at* https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/two-largest-teachers-unions-call-schools-revise-or-end-active-n1136271 (last visited April 14, 2021).

[13] Gary Younge, The New York Times, *The (Way Too Many) Kids Whose Lives Have Been Upended by Gun Violence,* The New York Times (March 2021), https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/25/books/review/children-under-fire-john-woodrow-cox.html.

[14] James Alan Fox and Aviva M. Rich-Shea, *Don't Defund All Police, But Keep Police Out of Schools. Kids Will Do Better Without Them,* Usa Today (June 2020), https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2020/06/12/defund-school-police-obstacles-to-student-success-column/5336791002/.

[15] Final Report of the Federal Commission on School Safety - U.S. Dept. of Education (pages 120 & 126), https://www2.ed.gov/documents/school-safety/school-safety-report.pdf

[16] Neil Nisperos, *San Bernardino City Unified Schools Back in Session Following Mass Shooting*, The San Bernardino Sun (December, 2015), *available at* https://www.sbsun.com/2015/12/02/san-bernardino-city-unified-schools-back-in-session-following-mass-shooting/.

[17] Belinda Luscombe and Haley Sweetland Edwards, *'The World Moves On And You Don't.' Parents Who Lost Children in School Shootings Find Comfort in a Group No One Wants to Join*, Time (November 2018), *available at* https://time.com/longform/school-shooting-parents/.

[18] *Id.*

[19] Amy Held, *'We Live With It Every Day': Parkland Community Marks 1 Year Since Massacre*, National Public Radio, Feb. 2019, *available at* www.npr.org/2019/02/14/694688365/we-live-with-it-every-day-parkland-community-marks-one-year-since-massacre.

[20] *Id.*

[21] *Id.*

[22] *Id.*

[23] U.S. Dep't Of Education, https://www2.ed.gov/programs/dvppserv/eligibility.html (last visited April 14, 2021).

SCHOOL SHOOTINGS CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Schedule a tabletop exercise to determine roles, communication channels, school security protocol, and the location of a Family Reunification Center in the event of a school mass shooting.
- ☐ Establish relationships with school officials and law enforcement leaders.
- ☐ Propose and participate in a planning team for school safety.
- ☐ Suggest a periodic assessment of school district mental health systems.
- ☐ Advocate for appropriate school-based trainings, exercises, and drills.

Response

- ☐ Establish communications channels with school officials and law enforcement.
- ☐ Consider whether a declaration of emergency is needed to activate further resources. If a state declaration is also needed, call the governor to request.

Recovery

- ☐ Research funding opportunities to help defray the costs of school recovery and student services, improved security, etc.
- ☐ Work with school officials to determine the role of the city in supporting the school's recovery and supporting student mental health and resilience.
- ☐ Consult with mental health experts, as well as mayors and family members who have been affected by a school shooting.

Chapter 7: Community Partnerships

"Existing partnerships is what matters on that day."
– Chief of Staff Heather Fagan, Orlando FL

Chapter Summary

Mayors told us existing partnerships in a crisis really matter: you can't call someone in the middle of the night if you don't already have a contact established. This chapter describes some of the partnerships you may want to cultivate.

During the **preparedness** phase, identify partners that may be needed in the response and recovery phases of a mass shooting. Arrange a tabletop exercise with these partners to understand the services they can provide and develop a protocol for a Family Resilience Center. Identify gaps in relationships, such as mental health providers, and cultivate relationships with them. You can discuss the security needs of religious or minority groups that may be targeted by an active shooter. Establish a relationship with school officials. Consider establishing a Community Crisis Response Team of concerned community members.

During the **response**, call on your partners to provide support and services to affected communities. Consult with partners that provide mental health services to shape your messaging. Ask for help arranging vigils. Seek partners needed for long-term recovery.

During the **recovery**, work with partners to ensure the long-term needs of families and the affected community and met, and for help securing funding.

Preparedness

Identify Community Partners Needed to Respond to a Shooting

Mayors told us relationships with community leaders mattered in significant, and sometimes unexpected, ways when a mass shooting happened in their communities. Cultivate these relationships and consider who else you may need to meet. Engage with key community leaders from time to time to discuss their security needs and understand the services they could provide in the event of an emergency. As discussed in Appendix A on Training, you may want to include some of them in a tabletop exercise to explore the role they could play after a shooting.

Examples of partnerships that may be important during the response include:

- Police chief
- American Red Cross
- FBI Victim Services Division
- The National Compassion Fund
- United Way
- School District officials
- Mental health professionals
- Victims' advocacy groups
- Religious communities and faith leaders
- Minority and underserved populations
- Hospitals and blood banks
- Business community organizations
- Grassroots and community organizations representing groups at risk for gun violence, such as organizations that employ street outreach workers
- Local bar association

Key Resource: OVC Checklist for Partnership Planning



The Office for Victims of Crimes provides a "Partnerships and Planning" checklist in its Mass Violence Toolkit. The checklist can help you develop a victim assistance plan using the local resources in your community. Free training and technical assistance related to the Mass Violence Toolkit are available through the OVC Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC). Contact TTAC@ovcttac.org or 1–866–682–8822. https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/pubs/mvt-toolkit/PartnershipsPlanningChecklist.pdf

Local Mental and Behavioral Health Experts

Several mayors told us they lacked existing relationships with mental health providers. Take the time to cultivate relationships with the county public health department, mental health and behavioral health services experts, and victims' advocates working in the district attorney's office. Your staff should have regular contact with the state agency providing VOCA support for victim service agencies and advocacy for victims in your state. In the aftermath of a shooting, these organizations can advise on effective messaging to reduce trauma and provide services (or timely referrals to services) to the families of the victims.

However, be aware that not all mental health service providers are qualified to counsel a victim or witness to a public mass shooting. In the immediate aftermath of a shooting, psychological first aid (PFA) is needed to stabilize emotions and prevent later post-traumatic stress is needed. See the Chapter 10 on Mental Health for more information and resources.

Local Faith-Based Organizations

Religious groups and faith-based organizations are key partners, not only because they may provide services to victims and families in the aftermath of a mass shooting, but also because they are potential targets for hate crimes. Your engagement with them should include:

- Safety and security: arrange for law enforcement officials to help these organizations with threat assessment, building security, alert systems, and partnerships with law enforcement.
- Response and recovery: discuss the services and community response that faith-based organizations can provide after instances of violence, such as vigils, funerals, and spiritual guidance.
- Cultural understanding: seek information about their cultural norms, death and burial practices, and language needs.

Importantly, remind faith-based organizations that provide services in the aftermath of a public mass shooting that they must offer their services to all victims and families, regardless of religious affiliation.

Mayors in Action: Faith-Based Partnerships in Pittsburgh

Before the Tree of Life Synagogue shooting, the Pittsburgh police department had performed threat assessments with the Jewish community and knew the phone numbers and locations of every synagogue in the city. Because the shooting took place on the Sabbath, other synagogues could not be reached by phone. Because of the preexisting relationship with the Jewish community, police were able to go to every synagogue and warn them of the threat as the law enforcement response was ongoing.



Key Resources: Faith-Based Organizations and Preventing Hate Crimes

Department of Justice, Preventing Hate Crimes in Your Community: https:/www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/preventing-hate-crimes-your-community

Department of Justice, Strengthening Police and Community Partnerships (SPCP) Program Fact Sheet: https://www.justice.gov/file/1059716/download

Overview of the FBI's Victim Assistance Resources: https://www.fbi.gov/resources/victim-services

Department of Justice, Protecting Places of Worship: https://www.justice.gov/file/1058496/download

Department of Justice COPS Office, Stop Hate: Action Steps for Local Communities: https://cops.usdoj.gov/html/dispatch/05-2016/action_steps_for_local_communities.asp

Department of Justice, Understanding Trends in Hate Crimes Against Immigrants and Hispanic-Americans: https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/244755.pdf

Minority and Underserved Communities

Within U.S. cities, Black and Hispanic neighborhoods often experience high levels of gun violence, yet these crimes rarely receive the level of attention or resource allocation that public mass shootings do. Partnering with community leaders from these neighborhoods can help you develop effective violence interrupter and other evidence-based programs to reduce "everyday community gun violence." For more information, see the Afterword: A Note About Urban Community Gun Violence.

Understand the security concerns of these communities and arrange for law enforcement agencies to meet with them. Identify language translation services where needed. Understand the cultural norms of these communities. Document the locations of their schools, community centers, and places of worship.

It's important to note that a pre-existing relationship with community leaders based on trust is vital in the aftermath of a racially motivated hate crime or officer-involved shooting. These leaders can play an important advisory role and serve as credible messengers to their communities to help prevent social unrest.

Mayors in Action: Community Partnerships in Orlando

In the case of the Pulse shooting, the Mayor's office had longstanding relationships with organizations serving the LGBTQ+ and Hispanic communities. The ability to work with these groups to host vigils and provide services to the affected communities would not have been possible without these relationships built on trust and respect.

School Communities and Districts

As described in Chapter 6 on school shootings, develop relationships with the broader school community: the school board, parent groups, and leaders of the schools and universities in your city. Schedule meetings with your school superintendent to discuss the school district's violence prevention plan and security needs.

Local Business Community

The local business community should also be included in preparedness planning. As the EL Paso shooting illustrates, businesses and workplaces can be targeted. Urge businesses to develop their own security protocols informed by local law enforcement guidance. Additionally, the business community may play a vital role in a recovery by providing resources, raising money for victims and families, and planning events.

Community Crisis Response Team

In the preparation phase, consider establishing a Community Crisis Response Team. The CCRT model involves inviting a variety of community partners to form a crisis response team that can be mobilized after a mass shooting. For more information, see Chapter 10 on Mental Health.

Engage National Partners

While this chapter is focused on community partners, you should also engage national partners directly, through state agencies or through their local chapters. Obtain the name and contact information for the local representative of each organization should you need to reach them during a crisis.

The FBI, especially the Victim Services Division and Critical Incident Response Group, can provide significant law enforcement and victims assistance resources. You should take the time to meet your regional Special Agent in Charge (SAC). Beyond its tactical and law enforcement capabilities, the FBI may also be able to leverage other partnerships that you don't have the ability to activate. For instance, FBI agents with victim services expertise are likely already connected to community-based victim service providers in your community and can activate them if you don't already have your own relationships in place. Additional information about FBI resources is provided in Chapter 3 on Victims and Families and Chapter 4 on Law Enforcement.

The American Red Cross can provide significant resources for the victims and families. However, the ARC can only respond to incidents if they are invited, so, when needed, you will need to make a call to activate its resources. The ARC has psychological first aid expertise. It can provide "just in time" training to other victim service providers and mental health service providers on psychological first aid and related topics such as stabilizing victims and witnesses. The ARC may be able to mobilize volunteers from other networks such as the Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD), a network of over 5 million volunteers.[i] Additional information about the ARC is provided in Chapter 3 on Victims and Families.

[i] For more information, please see https://www.nvoad.org/.

The National Compassion Fund, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), and the United Way also bring significant resources to the response and recovery. Initiate contact with each of these national organizations to discuss the services and funding they can provide, and to learn how to contact them when you need them. Additional information about The National Compassion Fund is provided in Chapter 5 on Donations and Volunteer Management.

Response & Recovery

Direct Partners Where They Are Needed Most

The first 24 hours after a shooting can be quite chaotic. Take the time to activate your partners and direct them to where they can be most helpful. For example, partners can be directed to provide services at the Family Reunification Center in accordance with any protocols you may have. Others may be directed to help plan a vigil. Still others might help out at the scene of the shooting to manage the items left to honor the victims or deliver food to first responders. Decide whether to invite the FBI, the ARC, or other national partners to join in the response.

Examples of the varied roles community-based partners can play include:

- Mental health services: Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) of Montgomery County, Ohio provided coordination of service delivery and helped shape Dayton's messaging.
- Family and victim assistance: In El Paso and Orlando, the Family Assistance Centers had over 40 community-based organizations present to serve the needs of victims, their families, and first responders.
- Unity and healing via spiritual leaders: A local Imam amplified Orlando's message of unity and healing. Faith leaders united in San Bernardino to host vigils and services in the immediate aftermath of the attack.
- Organizing events and donations management: The business community helped fund victims' assistance funds and permanent memorials in many cities. For example, in Orlando, Disney and other local business partners donated millions to the OneOrlando Fund. In Dayton, the Downtown Dayton business community organized a vigil and contributed to managing the fund for victims.
- Victims' fund management: Community foundations have also played a role in donations fund management and oversight.
- Legal services: in Orlando, the local bar association provided a range of pro bono legal services for victims and their families.
- Memorials: In El Paso, Walmart partnered with the city to establish a "Grand Candela" memorial, a 30-foot-tall obelisk honoring the victims with a "beacon of light." The city conducted focus groups with the families to understand how they wanted to memorialize the shooting.

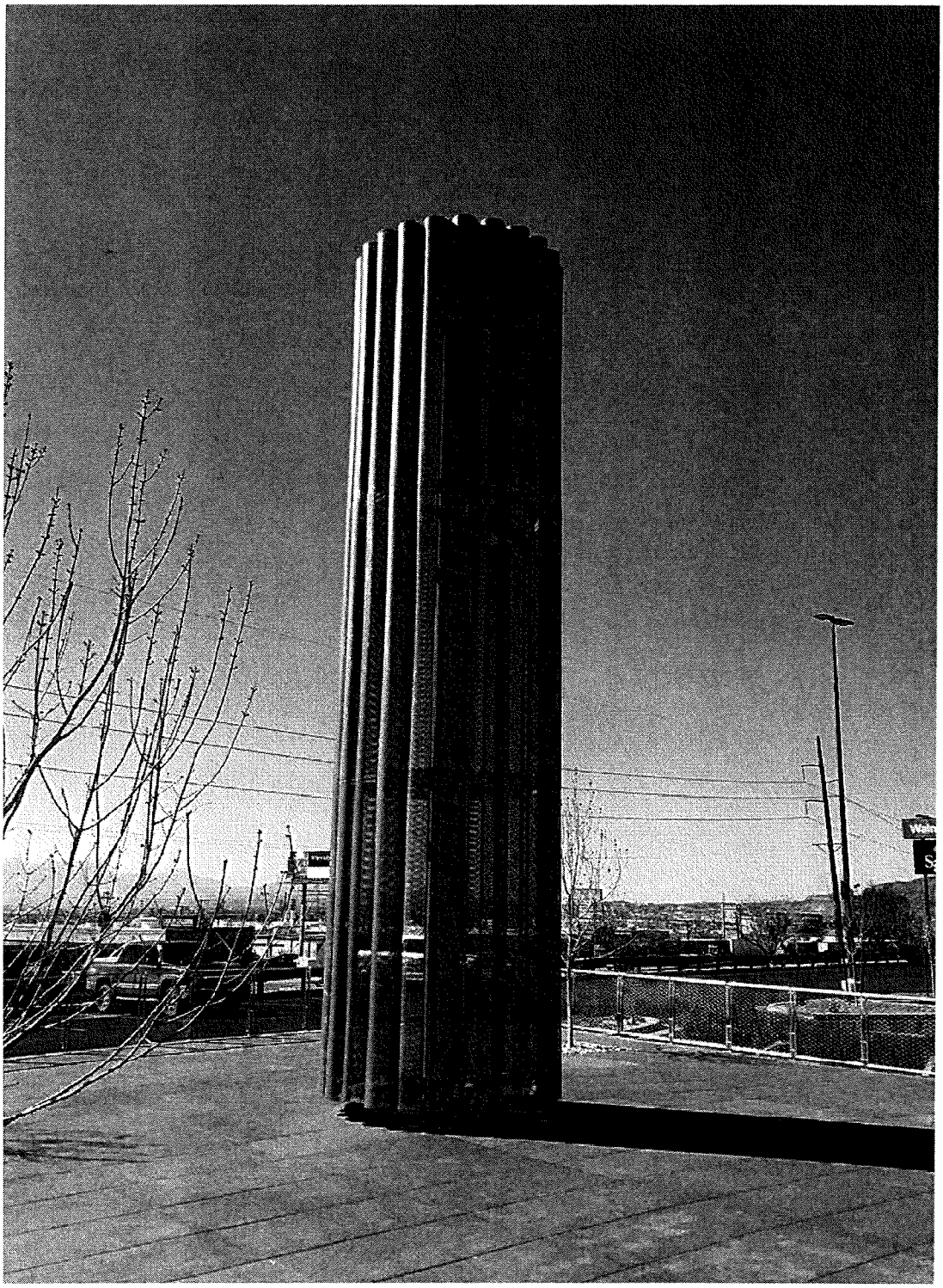


Image 9: *Grand Candela memorial at the Ciela Vista Walmart in El Paso (TomStar81).*

Mayors in Action: Community Partnerships

After the mass shooting in El Paso, local, state, and federal agencies collaborated to establish the El Paso United Family Resiliency Center (FRC) to help victims and families recover from the trauma they experienced. Opened three months after the shooting, the FRC is run by county and city governments, with funding from the Office of the Governor and United Way El Paso.



The FRC disseminates information and connects victims and families to services provided by nearly 40 community-based organizations. These services include individualized case management, referrals for counseling, financial planning, legal guidance, spiritual care, and more, based on an individual's specific needs. Without the engagement of so many community-based partners, the center would not have been able to meet the changing needs of the community, facilitate programs tailored for specific populations, and reduce stigma around receiving mental health care through outreach and education.

One Fund El Paso also involved collaboration with multiple community-based partners. While the fund was administered by the National Compassion Fund, it was established in collaboration with the City of El Paso and local foundations (the Paso del Norte Community Foundation and the El Paso Community Foundation). Importantly, the fund partnered with at least seven community organizations to help victims and family members apply for compensation. Communications about the fund were made in both English and Spanish. Community partners were also instrumental in providing representatives to oversee the donations. They developed the final distribution protocol that disbursed $11.8 million to 355 victims and family members.

Endnotes

[1] El Paso United Family Resiliency Center, "What We Do," *available at* https://www.elpasounitedfrc.org/what-we-do (last visited Apr 15, 2021).

[2] El Paso United Family Resiliency Center, "About," *available at* https://www.elpasounitedfrc.org/about (last visited Apr 15, 2021).

[3] El Paso United Family Resiliency Center, "What We Do," *available at* https://www.elpasounitedfrc.org/what-we-do (last visited Apr 15, 2021).

[4] El Paso United Family Resiliency Center, "About," *available at* https://www.elpasounitedfrc.org/about (last visited Apr 15, 2021).

[5] National Compassion Fund, *One Fund El Paso, available at* https://nationalcompassionfund.org/fund/one-fund-el-paso/ (last visited April 14, 2021).

[6] National Compassion Fund, *Local Agencies Assisting With One Fund Applications, available at* https://nationalcompassionfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Local-Agencies-Assisting-with-One-Fund-Applications.pdf (last visited April 14, 2020).

[7] *Id.*

[8] Vic Kolenc, *$11.8M El Paso Mass Shooting Fund Makes Last 2 Payouts, Audit Still To Be Done* (July, 2020), *available at* https://www.elpasotimes.com/story/news/2020/07/21/el-paso-mass-shooting-fund-makes-last-two-payouts-audit-next/5453190002/.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Identify community partners that may be needed in the response and recovery phases of a shooting. Identify and fill gaps.
- ☐ Initiate contact with national partners, such as FBI, American Red Cross, and the National Compassion Fund.
- ☐ Using a tabletop exercise or other form of planning, engage with partners to discuss their role in responding to a mass shooting or similar crisis. Include partners that can provide mental health services for the recovery phase.
- ☐ Consider establishing a Community Crisis Response Team (CCRT).

Response

- ☐ Contact partners to request help filling the unmet needs of families and victims.
- ☐ Consult with partners that provide mental health services to shape messaging.
- ☐ Cultivate partnerships that are lacking as you move to the recovery phase.

Recovery

- ☐ Work with partners to ensure that the long-term needs of families and the community are met, and for help securing funding.

Chapter 8:
Legal Considerations

**"We obtained legal advice right away.
As it turned out, the legal work was extensive."**
– COS Heather Fagan, Orlando FL

Important: This chapter does not offer legal advice, nor is it a comprehensive legal resource. Instead, it provides an overview of some of the legal issues you may wish to discuss during your consultations with counsel and provides useful resources.

Chapter Summary

If a public mass shooting takes place, some litigation may be inevitable. The grounds for lawsuits against cities following a public mass shooting may include negligence, code enforcement, access to information, and the role of off-duty police. As of this writing, courts have not held city governments or local law enforcement liable for injuries or deaths in connection with public mass shootings or the law enforcement response to such shootings, but the cost of responding to lawsuits is potentially high. In addition, cities must respond to public records requests from the media, potential litigants, and the public. There are steps you may consider taking, in consultation with counsel, to potentially reduce the city's legal risk.

During the **preparedness** phase, consult with your legal counsel to understand and minimize legal risks. Counsel should form a crisis team that includes the city's counsel, the city administrative officer (CAO), the Mayor's Chief of Staff (COS), and the city's Chief Financial Officer (CFO). This "C4" crisis team should meet for "extreme emergency" planning, as detailed below. They can ensure that the necessary agreements, protocols, and charitable entities are negotiated and in place and that all governing statutes relevant to an extreme emergency have been identified.

During the **response**, this C4 team should be called immediately. They can help you activate "mutual aid" (aka "interagency") agreements that will provide additional resources, guide the decision of whether to declare an emergency, and ensure the city's primary administrative functions are coordinated. They can also play a support role in establishing the victims' fund, managing the public record request process, and ensuring the city's response to the crisis complies with applicable law.

During the **recovery** phase, your counsel will oversee the resolution of any legal action filed after the shooting.

Preparedness

Assemble a Crisis Leadership Team ("C4")

Consult with your legal counsel to understand and minimize legal risks. Counsel should form a crisis team (*e.g.*, the city's legal counsel, the city administrative officer (CAO), the Mayor's Chief of Staff (COS), and the city's CFO, or the functional equivalents). The role of the "C4" team is to ensure that the city has mitigated areas of potential liability, and that the city's response to a mass shooting complies with applicable law and is coordinated across all agencies.



Best Practice Tip

Develop protocols to govern the operations of the coroner's office during a mass casualty event, the Family Reunification and Assistance Centers, and the victims' fund.

C4 Public Mass Shooting Preparedness Training

The C4 team should periodically conduct a practice exercise to ensure all agreements and protocols needed by the city in the event of a mass shooting have been identified, negotiated, and are in place. In the case of a small city, the C4 team may want to invite the county's chief administrative officer (CAO) to discuss how the county will be involved in the response.

The C4 team should begin assembling a file that contains, at a minimum:

- The names and contact information of key people and organizations that should be contacted immediately in case of a public mass shooting or similar extreme emergency. In addition to the obvious, the list should include the local U.S. attorney, the State's attorney general, the coroner, the senior operations official at the local trauma center, and the in-house counsel of local press outlets.
- Statutes and regulations that could be applicable on issues such as emergency declarations, victim compensation, police overtime, public record requests, code compliance, and deceased casualties who are unclaimed.
- Mutual aid agreements (aka interagency agreements) with surrounding communities, county and state law enforcement agencies, the FBI, trauma centers, etc., that govern mutual assistance in the event of an emergency.
- Protocols to govern the operations of the coroner's office during a mass casualty event, the Family Reunification and Assistance Centers, and the victims fund, among others.
- A draft executive order form.

The C4 team members should understand that they are always "on call" and should carry a cell phone at all times so that they can be reached immediately. See Chapter 1 on Communications for a best practice tip on preparing a "go bag."

C4 Internal Review

While courts have generally not held cities liable for the response to a mass shooting, the legal costs incurred from defending the city and/or law enforcement from claims brought by affected parties can be significant. Therefore, the C4 team should conduct an internal review to assess and minimize potential liability and consider other issues, summarized below, that could arise in the event of a mass shooting.

Assess and Minimize Legal Risks

The C4 team's legal review should ensure city agencies, including law enforcement, have procedures in place to protect the city from potential liability. Previous claims against local governments or law enforcement after a mass casualty incident include:

- Failure to follow up on identified threats, assess threats, or activate an extreme risk protection order against a perpetrator.[1]
- Failure to inspect a building or property where a mass shooting occurs such that victims are trapped inside or the event is more fatal than it would have been otherwise.[2]
- Failure to properly train law enforcement for active shooter events or provide the right equipment.[3]

Other areas of potential liability include code infractions involving the exits of buildings, the management of off-duty police officers, the response to public record requests, and the unofficial actions of well-meaning city employees who act in their individual capacity during a crisis and inadvertently create legal problems. The C4 team may recommend steps to remediate any liability identified, which should be implemented as quickly as possible.

Evaluate Agreements to Ensure Resource Needs are Met During a Shooting

Most cities have mutual aid agreements to ensure that additional emergency response resources, such as law enforcement and trauma care services, are available in the event of an emergency (see Chapter 4 for more on this topic). The C4 team should evaluate these agreements in view of projected resource needs during an extreme emergency and determine whether these agreements will meet the city's needs without posing undue legal risk. For example, the CFO of Orlando mentioned the value of negotiating an agreement with the city's private contractor that provides security for City Hall to also provide security for a Family Reunification Center or Assistance Center if either is established. Consider whether similar agreements (or lack thereof) expose the city to additional risk and how that risk can be properly managed.

Review Coroner Office Protocol

Notifying family members as soon as possible that their loved one is deceased is a top priority. However, existing regulations governing the responsibilities of the coroner's office could have the unintended effect of delaying death notifications. Your C4 team should meet with the coroner's office to develop a protocol that can speed the release of information in the case of a mass shooting, or to seek legislative change if necessary.

Best Practice Tip

Establish a 501(c)(3) charitable entity.

Orlando established a 501(3)(c) charitable entity well before the Pulse shooting. Orlando's attorney recommends every city, even small ones, establish such an entity.

Establish a 501(c)(3) Charitable Entity

Consider establishing a 501(c)(3) charitable entity as part of your preparedness planning. The cost is minimal (the cost of retaining tax counsel is an estimated $5k). While formation is straight forward, the process can be time-consuming; it can take months to obtain the necessary IRS certification. Therefore, it's best to form the 501(c)(3) early in your planning and before an emergency. Once established, the 501(c)(3) entity can be quickly structured to receive donations for a victim's fund. Importantly, it can also be used for other important functions, such as to receive funds donated for the families of fallen officers, victims of natural disasters, and for city initiatives such as parks or events.

As a related matter, the City may wish to establish a separate bank account for the 501(c)(3) charitable entity. You should appoint an individual, perhaps from the C4 team, to serve on the 501(c)(3) board to handle financial matters, and if necessary, to structure the 501(c)(3) to accept donations for victims and their families (see Chapter 5).

Prepare for Public Records Requests

After a mass shooting incident, there will be extensive public records requests from the media and potential litigants. Therefore, the C4 team should review the state's public records statute. It should develop a protocol for handling public records requests after determining what the law requires, whether there are deadlines or penalties for failure to promptly respond, and whether deadlines may be suspended in the case of an extreme emergency. The team should evaluate the city's document destruction policy and ensure the systems used to maintain public documents are up to date and accessible. The city's staff should be briefed on the public record request protocol.

The C4 team should be familiar with the differences between the Federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the state public records law. FOIA applies only to federal records, such as law enforcement documents generated by the FBI, but there may be times when it is unclear whether FOIA or state law applies (*e.g.*, local law enforcement bodycam footage generated during response led by the FBI).

Issues unique to a mass shooting may require the C4 team's urgent attention. For example, sensitive items like photos of the dead and recordings (audio and video) of their deaths could be subject to public records requests. (It is generally desirable to withhold these records if the law permits, as their release risks traumatizing the families of the victims and the public). If state law would require the release of these records, the C4 team may consider advocating in advance for an amendment to the law to prevent the release. Additionally, victims' home addresses may need to be immediately sealed by the county's property assessor as soon as names are released in order to protect victims' privacy and shield them from the news media and from people who would seek to harm them.

Insurance: Consult with a Risk Management Expert

The C4 team should meet with an official from the city's risk management agency or office. In light of the complex liability issues, unusual risks, and potential for dramatic damages, risk management experts should proactively explore ways to mitigate potential liability in connection with a mass shooting. Their assessment should consider applicable state law governing sovereign liability and personal liability exposure for you and your staff. They should report their recommendations to you and the C4 team.

In addition to liability coverage, it's worth noting that a policy can provide coverage for services the city may need in an emergency. For example, one city's liability insurance provided coverage for the cost of engaging a crisis communications consultant (*e.g.*, a public relations expert with the appropriate expertise) during an emergency. As the need to manage large amounts of information can be overwhelming after a shooting, this coverage may benefit your city.

One additional point related to limiting liability: there is no guarantee that establishing a victims' fund will reduce the risk of a lawsuit against the city. However, because there *may* be a liability reduction component to such a fund, the city should take the lead establishing a victim's fund rather than waiting for another entity to establish one.

Consult with Experienced Legal Experts

The experience of others can help your C4 team assess the legal issues outlined above. After the Pulse shooting, the Orlando C4 team contacted the legal counsel of ten cities that had recently responded to a public mass shooting or mass casualty event to solicit their guidance.

Understand State Preemption Laws

Following the Tree of Life Shooting, Mayor Peduto urged the Pittsburgh City Council to pass local regulations relating to firearms. These actions were met with lawsuits that exposed the city and the mayor to liability. During the preparedness phase, your city's C4 team can review the state preemption laws to help you understand the limits to your ability to regulate firearms before or after a shooting.

Response

Contact the C4 Team

Involve your C4 team immediately. They should meet daily to ensure the city's primary administrative functions are coordinated, and that the city's response to the crisis complies with applicable law. They can help you activate mutual aid agreements to provide additional resources, advise on your decision of whether to declare an emergency, and help you implement applicable protocols. They can also play a support role in establishing the victims' fund, managing the public record request process, and managing outside counsel. Orlando City Counsel Mayanne Downs said her C4 team spoke at 6:30 every morning after the Pulse shooting to discuss urgent issues. This prescheduled call promoted efficiency and helped coordinate the response across city offices. As a result, the daily C4 call is now part of the city's standard emergency protocol.

Consider Whether to Make an Emergency Declaration

Consider whether to declare a local emergency or local disaster. According to Attorney Downs, there is no downside to making the declaration immediately. Declaring an emergency may protect the city from some of the legal risks described above and has the potential to defray costs relating to police overtime costs. The implications of the declaration vary state by state, but the declaration may authorize you to:[4]

- Activate local emergency response plans and mutual aid agreements with nearby jurisdictions, trauma centers, and the FBI.
- Activate local emergency operations center and national incident management system (NIMS).
- Suspend or temporarily waive union rules or other labor laws and deploy responders for longer work shifts.
- Activate immunities and liability protections for staff that respond.

Local declarations of emergency may require you to assess whether local emergency response resources would be exhausted before allowing the declaration of an emergency and/or requesting state aid. This determination can be made in consultation with your C4 team. You may also ask the governor to declare a statewide emergency if state resources are needed.

A state or federal emergency declaration for an incident that meets the criterion of a "major disaster" may provide access to federal funding, including SBA disaster loans and FEMA funding authorized by the Stafford Act.[5] However, to be eligible for FEMA funding a city must provide evidence of extensive property damage, such as damage caused by fire or an explosion, or demonstrate exhaustion of local resources. See Appendix C on Funding Opportunities for more information.

Respond to Open Government and Public Record Requests

Your staff may need to assist with responding to public record requests from the media and potential litigants. One best practice is to post all public records relating to the shooting on a city website to reduce repetitive requests. Outside counsel may need to be retained during the response phase to form the policy for meeting the intense demand for information and to manage litigation, if any.

Mayors in Action: Public Records Requests

In Orlando, a dedicated staff responded to hundreds of requests, in consultation with the C4 team and coordinated with FBI. The city promoted transparency and reduced the impact of repetitive public record requests by hosting a webpage on which all public documents relating to Pulse Nightclub and the shooting were published and regularly updated. Instead of responding to individual requests, city staff directed inquiries to the website. The website also specified information that would not be released, usually for privacy or law enforcement reasons. A dedicated police official reviewed all law enforcement records before they were posted. The city also sought clarification from a court about the ability to release 911 calls and transcripts. The city released this information within one week of receiving a court order that clarified which calls and transcripts needed to be redacted to protect victims' personal information.



The website is still available for viewing. See, "Pulse Tragedy Public Records" at https://www.orlando.gov/Our-Government/Departments-Offices/Executive-Offices/City-Clerk/Pulse-Tragedy-Public-Records.

Establish a Victims' Fund

This topic is covered in the preparedness section above and, in greater depth, in Chapter 5 on Donations and Volunteer Management. However, it is worth noting here that your counsel should be involved in the establishment of the victims' fund. Once the city establishes a fund (using a pre-existing 501(c)(3) entity or in collaboration with another organization such as the National Compassion Fund), the best practice is to combine all victims' funds into one. This will help prevent fraud and ensure transparent and equitable distributions to the victims and their families. If other funds were established, your counsel can assist by contacting competing funds (ideally, within a week) to urge them to transfer funds they raise to the city's designated fund. Counsel can explain to these operators that they lack both the necessary 501(c)(3) status to accept tax-deductible charitable donations and a process for making the distributions.

Engage the Local Bar Association

Victims and their families will need legal services. You or your legal counsel should contact your local bar association. They can identify qualified attorneys willing to volunteer their time to help victims and family members handle the probate, immigration, and other legal issues triggered by the shooting. They can even find mediators to help resolve intrafamily disagreements that can arise.



Recovery

Litigation and Trial Considerations

Depending on circumstances unique to the shooting and to the city's response, lawsuits may be filed by victims, media outlets, or advocacy groups against the city, the venue, the police department, or you. Additionally, if the shooter is arrested and prosecuted, there could also be legal considerations relating to a trial. For example, an ongoing criminal case could limit what you can say about the attack. Your counsel will advise you on these legal matters and manage the services of outside counsel retained to defend the city.

Key Resources: Legal Summaries of Potential Claims Arising from Mass Shootings

American Bar Association, survey of legal actions and related issues stemming from a mass shooting:
https://www.americanbar.org/groups/tort_trial_insurance_practice/publications/the_brief/2019-20/winter/liability-mass-shootings-are-we-a-turning-point/

Sherman Howard, Insurance Law Coverage of Mass Shootings:
http://shermanhoward.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Mass-Shootings-and-Insurance-Coverage.pdf

Endnotes

[1] Chen v. Cty. of Santa Barbara, 2015 WL 1262150 (C.D. Cal. 2015) (alleging law enforcement "created a dangerous condition" by failing to reasonably investigate the shooter as part of "wellness check" despite being aware of his online postings and violent intentions). https://www.americanbar.org/groups/tort_trial_insurance_practice/publications/the_brief/2019-20/winter/liability-mass-shootings-are-we-a-turning-point/

[2] *E.g.*, Lawsuits were filed in connection with the Oakland ghost ship fire. The city ultimately settled with survivors, https://www.mercurynews.com/2020/11/11/oakland-ends-ghost-ship-fire-lawsuit-paying-victims-33-million-for-deadliest-fire-in-citys-history/ (last visited July 18, 2021).

[3] *E.g.*, Case against city arguing failure to properly train police officer, among other things, properly dismissed, https://www.police1.com/legal/articles/appeals-court-court-was-right-to-dismiss-pulse-nightclub-victims-lawsuit-against-city-police-D7sKXU2LK7wunByK/ (last visited July 18, 2021).

[4] Ass'n Of State And Territorial Health Officials, Emergency Declarations and Authorities Fact Sheet, ASTHO (2011), https://astho.org/Programs/Preparedness/Public-Health-Emergency-Law/Emergency-Authority-and-Immunity-Toolkit/Emergency-Declarations-and-Authorities-Fact-Sheet/ (last visited May 27, 2021).

[5] Congressional Research Service, Stafford Act Assistance and Acts of Terrorism, 2019, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/R44801.pdf.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Establish a C4 team and ask them to engage in "extreme emergency" planning. They should ensure the necessary agreements, protocols, and funding entities are negotiated and in place, and that all governing statutes are identified.
- ☐ Assess need for enhanced liability protection.
- ☐ Understand the limits to regulatory action imposed by state laws.
- ☐ Establish a public records request strategy and, if needed, advocate for a change in state law if records that could cause trauma (such as photos or recordings of the dying or the dead) would need to be released.

Response

- ☐ Consider whether to declare a local or state emergency.
- ☐ Activate mutual aid/interagency agreements to meet additional resource needs.
- ☐ Respond to public record requests; consider posting public records online.
- ☐ Engage the local bar association to provide volunteer services for victims.

Recovery

- ☐ Work with city legal counsel and C4 team to manage litigation and trial issues.

Chapter 9: Commemorations

"People need to grieve."
– Mayor William Peduto, Pittsburgh PA

Chapter Summary

After a public mass shooting, community members will want to gather for many reasons: to show support for victims and families, thank first responders, process their grief and anger, and demand change. These feelings can be especially raw in the immediate aftermath and may linger for years beyond the tragedy.

Mayors told us that nothing will **prepare** you for the grief caused by a public mass shooting. The best you can do is include the hosting of a vigil in your preparedness planning so that you and other city agencies know what to expect. Meet with mental health experts for guidance on how to promote community healing (see Chapter 10 on Mental Health). Strengthen relationships with faith groups and other community partners who can help you quickly organize a vigil should the need arise (see Chapter 7 on Community Partnerships).

During the **response**, community gatherings often begin with impromptu memorials and vigils shortly after the shooting occurs. Your staff or community partners may host a vigil within a few days of the shooting. Here, your compassion and connection to the community will guide your planning. Note that police security may be required for large gatherings, which could delay when the first vigil can be scheduled.

During the **recovery** phase, as the community takes stock of the loss, other events—benefit concerts, community meetings, religious gatherings, political assemblies, and other forms of remembrance—will be planned. Mayors and their staffs say that one-year remembrances are particularly difficult because some members of the community have returned to a sense of normalcy while others are still very much traumatized by the shooting. Thus, it is important to consult with mental health experts and the families of the victims when planning or participating in these events.

Mayors offered the following advice for these gatherings: (1) take steps to avoid politicizing the shooting at remembrances, as it can retraumatize the families, (2) consider scheduling a variety of events that offer different avenues for people to grieve (including by staying home if that is what they need), and (3) speak from your heart.

Preparedness

No amount of preparation can diminish the grief you will experience and witness after a public mass shooting. The best you can do is include the hosting of a vigil in your preparedness planning so that you and other city agencies know what to expect. Consider potential venues for vigils and other commemorations and develop protocols for managing in-kind donations. Learn about messaging to traumatized communities. Finally, meet with faith groups, mental health experts, and other partners who can offer their guidance on how to promote community healing.

Response

Vigils

Vigils—perhaps organized by the city, the business community, local organizations, or faith groups—happen spontaneously shortly after the shooting. Whether or not the city hosts the vigil, the city may need to provide police security and designate the event's location. Issues to consider for planning a vigil are those you would address for any large public gathering: traffic control, security needs, crowd control, parking, issuing the necessary permits for use of public spaces, among others.

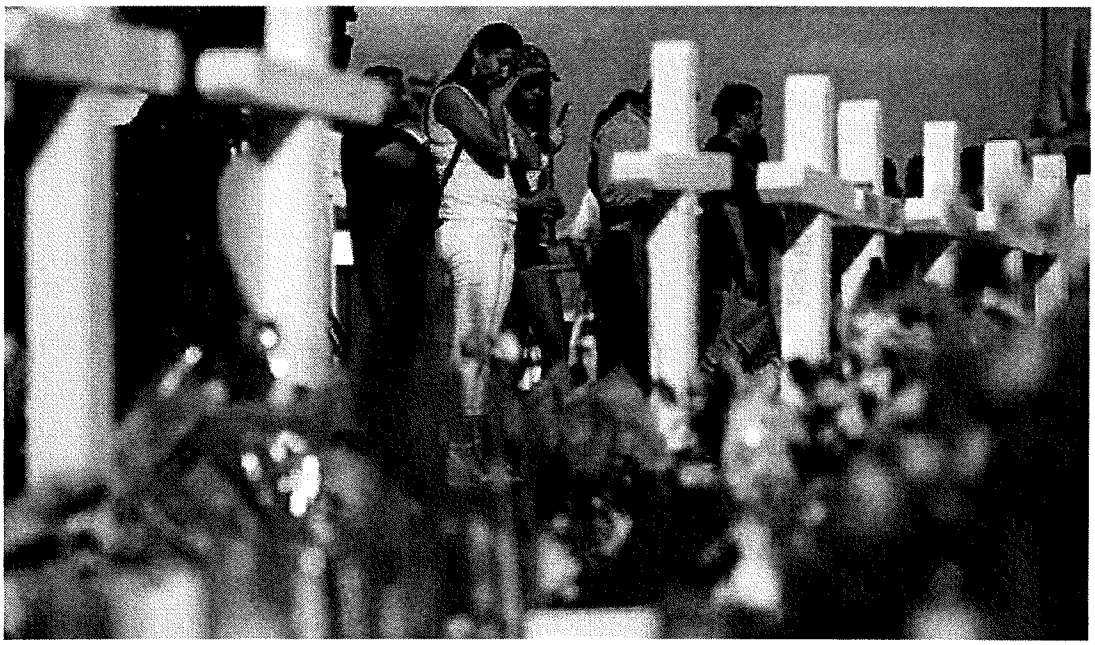


Image 10: *Vigil and memorial following the Walmart shooting in El Paso (Ruperto Miller).*

If the city is involved in organizing a vigil, consider whether any elected officials (including yourself) should be authorized to speak at the event. At one event, one mayor decided to prevent elected officials from speaking to avoid politicizing the tragedy. Other mayors have addressed this concern by advising elected officials and dignitaries to deliver a coordinated message of healing and unity.

When planning a vigil, seek input from the victims and families (through the victim advocates) and from mental health experts. If the shooting targeted an ethnic or religious community, consult with leaders from that community for help crafting culturally appropriate messages of loss and to understand appropriate dress and customary practices. Determine whether interpreting services are needed at the vigil.

Timing may be an important consideration. Although the community will want to have a vigil as soon as possible, law enforcement officials may still be working overtime on the investigation. The vigil may need to be delayed until sufficient police staffing is available to provide for adequate security.

Mayors in Action: The First Vigils

Faith communities organized a vigil the afternoon after the mass shooting in Dayton. A candlelight vigil was held that evening, organized by the "Downtown Dayton" business community group and several City Commissioners. The Mayor said she asked the Commissioners for help planning the vigil so that they could demonstrate their concern for the victims and their families in a concrete way. Their support in this way also allowed the Mayor to concentrate on other aspects of the response. These vigils allowed the community to come together to safely "reclaim" the Oregon District, where the shooting took place. The Dayton Police provided security for the candlelight vigil in the business district.



In Orlando, city staff coordinated with faith leaders and organizations that serve the LGBTQ+ community to host an interfaith vigil. Because the event was declared a terrorist attack after the shooter swore allegiance to the Islamic State, Mayor Dyer felt it necessary to invite a respected Imam to speak out against the attack in order to prevent retaliation against the local Muslim community. At the vigil, Imam Muhammad Musri declared the support of the Muslim community for the victims of the tragedy, and condemned the ideology of hate and death expressed by the shooter.[1]

Funerals

All the mayors we interviewed told us they attended as many funerals as they could. In some cases, they were invited to speak. Familiarize yourself with any faith and cultural traditions that may be part of the funerals you attend. In some cases, state and community-based partners may offer to pay for funerals. Your office can ensure that victims' families are connected with these resources.

Security may also be needed at funerals, especially if the shooting was a hate crime and the affected community is gathering at a large funeral or memorial service. One mayor mentioned that police also provided security for family members' homes while they were at funerals to protect against potential theft while they were away from their homes. These security needs must be balanced with ongoing demands for law enforcement personnel at the scene, at the family reunification center, and at vigils or other events.

Victims' home addresses may need to be sealed by the county's property assessor as soon as names are released in order to protect victims' privacy and prevent people from going to the homes of victims and family members during the funerals.

Recovery

First Annual Remembrance Event & Commemorations

Mayors and their staff told us that the one-year mark is one of the most difficult times in the recovery from the shooting. Right after the shooting, you will be working around the clock to attend to the urgent demands of the response, and you may sense that the community is united in its shared feelings of grief and loss. A year later, those feelings may have changed. The community may become divided over issues such as pending litigation, a criminal trial for the shooter, payouts from funds and foundations, and political views. The first annual remembrance event is therefore both a terrible reminder of an event that is still raw for many, as well as a time to heal for others.

Many mayors told us their city took the lead in planning that first remembrance event (or series of events). They called it a "remembrance" rather than an "anniversary" because the latter is a word with happy connotations. Some families wanted to participate in planning and tell their stories, while others did not. The mayors recommend consulting with victims' advocates and mental health professionals.

It is important to prevent the event from becoming politicized to avoid re-traumatizing family members and the community. That may involve requiring elected officials to use messaging focused on healing or not inviting elected officials to speak.

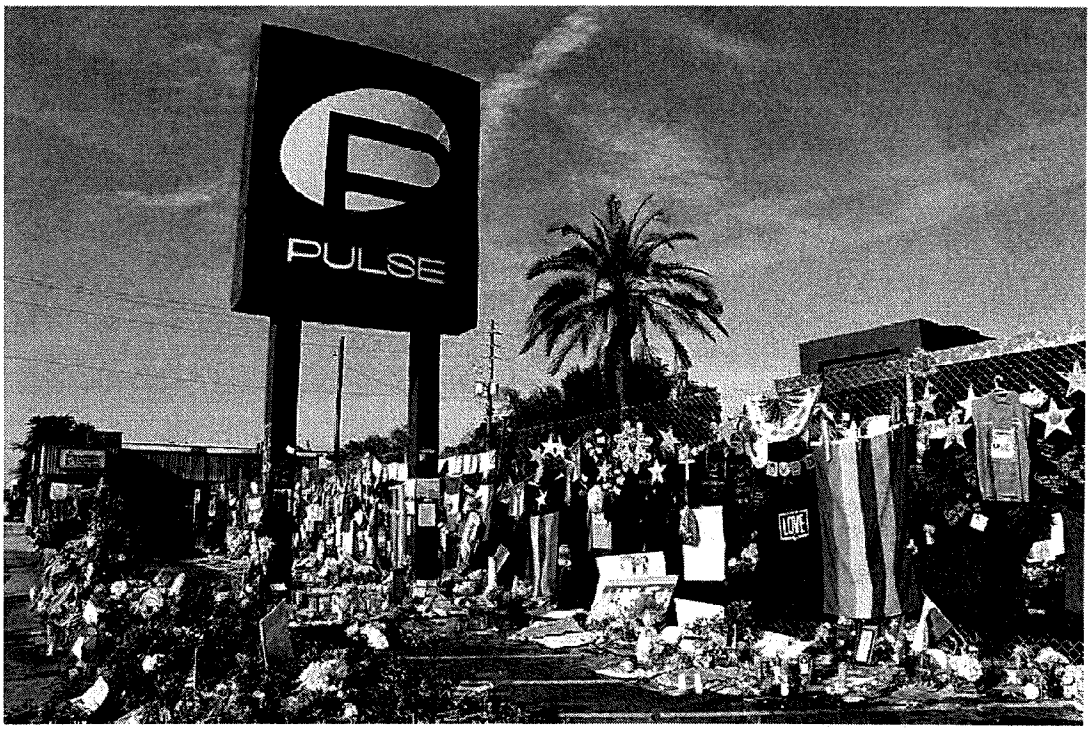


Image 11: *Location of the Pulse Nightclub Shooting in Orlando (WalterPro).*

The City of Orlando worked with Orange County and the onePULSE Foundation to host Orlando United Day on June 12, 2017, one year after the shooting. Buildings throughout Orlando and central Florida were lit in rainbow colors. Events were also hosted by the University of Central Florida and other colleges. Community members were invited to Lake Eola Park Amphitheater for an evening of prayer, live music, inspirational dance, and a moment of reflection for the victims. There were tens of thousands of attendees. The City was involved in planning and provided the security for the Lake Eola event.

The Covid-19 pandemic made it difficult to organize vigils and remembrance events. In 2020, remembrance events in Dayton and El Paso had to be virtual. Dayton Mayor Whaley told us that a "virtual event is not the same, people need to come together." Nevertheless, the city found ways to engage mourners. #DaytonShines events included physical activities, such as a memorial tree placed in the Oregon District on which notes of remembrance could be placed along with seed packets, and an online event that featured a photo mosaic and nine minutes of silence.

See Chapter 6 on schools for a description of Parkland's first annual remembrance events, which included activities for students and the broader community.

Key Resources: Resources for Helping Victims and Planning Vigils

Office for Victims of Crime, Helping Victims of Mass Violence & Terrorism, Recovery Phase: Office for Victims of Crime Training & Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC), Planning How to Cope with Commemorations, Special Events, and Timeframes that Activate Trauma Memories
https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/pubs/mvt-toolkit/recovery.html

Permanent Memorials

Permanent memorials honor the victims and testify to the community's united response. When planning a memorial:

- Engage victims and families, community partners, and local businesses. Consider forming an independent board or commission with stakeholders that are committed to advancing a shared vision.
- Consult with mental health partners.
- Recognize that the process will take time.

[1]Karni A. Biden signs bill creating National Pulse Memorial and commemorates Pride Month. The New York Times. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/06/25/us/politics/biden-national-pulse-memorial.html. Published June 25, 2021. Accessed July 7, 2021.

Memorials may take years of planning due to the need to find an appropriate site, address the wishes of the families (some express a desire not to be reminded daily of their loss), and coordinate partners that can realize the community's vision (such as architects and donors). In San Bernardino, for instance, the groundbreaking ceremony for a memorial honoring the victims took place five years after the tragedy, with construction scheduled to be competed in summer of 2021. Likewise, President Biden signed legislation creating a permanent memorial and reflecting pool at the site of the Pulse shooting in 2021, five years after the shooting.[1]

In Newtown, Connecticut, planning has taken even longer, with voters approving a referendum to construct a memorial pond nearly a decade after the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School in 2012.[2] According to press reports, the memorial will be completed in December 2021.[3]

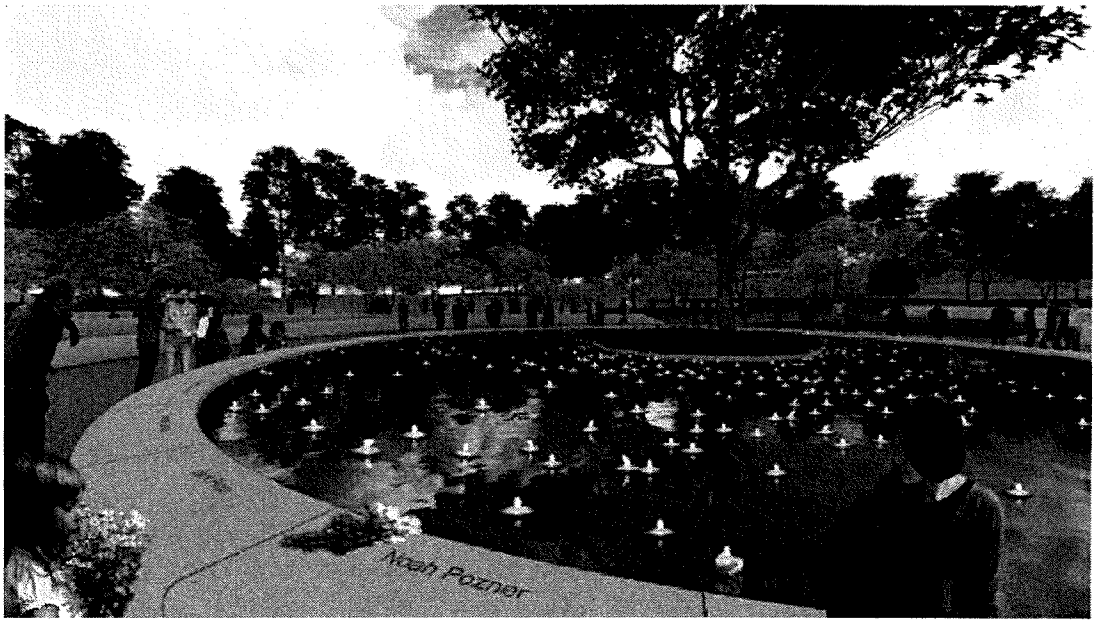


Image 12: *Rendering of the Sandy Hook Permanent Memorial reflecting pool (Courtesy of SWA San Francisco).*

Archival Considerations

Documenting and archiving items left at the scene—the spontaneous memorials created by the community—or donated after the shooting is a monumental task. These items may include flowers, candles, notes, teddy bears, art, and items of personal significance and sentimental value. In Orlando, this massive effort involved a large number of staff working against the clock to prevent items from being soaked by rain.

Deciding when and how to preserve these items can be a challenge. One approach is to partner with a local museum or historical society to properly archive them. One mayor recommended informing the public about these preservation efforts to prevent confusion when they are removed from the site. Consider reaching out to other cities who have endured a public mass shooting to make connections with staff that have expertise in this area.

For example, Pamela Schwartz of the Orange County History Center in Florida has developed best practices for museums and historical centers to curate and display art and artifacts from impromptu memorials assembled after a public mass shooting.[4] She has reached out to historians in other cities to offer archival guidance after public mass shootings.

Depending on the volume of items received, you may need to get creative. Newtown, CT received 65,000 teddy bears after the Sandy Hook Elementary school shooting and thousands of letters, Origami paper cranes, and other items. Storage capacity and staff were overwhelmed. Stuffed animals had to be diverted to recipients such as children's hospitals and orphanages across the country.[5] First Selectman Patricia Llodra suggested "cremating" letters and other items for use as "sacred soil" for a permanent memorial—staff simply could not read all of the letters received from around the world.

It may not be possible, or even desirable, to save every item: Newtown converted many of the tons of teddy bears, letters, and ephemera that were donated into bricks that could be used when a permanent memorial was built.[6]

Key Resources: Permanent Memorials and Archiving

Los Angeles Times, Archiving grief: Museums learn to preserve memorials left at mass shootings: https://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-museums-mass-shootings-20180225-story.html

Lisa M. Moore, (Re)Covering the Past, Remembering Trauma: The Politics of Commemoration at Sites of Atrocity: https://jpia.princeton.edu/sites/jpia/files/2009-3.pdf

Judy Barsalou and Victoria Baxter, The Urge to Remember: The Role of Memorials in Social Reconstruction and Transitional Justice: https:/www.usip.org/sites/default/files/resources/srs5.pdf

Oklahoma City Memorial Museum: https://memorialmuseum.com/

9/11 Memorial Museum: https://www.911memorial.org/

National Mass Violence and Victimization Resource Center, best practices: https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/cf2f54yj/tipsheet15.pdf

Endnotes

[1] BBC News, *Orlando Shooting: Vigils Held Around World to Honour Victims* (June 2016), *available at* https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-36524095.

[2] Elizabeth Williamson, *A Search for Remembrance After the Sandy Hook Massacre*, The New York Times, May 1, 2021, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/01/us/politics/newtown-sandy-hook-elementary.html (last visited May 4, 2021).

[3] Amanda Blanco, *After Years of Planning, 'The Clearing' is a Memorial That Will Honor the 26 Victims Who Died at Sandy Hook Elementary School*, The Courant (December 2012), *available at* https://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-news-connecticut-sh-memorial-20191214-gxfbdkbbyza6xbh7iammnpxbfu-story.html.

[4] Matthew Peddie, *Intersection: Pulse Memorial Plans; Gun Safety Activism; Curating Pulse Items; Former Pro Surfer CJ Hobgood*, National Public Radio (June 2019), *available at* https://www.wmfe.org/intersection-pulse-memorial-plans-gun-safety-activism-curating-pulse-items-former-pro-surfer-cj-hobgood/115908.

[5] Paul Kix, *65,000 Teddy Bears for Newtown, and One Man to Sort the World's Grief*, The Trace (December, 2015), *available at* https://www.thetrace.org/2015/12/sandy-hook-shooting-donations/.

[6] WCVB, *Newtown Finds a Way to Dispose of Victim Mementos* (December, 2012), *available at* https://www.wcvb.com/article/newtown-finds-a-way-to-dispose-of-victim-mementos/8176565.

COMMEMORATIONS CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Include commemorations in any emergency management planning or victim assistance planning for a public mass shooting.
- ☐ Develop protocols for donations management.
- ☐ Learn about how communities heal from trauma.

Response

- ☐ Activate partners to begin documenting and cataloguing items left at the scene.
- ☐ Activate partners for help planning a vigil and other events.
- ☐ Cultivate partnerships that are lacking as you move to recovery phase.

Recovery

- ☐ Attend funerals when invited, plan security for the families of the victims.
- ☐ Consult families when planning for vigils, the one-year remembrance, and any permanent memorial.
- ☐ Make staff available to assist with archival and documentation needs or revise protocols for use with community partners and volunteers.

Chapter 10:
Mental Health

"When something like this happens, people feel vulnerable. They feel unsafe. They worry, their children worry, grandparents worry, and it has a mass effect. We can't send in equipment to help fix that. We can just give our support."
– Mayor William Peduto, Pittsburgh PA

Chapter Summary

The invisible impact of a mass shooting is the widespread trauma it causes, starting with survivors, their families, and first responders, extending to you and your staff, and deep into the community. As one mayor said, every person who was in the city on the day of the shooting will be affected in some way. And evidence shows that those watching media coverage from afar are also emotionally affected. Perhaps your most important role, after being the "communicator-in-chief," is to ensure mental health resources are available to the community in the days, months, and years that follow.

In the **preparedness** phase, consider mental health in every aspect of emergency planning, including victim and family assistance, training, and communications. This is your chance to identify mental health resources of both local and national organizations for the response and recovery phase. All the protocols you develop, such as those for victim and family assistance, should include input from mental health and behavioral health service providers. Consider establishing a Community Crisis Response Team that can be mobilized in response to a shooting. You may request an assessment of the school district's mental health resources for students.

During the **response**, move quickly to establish mental health services for the victims and family members, and also the broader community and first responders. Shape your messaging in consultation with mental health experts. Representatives from the American Red Cross, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), and the FBI Victim Services Division can help you identify community-based mental health resources and share their own considerable expertise.

Finally, your focus during the **recovery** phase should be to ensure that the long-term mental health needs of the victims and the wider community are met. This may involve establishing a Resiliency Center. In addition, urge first responders, your staff, and others directly affected by the shooting to seek help (including yourself).

Preparedness

Consult Mental Health Experts in Preparedness Efforts

Mayors told us their planning did not focus on the recovery phase, and some lacked preexisting relationships with mental health experts and victims' services organizations. To aide your planning, identify and cultivate relationships with these experts now. Invite them to your tabletop exercise and discuss the mental health services that will need to be offered at the Family Reunification Center (aka Family Reception Center) (FRC) and Family Assistance Center (FAC). See Chapter 3 for additional information and resources (*e.g.*, the OVCTTAC Mass Violence Toolkit).

Understand the Traumatic Impact of a Mass Shooting

As part of your planning, learn about the traumatic impact of a mass shooting on different populations. The exposure levels below, adapted from The Wiley Handbook of The Psychology of Mass Shootings, illustrate how widespread the traumatic impact can be:

- Survivors (extreme exposure): witnessed shooting, saw others injured or killed or wounded, maybe was wounded but survived.
- Indirectly exposed: physically present at location, heard gunfire, etc.
- Others who are members of the community that was targeted but did not witness the shooting firsthand.
- Bereaved family members who lost someone in the shooting.
- Law enforcement and first responders.
- Journalists covering the issue (they can experience both acute stress and long-term occupational health impacts).
- Broader public (exposed via media coverage or knowing victims and their families).
- Yourself and your staff.

Community Crisis Response Team

Consider establishing a Community Crisis Response Team. The CCRT model involves inviting a variety of community partners to form a crisis response team that can be mobilized after a mass shooting. The CCRT's role is to analyze a request, identify gaps in resources, design and implement a culturally appropriate response, and evaluate the response that was delivered. The CCRT can also assist in the response to natural disasters and everyday mental health crises in your communities.

The following professional affiliations are represented on most CCRTs:

- Law enforcement representative
- Psychologist or psychiatrist

- Victim service professional
- Member of the clergy
- Member of a medical profession
- Child counselor or teacher
- Representatives of grassroots organizations serving diverse sectors of the community
- Person experienced with media relations

Consider who else might be included in your community. For instance, artists and art organizations often volunteer to help affected community members give expression to pain, outrage and a search for justice and healing.

Key Resources: Community Crisis Response

National Organization for Victim Assistance, Crisis Response Team Training: Ideally, all members of the Community Crisis Response Team should be trained in trauma mitigation, psychological first aid, and education protocols so that they are prepared to deliver or coordinate the delivery of these services if a public mass shooting occurs. https://www.trynova.org/crisis-response-program/crtregistration/



National Organization for Victim Assistance and Office for Victims of Crime, Community Crisis Response Training Manual: The current version used in the above training is the fourth edition, which can be ordered ($85 per copy) from NOVA (the hyperlink is to the second edition which remains available free of charge). This training manual is for individuals and organizations interested in responding to crisis, providing an overview of trauma responses, crisis intervention techniques, media management techniques, and discussion of organizational roles in crisis preparedness, response, and recovery. https://www.ncjrs.gov/ovc_archives/reports/crt/welcome.html

Student Mental Health Services

Consider requesting a report that assesses the school district's mental health system. There are many tools available to help with this assessment. Ask school leaders and mental health experts for their recommendations on ways the city can support their efforts to provide needed mental health services.

Also, encourage school officials to consult with the American Red Cross as part of their security planning to understand the mental health resources the ARC can provide in the event of a school shooting. For more information and resources, see Chapter 6 on school shootings.

Response

Ensure Mental Health Services are Available

Quickly establish the FAC to provide for the immediate mental health needs of victims and family. You may also need to consult mental health experts to ensure that a range of mental health services are made available to meet the needs of the broader community. Your planning should include community-based services for people who face barriers to seeking mental health services, such as childcare obligations, limited time off from work, stigma, language barriers, or unemployment. For more information, see Chapter 3 on Victims and Families.

Crisis Communications Informed by Mental Health Experts

To inform your messaging during the response phase, familiarize yourself with the crisis communications resources provided by the CDC and consult with mental health experts. The CERC manual is a useful tool. For more information on crisis communications and resources, see Chapter 1 on Communications.

Promptly and consistently announce the location and services of the Family Reunification Center—and later the Family Assistance Center (FAC)—so that victims and family members know where to go for mental health support and care. Clearly communicate who is eligible to receive services at the FAC, which may only serve those who are directly impacted by the tragedy. Offering mental health services as quickly as possible in a central location will ease the burden of seeking care for families when they are at their most vulnerable psychologically.

Share information about mental health resources available to the broader community and encourage people to seek help if they need it and to lend a hand where they can. You can let everyone know "it's okay to not be okay." Community members should know that their initial reactions and feelings (whatever they are) are a predictable response to a shocking and disruptive tragedy. This message is not only important for the public, but also for first responders and your own staff and colleagues.

Familiarize yourself with concepts from psychological first aid (PFA) resources so that you can include them in your crisis communications during the response phase.

Psychological First Aid

Psychological first aid (PFA) is a counseling technique developed by the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (NC-PTSD). According to the NC-PTSD, PFA is an evidence-informed approach that first responders and others can use to assist people in the immediate aftermath of a traumatic event to reduce initial distress, foster adaptive functioning, and prevent later post-traumatic stress. PFA includes non-intrusive care and assessment of needs (like medical triage). It does *not* include discussion of the underlying traumatic event like traditional therapy.

The American Red Cross and other partners can help your staff identify local organizations that can appropriately serve the psychological needs of the victims, family members, witnesses, and first responders.

Key Resource: NC-PTSD Psychological First Aid (PFA) Manual

NC-PTSD Psychological First Aid (PFA) Manual:
https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/treat/type/psych_firstaid_manual.asp

Recovery

Communications: Shifting from Response to Recovery

Your messaging will gradually shift from a "response" to a "recovery" frame. As you begin to develop recovery messages, consult with mental health experts to understand how to avoid exacerbating or resurfacing trauma for the community. For example, in Dayton, Mayor Whaley consulted with a countywide mental health services network with whom she had previously partnered to understand how to effectively communicate about the opioid crisis.

Continue to share information about mental health resources available to victims, families, and the broader community. Your communications may also include messages to bolster long-term community resilience and restore hope. Your messages will depend on the situation, but common themes to promote resiliency include unity ("OneOrlando"), strength (Pittsburgh's "Stronger than Hate"), and healing ("Dayton Shines"). Note, however, that the well-intentioned hashtags and messages that organically arise in the wake of a shooting can be emotionally



Image 13: *"Hate and terror will never divide us" poster at Christchurch mosque shooting memorial (Nateculi).*

harmful to those who were most directly impacted. Some victims and families have shared negative reactions to some of these themes due to the impossibility of feeling strong in the face of unspeakable loss.

Vigils, remembrances, and memorials are important tools for helping your community grieve and increase their psychological wellbeing. Plan these events in consultation with mental health experts in addition to victims and their families. For more information about planning these events, see Chapter 6 on Commemorations.

Provide Services to Address Ongoing Trauma

Mental health services may be needed for months, and even years, following a public mass shooting. The role of a Resiliency Center (RC) is to provide these services to the survivors and their families. Ideally, the RC should also provide referrals to mental health services for the broader community. For more information on establishing a RC, see Chapter 3 on Victims and Families. For information on funding an RC, see Appendix C on Funding Opportunities.

Include Information on Mental and Behavioral Health in After Action Reports

Information on mental health, behavioral health, and victim services is rarely included in after action reports, but could benefit victim service agencies and community organizations. Feedback from victim service providers, victims and families themselves, and first responders that receive mental health and behavioral health services, should be included in after action Reports. For more best practices and a useful template, see the key resource below.

Key Resource: After Action Report Recommendations and Templates

National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center, Victim-Centric Mass Violence Incident After Action Report: Recommendations and Template:
https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/obkbblid/victimcentricmviaarrecommendationsandtemplate-final-07-14.pdf

First Responders' Mental Health

First responders often experience trauma and post-traumatic stress syndrome following a mass shooting. Yet, Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl told us there are inadequate mental health resources for police officers and first responders. You can work in partnership with your Police Chief to ensure first responders in your city receive the mental health support they need and deserve. As noted above, first responders are eligible for services that are funded by AEAP (see Appendix C).

Similarly, in the event of a serious injury of death of an officer, there are concrete actions you can take to ensure that the officer is recognized for his or her heroism. Beyond advocating on behalf of the officer's family for the services and benefits they will need, you could also use an existing 501(c)(3) organization to receive public donations intended for the officer's family. See Chapter 5 for more information on donations and fund management.

Key Resources: Mental Health Services and Benefits for First Responders

COPS Office resource center, Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Programs: Eleven Case Studies: The COPS Office publishes materials for law enforcement and community stakeholders to address crime and disorder challenges. This link features a book entitled Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Programs: Eleven Case Studies, which describes agencies' programs that protect the mental and emotional health of law enforcement officers, their nonsworn colleagues, and families.
https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ric.php?page=detail&id=COPS-P371

Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness Act—Funding opportunities available through the COPS office:
https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/ric.php?page=detail&id=COPS-P371

National Alliance on Mental Illness, Preparing for the Unimaginable: Report describing actions to take within police departments to safeguard officers' mental health, promote resilience, and prevent secondary trauma.
https://www.nami.org/Support-Education/Publications-Reports/Public-Policy-Reports/Preparing-for-the-Unimaginable/Preparing-For-The-Unimaginable

Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program (PSOB): PSOB provides death and educational benefits to the survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other first responders, and disability benefits to officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty.
https://psob.bja.ojp.gov/

Community Conflict

Be aware of the "dark side of solidarity," when people feel pressured to participate in shared mourning or collective expressions of unity that may not reflect their own emotional reactions. Although community solidarity provides an opportunity to increase psychological wellbeing or buffer against mental health symptoms, it may also be undermined by differing views about the "readiness to move on." Conflict can arise within community groups and in affected workplaces, as people experience grief in different ways, or as the shooting becomes politicized.

As Mayor, you can try to balance these tensions by providing high levels of support and assistance in the immediate aftermath (generally, the first six months), being a source of credible and accurate information, and being attentive to the differing needs of various groups as they attempt to "find meaning" of the event.

In the aftermath of a "public mass shooting" (the focus of this Playbook), communities that deal with daily "urban gun violence" (including gang- and drug-related shooting involving multiple victims) are understandably upset that so much more attention and funding is paid to this type of shooting. Please see the afterword, "A Note on Urban Gun Violence" for guidance on how to address this issue in your community.

Taking Care of Yourself and Your Staff

Mayors and their staff report that adrenaline carried them through a week or so of the response, as the stress of hosting VIP visits, attending funerals, speaking to the national media, and managing city agencies prevented them from processing their own emotional reactions to the public mass shooting. Then many experienced a "crash" once safety was established. Grief haunted them for years after the event.

You and your staff will be affected for months or years, just like other members of the community. You need to engage in self-care and encourage others to do so. Mayors spoke of their own coping strategies and emphasized the importance of modeling self-care to other members of the community. For example, El Paso Mayor Dee Margo spoke of taking time for prayer while he was traveling from Austin back to El Paso on the day of the shooting. Other mayors spoke publicly about receiving therapy, thereby modeling self-care for their staff and the community.

Mayors also described their conversations with other mayors as "therapeutic" and emphasized the importance of reaching out to their social support systems.

Encourage your staff to seek help as well. In the immediate aftermath, look around and notice which staff members are struggling and need to take time away from the response. Encourage staff to take time off to recover. Ensure there are systems in place to document and meet employees' needs. Some actions mayors have taken to help their staff include:

- Group therapy sessions
- Providing time off work
- Reassigning them from their response or recovery work
- Checking in personally to see if they need anything you can provide

Endnotes

[1] The Wiley Handbook Of The Psychology Of Mass Shootings, (Laura C. Wilson ed., 1st edition ed. 2016).

[2] The difference between CCRT and CERT: The focus of a local Community Crisis Response Team (CCRT) team is trauma mitigation, mental health recovery, and community resilience. The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is a national program that educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. CERT offers a consistent, nationwide approach to volunteer training and management that professional first responders can rely on during disaster situations, allowing them to focus on more complex tasks. See https://www.ready.gov/cert. Your community may establish both to offer opportunities for residents to serve their community and to leverage their expertise and manpower.

[3] Mary R. Harvey, Anne V. Mondesir & Holly Aldrich, *Fostering Resilience in Traumatized Communities*, 14 J Of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma 265–285 (2007).

[4] *See e.g.*, School Health Assessment And Performance Evaluation System, *available at* https://www.theshapesystem.com/ (last visited June 10, 2021).

[5] Ctrs For Disease Control And Prevention, Cerc Manual, 2018, https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/manual/index.asp.

[6] Amy Novotney, *What happens to the survivors?*, 49 Monitor On Psychology, 2018, at 36.

[7] *Id.*

[8] *Id.*

[9] *Id.*

[10] Stephen A. Scaffidi, Six Minutes In August: A Story Of Tragedy, Healing And Community 155 (2015).

MENTAL HEALTH CHECKLIST

Preparedness

- ☐ Identify mental health resources. Include mental health experts in your preparedness planning and exercises and ensure they have the proper training for crisis response, which is different from "everyday" talk therapy.
- ☐ Consider establishing a Community Crisis Response Team.
- ☐ Request an assessment of the school district's mental health resources.

Response

- ☐ Ask the American Red Cross and other partners for help identifying mental health resources; work with them to establish the Family Assistance Center.
- ☐ Establish access to mental health services for the broader community.
- ☐ Seek the guidance of victim's assistance and mental health experts to develop trauma-informed messaging.
- ☐ Encourage school districts to accept help from outside resources.
- ☐ Understand Psychological First Aid (PFA) basics.

Recovery

- ☐ Focus your messaging on encouraging people to seek help if they need it, bolstering long-term community resilience, and restoring hope.
- ☐ Establish a long-term Resiliency Center to provide mental health services.
- ☐ Ensure mental health services are available for first responders.
- ☐ Take care of yourself and your staff.

Afterword & Appendices





Afterword:
A Note About Community Gun Violence

This Playbook focuses on shooting rampages in public places resulting in four or more victims killed by the assailant because of the extraordinary challenges these extreme emergencies pose to mayors. While horrifying, this type of mass shooting is exceedingly rare, averaging about six per year since 2006. Only three mass shootings met this definition in 2020, largely as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic that forced closure of schools, restaurants, and other public venues. However, over the first five months of 2021, as the nation moved toward a more normal way of life, there have already been five public mass killings.

The Associated Press/USA Today/Northeastern University database takes a broader approach, defining a "mass shooting" as any incident in which at least four people are killed by gunfire. Using this definition, there were 21 mass shootings in 2020. Most of this community gun violence occurs in U.S. cities, often in specific areas within neighborhoods. The perpetrators are usually young men and are often gun violence victims themselves. Their crimes upend promising lives, often of young people, and create a ripple effect of collective trauma in otherwise vibrant Black and Hispanic communities.

There are, of course, hundreds of large-scale shootings in the U.S. every year in which, fortunately, most of the victims survive their gunshot wounds. According to an alternative definition of a mass shooting used by the Gun Violence Archive, there were more than 600 cases in 2020. Although half of these incidents resulted in no fatalities and another quarter involved but one death, surviving victims still endure painful and debilitating injuries. Like the deadly mass shootings discussed above, this form of mass violence frequently occurs in city neighborhoods with high concentrations of racial and ethnic minorities.

This Playbook does not address the everyday toll of community gun violence because the root causes (including poverty,[1] racism, underresourced schools, and ineffective public safety strategies and social services) differ from the root causes of the indiscriminate rampages committed by active shooters (often motivated by a perceived grievance, hate, or terrorist ideology).[2] There is no known way to prevent the latter attacks; therefore, mayors need to prepare for them.

In contrast, research has shown that community gun violence *can* be reduced by (a) implementing programs that focus on known perpetrators (*e.g.*, violence interrupter programs), (b) making improvements in gun tracing, (c) providing needed social services (*e.g.*, through hospital-based interventions), as well as (d) building community-based support for at-risk youth (including after-school programs). These evidence-informed programs have proved effective across the nation regardless of socioeconomic neighborhood contexts. Partner with your police chief and leaders of the affected communities to plan and implement intervention programs (and improve existing programs) that are appropriate for your community. More needs to be done to combat community gun violence with the urgency and funding that the issue requires.

---

[1] Note that some communities of high poverty have low crime rates. These communities demonstrate what criminal justice researchers describe as "community collective efficacy," which is characterized by social cohesion, shared identities and social norms, and a willingness to take action to defend norms particularly when the interests of vulnerable populations are at stake.

[2] We use the term "public mass shooting" or the shortened "mass shooting" to refer to these crimes.

At the same time, many of the recommendations in this Playbook *do* apply to community gun violence. For starters, you should publicly acknowledge when instances of community gun violence rise to the level of a "mass shooting" (with a large number of victims even if fewer deaths than the usual threshold) and use that term when speaking about the violence. New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio learned this lesson after he was criticized for waiting more than three days to acknowledge that a Brownsville shooting in 2019 that left one dead and another 11 injured was, in fact, a mass shooting. He later announced $9 million in funding for programs to help the affected community.

The trauma described in this Playbook is, of course, experienced by the victims of community gun violence and their families. Yet when a shooting kills multiple partygoers or people on the street in an city neighborhood, there is scant press coverage, no POTUS visit or attention from elected officials, and no victims' fund or Family Assistance Center established in response. This disparity is not lost on the affected communities, and local advocates frequently note that the families and victims affected by community gun violence deserve the same attention and resources they would if the shooting occurred at a festival, a theater, or a school in an affluent neighborhood.

Drawing on the recommendations elsewhere in this Playbook, you can:

- Schedule a press conference to inform the public of law enforcement actions taken in response to the shooting.
- Your trauma-informed messaging can promptly identify the victims, convey messages of unity and healing, highlight local mental health resources, and announce services available to families and victims.
- Describe violence intervention programs that you have established—or plan to implement—to reduce community gun violence. (The federal government has made additional funding available for this type of program.)
- Reach out to the families to comfort them and ensure their needs are met. Coordinate with your Police Chief and/or prosecutor's office to ensure they connect families to victims' advocates and state victim compensation programs.
- Meet with affected community leaders and local partners to listen to their concerns. Determine what else your office can do to address the challenges experienced by the affected community.
- Be innovative: Is there is a Resiliency Center already established in your community? If so, could the victims and families of other forms of gun violence access its concierge services? If not, could you establish one for them? It could serve as an on-demand resource should the *other* kind of mass shooting take place in your community. Cities such as Washington D.C. and San Francisco are taking this approach to adapt infrastructure developed for victims of mass violence to support victims of urban gun violence.
- There are approximately forty Family Justice Centers located in the United States and other countries. The concept is to create a family-friendly environment in which a multi-disciplinary team of professionals work together in one, centralized location to provide coordinated services to victims of family violence. Could the services in an existing Family Justice Center in your community be broadened to assist families recovering from the loss of a loved one to gun violence, whether from suicide, domestic violence, or urban gun violence? If your community lacks one of these centers, could you work with community partners to establish one?

Key Resources: Community Gun Violence Prevention

Cities United: supports a national network of mayors who are committed to reducing the epidemic of homicides and shootings among young Black men and boys. https://citiesunited.org

Everytown for Gun Safety: The City Gun Violence Reduction Insight Portal (CityGRIP) is an online clearinghouse of data-informed gun violence reduction strategies, and the Mayors Against Illegal Guns coalition provides a host of resources to member mayors to support local gun violence reduction efforts. https://citygrip.org/

Giffords Law Center: this report summarizes effective intervention strategies to reduce urban gun violence. https://giffords.org/lawcenter/gun-laws/policy-areas/other-laws-policies/intervention-strategies/

Conclusion

Obviously, all victims of gun violence deserve your compassion and support. All the neighborhoods in your city deserve to be safe from gun violence. Fortunately, we know how to reduce community gun violence, and most of the evidence-informed actions must be implemented at the local level. Therefore, mayors like you are in the best position to reduce community gun violence, even as you work to implement the recommendations in this Playbook to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a public mass shooting.

Endnotes

[1] Anthony A. Braga, David M. Hureau & Andrew V. Papachristos, *Deterring Gang-Involved Gun Violence: Measuring the Impact of Boston's Operation Ceasefire on Street Gang Behavior*, 30 J Quant Criminol 113–139 (2014).

[2] City of Chicago, Gun Trace Report 2017, 5(2017), https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/depts/mayor/Press%20Room/Press%20Releases/2017/October/GTR2017.pdf (last visited May 20, 2021).

[3] Carnell Cooper, Dawn M. Eslinger & Paul D. Stolley, *Hospital-based violence intervention programs work*, 61 J Trauma 534–540, 535 (2006).

[4] Sara B. Heller, *Summer jobs reduce violence among disadvantaged youth*, 346 Science 1219–1223, 1219 (2014).

[5] Noah Goldberg, *Mayor calls Brownsville tragedy a "mass shooting" after days of hesitation*, Brooklyn Eagle (2019), https://brooklyneagle.com/articles/2019/07/31/mayor-calls-brownsville-tragedy-a-mass-shooting-after-days-of-hesitation/ (last visited May 26, 2021).

[6] City of New York, *Mayor de Blasio Announces Nearly $9 Million in Funding to Support Brownsville*, City of New York (2019), http://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/381-19/mayor-de-blasio-nearly-9-million-funding-support-brownsville-following-mass (last visited May 20, 2021).



Appendix A:
Training and Preparedness Recommendations

"Training is important. And it shows."

– Former FBI Special Agent in Charge Robert Jones, Pittsburgh PA

Overview

This appendix compiles the trainings, best practices, and resources described elsewhere in this Playbook. It is intended to put them all in one place to help you plan the steps you and your team can take to be prepared to respond to a mass shooting. We suggest that you also review the six Case Briefs as part of your planning, as they provide key takeaways from the six mass shootings we researched.

The mayors we interviewed stressed the need for training. They were unaware of trainings specifically for mayors to prepare them to respond to a mass shooting. Our research revealed that this remains an unmet need. Nevertheless, many mayors had engaged in related trainings or had experience handling other types of emergencies that helped prepare them for responding to a mass shooting. While you will rely on trained professionals in many aspects of the response, there are still things you can do to prepare yourself and support your staff in their continuing education efforts.

Training options you can consider as part of your emergency preparedness include:

- Tabletop exercises focused on responding to a mass shooting.
- Crisis communications training.
- Emergency preparedness training, such as FEMA emergency operations training (see below).
- Observing or participating in active shooter training (including scenarios involving a shooter that targets municipal staff).
- Continuing education is available for every discipline: encourage your staff to participate in trainings that could help them respond to an emergency.

Training typically happens in advance of a crisis, but there are training-related actions you can take during the response and recovery phase. For example, you can consult with mayors who have responded to a public mass shooting at any stage to benefit from their experience. One mayor recommended documenting the decisions you make during the response for use by the response team to help coordinate their efforts (particularly when standing up something as complex as the Family Assistance Center), and for use in the recovery phase by the team that develops the after-action report. This documentation in turn can guide your future trainings and are vital for other communities seeking to better prepare for an evolving threat environment.

Also, during the recovery phase, you can review the after-action report to determine best practices for training your staff to respond to future disasters, whether mass shootings, civil uprisings, terror attacks, or natural disasters. You can share your findings with other mayors. You can also use them when advocating for policy and program changes to address challenges you encountered.

Finally, you can benefit from your experience responding to other emergencies in your community, such as tornados, fires, gas main leaks, police-involved shootings, and civil disobedience. Documenting best practices from those responses can help you plan the response to a mass shooting.

Mayors in Action: Training and Experience That Were Helpful

Mayor Nan Whaley, Dayton OH: "Responding to a natural disaster, in our case a tornado, proved to be good experience for responding to a mass shooting."



Public Safety Director Wendell Hissrich, Pittsburgh PA: "Pittsburgh's public safety personnel received active shooter training. The Mayor's chief of staff attended one to understand what is involved."

Heather Fagan, Chief of Staff to Mayor Buddy Dyer, Orlando FL: "The mayor hosts a tabletop exercise every year. The year before the Pulse shooting, the theme for the tabletop was civil disobedience. That tabletop provided an opportunity for agencies to think through how they would respond to a crisis similar to a mass shooting."

Preparedness Actions and Trainings

Tabletop Exercises

Hosting a tabletop exercise with the appropriate city and county agencies is perhaps the most important thing you can do to prepare yourself and your city for a mass shooting. The tabletop exercise will give you and your team an idea of what to expect and prepare agencies about their role in responding to a public mass shooting.[1]

Best Practice Tip: Organizing a Tabletop Exercise

Whom to include:



- At a minimum, key elected officials, chief of police or county sheriff, legal counsel and "C4" team (see Chapter 8 on Legal Considerations), and department heads responsible for decision-making during an emergency.
- If your city is a commission-manager form of government, include your city manager, city commissioners, and county officials.
- If you are planning a tabletop focused on a school mass shooting, include school officials.

- Always include local public health officials.
- Consider including a representative of the American Red Cross.

Issues to be considered:

- Define roles of elected officials, agencies, county officials, and potential partners (including the FBI and the American Red Cross).
- Develop a communication protocol for press briefings.
- Develop other protocols that will be needed: *e.g.*, social media, family reunification, coroner's protocol for identifying victims in an extreme emergency, victims' fund and distribution, hosting vigils, VIP visits, and managing public records requests.
- Identify key points of contact for each mass shooting scenario.
- Identify potential locations for a Family Reunification Center (it should have a secured perimeter and separate from the press).
- Discuss the services that may be required by victims and families and how the city will provide them.
- Identify potential liability for the city and develop a plan to address.
- Consult chapters in the Playbook for best practices and resources for each of these topics.



The mayors who did engage in tabletop exercises told us they did not plan the recovery phase, which left them unprepared to address community trauma when a shooting took place. Therefore, consider including trauma and mental health experts—including public health officials, victim services providers, and the American Red Cross—in your planning exercises to assist you with appropriate messaging and to help you better understand what victims, family members, first responders, and members of the greater community will need during the recovery phase.

A tabletop exercise will also help you identify mutual aid agreements and protocols you may need (such as protocols for managing the victims' fund, establishing the family reunification and assistance centers, and making timely death notifications). It will help you identify relationships you may need to cultivate or strengthen. Ideally, the exercise will reveal areas where you or your staff could benefit from additional training.

Crisis Communications Training

You will rely on your communications experience when speaking to the public during an emergency. However, if you have limited experience speaking to the national and international press, you may benefit from media training. The National Press Club, the FBI Academy (in Quantico, VA), local universities, and consultants may be able to direct you to—or provide—training appropriate to your individual needs.

In addition, crisis communications training can help you understand how to communicate effectively to a traumatized community. As described in Chapter 1 on Communications, the CDC has prepared a manual and trainings to help you.

Emergency Preparedness Training

Training is an important component of emergency preparedness. Consider completing the trainings FEMA recommends for elected officials.

Key Resource: Recommended FEMA training

G-402 Incident Command System (ICS) Overview for Executives/Senior Officials: FEMA recommends elected officials complete this course, which covers the basics of what you need to know about the National Incident Management System, Multiagency Coordination Groups, Incident Command Systems, and Emergency Operations Centers. The course also summarizes the chief elected official's role in emergency preparedness, which may be applied to preparedness for a public mass shooting.

https://training.fema.gov/gstate/downloadmats.aspx?rd=1&course=G0402%20-%20ics-402%20-%20incident%20command%20system%20(ICS)%20overview%20for%20executives%20and%20senior%20officials

G-191 Incident Command System/Emergency Operations Center Interface: According to FEMA, this course reviews Incident Command System and Emergency Operation Center responsibilities and functions and provides an opportunity for participants to begin developing an interface between an Incident Management Team and EOC personnel. FEMA recommends this course for elected officials. The course is not available online as of this writing, but more information is available here: https://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/icsresource/trainingmaterials/

Active Shooter Trainings

Observe an Active Shooter Training for Law Enforcement

Some mayors have observed or participated in active shooter trainings arranged for law enforcement agencies. They report this observation helped them understand the law enforcement tactics used during active shooter containment. One mayor recommended doing this as a best practice, noting he wished he had seen an active shooter training before the shooting that took place in his city.

Arrange Active Shooter Trainings to Defend Municipal Buildings and Staff

The 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol and mass shootings at governments buildings in San Bernardino, Virginia Beach, and the Washington Navy Yard highlight the need for preparedness and security for government buildings. Consult with your chief of police about arranging appropriate training for security staff that work for the city, including contracted security and/or local police that protect municipal buildings.

Municipalities such as Jersey City, NJ have also contracted active shooter drill training to prepare city staff for a potential attack on a municipal target.[2] Consider whether to arrange active shooter training for your staff to prepare them for a potential attack in their offices, in consultation with law enforcement.

Key Resource: FBI Training Materials

***The Coming Storm*, an FBI-produced film to help prepare officials to respond to an active shooter event:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9jgS7jBXZU4

Other FBI resources: FBI, "Run. Hide. Fight." video:
https://www.fbi.gov/about/partnerships/office-of-partner-engagement/active-shooter-resources

Active Shooter Drills for Schools

Realistic active shooter training for law enforcement personnel is necessary and appropriate. Note, however, that the Public Health Advocacy Institute, teachers unions[3], and mental health experts recommend against unannounced or realistic active shooter drills for children (such as the type offered by ALICE (which stands for "Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate"). These drills can be traumatizing for children and may do more harm than good; better approaches are available.[4] See Chapter 6 on School Shootings for more information about the mental health needs of students.

Learn from Other Mayors

Look for opportunities to benefit from the experience of other mayors. For example, the U.S. Conference of Mayors hosted an excellent panel discussion that featured the insights of mayors who responded to a mass shooting (see link below). Other mayors have written books, such as Mayor Steve Scaffidi, who shared his experience responding to the Sikh Temple shooting in Oak Creek, Wisconsin in 2012. Trainings that were helpful to other mayors are mentioned below.

If a public mass shooting takes place in your community, you can count on other mayors to immediately contact you to share their advice and condolences. While their advice will be invaluable, in the immediate aftermath of a shooting your focus will necessarily be on the investigation, the press, and the victims and families. Therefore, feel free to contact experienced mayors or their staff before a crisis to solicit their advice on planning a tabletop exercise and developing the recommended protocols.

Finally, we hope you will find this Playbook—which highlights the advice of experienced mayors, staff, first responders, health care professionals, and other experts—a useful tool for planning your response to a mass shooting.

Key Resources—Mayors Share Their Experience

U.S Conference of Mayors, 88th Winter Meeting: Lesson Learned - Preventing, Preparing for, and Responding to Mass Shootings, 2020: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hijqn9q1rQg

Six Minutes in August: A Story of Tragedy, Healing and Community, Steve Scaffidi. The book tells the story of the murder of six members of a Sikh Temple, and the aftermath of that day's events on the community of Oak Creek, its newly-elected mayor, and the families of the Sikh Temple: https://www.amazon.com/Six-Minutes-August-Tragedy-Community/dp/057816714X

Endnotes

[1] U.S Conference of Mayors, 88th Winter Meeting: Lesson Learned - Preventing, Preparing for, and Responding to Mass Shootings, 2020, 21:40 *available at* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hijqn9q1rQg (last visited Apr 8, 2021).

[2] Leah Asmelash, *Nation's largest teachers unions call to end active shooter drills over fears they're traumatizing students*, CNN (2020), https://www.cnn.com/2020/02/12/us/active-shooter-drills-teacher-union-trnd/index.html (last visited May 6, 2021).

[3] Sarah C. Peck, *Halt active shooter drills in schools*, South Florida Sun-Sentinel (2019), https://www.sun-sentinel.com/opinion/commentary/fl-op-com-peck-halt-active-shooter-drills-schools-20191120-fbtyyjfutvf4zlyue5ghebi7gm-story.html (last visited May 6, 2021).

Appendix B:
Managing Visits from Elected Officials

Overview

This Appendix is intended to supplement Chapter 1 on Communications by providing best practice tips for managing visiting VIPs. All the mayors we interviewed spoke of the influx of elected officials in the aftermath of a mass shooting. These visitors included the U.S. President (POTUS), U.S. senators, state representatives, governors, local officials from the region, and city counselors. These elected officials often want to speak at press conferences, meet victims, and visit the crime scene. Their arrival may burden your overstretched staff and pose a messaging challenge. Without advance planning, their very presence can politicize the shooting and divide victims and their families when unity is most important. Nevertheless, hosting these visitors is an important part of your role and can provide an excellent opportunity to communicate your city's needs and advocate for action. Directed properly, elected officials can contribute to healing the community.

Advance Planning

As part of preparedness planning for a mass shooting, think about how your city will manage a POTUS or high-level VIP visit. Your planning can include communications, staffing, security, accommodations, itinerary, and advocacy. Consider the messages the VIP could deliver, or actions the VIP could take, that would benefit your community. Engage with community partners (e.g., school officials, victim services providers, and others) to solicit their input (and notify them immediately if a visit is scheduled). Evaluate resource, funding, and staffing needs.

Communications

The question of whether visiting VIPs will be permitted to speak to the press should be part of any communication protocol you develop. As elected officials, they will naturally want to speak to the press. As "communicator-in-chief," you should determine whether that would be appropriate. Above all, your goal is to prevent the remarks of elected officials from politicizing the tragedy. Your communications team can work with the VIP's staff to help set their expectations, coordinate messaging, and identify ways the VIP can serve the needs of your community.

Mayors in Action: Managing VIPs at a Press Conference

Pennsylvania's Governor Tom Wolf, U.S. Senator Toomey, and other senior elected officials happened to be in Pittsburgh on the day of the Tree of Life shooting.[1] Mayor Peduto decided city officials should be the primary speakers at the first press conference. He spoke first, followed by law enforcement officials who spoke about the response and the investigation. The city PIO decided when visiting officials could speak at later press conferences. Visiting elected officials were invited to attend the first vigil the next day but were not invited to speak. Mayor Peduto spoke, as did Jewish community leaders and a visiting Israeli dignitary.

The mayors spoke of decisions they made to manage the communications challenges posed by visiting elected officials. These included:

- Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto chose not to allow state and national elected officials to speak at the first press conference and vigil.
- Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer recommended securing the site of press conferences to control the access of local elected officials to the press pool (they can still speak to the press one-on-one).
- Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley recommended that President Trump not visit the site of the shooting because she was concerned his remarks would be divisive.
- After witnessing the distress to family members caused by remarks given by elected officials at the city's first vigil, one mayor invited elected officials to the city's first annual remembrance but did not invite them to speak. The mayor explained, "if you let one speak, you have to let everyone speak."

Itinerary: Help the VIP to be Helpful

Political polarization around gun violence is a reality in the United States. It is therefore important to consider how to prevent a VIP from sensationalizing the shooting for political gain. Mayor Whaley recommended focusing the VIP's visit on activities that could be healing to the victims or the greater community.

It may be prudent to manage the VIP's expectations before meeting with victims. Deputy Chief of Venues Officer Craig Borkon, who helped establish and operate Orlando's Family Assistance Center, spoke of the importance of preparing officials to meet with families. In Orlando, the American Red Cross briefed VIPs to help them understand what to expect and how to speak appropriately with victims' families.

Managing a POTUS Visit

We heard from several mayors that a Presidential visit poses unique challenges. These visits require massive coordination and logistical support between city hall, local law enforcement, the White House Advance Team, and the U.S. Secret Service. This comes at a time when local law enforcement officers are working overtime on the investigation and fulfilling security needs and traffic control related to the shooting. In addition, the arrival of POTUS can be polarizing and bring unwelcome political attention.

If your city has previously hosted a presidential visit, you may have protocols and systems in place. If not, the following checklist summarizes what to expect and offers suggestions on how to manage a visit.

- Appoint a team to manage the visit. Its members should coordinate with White House staffers who are planning the visit. Involve your public safety and citywide emergency management team in the planning process.
- Assign a "control officer" to be the primary point of contact for the city.
- Discuss the city's needs with the White House Advance staffer to help set expectations for the visit.
- Propose activities you assess will be useful to the city's recovery, which could include meeting with families, staging a press conference, visiting the site, and/or meeting with local elected officials or community representatives.
- Assess possible venues where meetings or press conferences can take place. Start planning for crowd control, security, traffic planning, and free speech zones for protesters outside any site POTUS will visit.
- If overnight accommodations are required, identify hotels with adequate space and perimeter control.
- Significant police overtime may be required. Ask about reimbursement of security and other costs.
- Your communications team will need to coordinate with the press.
- Brief community leaders about plans for the visit. Ensure meetings with POTUS are as inclusive as possible. Invite victims and family members, representatives of impacted communities, other community leaders, and first responders, but first consult with them to determine whether they wish to meet the VIP.

Key Resource: Preparing for a Presidential Candidate Visit

Sarah E. Moss, "Local Government Preparation for Presidential Candidate Visits" Webinar: (July 2021) a webinar describing how to prepare for a POTUS visit. Although the focus is on a campaign stop, the information may also be useful for planning a POTUS visit in response to a mass shooting. Presenter Sarah E. Moss, MPA, is a former public servant and former advance staffer for three presidential campaigns and the White House. Her co-presenter is Kerry O'Grady, a former Special Agent in Charge of the U.S. Secret Service Denver field office, has protected presidential candidates and presidents.
https://elgl.org/event/webinar-local-government-preparation-for-presidential-candidate-visits/

During a time of heightened political division, anticipate that some of your constituents will be angry if you host a POTUS visit. El Paso Mayor Dee Margo said President Trump's visit triggered death threats against the Mayor. He explained his choice to welcome the President to El Paso as the "right thing to do" after a tragedy and felt he had little choice in the matter. Mayor Whaley's decision to host President Trump likewise fueled anger from constituents on both the political left and the political right.

Mayors in Action: Managing a Presidential Visit

President Trump's visit to Dayton after the Oregon District shooting posed a challenge because it prolonged the intense media pressure and politicized the shooting. The Mayor later told the press her decision to join the President during his Dayton visit was not an easy one. She believed the President was a divisive figure whose presence could fracture her grieving city. Some residents protested the visit, holding signs that read, "Not Welcome Here."[2] On the other hand, the Mayor considered it her duty to greet him. She met briefly with the President and directed him to activities she believed would be healing, such as meetings with victims and medical staff at the hospital and with first responders.[3] She also used the opportunity to urge the President to "do something" to prevent gun violence. Illustrating the challenges mayors may encounter when handling the visit of a controversial leader, the President criticized the Mayor's handling of the visit[4] and the Mayor received death threats following his visit."

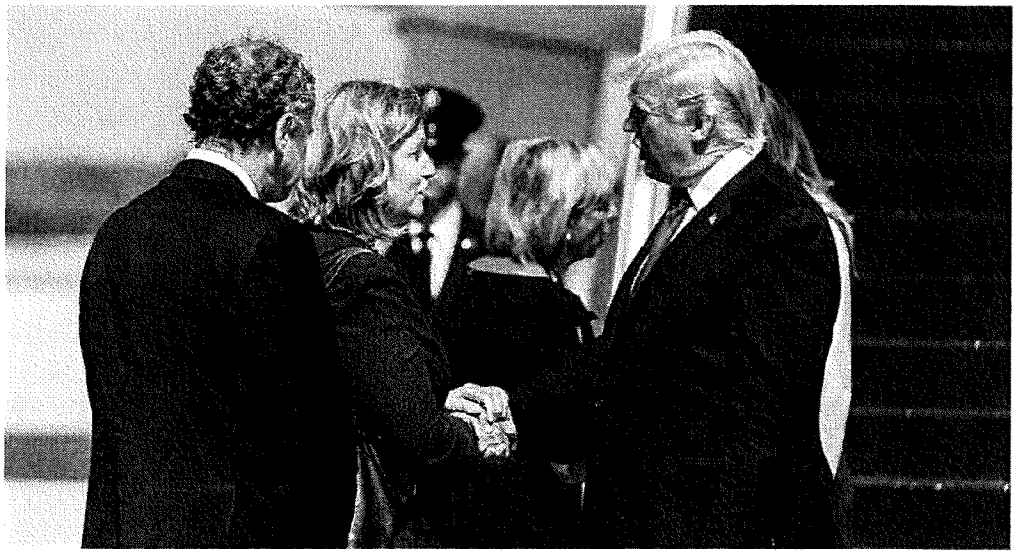


Image 14: *President Donald J. Trump and First Lady Melania Trump are greeted by Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley Wednesday, Aug. 7, 2019, at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, and other state and local officials. (Official White House Photo by Shealah Craighead).*

Security Cost Recovery

There will likely be significant police overtime costs associated with providing security for a POTUS visit. You may be able to negotiate an agreement to recover these costs with adequate documentation.

Endnotes

[1] Amanda Reed, *Thousands gather at Sunday vigil honoring Tree of Life Synagogue shooting victims*, Pittsburgh Current (2018), https://www.pittsburghcurrent.com/thousands-gather-at-sunday-vigil-honoring-tree-of-life-synagogue-shooting-victims/ (last visited May 25, 2021).

[2] John Seewer, *Dayton's pain: 'Do something'*, The Lima News (2019), https://www.limaohio.com/news/368343/daytons-pain-do-something (last visited May 25, 2021).

[3] Emily Davies, *How Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley became a national voice for gun control*, The Washington Post, August 25, 2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/the-mayor-of-dayton-should-matter-how-nan-whaley-became-a-national-voice-for-gun-control/2019/08/24/a7abd752-bf5f-11e9-aff2-3835caab97f6_story.html (last visited May 25, 2021).

[4] Rebecca Morin, *Trump's Ohio visit: Dayton Mayor Nan Whaley confused by Trump tweet*, USA Today (2019), https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2019/08/07/trumps-ohio-visit-dayton-mayor-nan-whaley-confused-president-tweets/1946291001/ (last visited May 25, 2021).



Appendix C:
Funding Sources for Cities

The cost of responding to a mass shooting can be enormous. This appendix provides an overview of funding sources that cover the following categories of potential expenses faced by the community:

- Crime Victim Compensation
- Law Enforcement Expenses
- Emergency Response Costs
- Family Assistance and Resiliency Centers
- School Shooting Response

This list is necessarily incomplete, especially where state resources are concerned, but provides pointers to guide your research.

Crime Victim Compensation

Both federal and state agencies provide direct financial support to victims of crime, including victims of a public mass shooting. Victim advocates or your staff can help connect victims to these compensation sources, which are summarized below.

State Funding

Each state's victim assistance program is different, but most are funded by VOCA grants to states. The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Compensation program provides grants to every state, the District of Columbia, and every territory to fund eligible crime victim compensation programs. Victim advocates can help the victims and family members understand whether they are eligible for payment and identify any barriers to receiving compensation. Generally speaking, crime victim compensation programs pay for out-of-pocket expenses, including medical care, mental health counseling, lost time at work, and funerals.

Note that these funds are often capped for each victim. If a victim accepts funds from another source (such as from a victims' fund) to cover an expense the state funds would have covered, they cannot also receive those funds from their state program.

Key Resources: Crime Victim Compensation and VOCA Funding

National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards, Compensation Protocol: A guide to Responding to Mass-Casualty Incidents: This manual provides managers and staff of crime victim compensation programs with an updated mass casualty protocol that reflects newly identified practices and lessons learned from those who have responded to mass casualty events. https://ovc.ojp.gov/library/publications/compensation-protocol-guide-responding-mass-casualty-incidents

Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) and American Red Cross (ARC), Responding to Victims of Terrorism and Mass Violence Crimes: Coordination and Collaboration Between American Red Cross Workers and Crime Victim Service Providers. OVC and ARC fill critical and complementary roles in assisting victims of terrorism and mass violence. This publication discusses the emotional and psychological effects of a disaster, the disaster's effects on targeted groups, and the effects of media coverage. It also discusses the importance of knowing state and local crime victim assistance and compensation agencies that may be able to help in the wake of disaster.
https://ovc.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh226/files/publications/infores/redcross/ncj209681.pdf

For more information, see the VOCA website:
https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/victims-crime-act-voca-administrators/welcome
VOCA grants to states: https://ovc.ojp.gov/help-for-victims/help-in-your-state and https://ovc.ojp.gov/program/victims-crime-act-voca-administrators/welcome

Federal Funding

AEAP

The Antiterrorism Emergency Assistance Program (AEAP) of the U.S. Department of Justice provides technical assistance and compensation to institutional applicants such as state victim assistance and compensation programs, public agencies, Indian tribal governments, U.S. Attorneys' Offices, and higher education institutions. Grants are by invitation only, but you may contact your state agency to learn whether you might be invited to access AEAP funds for victim services.

FEMA

In the event of a major disaster declaration, as in the case of a hurricane or major terror attack (like 9/11), the Stafford Act authorizes funding through the FEMA Individual Assistance (IA) program, which offers reimbursement to individuals for emergency services like shelter and medical expenses. See FEMA Individual Assistance for more information.

To be eligible for general FEMA funding to reimburse costs related to a mass shooting, a city must provide evidence of extensive property damage, such as damage caused by fire or an explosion, or demonstrate exhaustion of local resources. At the time of this writing, general FEMA funds have not

been granted to any city to cover the cost of responding to a mass shooting as they have for other "major disasters."[1] In the case of the Pulse shooting, the request for FEMA funding was denied based on failure to show an "unmet need" not covered by state/local response.

SBA Disaster Loan Program

However, FEMA also offers the SBA Disaster Loan Program to provide low-interest loans for costs incurred by municipalities or businesses that are not covered by insurance or other sources. Orlando obtained a number of SBA loans, totaling $353k, to assist local businesses that were impacted by the Pulse shooting.

Key Resource: Congressional Research Service Report on FEMA funding

A report explaining the applicability of Stafford Act Assistance to acts of terrorism and public mass shootings is available at this link: https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/R44801.pdf

Information about the SBA Disaster Loan Program is available at this link.
https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance

Law Enforcement Expenses

Police Overtime

Police overtime pay is a major expense following a public mass shooting. There are two federal sources of funding to consult.

EFLEA

The Emergency Federal Law Enforcement Assistance (EFLEA) Program can help municipalities and law enforcement agencies mitigate the cost of responding to a mass shooting, including to cover emergency costs borne by police departments. Note that it is often by invitation only.

JAG Program

The Justice Department's Byrne Justice Assistance Grants (JAG) program provides grants to public safety organizations for overtime or other "precipitous" increases in expenses resulting from mass violence. Both state agencies and local governments are eligible to apply, so you may need to coordinate your plans for an application with your state's law enforcement agency. After the school shooting in Parkland, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement received a JAG grant of $1 million to defray overtime costs for police from 18 different agencies that responded to the shooting.[2]

Death or Injury of a Law Enforcement Officer

The Public Safety Officers' Benefits Program (PSOB) provides death and educational benefits to the survivors of fallen law enforcement officers, firefighters, and other first responders, and disability benefits to officers catastrophically injured in the line of duty. For more information, please see the Bureau of Justice Assistance website.

Law Enforcement Mental Health and Wellness

There are funding opportunities are available through the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office that cover mental health expenses for law enforcement agencies. More information is available at this link.

Emergency Response Costs

Federal Funding: AEAP

In addition to providing crime victim compensation as mentioned above, the Office for Victims of Crime offers three other funding streams through its Antiterrorism and Emergency Assistance Program (AEAP): (1) crisis response (2) consequence management, and (3) criminal justice support. While applications are by invitation only, local governments are among eligible applicants. Note that the office encourages applications to be coordinated with state agencies and local chapters of organizations such as the American Red Cross and United Way. Consultants at the Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Program can help you determine whether your city may be eligible to apply for AEAP funding and prepare you to meet application requirements if invited.

State Funding

States employ a variety of strategies to mitigate the costs of disasters within their jurisdictions. In many ways, state agencies are the front line of disaster response, paying upfront for costs that may later be reimbursed by the federal government. For example, Texas released $5.5 million in funding after the El Paso shooting to pay for psychological first aid, state behavioral health services, county reimbursements related to the prosecution, school-based mental health services, a resiliency center, and more.3 Therefore, consult state public health agencies, emergency response agencies, and state law enforcement to identify potential grant opportunities, which may include:

- Disaster account or flexible contingency funds that can be used to cover costs from natural disasters or emergencies (guidelines vary by state).
- Rainy day or reserve funds (nearly half of the states allow these funds to be used for emergencies).
- Moving funds between state agencies (transfer authority) or authorizing funds within an agency's budget to be used for disaster relief (sometimes made possible by the state declaration of emergency).
- Note that some of these funding resources may only be used to cover the costs borne by the state in responding, rather than expenses incurred by the city's response.

Family Assistance and Resiliency Centers

The Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC) consultants can help you write a grant proposal for OVC funding to help fund a Resiliency Center (RC) for a limited period. Other potential funding sources include state funds, the United Way, and private foundations. For example, the state of Florida and Heart of Florida United Way partnered to fund the Orlando United Assistance Center. In Texas, the state provided funding for the RC in El Paso.

School Shooting Response

There may be additional costs unique to a school shooting. in addition to those covered by the other funding sources listed in this Appendix. Eligibility for most funding opportunities is limited to local educational institutions. Work with the affected school to determine if the city can help identify resources to meet specific needs.

One possible resource is the Project School Emergency Response to Violence (SERV), which is usually limited to local educational institutions but may be relevant for municipalities. Local education agencies (LEAs) and institutions of higher education (IHEs) that have experienced a traumatic event of "such magnitude as to severely disrupt the teaching and learning environment" are eligible to apply.

Endnotes

[1] Congressional Research Services, *Stafford Act Assistance and Acts of Terrorism*, 2019, https://fas.org/sgp/crs/homesec/R44801.pdf.
[2] Dep't of Justice, *Justice Department Announces $1 Million to Florida Law Enforcement and First Responders who Supported the Parkland High School Shooting*, 2018, https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-announces-1-million-florida-law-enforcement-and-first-responders-who.
[3] Office of the Texas Governor I Greg Abbott, *Governor Abbott Meets With Lawmakers Following El Paso Shooting*, 2019, https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-abbott-meets-with-lawmakers-following-el-paso-shooting.



Appendix D:
To Prevent Mass Killings, Prevent Suicides

There is no known way to completely prevent public mass shootings. However, we do know that 40 percent of public mass shooters commit suicide during their rampage, according to the Associated Press/USA Today/Northeastern University Mass Killing Database. This fact provides hope that some of these horrific crimes can be prevented by focusing specifically on suicide prevention.

Evidence-Based Approaches to Suicide Prevention

Although the common perception is that homicides and mass shootings predominate, about two-thirds of the nearly 40k gun deaths annually in the U.S. are suicides.[1] Reducing suicides will not only save the lives of loved ones in crisis, but may also avert some public mass shootings, the focus of this Playbook.

What can be done at the local level to prevent suicides? Research has shown that the risk a household member will commit suicide is increased threefold when there is a gun in the home.[2] That is not to say that responsible gun owners should give up their guns. However, lives could be saved by a public education campaign recommending that gun owners: (1) temporarily remove a firearm when a household member is in crisis, and (2) safely secure handguns and long guns bought for sport or protection, especially if there is a minor in the home.

As "communicator-in-chief," you could advocate for these evidence-based approaches when appropriate, such as when a beloved community member has died by suicide, during national suicide awareness week, or on Veteran's Day. You could initiate public education campaigns in partnership with community-based organizations, medical associations, gun owners, and mental health service providers in your community. For example, gun shops have worked in partnership with the National Shooting Sports Foundation to provide information about suicide to gun owners.[3]

You could join forces with other mayors to adopt measures to reduce veteran suicide.[4] You could look for other innovative approaches your city could adopt. For example, recognizing that out-of-home gun storage can prevent suicide, Colorado has partnered with gun shops, businesses, law enforcement agencies, and public health departments to provide a network of places that offer voluntary, temporary gun storage.[5]

ERPO Laws Prevent Suicide and May Help Prevent Mass Shootings

In cases where a family member is concerned that a gun owner appears suicidal or at risk of harming others, Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO) laws (aka "Red Flag Laws") give police a tool to remove guns temporarily. Researchers have found that Indiana's ERPO law reduced suicides by 7.5%.[6] To date, research has focused on suicide prevention, not mass murder. But there are documented cases where an ERPO was used to remove a gun from someone who planned to commit a mass shooting.[7] If your state has passed an ERPO law, work with law enforcement and judicial officials to ensure the law is implemented effectively and that the public is aware of the law.

Key resource: Improving Implementation of ERPO Laws

Researchers at Northeastern University School of Law examined ERPO implementation challenges and made recommendations to improve ERPO laws. https://www.phaionline.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Extreme-Risk-Protection-Orders-Implementation-in-a-Social-Justice-Context.Final_.pdf

Safe Storage May Prevent School Shootings and Accidental Deaths

Securing guns is another evidence-based strategy for preventing suicides, and may prevent some mass murders, particularly school shootings. The majority of school shootings, like the Sandy Hook massacre, were committed using guns taken from a parent, grandparent, or neighbor.[8] If these shooters had been unable to access a gun at home, some of these tragedies could have been prevented. Partnering with law enforcement officials, public health officials, gun owners, and other credible voices to promote the benefits of safe storage could potentially prevent a school shooting.

Urging gun owners to secure their guns if there are children in the home can also prevent accidental gun injuries and deaths. According to the Nationwide Children's Hospital, nearly 1,300 children die from guns every year and many more are seriously injured.[9] The American Academy of Pediatrics advises the best way to prevent gun-related injuries to children is to remove guns from the home or store them properly.[10]

Endnotes

[1] Heath Druzen, *Majority Of U.S. Gun Deaths Are Suicides, But A New Poll Suggests Few Americans Know It*, WAMU, https://wamu.org/story/19/10/02/the-majority-of-u-s-gun-deaths-are-suicides-but-a-new-poll-suggests-few-americans-know-it/ (last visited Jun 16, 2021).

[2] APHA Policy Statement (#20184): Reducing Suicides by Firearms, (2018), https://www.apha.org/policies-and-advocacy/public-health-policy-statements/policy-database/2019/01/28/reducing-suicides-by-firearms (last visited Jun 16, 2021).

[3] NSSF & American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, *Suicide Prevention Program for Retailers and Ranges*, NSSF, https://www.nssf.org/safety/suicide-prevention/ (last visited Jun 16, 2021); *see also* Harvard School of Public Health, Gun Shop Project, Means Matter (2012), https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/means-matter/gun-shop-project/ (last visited Jun 16, 2021).

[4] SAMHSA has partnered with Veterans Affairs (VA) to bring the *Governor's and Mayor's Challenges to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families* to states and communities across the Nation. https://www.samhsa.gov/smvf-ta-center/mayors-governors-challenges

[5] Colorado Firearm Safety Coalition, *Gun Storage Map*, Colorado Firearm Safety Coalition (2019), https://coloradofirearmsafetycoalition.org/gun-storage-map/ (last visited Jun 16, 2021).

[6] Aaron J. Kivisto & Peter Lee Phalen, *Effects of Risk-Based Firearm Seizure Laws in Connecticut and Indiana on Suicide Rates*, 1981–2015, 69 Psychiatric Services 855–862 (2018).

[7] Garen J. Wintemute et al., *Extreme Risk Protection Orders Intended to Prevent Mass Shootings*, 171 Annals of Internal Medicine 655–658 (2019).

[8] Tawnell D. Hobbs, *Most Guns Used in School Shootings Come From Home*, Wall Street Journal, April 5, 2018, https://www.wsj.com/articles/in-school-shootings-most-guns-come-from-home-1522920600 (last visited Jun 16, 2021).

[9] Nationwide Children's, "Gun Safety," https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/research/areas-of-research/center-for-injury-research-and-policy/injury-topics/general/gun-safety (last visited Jun 16, 2021).

[10] American Academy of Pediatrics, "*Guns in the Home*," https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Handguns-in-the-Home.aspx (last visited July 21, 2021).

Appendix E:
Additional Resources from the National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center

The National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center, based at the Medical University of South Carolina, serves to provide communities access to evidence-based information and resources needed to effectively prepare for and respond to mass violence incidents. A primary focus of the National Mass Violence Victimization Resource Center (NMVVRC) is to address the mental health and victim assistance needs of victims, survivors, family members, and communities impacted by a mass violence incident. In the aftermath of a public mass shooting in your community, we encourage you to reach out to NMVVRC to learn more about best practices and to ask your staff and partners to consult the following recommended resources from the Center.

Preparation

- NMVVRC, "The Role of Victim Assistance Professionals in Preparing for Mass Violence Incidents," is a tip sheet that will help you understand the resources and roles of your partners that provide victim assistance. https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/0ddft0pn/tipsheet11.pdf
- NMVVRC, "At-a-Glance: The Role of Victim Service Professionals," provides an overview of the services and aid that victim services professionals bring to a mass violence incident response, for those in your community and/or staff that may need a background/primer on the subject. https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/pobdrf1n/role-of-vsps-rrr-matrix.pdf

Response

- FBI and Penn State, "We Regret to Inform You: Providing Sensitive Death Notifications with Professionalism, Dignity and Compassion." This is a training course for law enforcement professionals, medical examiners, and victim assistance professionals outlining a four-step process for compassionate delivery of death notifications to family members and other loved ones. https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/pghaczss/tipsheet6.pdf
- NMVVRC, "After the Death Notification: Ten Guidelines for Assisting Victims & Survivors of Mass Violence" describes a continuum of quality care for families whose loved one was murdered in a mass violence incident. https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/fmcb5jxo/tipsheet10.pdf
- NMVVRC, "After a MVI: Helpful Hashtags and Social Media Accounts," provides information to reference via the City's social media accounts. https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/fu2j4is3/tipsheet7.pdf
- NMVVRC, "Tips for Community Leaders: Establishing a Family Assistance Center (FAC)," provides best practices for establishing an FAC in the immediate aftermath of a mass shooting. https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/tkgfidqq/tipsheet19.pdf

Recovery

- NMVVRC, "Rebuild Your Community," is a webpage providing links to resources that will be helpful throughout the recovery phase.
  https://www.nmvvrc.org/community-leaders/rebuild-your-community/
- NMVVRC, "Unexpected Challenges for Communities in the Recovery Phase of a Mass Violence Incident," provides a list of 17 challenges you will likely face along with helpful solutions for preventing or mitigating each challenging circumstance.
  https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/00tbio4n/tip-sheet-unexpected-challenges-for-communities-in-recovery-phase.pdf
- NMVVRC, "Resilience Following Hate Crimes: Information and Tips" provides five tips for your response to a hate-motivated incident in your community.
  https://www.nmvvrc.org/media/hcnphst3/tipsheet16.pdf
- NMVVRC, TRANSCEND, a self-Help app for victims and survivors), is available here:

  https://www.nmvvrc.org/survivors/self-help/

About the Public Health Advocacy Institute

The Public Health Advocacy Institute

In 2019, the Public Health Advocacy Institute at Northeastern University School of Law (NUSL) launched UnitedOnGuns, a nonpartisan initiative to unite professionals from different disciplines (health, law enforcement, law, and government) to promote public health approaches to reduce gun violence, while respecting the rights of responsible gun owners. This Playbook is the culmination of our first major research project in fulfillment of our mission to develop evidence-based tools that mayors can use to prevent gun violence in their communities.

The UnitedOnGuns Team

Sarah C. Peck, J.D., Director, UnitedOnGuns

Ms. Peck is the Director of UnitedOnGuns. Before co-founding this initiative, Ms. Peck served as a U.S. diplomat for fifteen years, including service in Afghanistan and Iraq, where she advised senior policy makers on national security issues and promoted democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Prior to her diplomatic career, Ms. Peck practiced law as a litigator at Goodwin Procter and Sunstein in Boston, and as corporate counsel in Paris. She is a graduate of the University of Florida and NUSL.

Emily Nink, MS, CPH, PHAI Policy Associate

Ms. Nink assists local governments pursuing public health policies. Ms. Nink provides legal and policy research for public health topics, including tobacco regulation, regulations of packaged beverages, interventions to improve safe drinking water, and school nutrition. Ms. Nink was the lead researcher for the mass shooting project. She earned her M.S. through the Agriculture, Food and Environment program at the Tufts Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy in Boston. Prior to joining PHAI, she provided research assistance at the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future, at the Friedman School, and at The Food Think Tank.

Mark Gottlieb, J.D., PHAI Executive Director

Mr. Gottlieb joined PHAI in 1993 after graduating from NUSL. His efforts have focused on researching tobacco litigation as a public health strategy as director of the Tobacco Products Liability Project, reducing the harm caused by secondhand tobacco smoke through a variety of legal and policy approaches, fostering scholarship using tobacco industry documents, examining legal and policy approaches to address obesity, and, more recently, researching public health approaches to reducing gun violence. Mark is an adjunct professor at NUSL where he teaches and operates the Public Health Legal Clinic.

About the Mass Shooting Protocol & Playbook

The **Protocol** is a four-page overview of a mayor's role during the first 24 hours after a mass shooting. It highlights the key decisions the mayor will need to make and refers to the playbook chapters that can provide additional information as needed. A one-page checklist highlighting immediate action steps is also included.

The **Playbook** is a resource guide that is informed by the recommendations and experience of mayors who have responded to a mass shooting. It is organized into ten topic areas: communications, emergency management, victims and families, law enforcement, donations, school shootings, community partnerships, legal considerations, commemorations, and mental health. Each chapter includes the actions and training that a mayor can take in advance of a mass shooting; actions a mayor should take during the response phase; and guidance for providing services to victims, family members, and the broader community as they recover. The Playbook features case briefs of the six mass shootings researched for the project, with key takeaways. These case briefs may be useful to mayors for planning and training purposes, as well as to researchers and law enforcement officials. Finally, the Playbook includes appendices that contain additional resources, such as a compilation of all training resources, funding resources, and information about community gun violence and suicide prevention to save lives and possibly prevent mass shootings.

Published in the United States of America by
Public Health Advocacy Institute
Northeastern University School of Law
360 Huntington Ave, 117CU
Boston, MA 02115
www.phaionline.org

© 2021 by Public Health Advocacy Institute. "Public Health Advocacy Institute" and "UnitedOnGuns" are registered trademarks of the Public Health Advocacy Institute.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of Public Health Advocacy Institute, or as expressly permitted by law, by license, or under terms agreed with the appropriate reproduction rights organization. Inquiries regarding use or reproduction should be sent to the address above.



UNITEDONGUNS

From: ejason@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:37 PM
To: gneukirch@cityhpil.com; acivitello@cityhpil.com
Subject: Re: Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois

Will do.

Get Outlook for iOS

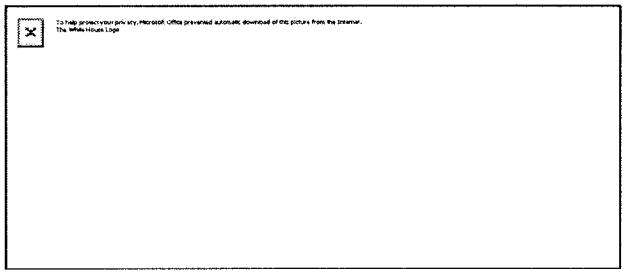
From: Neukirch, Ghida <gneukirch@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:33:42 PM
To: Civitello, Amanda <acivitello@cityhpil.com>
Cc: Jason, Erin <ejason@cityhpil.com>
Subject: Fwd: Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois

Erin,
Pls retain for our records

Ghida S. Neukirch
City Manager
City of Highland Park

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

> **From:** "Rotering, Nancy" <nrotering@cityhpil.com>
> **Date:** July 4, 2022 at 11:24:32 PM CDT
> **To:** Mayor and City Council <council@cityhpil.com>, "Neukirch, Ghida" <gneukirch@cityhpil.com>, "Jogmen, Lou" <ljogmen@cityhpil.com>
> **Subject: Fwd: Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois**
>
> **Subject:** Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois
>
> 

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 4, 2022

Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois

Jill and I are shocked by the senseless gun violence that has yet again brought grief to an American community on this Independence Day. As always, we are grateful for the first responders and law enforcement on the scene. I have spoken to Governor Pritzker and Mayor Rotering, and have offered the full support of the Federal government to their communities. I also surged Federal law enforcement to assist in the urgent search for the shooter, who remains at large at this time. Members of the community should follow guidance from leadership on the ground, and I will monitor closely as we learn more about those whose lives have been lost and pray for those who are in the hospital with grievous injuries.

I recently signed the first major bipartisan gun reform legislation in almost thirty years into law, which includes actions that will save lives. But there is much more work to do, and I'm not going to give up fighting the epidemic of gun violence.

###

Privacy Policy | Unsubscribe | press@who.eop.gov

White House Press Office · 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW · Washington, DC 20500-0003 · USA · 202-456-1111

From: acivitello@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:41 PM
To: ejason@cityhpil.com; gneukirch@cityhpil.com
Subject: RE: Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois
Attachments: image002.gif; image003.png; image004.png; image005.png; image006.png

Thanks for sharing – I didn't get a chance to read this earlier

Amanda Civitello
Communications Manager
she / her / hers

City of Highland Park
1707 St Johns Avenue
Highland Park, Illinois 60035

847.926.1043

acivitello@cityhpil.com
cityhpil.com

From: Jason, Erin <ejason@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:37 PM
To: Neukirch, Ghida <gneukirch@cityhpil.com>; Civitello, Amanda <acivitello@cityhpil.com>
Subject: Re: Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois

Will do.

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Neukirch, Ghida <gneukirch@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:33:42 PM
To: Civitello, Amanda <acivitello@cityhpil.com>
Cc: Jason, Erin <ejason@cityhpil.com>
Subject: Fwd: Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois

Erin,
Pls retain for our records

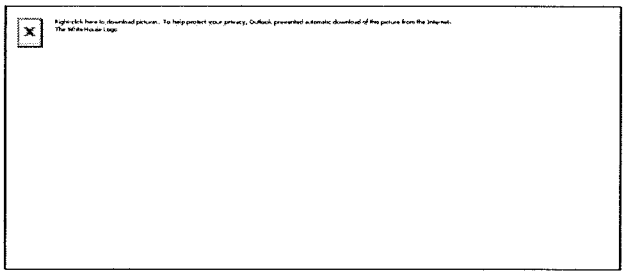
Ghida S. Neukirch
City Manager
City of Highland Park

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Rotering, Nancy" <nrotering@cityhpil.com>
Date: July 4, 2022 at 11:24:32 PM CDT
To: Mayor and City Council <council@cityhpil.com>, "Neukirch, Ghida" <gneukirch@cityhpil.com>, "Jogmen, Lou" <ljogmen@cityhpil.com>
Subject: Fwd: Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois

Subject: Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 4, 2022

Statement from President Biden on the Shooting in Highland Park, Illinois

Jill and I are shocked by the senseless gun violence that has yet again brought grief to an American community on this Independence Day. As always, we are grateful for the first responders and law enforcement on the scene. I have spoken to Governor Pritzker and Mayor Rotering, and have offered the full support of the Federal government to their communities. I also surged Federal law enforcement to assist in the urgent search for the shooter, who remains at large at this time. Members of the community should follow guidance from leadership on the ground, and I will monitor closely as we learn more about those whose lives have been lost and pray for those who are in the hospital with grievous injuries.

I recently signed the first major bipartisan gun reform legislation in almost thirty years into law, which includes actions that will save lives. But there is much more work to do, and I'm not going to give up fighting the epidemic of gun violence.

###

Privacy Policy | **Unsubscribe** | press@who.eop.gov

White House Press Office · 1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW · Washington, DC 20500-0003 · USA · 202-456-1111

From: acivitello@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:46 PM
To: gneukirch@cityhpil.com
Subject: FW: Today's Failure of City Government

Hi Ghida,

Please see below for an email we received earlier tonight - please advise, thank you.

Amanda Civitello
Communications Manager
she / her / hers

1707 St Johns Avenue
Highland Park, Illinois 60035

847.926.1043

acivitello@cityhpil.com
cityhpil.com

-----Original Message-----
From: Patrick S. Sylvester <p@pss.law>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 10:59 PM
To: cityhp <cityhp@cityhpil.com>
Subject: Today's Failure of City Government

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

I am truly sorry that Highland Park was under assault today. There is never an excuse for murder. That said, I hope that the HP officials who failed to reasonably plan for security, including on rooftops (during a parade below rooftops!) are held accountable. Unfortunately, the murderer's disgusting action from a rooftop during today's ground parade was reasonably foreseeable, unfortunately.

Patrick S. Sylvester

From: Goldstein, Julie (NBCUniversal) <Julie.Goldstein@nbcuni.com>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:48 PM
To: ljogmen@cityhpil.com
Subject: NBC News Inquiry

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Hi there,

Hope you are hanging in. Julie Goldstein here with NBC News and the TODAY Show. I am so sorry for the late note.

I am hoping to confirm whether Jacki Sundheim was one of the deceased victims in yesterday's tragic shooting? Her synagogue seemingly put out a press release, but we are hoping to confirm with officials.

Thank you,
Julie

Julie Goldstein
Booking, NBC News
[redacted]

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:48 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:48 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

This is the Email Security Gateway at host spam1.cityhpil.com.

I'm sorry to inform you that the message below could not be delivered.
When delivery was attempted, the following error was returned.

<[redacted]>: host mx2c1.comcast.net[96.102.18.149] said: 550 5.2.0 <[redacted]> - Recipient unavailable (in reply to RCPT TO command)

Reporting-MTA: dns; spam1.cityhpil.com
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Queue-ID: 1963F38F478
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Sender: rfc822; LFrey@cityhpil.com
Arrival-Date: Mon, 4 Jul 2022 23:48:27 -0500 (CDT)

Final-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Original-Recipient: rfc822[redacted]
Action: failed
Status: 5.2.0
Remote-MTA: dns; mx2c1.comcast.net
Diagnostic-Code: smtp; 550 5.2.0 <[redacted]Recipient
unavailable

From: Frey, Laura <LFrey@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 10:18 PM
Subject: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule
Attachments: image002.png

Dear Members and Friends,

On behalf of the Senior Center staff, we are devastated and heart-broken over the senseless act of violence against our community, that occurred during today's 4th of July parade. Our hearts go out to those who lost their lives and those who were injured - and to their families and loved ones as well.

After thoughtful consideration, we have decided that the Senior Center will be open tomorrow, and that all classes and activities will be held as scheduled. We hope this decision will allow us to grieve together and just maybe we can begin to heal together as well.

As a life-long resident of Highland Park who lives and works in this beloved community – the pain is palpable – and we are experiencing this pain together. The outpouring of love and support our community has shown – is one of the reasons I love Highland Park. Together, we will get through this.

If you are seeking support after today's tragic events, you are invited to participate in a coordinated effort to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available for community members in need of support. Counseling will be available at the Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Avenue tomorrow (Tuesday) from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM; please enter through the Vine Avenue entrance. Anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services, will need to present a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school; no appointments are necessary.

Message from Mayor Rotering

Today was the bloodiest day that we have ever experienced in Highland Park. This morning at approximately 10:14 AM a shooter opened fire with an assault weapon on a crowd attending our 4th of July parade. We know at this time that six individuals lost their lives and at least 24 were injured. Our hearts go out to the victims, families, and our community.

The attack prompted an immediate and well-coordinated response from multiple law enforcement agencies at the Federal, State, County, and local levels. A suspect, Robert "Bobby" Crimo III (age 22 of Highwood, Ill.) was identified and a massive manhunt ensued.

At approximately 6:30 p.m., the suspect was apprehended on Route 41 at Westleigh Road. He was taken into custody without incident and is currently being processed through the Highland Park Police Department.

Throughout the day we have received offers of support and resources from public officials and agencies including President Biden. Fellow mayors have reached out from across the country, many who lead communities that have experienced this pain and tragedy. We thank Governor J.B. Pritzker, Senator Richard Durbin, Senator Tammy Duckworth, Congressman Brad Schneider, Illinois State Senator Julie Morrison, and Illinois State Representative Bob Morgan for coming to support our community and for providing every available resource.

I want to thank our first responders for their bravery and extraordinary efforts today. Our police and firefighters saved countless lives with their responses -- running into danger and taking immediate action to save others. We are grateful for these selfless acts. We know there were members of our community who rendered aid and assistance as well, and we thank each and every one of you for those efforts.

I also want to acknowledge and thank numerous agencies for their support including American Red Cross, World Central Kitchen, Lakeshore Country Club, Northmoor Country Club, Soul and Smoke food truck, Catering by Michaels, Northern Illinois Critical Incident Stress Management, local clergy and many other individuals and agencies have stepped up to provide food and support for our first responders. We are grateful for their generosity.

Our community, like so many before us, is devastated. It's impossible to imagine the pain of this kind of tragedy until it happens in your backyard. Gun violence - a mass shooting such as this casts a much wider net of agony than what the public is typically exposed to; it's a crisis that devastates entire families and communities in a single moment and we know will take time to heal.

Tomorrow the President will order our flags to fly at half-mast, and many public programs have been canceled. Please check with your camps and activities to see if they are operating. In the days and weeks ahead we will come together as a community to mourn and begin the path of healing. I will share more information as it is available.

Road and Business Closures

Numerous roads will remain closed in central downtown Highland Park for the FBI investigation, and many businesses will remain closed. The area closure spans Laurel Avenue from First Street to Elm Place and Green Bay Road from First Street to Elm Place (map below). Detours will be established, but please limit your travel only to essential business in Highland Park. The City is reaching out to business owners to share information, and will work with them to reopen as soon as possible.

Counseling Resources

A coordinated effort is also being made to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available at Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Ave., for community members in need of assistance, tomorrow from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. No appointment is necessary. The Vine Ave. entrance will be open and anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services will need to have a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school.

The theme of this year's parade was community -- and while we are hurting -- we know that we will come together and support each other, as we always do, in difficult times. We are Highland Park strong.

Nancy R. Rotering, Mayor
City of Highland Park, IL

Sincerely,

Laura Frey, CPRP

Manager of Senior Services

847.432.4110

www.cityhpil.com

Highland Park Senior Center
1201 Park Avenue West – Highland Park

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

This is the Email Security Gateway at host spam1.cityhpil.com.

I'm sorry to inform you that the message below could not be delivered.
When delivery was attempted, the following error was returned.

[redacted]>: host mx-aol.mail.gm0.yahoodns.net[67.195.228.84] said: 552 1 Requested mail action aborted, mailbox not found (in reply to end of DATA command)

Reporting-MTA: dns; spam1.cityhpil.com
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Queue-ID: C4FB338F471
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Sender: rfc822; LFrey@cityhpil.com
Arrival-Date: Mon, 4 Jul 2022 23:48:30 -0500 (CDT)

Final-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Original-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Action: failed
Status: 5.0.0
Remote-MTA: dns; mx-aol.mail.gm0.yahoodns.net
Diagnostic-Code: smtp; 552 1 Requested mail action aborted, mailbox not found

From: Frey, Laura <LFrey@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 10:18 PM
Subject: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

Dear Members and Friends,

On behalf of the Senior Center staff, we are devastated and heart-broken over the senseless act of violence against our community, that occurred during today's 4th of July parade. Our hearts go out to those who lost their lives and those who were injured - and to their families and loved ones as well.

After thoughtful consideration, we have decided that the Senior Center will be open tomorrow, and that all classes and activities will be held as scheduled. We hope this decision will allow us to grieve together and just maybe we can begin to heal together as well.

As a life-long resident of Highland Park who lives and works in this beloved community – the pain is palpable – and we are experiencing this pain together. The outpouring of love and support our community has shown – is one of the reasons I love Highland Park. Together, we will get through this.

If you are seeking support after today's tragic events, you are invited to participate in a coordinated effort to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available for community members in need of support. Counseling will be available at the Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Avenue tomorrow (Tuesday) from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM; please enter through the Vine Avenue entrance. Anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services, will need to present a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school; no appointments are necessary.

Message from Mayor Rotering

Today was the bloodiest day that we have ever experienced in Highland Park. This morning at approximately 10:14 AM a shooter opened fire with an assault weapon on a crowd attending our 4th of July parade. We know at this time that six individuals lost their lives and at least 24 were injured. Our hearts go out to the victims, families, and our community.

The attack prompted an immediate and well-coordinated response from multiple law enforcement agencies at the Federal, State, County, and local levels. A suspect, Robert "Bobby" Crimo III (age 22 of Highwood, Ill.) was identified and a massive manhunt ensued.

At approximately 6:30 p.m., the suspect was apprehended on Route 41 at Westleigh Road. He was taken into custody without incident and is currently being processed through the Highland Park Police Department.

Throughout the day we have received offers of support and resources from public officials and agencies including President Biden. Fellow mayors have reached out from across the country, many who lead communities that have experienced this pain and tragedy. We thank Governor J.B. Pritzker, Senator Richard Durbin, Senator Tammy Duckworth, Congressman Brad Schneider, Illinois State Senator Julie Morrison, and Illinois State Representative Bob Morgan for coming to support our community and for providing every available resource.

I want to thank our first responders for their bravery and extraordinary efforts today. Our police and firefighters saved countless lives with their responses -- running into danger and taking immediate action to save others. We are grateful for these selfless acts. We know there were members of our community who rendered aid and assistance as well, and we thank each and every one of you for those efforts.

I also want to acknowledge and thank numerous agencies for their support including American Red Cross, World Central Kitchen, Lakeshore Country Club, Northmoor Country Club, Soul and Smoke food truck, Catering by Michaels, Northern Illinois Critical Incident Stress Management, local clergy and many other individuals and agencies have stepped up to provide food and support for our first responders. We are grateful for their generosity.

Our community, like so many before us, is devastated. It's impossible to imagine the pain of this kind of tragedy until it happens in your backyard. Gun violence - a mass shooting such as this casts a much wider net of agony than what the public is typically exposed to; it's a crisis that devastates entire families and communities in a single moment and we know will take time to heal.

Tomorrow the President will order our flags to fly at half-mast, and many public programs have been canceled. Please check with your camps and activities to see if they are operating. In the days and weeks ahead we will come together as a community to mourn and begin the path of healing. I will share more information as it is available.

Road and Business Closures

Numerous roads will remain closed in central downtown Highland Park for the FBI investigation, and many businesses will remain closed. The area closure spans Laurel Avenue from First Street to Elm Place and Green Bay Road from First Street to Elm Place (map below). Detours will be established, but please limit your travel only to essential business in Highland Park. The City is reaching out to business owners to share information, and will work with them to reopen as soon as possible.

Counseling Resources

A coordinated effort is also being made to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available at Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Ave., for community members in need of assistance, tomorrow from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. No appointment is necessary. The Vine Ave. entrance will be open and anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services will need to have a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school.

The theme of this year's parade was community -- and while we are hurting -- we know that we will come together and support each other, as we always do, in difficult times. We are Highland Park strong.

Nancy R. Rotering, Mayor
City of Highland Park, IL

Sincerely,

Laura Frey, CPRP

Manager of Senior Services

847.432.4110

www.cityhpil.com

Highland Park Senior Center
1201 Park Avenue West – Highland Park

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

This is the Email Security Gateway at host spam1.cityhpil.com.

I'm sorry to inform you that the message below could not be delivered.
When delivery was attempted, the following error was returned.

[redacted]: host gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com[142.250.114.26]
said: 550-5.1.1 The email account that you tried to reach does not exist.
Please try 550-5.1.1 double-checking the recipient's email address for
typos or 550-5.1.1 unnecessary spaces. Learn more at 550 5.1.1
https://support.google.com/mail/?p=NoSuchUser
bk18-20020a0568081a1200b00337d205b266si4725797oib.267 - gsmtp (in reply to
RCPT TO command)

Reporting-MTA: dns; spam1.cityhpil.com
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Queue-ID: 954E438F473
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Sender: rfc822; LFrey@cityhpil.com
Arrival-Date: Mon, 4 Jul 2022 23:48:44 -0500 (CDT)

Final-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Original-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Action: failed
Status: 5.1.1
Remote-MTA: dns; gmail-smtp-in.l.google.com
Diagnostic-Code: smtp; 550-5.1.1 The email account that you tried to reach does not exist. Please try 550-5.1.1 double-checking the recipient's email address for typos or 550-5.1.1 unnecessary spaces. Learn more at 550 5.1.1 https://support.google.com/mail/?p=NoSuchUser bk18-20020a0568081a1200b00337d205b266si4725797oib.267 - gsmtp

From: Frey, Laura <LFrey@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 10:18 PM
Subject: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

Dear Members and Friends,

On behalf of the Senior Center staff, we are devastated and heart-broken over the senseless act of violence against our community, that occurred during today's 4th of July parade. Our hearts go out to those who lost their lives and those who were injured - and to their families and loved ones as well.

After thoughtful consideration, we have decided that the Senior Center will be open tomorrow, and that all classes and activities will be held as scheduled. We hope this decision will allow us to grieve together and just maybe we can begin to heal together as well.

As a life-long resident of Highland Park who lives and works in this beloved community – the pain is palpable – and we are experiencing this pain together. The outpouring of love and support our community has shown – is one of the reasons I love Highland Park. Together, we will get through this.

If you are seeking support after today's tragic events, you are invited to participate in a coordinated effort to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available for community members in need of support. Counseling will be available at the Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Avenue tomorrow (Tuesday) from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM; please enter through the Vine Avenue entrance. Anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services, will need to present a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school; no appointments are necessary.

Message from Mayor Rotering

Today was the bloodiest day that we have ever experienced in Highland Park. This morning at approximately 10:14 AM a shooter opened fire with an assault weapon on a crowd attending our 4th of July parade. We know at this time that six individuals lost their lives and at least 24 were injured. Our hearts go out to the victims, families, and our community.

The attack prompted an immediate and well-coordinated response from multiple law enforcement agencies at the Federal, State, County, and local levels. A suspect, Robert "Bobby" Crimo III (age 22 of Highwood, Ill.) was identified and a massive manhunt ensued.

At approximately 6:30 p.m., the suspect was apprehended on Route 41 at Westleigh Road. He was taken into custody without incident and is currently being processed through the Highland Park Police Department.

Throughout the day we have received offers of support and resources from public officials and agencies including President Biden. Fellow mayors have reached out from across the country, many who lead communities that have experienced this pain and tragedy. We thank Governor J.B. Pritzker, Senator Richard Durbin, Senator Tammy Duckworth, Congressman Brad Schneider, Illinois State Senator Julie Morrison, and Illinois State Representative Bob Morgan for coming to support our community and for providing every available resource.

I want to thank our first responders for their bravery and extraordinary efforts today. Our police and firefighters saved countless lives with their responses -- running into danger and taking immediate action to save others. We are grateful for these selfless acts. We know there were members of our community who rendered aid and assistance as well, and we thank each and every one of you for those efforts.

I also want to acknowledge and thank numerous agencies for their support including American Red Cross, World Central Kitchen, Lakeshore Country Club, Northmoor Country Club, Soul and Smoke food truck, Catering by Michaels, Northern Illinois Critical Incident Stress Management, local clergy and many other individuals and agencies have stepped up to provide food and support for our first responders. We are grateful for their generosity.

Our community, like so many before us, is devastated. It's impossible to imagine the pain of this kind of tragedy until it happens in your backyard. Gun violence - a mass shooting such as this casts a much wider net of agony than what the public is typically exposed to; it's a crisis that devastates entire families and communities in a single moment and we know will take time to heal.

Tomorrow the President will order our flags to fly at half-mast, and many public programs have been canceled. Please check with your camps and activities to see if they are operating. In the days and weeks ahead we will come together as a community to mourn and begin the path of healing. I will share more information as it is available.

Road and Business Closures

Numerous roads will remain closed in central downtown Highland Park for the FBI investigation, and many businesses will remain closed. The area closure spans Laurel Avenue from First Street to Elm Place and Green Bay Road from First Street to Elm Place (map below). Detours will be established, but please limit your travel only to essential business in Highland Park. The City is reaching out to business owners to share information, and will work with them to reopen as soon as possible.

Counseling Resources

A coordinated effort is also being made to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available at Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Ave., for community members in need of assistance, tomorrow from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. No appointment is necessary. The Vine Ave. entrance will be open and anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services will need to have a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school.

The theme of this year's parade was community -- and while we are hurting -- we know that we will come together and support each other, as we always do, in difficult times. We are Highland Park strong.

Nancy R. Rotering, Mayor
City of Highland Park, IL

Sincerely,

Laura Frey, CPRP

Manager of Senior Services

847.432.4110

www.cityhpil.com

Highland Park Senior Center
1201 Park Avenue West – Highland Park

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

This is the Email Security Gateway at host spam1.cityhpil.com.

I'm sorry to inform you that the message below could not be delivered.
When delivery was attempted, the following error was returned.

<[redacted]>: host mx-aol.mail.gm0.yahoodns.net[98.136.96.93] said: 552
1 Requested mail action aborted, mailbox not found (in reply to end of DATA
command)

Reporting-MTA: dns; spam1.cityhpil.com
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Queue-ID: A8BA138F477
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Sender: rfc822; LFrey@cityhpil.com
Arrival-Date: Mon, 4 Jul 2022 23:48:49 -0500 (CDT)

Final-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Original-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Action: failed
Status: 5.0.0
Remote-MTA: dns; mx-aol.mail.gm0.yahoodns.net
Diagnostic-Code: smtp; 552 1 Requested mail action aborted, mailbox not found

From: Frey, Laura <LFrey@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 10:18 PM
Subject: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule
Attachments: image002.png

Dear Members and Friends,

On behalf of the Senior Center staff, we are devastated and heart-broken over the senseless act of violence against our community, that occurred during today's 4th of July parade. Our hearts go out to those who lost their lives and those who were injured - and to their families and loved ones as well.

After thoughtful consideration, we have decided that the Senior Center will be open tomorrow, and that all classes and activities will be held as scheduled. We hope this decision will allow us to grieve together and just maybe we can begin to heal together as well.

As a life-long resident of Highland Park who lives and works in this beloved community – the pain is palpable – and we are experiencing this pain together. The outpouring of love and support our community has shown – is one of the reasons I love Highland Park. Together, we will get through this.

If you are seeking support after today's tragic events, you are invited to participate in a coordinated effort to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available for community members in need of support. Counseling will be available at the Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Avenue tomorrow (Tuesday) from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM; please enter through the Vine Avenue entrance. Anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services, will need to present a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school; no appointments are necessary.

Message from Mayor Rotering

Today was the bloodiest day that we have ever experienced in Highland Park. This morning at approximately 10:14 AM a shooter opened fire with an assault weapon on a crowd attending our 4th of July parade. We know at this time that six individuals lost their lives and at least 24 were injured. Our hearts go out to the victims, families, and our community.

The attack prompted an immediate and well-coordinated response from multiple law enforcement agencies at the Federal, State, County, and local levels. A suspect, Robert "Bobby" Crimo III (age 22 of Highwood, Ill.) was identified and a massive manhunt ensued.

At approximately 6:30 p.m., the suspect was apprehended on Route 41 at Westleigh Road. He was taken into custody without incident and is currently being processed through the Highland Park Police Department.

Throughout the day we have received offers of support and resources from public officials and agencies including President Biden. Fellow mayors have reached out from across the country, many who lead communities that have experienced this pain and tragedy. We thank Governor J.B. Pritzker, Senator Richard Durbin, Senator Tammy Duckworth, Congressman Brad Schneider, Illinois State Senator Julie Morrison, and Illinois State Representative Bob Morgan for coming to support our community and for providing every available resource.

I want to thank our first responders for their bravery and extraordinary efforts today. Our police and firefighters saved countless lives with their responses -- running into danger and taking immediate action to save others. We are grateful for these selfless acts. We know there were members of our community who rendered aid and assistance as well, and we thank each and every one of you for those efforts.

I also want to acknowledge and thank numerous agencies for their support including American Red Cross, World Central Kitchen, Lakeshore Country Club, Northmoor Country Club, Soul and Smoke food truck, Catering by Michaels, Northern Illinois Critical Incident Stress Management, local clergy and many other individuals and agencies have stepped up to provide food and support for our first responders. We are grateful for their generosity.

Our community, like so many before us, is devastated. It's impossible to imagine the pain of this kind of tragedy until it happens in your backyard. Gun violence - a mass shooting such as this casts a much wider net of agony than what the public is typically exposed to; it's a crisis that devastates entire families and communities in a single moment and we know will take time to heal.

Tomorrow the President will order our flags to fly at half-mast, and many public programs have been canceled. Please check with your camps and activities to see if they are operating. In the days and weeks ahead we will come together as a community to mourn and begin the path of healing. I will share more information as it is available.

Road and Business Closures

Numerous roads will remain closed in central downtown Highland Park for the FBI investigation, and many businesses will remain closed. The area closure spans Laurel Avenue from First Street to Elm Place and Green Bay Road from First Street to Elm Place (map below). Detours will be established, but please limit your travel only to essential business in Highland Park. The City is reaching out to business owners to share information, and will work with them to reopen as soon as possible.

Counseling Resources

A coordinated effort is also being made to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available at Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Ave., for community members in need of assistance, tomorrow from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. No appointment is necessary. The Vine Ave. entrance will be open and anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services will need to have a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school.

The theme of this year's parade was community -- and while we are hurting -- we know that we will come together and support each other, as we always do, in difficult times. We are Highland Park strong.

Nancy R. Rotering, Mayor
City of Highland Park, IL

Sincerely,

Laura Frey, CPRP

Manager of Senior Services

847.432.4110

www.cityhpil.com

Highland Park Senior Center
1201 Park Avenue West – Highland Park

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

This is the Email Security Gateway at host spam1.cityhpil.com.

I'm sorry to inform you that the message below could not be delivered.
When delivery was attempted, the following error was returned.

[redacted]: host mx03.oxsus-vadesecure.net[51.81.232.218] said: 550 5.7.1 Connection refused - ELNK001_403 - https://postmaster-earthlink.vadesecure.com/inbound_error_codes/#_403 (in reply to RCPT TO command)

Reporting-MTA: dns; spam1.cityhpil.com
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Queue-ID: 1603A38F473
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Sender: rfc822; LFrey@cityhpil.com
Arrival-Date: Mon, 4 Jul 2022 23:48:49 -0500 (CDT)

Final-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Original-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Action: failed
Status: 5.7.1
Remote-MTA: dns; mx03.oxsus-vadesecure.net
Diagnostic-Code: smtp; 550 5.7.1 Connection refused - ELNK001_403 -
https://postmaster-earthlink.vadesecure.com/inbound_error_codes/#_403

From: Frey, Laura <LFrey@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 10:18 PM
Subject: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule
Attachments: image002.png

Dear Members and Friends,

On behalf of the Senior Center staff, we are devastated and heart-broken over the senseless act of violence against our community, that occurred during today's 4th of July parade. Our hearts go out to those who lost their lives and those who were injured - and to their families and loved ones as well.

After thoughtful consideration, we have decided that the Senior Center will be open tomorrow, and that all classes and activities will be held as scheduled. We hope this decision will allow us to grieve together and just maybe we can begin to heal together as well.

As a life-long resident of Highland Park who lives and works in this beloved community – the pain is palpable – and we are experiencing this pain together. The outpouring of love and support our community has shown – is one of the reasons I love Highland Park. Together, we will get through this.

If you are seeking support after today's tragic events, you are invited to participate in a coordinated effort to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available for community members in need of support. Counseling will be available at the Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Avenue tomorrow (Tuesday) from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM; please enter through the Vine Avenue entrance. Anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services, will need to present a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school; no appointments are necessary.

Message from Mayor Rotering

Today was the bloodiest day that we have ever experienced in Highland Park. This morning at approximately 10:14 AM a shooter opened fire with an assault weapon on a crowd attending our 4th of July parade. We know at this time that six individuals lost their lives and at least 24 were injured. Our hearts go out to the victims, families, and our community.

The attack prompted an immediate and well-coordinated response from multiple law enforcement agencies at the Federal, State, County, and local levels. A suspect, Robert "Bobby" Crimo III (age 22 of Highwood, Ill.) was identified and a massive manhunt ensued.

At approximately 6:30 p.m., the suspect was apprehended on Route 41 at Westleigh Road. He was taken into custody without incident and is currently being processed through the Highland Park Police Department.

Throughout the day we have received offers of support and resources from public officials and agencies including President Biden. Fellow mayors have reached out from across the country, many who lead communities that have experienced this pain and tragedy. We thank Governor J.B. Pritzker, Senator Richard Durbin, Senator Tammy Duckworth, Congressman Brad Schneider, Illinois State Senator Julie Morrison, and Illinois State Representative Bob Morgan for coming to support our community and for providing every available resource.

I want to thank our first responders for their bravery and extraordinary efforts today. Our police and firefighters saved countless lives with their responses -- running into danger and taking immediate action to save others. We are grateful for these selfless acts. We know there were members of our community who rendered aid and assistance as well, and we thank each and every one of you for those efforts.

I also want to acknowledge and thank numerous agencies for their support including American Red Cross, World Central Kitchen, Lakeshore Country Club, Northmoor Country Club, Soul and Smoke food truck, Catering by Michaels, Northern Illinois Critical Incident Stress Management, local clergy and many other individuals and agencies have stepped up to provide food and support for our first responders. We are grateful for their generosity.

Our community, like so many before us, is devastated. It's impossible to imagine the pain of this kind of tragedy until it happens in your backyard. Gun violence - a mass shooting such as this casts a much wider net of agony than what the public is typically exposed to; it's a crisis that devastates entire families and communities in a single moment and we know will take time to heal.

Tomorrow the President will order our flags to fly at half-mast, and many public programs have been canceled. Please check with your camps and activities to see if they are operating. In the days and weeks ahead we will come together as a community to mourn and begin the path of healing. I will share more information as it is available.

Road and Business Closures

Numerous roads will remain closed in central downtown Highland Park for the FBI investigation, and many businesses will remain closed. The area closure spans Laurel Avenue from First Street to Elm Place and Green Bay Road from First Street to Elm Place (map below). Detours will be established, but please limit your travel only to essential business in Highland Park. The City is reaching out to business owners to share information, and will work with them to reopen as soon as possible.

Counseling Resources

A coordinated effort is also being made to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available at Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Ave., for community members in need of assistance, tomorrow from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. No appointment is necessary. The Vine Ave. entrance will be open and anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services will need to have a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school.

The theme of this year's parade was community -- and while we are hurting -- we know that we will come together and support each other, as we always do, in difficult times. We are Highland Park strong.

Nancy R. Rotering, Mayor
City of Highland Park, IL

Sincerely,

Laura Frey, CPRP

Manager of Senior Services

847.432.4110

www.cityhpil.com

Highland Park Senior Center
1201 Park Avenue West – Highland Park

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

This is the Email Security Gateway at host spam1.cityhpil.com.

I'm sorry to inform you that the message below could not be delivered.
When delivery was attempted, the following error was returned.

<[redacted]>: host mx-aol.mail.gm0.yahoodns.net[67.195.204.80] said: 552
1 Requested mail action aborted, mailbox not found (in reply to end of DATA
command)

Reporting-MTA: dns; spam1.cityhpil.com
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Queue-ID: 5646738F474
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Sender: rfc822; LFrey@cityhpil.com
Arrival-Date: Mon, 4 Jul 2022 23:48:49 -0500 (CDT)

Final-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Original-Recipient: rfc822[redacted]
Action: failed
Status: 5.0.0
Remote-MTA: dns; mx-aol.mail.gm0.yahoodns.net
Diagnostic-Code: smtp; 552 1 Requested mail action aborted, mailbox not found

From: Frey, Laura <LFrey@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 10:18 PM
Subject: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule
Attachments: image002.png

Dear Members and Friends,

On behalf of the Senior Center staff, we are devastated and heart-broken over the senseless act of violence against our community, that occurred during today's 4th of July parade. Our hearts go out to those who lost their lives and those who were injured - and to their families and loved ones as well.

After thoughtful consideration, we have decided that the Senior Center will be open tomorrow, and that all classes and activities will be held as scheduled. We hope this decision will allow us to grieve together and just maybe we can begin to heal together as well.

As a life-long resident of Highland Park who lives and works in this beloved community – the pain is palpable – and we are experiencing this pain together. The outpouring of love and support our community has shown – is one of the reasons I love Highland Park. Together, we will get through this.

If you are seeking support after today's tragic events, you are invited to participate in a coordinated effort to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available for community members in need of support. Counseling will be available at the Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Avenue tomorrow (Tuesday) from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM; please enter through the Vine Avenue entrance. Anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services, will need to present a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school; no appointments are necessary.

Message from Mayor Rotering

Today was the bloodiest day that we have ever experienced in Highland Park. This morning at approximately 10:14 AM a shooter opened fire with an assault weapon on a crowd attending our 4th of July parade. We know at this time that six individuals lost their lives and at least 24 were injured. Our hearts go out to the victims, families, and our community.

The attack prompted an immediate and well-coordinated response from multiple law enforcement agencies at the Federal, State, County, and local levels. A suspect, Robert "Bobby" Crimo III (age 22 of Highwood, Ill.) was identified and a massive manhunt ensued.

At approximately 6:30 p.m., the suspect was apprehended on Route 41 at Westleigh Road. He was taken into custody without incident and is currently being processed through the Highland Park Police Department.

Throughout the day we have received offers of support and resources from public officials and agencies including President Biden. Fellow mayors have reached out from across the country, many who lead communities that have experienced this pain and tragedy. We thank Governor J.B. Pritzker, Senator Richard Durbin, Senator Tammy Duckworth, Congressman Brad Schneider, Illinois State Senator Julie Morrison, and Illinois State Representative Bob Morgan for coming to support our community and for providing every available resource.

I want to thank our first responders for their bravery and extraordinary efforts today. Our police and firefighters saved countless lives with their responses -- running into danger and taking immediate action to save others. We are grateful for these selfless acts. We know there were members of our community who rendered aid and assistance as well, and we thank each and every one of you for those efforts.

I also want to acknowledge and thank numerous agencies for their support including American Red Cross, World Central Kitchen, Lakeshore Country Club, Northmoor Country Club, Soul and Smoke food truck, Catering by Michaels, Northern Illinois Critical Incident Stress Management, local clergy and many other individuals and agencies have stepped up to provide food and support for our first responders. We are grateful for their generosity.

Our community, like so many before us, is devastated. It's impossible to imagine the pain of this kind of tragedy until it happens in your backyard. Gun violence - a mass shooting such as this casts a much wider net of agony than what the public is typically exposed to; it's a crisis that devastates entire families and communities in a single moment and we know will take time to heal.

Tomorrow the President will order our flags to fly at half-mast, and many public programs have been canceled. Please check with your camps and activities to see if they are operating. In the days and weeks ahead we will come together as a community to mourn and begin the path of healing. I will share more information as it is available.

Road and Business Closures

Numerous roads will remain closed in central downtown Highland Park for the FBI investigation, and many businesses will remain closed. The area closure spans Laurel Avenue from First Street to Elm Place and Green Bay Road from First Street to Elm Place (map below). Detours will be established, but please limit your travel only to essential business in Highland Park. The City is reaching out to business owners to share information, and will work with them to reopen as soon as possible.

Counseling Resources

A coordinated effort is also being made to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available at Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Ave., for community members in need of assistance, tomorrow from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. No appointment is necessary. The Vine Ave. entrance will be open and anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services will need to have a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school.

The theme of this year's parade was community -- and while we are hurting -- we know that we will come together and support each other, as we always do, in difficult times. We are Highland Park strong.

Nancy R. Rotering, Mayor
City of Highland Park, IL

Sincerely,

Laura Frey, CPRP

Manager of Senior Services

847.432.4110

www.cityhpil.com

Highland Park Senior Center
1201 Park Avenue West – Highland Park

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

This is the Email Security Gateway at host spam1.cityhpil.com.

I'm sorry to inform you that the message below could not be delivered.
When delivery was attempted, the following error was returned.

[redacted]>: Host or domain name not found. Name service error for name=i.cloud.com type=A: Host not found

Reporting-MTA: dns; spam1.cityhpil.com
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Queue-ID: 625E338F473
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Sender: rfc822; LFrey@cityhpil.com
Arrival-Date: Mon, 4 Jul 2022 23:48:54 -0500 (CDT)

Final-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Original-Recipient: rfc822[redacted]
Action: failed
Status: 5.4.4
Diagnostic-Code: X-Email-Security-Gateway; Host or domain name not found. Name service error for name=i.cloud.com type=A: Host not found

From: Frey, Laura <LFrey@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 10:18 PM
Subject: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule
Attachments: image002.png

Dear Members and Friends,

On behalf of the Senior Center staff, we are devastated and heart-broken over the senseless act of violence against our community, that occurred during today's 4th of July parade. Our hearts go out to those who lost their lives and those who were injured - and to their families and loved ones as well.

After thoughtful consideration, we have decided that the Senior Center will be open tomorrow, and that all classes and activities will be held as scheduled. We hope this decision will allow us to grieve together and just maybe we can begin to heal together as well.

As a life-long resident of Highland Park who lives and works in this beloved community – the pain is palpable – and we are experiencing this pain together. The outpouring of love and support our community has shown – is one of the reasons I love Highland Park. Together, we will get through this.

If you are seeking support after today's tragic events, you are invited to participate in a coordinated effort to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available for community members in need of support. Counseling will be available at the Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Avenue tomorrow (Tuesday) from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM; please enter through the Vine Avenue entrance. Anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services, will need to present a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school; no appointments are necessary.

Message from Mayor Rotering

Today was the bloodiest day that we have ever experienced in Highland Park. This morning at approximately 10:14 AM a shooter opened fire with an assault weapon on a crowd attending our 4th of July parade. We know at this time that six individuals lost their lives and at least 24 were injured. Our hearts go out to the victims, families, and our community.

The attack prompted an immediate and well-coordinated response from multiple law enforcement agencies at the Federal, State, County, and local levels. A suspect, Robert "Bobby" Crimo III (age 22 of Highwood, Ill.) was identified and a massive manhunt ensued.

At approximately 6:30 p.m., the suspect was apprehended on Route 41 at Westleigh Road. He was taken into custody without incident and is currently being processed through the Highland Park Police Department.

Throughout the day we have received offers of support and resources from public officials and agencies including President Biden. Fellow mayors have reached out from across the country, many who lead communities that have experienced this pain and tragedy. We thank Governor J.B. Pritzker, Senator Richard Durbin, Senator Tammy Duckworth, Congressman Brad Schneider, Illinois State Senator Julie Morrison, and Illinois State Representative Bob Morgan for coming to support our community and for providing every available resource.

I want to thank our first responders for their bravery and extraordinary efforts today. Our police and firefighters saved countless lives with their responses -- running into danger and taking immediate action to save others. We are grateful for these selfless acts. We know there were members of our community who rendered aid and assistance as well, and we thank each and every one of you for those efforts.

I also want to acknowledge and thank numerous agencies for their support including American Red Cross, World Central Kitchen, Lakeshore Country Club, Northmoor Country Club, Soul and Smoke food truck, Catering by Michaels, Northern Illinois Critical Incident Stress Management, local clergy and many other individuals and agencies have stepped up to provide food and support for our first responders. We are grateful for their generosity.

Our community, like so many before us, is devastated. It's impossible to imagine the pain of this kind of tragedy until it happens in your backyard. Gun violence - a mass shooting such as this casts a much wider net of agony than what the public is typically exposed to; it's a crisis that devastates entire families and communities in a single moment and we know will take time to heal.

Tomorrow the President will order our flags to fly at half-mast, and many public programs have been canceled. Please check with your camps and activities to see if they are operating. In the days and weeks ahead we will come together as a community to mourn and begin the path of healing. I will share more information as it is available.

Road and Business Closures

Numerous roads will remain closed in central downtown Highland Park for the FBI investigation, and many businesses will remain closed. The area closure spans Laurel Avenue from First Street to Elm Place and Green Bay Road from First Street to Elm Place (map below). Detours will be established, but please limit your travel only to essential business in Highland Park. The City is reaching out to business owners to share information, and will work with them to reopen as soon as possible.

Counseling Resources

A coordinated effort is also being made to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available at Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Ave., for community members in need of assistance, tomorrow from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. No appointment is necessary. The Vine Ave. entrance will be open and anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services will need to have a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school.

The theme of this year's parade was community -- and while we are hurting -- we know that we will come together and support each other, as we always do, in difficult times. We are Highland Park strong.

Nancy R. Rotering, Mayor
City of Highland Park, IL

Sincerely,

Laura Frey, CPRP

Manager of Senior Services

847.432.4110

www.cityhpil.com

Highland Park Senior Center
1201 Park Avenue West – Highland Park

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

This is the Email Security Gateway at host spam1.cityhpil.com.

I'm sorry to inform you that the message below could not be delivered.
When delivery was attempted, the following error was returned.

<[redacted]host mx2a1.comcast.net[96.103.145.164] said: 550 5.1.1
Not our Customer (in reply to RCPT TO command)

Reporting-MTA: dns; spam1.cityhpil.com
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Queue-ID: 16B0138F473
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Sender: rfc822; LFrey@cityhpil.com
Arrival-Date: Mon, 4 Jul 2022 23:49:00 -0500 (CDT)

Final-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Original-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Action: failed
Status: 5.1.1
Remote-MTA: dns; mx2a1.comcast.net
Diagnostic-Code: smtp; 550 5.1.1 Not our Customer

From: Frey, Laura <LFrey@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 10:18 PM
Subject: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule
Attachments: image002.png

Dear Members and Friends,

On behalf of the Senior Center staff, we are devastated and heart-broken over the senseless act of violence against our community, that occurred during today's 4th of July parade. Our hearts go out to those who lost their lives and those who were injured - and to their families and loved ones as well.

After thoughtful consideration, we have decided that the Senior Center will be open tomorrow, and that all classes and activities will be held as scheduled. We hope this decision will allow us to grieve together and just maybe we can begin to heal together as well.

As a life-long resident of Highland Park who lives and works in this beloved community – the pain is palpable – and we are experiencing this pain together. The outpouring of love and support our community has shown – is one of the reasons I love Highland Park. Together, we will get through this.

If you are seeking support after today's tragic events, you are invited to participate in a coordinated effort to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available for community members in need of support. Counseling will be available at the Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Avenue tomorrow (Tuesday) from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM; please enter through the Vine Avenue entrance. Anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services, will need to present a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school; no appointments are necessary.

Message from Mayor Rotering

Today was the bloodiest day that we have ever experienced in Highland Park. This morning at approximately 10:14 AM a shooter opened fire with an assault weapon on a crowd attending our 4th of July parade. We know at this time that six individuals lost their lives and at least 24 were injured. Our hearts go out to the victims, families, and our community.

The attack prompted an immediate and well-coordinated response from multiple law enforcement agencies at the Federal, State, County, and local levels. A suspect, Robert "Bobby" Crimo III (age 22 of Highwood, Ill.) was identified and a massive manhunt ensued.

At approximately 6:30 p.m., the suspect was apprehended on Route 41 at Westleigh Road. He was taken into custody without incident and is currently being processed through the Highland Park Police Department.

Throughout the day we have received offers of support and resources from public officials and agencies including President Biden. Fellow mayors have reached out from across the country, many who lead communities that have experienced this pain and tragedy. We thank Governor J.B. Pritzker, Senator Richard Durbin, Senator Tammy Duckworth, Congressman Brad Schneider, Illinois State Senator Julie Morrison, and Illinois State Representative Bob Morgan for coming to support our community and for providing every available resource.

I want to thank our first responders for their bravery and extraordinary efforts today. Our police and firefighters saved countless lives with their responses -- running into danger and taking immediate action to save others. We are grateful for these selfless acts. We know there were members of our community who rendered aid and assistance as well, and we thank each and every one of you for those efforts.

I also want to acknowledge and thank numerous agencies for their support including American Red Cross, World Central Kitchen, Lakeshore Country Club, Northmoor Country Club, Soul and Smoke food truck, Catering by Michaels, Northern Illinois Critical Incident Stress Management, local clergy and many other individuals and agencies have stepped up to provide food and support for our first responders. We are grateful for their generosity.

Our community, like so many before us, is devastated. It's impossible to imagine the pain of this kind of tragedy until it happens in your backyard. Gun violence - a mass shooting such as this casts a much wider net of agony than what the public is typically exposed to; it's a crisis that devastates entire families and communities in a single moment and we know will take time to heal.

Tomorrow the President will order our flags to fly at half-mast, and many public programs have been canceled. Please check with your camps and activities to see if they are operating. In the days and weeks ahead we will come together as a community to mourn and begin the path of healing. I will share more information as it is available.

Road and Business Closures

Numerous roads will remain closed in central downtown Highland Park for the FBI investigation, and many businesses will remain closed. The area closure spans Laurel Avenue from First Street to Elm Place and Green Bay Road from First Street to Elm Place (map below). Detours will be established, but please limit your travel only to essential business in Highland Park. The City is reaching out to business owners to share information, and will work with them to reopen as soon as possible.

Counseling Resources

A coordinated effort is also being made to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available at Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Ave., for community members in need of assistance, tomorrow from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. No appointment is necessary. The Vine Ave. entrance will be open and anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services will need to have a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school.

The theme of this year's parade was community -- and while we are hurting -- we know that we will come together and support each other, as we always do, in difficult times. We are Highland Park strong.

Nancy R. Rotering, Mayor
City of Highland Park, IL

Sincerely,

Laura Frey, CPRP

Manager of Senior Services

847.432.4110

www.cityhpil.com

Highland Park Senior Center
1201 Park Avenue West – Highland Park

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

From: Mail Delivery System <MAILER-DAEMON@LOCALHOST>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:49 PM
To: LFrey@cityhpil.com
Subject: Undelivered Mail Returned to Sender
Attachments: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

This is the Email Security Gateway at host spam1.cityhpil.com.

I'm sorry to inform you that the message below could not be delivered.
When delivery was attempted, the following error was returned.

[redacted] host mx01.oxsus-vadesecure.net[51.81.61.70] said: 550 5.7.1 Connection refused - ELNK001_403 - https://postmaster-earthlink.vadesecure.com/inbound_error_codes/#_403 (in reply to RCPT TO command)

Reporting-MTA: dns; spam1.cityhpil.com
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Queue-ID: 6279338F479
X-Email-Security-Gateway-Sender: rfc822; LFrey@cityhpil.com
Arrival-Date: Mon, 4 Jul 2022 23:49:07 -0500 (CDT)

Final-Recipient: rfc822; [redacted]
Original-Recipient: rfc822 [redacted]
Action: failed
Status: 5.7.1
Remote-MTA: dns; mx01.oxsus-vadesecure.net
Diagnostic-Code: smtp; 550 5.7.1 Connection refused - ELNK001_403 -
https://postmaster-earthlink.vadesecure.com/inbound_error_codes/#_403

From: Frey, Laura <LFrey@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 10:18 PM
Subject: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule

Dear Members and Friends,

On behalf of the Senior Center staff, we are devastated and heart-broken over the senseless act of violence against our community, that occurred during today's 4th of July parade. Our hearts go out to those who lost their lives and those who were injured - and to their families and loved ones as well.

After thoughtful consideration, we have decided that the Senior Center will be open tomorrow, and that all classes and activities will be held as scheduled. We hope this decision will allow us to grieve together and just maybe we can begin to heal together as well.

As a life-long resident of Highland Park who lives and works in this beloved community – the pain is palpable – and we are experiencing this pain together. The outpouring of love and support our community has shown – is one of the reasons I love Highland Park. Together, we will get through this.

If you are seeking support after today's tragic events, you are invited to participate in a coordinated effort to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available for community members in need of support. Counseling will be available at the Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Avenue tomorrow (Tuesday) from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM; please enter through the Vine Avenue entrance. Anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services, will need to present a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school; no appointments are necessary.

Message from Mayor Rotering

Today was the bloodiest day that we have ever experienced in Highland Park. This morning at approximately 10:14 AM a shooter opened fire with an assault weapon on a crowd attending our 4th of July parade. We know at this time that six individuals lost their lives and at least 24 were injured. Our hearts go out to the victims, families, and our community.

The attack prompted an immediate and well-coordinated response from multiple law enforcement agencies at the Federal, State, County, and local levels. A suspect, Robert "Bobby" Crimo III (age 22 of Highwood, Ill.) was identified and a massive manhunt ensued.

At approximately 6:30 p.m., the suspect was apprehended on Route 41 at Westleigh Road. He was taken into custody without incident and is currently being processed through the Highland Park Police Department.

Throughout the day we have received offers of support and resources from public officials and agencies including President Biden. Fellow mayors have reached out from across the country, many who lead communities that have experienced this pain and tragedy. We thank Governor J.B. Pritzker, Senator Richard Durbin, Senator Tammy Duckworth, Congressman Brad Schneider, Illinois State Senator Julie Morrison, and Illinois State Representative Bob Morgan for coming to support our community and for providing every available resource.

I want to thank our first responders for their bravery and extraordinary efforts today. Our police and firefighters saved countless lives with their responses -- running into danger and taking immediate action to save others. We are grateful for these selfless acts. We know there were members of our community who rendered aid and assistance as well, and we thank each and every one of you for those efforts.

I also want to acknowledge and thank numerous agencies for their support including American Red Cross, World Central Kitchen, Lakeshore Country Club, Northmoor Country Club, Soul and Smoke food truck, Catering by Michaels, Northern Illinois Critical Incident Stress Management, local clergy and many other individuals and agencies have stepped up to provide food and support for our first responders. We are grateful for their generosity.

Our community, like so many before us, is devastated. It's impossible to imagine the pain of this kind of tragedy until it happens in your backyard. Gun violence - a mass shooting such as this casts a much wider net of agony than what the public is typically exposed to; it's a crisis that devastates entire families and communities in a single moment and we know will take time to heal.

Tomorrow the President will order our flags to fly at half-mast, and many public programs have been canceled. Please check with your camps and activities to see if they are operating. In the days and weeks ahead we will come together as a community to mourn and begin the path of healing. I will share more information as it is available.

Road and Business Closures

Numerous roads will remain closed in central downtown Highland Park for the FBI investigation, and many businesses will remain closed. The area closure spans Laurel Avenue from First Street to Elm Place and Green Bay Road from First Street to Elm Place (map below). Detours will be established, but please limit your travel only to essential business in Highland Park. The City is reaching out to business owners to share information, and will work with them to reopen as soon as possible.

Counseling Resources

A coordinated effort is also being made to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available at Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Ave., for community members in need of assistance, tomorrow from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. No appointment is necessary. The Vine Ave. entrance will be open and anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services will need to have a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school.

The theme of this year's parade was community -- and while we are hurting -- we know that we will come together and support each other, as we always do, in difficult times. We are Highland Park strong.

Nancy R. Rotering, Mayor
City of Highland Park, IL

Sincerely,

Laura Frey, CPRP

Manager of Senior Services

847.432.4110

www.cityhpil.com

Highland Park Senior Center
1201 Park Avenue West – Highland Park

From: acivitello@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:50 PM
To: gneukirch@cityhpil.com; ejason@cityhpil.com
Subject: FW: A gathering in Memorial Park tomorrow evening at 7 pm
Attachments: image002.gif; image003.png; image004.png; image005.png; image006.png

FYI below – do we want to centralize these requests to one point of contact?

Amanda Civitello
Communications Manager
she / her / hers

City of Highland Park
1707 St Johns Avenue
Highland Park, Illinois 60035

847.926.1043

acivitello@cityhpil.com
cityhpil.com

From: Rector at Trinity Parish <Rector@trinitychurchhp.org>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 9:29 PM
To: cityhp <cityhp@cityhpil.com>
Subject: A gathering in Memorial Park tomorrow evening at 7 pm

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

To whom it may concern,

The congregations of Trinity Episcopal Church in Highland Park and Highland Park Presbyterian Church plan to hold a brief vigil tomorrow (Tuesday) at 7 pm at Memorial Park on Laurel Avenue, which lies between our two congregations. We intend it to be an interfaith gathering of about 30 minutes. Please let us know who else we might contact to make aware.

Regards,
Bryan Cones

Bryan Cones (he/him)
Pastor, Trinity Episcopal Church

rector@trinitychurchhp.org
847 432 6653 (office)
773 786 6803 (cell/text/pastoral emergency)

I am generally in the office Sundays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. I check emails on those days and on Saturday mornings. Mondays and Tuesdays are my days off. In case of pastoral emergency, please contact me by my cell number above.

From: [redacted]
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:52 PM
To: Frey, Laura
Subject: Re: Highland Park Senior Center Update - Tragedy, Resources, and Schedule
Attachments: image003.png

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

A very good and smart decision.

Thanks,

Marvin

On Jul 4, 2022, at 10:48 PM, Frey, Laura <LFrey@cityhpil.com> wrote:

Dear Members,

On behalf of the Senior Center staff, we are devastated and heart-broken over the senseless act of violence against our community, that occurred during today's 4th of July parade. Our hearts go out to those who lost their lives and those who were injured - and to their families and loved ones as well.

After thoughtful consideration, we have decided that the Senior Center will be open tomorrow, and that all classes and activities will be held as scheduled. We hope this decision will allow us to grieve together and just maybe we can begin to heal together as well.

As a life-long resident of Highland Park who lives and works in this beloved community – the pain is palpable – and we are experiencing this pain together. The outpouring of love and support our community has shown – is one of the reasons I love Highland Park. Together, we will get through this.

If you are seeking support after today's tragic events, you are invited to participate in a coordinated effort to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available for community members in need of support. Counseling will be available at the Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Avenue tomorrow (Tuesday) from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM; please enter through the Vine Avenue entrance. Anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services, will need to present a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school; no appointments are necessary.

Message from Mayor Rotering

Today was the bloodiest day that we have ever experienced in Highland Park. This morning at approximately 10:14 AM a shooter opened fire with an assault weapon on a crowd attending

our 4th of July parade. We know at this time that six individuals lost their lives and at least 24 were injured. Our hearts go out to the victims, families, and our community.

The attack prompted an immediate and well-coordinated response from multiple law enforcement agencies at the Federal, State, County, and local levels. A suspect, Robert "Bobby" Crimo III (age 22 of Highwood, Ill.) was identified and a massive manhunt ensued.

At approximately 6:30 p.m., the suspect was apprehended on Route 41 at Westleigh Road. He was taken into custody without incident and is currently being processed through the Highland Park Police Department.

Throughout the day we have received offers of support and resources from public officials and agencies including President Biden. Fellow mayors have reached out from across the country, many who lead communities that have experienced this pain and tragedy. We thank Governor J.B. Pritzker, Senator Richard Durbin, Senator Tammy Duckworth, Congressman Brad Schneider, Illinois State Senator Julie Morrison, and Illinois State Representative Bob Morgan for coming to support our community and for providing every available resource.

I want to thank our first responders for their bravery and extraordinary efforts today. Our police and firefighters saved countless lives with their responses -- running into danger and taking immediate action to save others. We are grateful for these selfless acts. We know there were members of our community who rendered aid and assistance as well, and we thank each and every one of you for those efforts.

I also want to acknowledge and thank numerous agencies for their support including American Red Cross, World Central Kitchen, Lakeshore Country Club, Northmoor Country Club, Soul and Smoke food truck, Catering by Michaels, Northern Illinois Critical Incident Stress Management, local clergy and many other individuals and agencies have stepped up to provide food and support for our first responders. We are grateful for their generosity.

Our community, like so many before us, is devastated. It's impossible to imagine the pain of this kind of tragedy until it happens in your backyard. Gun violence - a mass shooting such as this casts a much wider net of agony than what the public is typically exposed to; it's a crisis that devastates entire families and communities in a single moment and we know will take time to heal.

Tomorrow the President will order our flags to fly at half-mast, and many public programs have been canceled. Please check with your camps and activities to see if they are operating. In the days and weeks ahead we will come together as a community to mourn and begin the path of healing. I will share more information as it is available.

Road and Business Closures

Numerous roads will remain closed in central downtown Highland Park for the FBI investigation, and many businesses will remain closed. The area closure spans Laurel Avenue from First Street to Elm Place and Green Bay Road from First Street to Elm Place (map below). Detours will be established, but please limit your travel only to essential business in Highland Park. The City is reaching out to business owners to share information, and will work with them to reopen as soon as possible.

Counseling Resources

A coordinated effort is also being made to provide crisis counseling to anyone in need. The City of Highland Park, District 112, District 113, and the Park District will have counselors available at Highland Park High School, 433 Vine Ave., for community members in need of assistance, tomorrow from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. No appointment is necessary. The Vine Ave. entrance will be open and anyone who wishes to take advantage of counseling services will need to have a valid driver's license or student ID to be cleared to enter the school.

The theme of this year's parade was community -- and while we are hurting -- we know that we will come together and support each other, as we always do, in difficult times. We are Highland Park strong.

Nancy R. Rotering, Mayor
City of Highland Park, IL

Sincerely,

Laura Frey, CPRP

Manager of Senior Services

847.432.4110

www.cityhpil.com

Highland Park Senior Center
1201 Park Avenue West – Highland Park

From: ejason@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:52 PM
To: acivitello@cityhpil.com; gneukirch@cityhpil.com
Subject: Re: A gathering in Memorial Park tomorrow evening at 7 pm
Attachments: image002.gif; image003.png; image004.png; image005.png; image006.png; image002.gif; image003.png; image004.png; image005.png; image006.png

Agree there needs to be larger conversation to Bills point in stretching resources

Get Outlook for iOS

From: Civitello, Amanda <acivitello@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:49:51 PM
To: Neukirch, Ghida <gneukirch@cityhpil.com>; Jason, Erin <ejason@cityhpil.com>
Subject: FW: A gathering in Memorial Park tomorrow evening at 7 pm

FYI below – do we want to centralize these requests to one point of contact?

Amanda Civitello
Communications Manager
she / her / hers

City of Highland Park
1707 St Johns Avenue
Highland Park, Illinois 60035

847.926.1043

acivitello@cityhpil.com
cityhpil.com

From: Rector at Trinity Parish <Rector@trinitychurchhp.org>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 9:29 PM
To: cityhp <cityhp@cityhpil.com>
Subject: A gathering in Memorial Park tomorrow evening at 7 pm

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

To whom it may concern,

The congregations of Trinity Episcopal Church in Highland Park and Highland Park Presbyterian Church plan to hold a brief vigil tomorrow (Tuesday) at 7 pm at Memorial Park on Laurel Avenue, which lies between our two congregations. We intend it to be an interfaith gathering of about 30 minutes. Please let us know who else we might contact to make aware.

Regards,
Bryan Cones

Bryan Cones (he/him)
Pastor, Trinity Episcopal Church
rector@trinitychurchhp.org
847 432 6653 (office)
773 786 6803 (cell/text/pastoral emergency)

I am generally in the office Sundays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. I check emails on those days and on Saturday mornings. Mondays and Tuesdays are my days off. In case of pastoral emergency, please contact me by my cell number above.

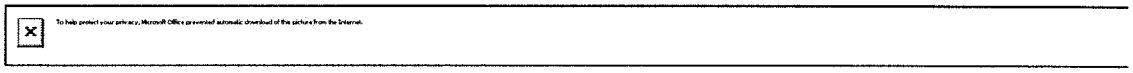
From: Twitter <info@twitter.com>
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:54 PM
To: Highland Park, IL
Subject: ABC 7 Chicago shared "Highland Park parade shooting victims range in...

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

What's happening

https://ea.twimg.com/email/self_serve/media/spacer_1x448-1539386215450.png" height="1" width="448" style="border:none;" />

ABC 7 Chicago shared



ABC7 Chicago

Highland Park parade shooting victims range in age from 8 to 85 years old, doctors say

Family members have started to identify some of the victims of the Highland Park parade shooting on July 4, which inj...

Read more at ABC7 Chicago

ABC 7 Chicago shared



ABC7 Chicago

Highland Park police respond to 'incident' in downtown area; 4th of July events canceled

Deerfield officials said there was a shooting in the north suburb.

Read more at ABC7 Chicago

The Associated Press shared



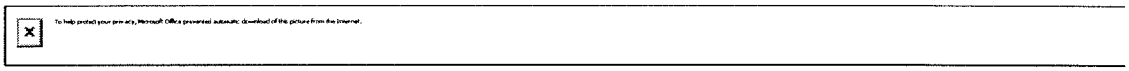
AP NEWS

6 dead, 24 wounded in shooting at Chicago-area July 4 parade

HIGHLAND PARK, Ill. (AP) — At least six people died and 24 were wounded in a shooting at a July Fourth parade in the ...

Read more at AP NEWS

WTTW (Chicago PBS) shared



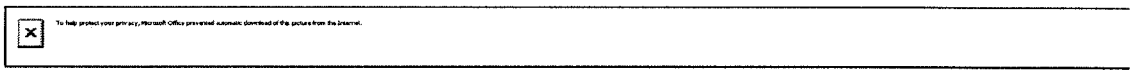
WTTW News

Column: As the Band Approached Us, the Gunshots Rang Out in Highland

Video: Shots ring out during the Fourth of July parade in Highland Park on July 4, 2022. At least 30 people were shot...

Read more at WTTW News

WTTW (Chicago PBS) shared



WTTW News

Police Respond to July 4 Parade in Highland Park Amid Reports of

Police are responding to a shooting at a July Fourth parade in a Chicago suburb, authorities said Monday. Authorities...

Read more at WTTW News

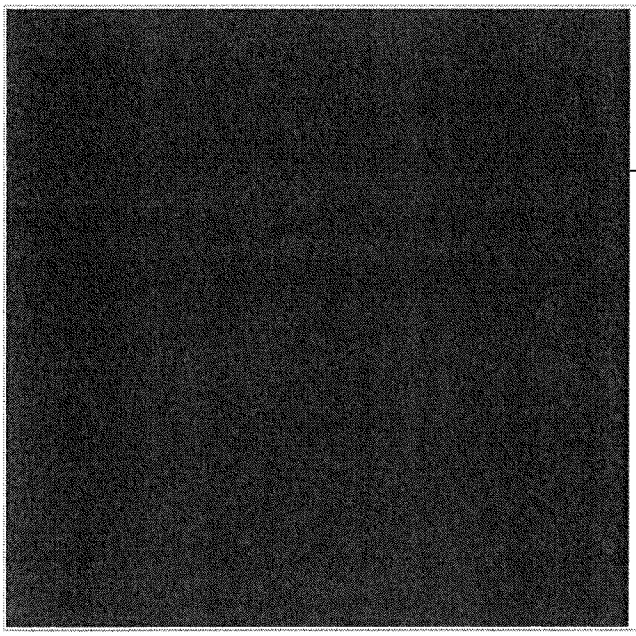
Nancy Loo and 1 other shared

WGN-TV

5 dead, 16 injured at Highland Park Fourth of July parade shooting

HIGHLAND PARK, Ill. — Five people were killed and 16 others were injured in a shooting at a Fourth of July parade in ...

Read more at WGN-TV



Find the people you know on Twitter

Sync contacts from your address book to find your friends on Twitter.

Sync your contacts

Help | Privacy | Reset password | Download app

We sent this email to @CityHPIL. Unsubscribe

Twitter, Inc. 1355 Market Street, Suite 900 San Francisco, CA 94103

From: acivitello@cityhpil.com
Sent: Monday, July 04, 2022 11:57 PM
To: irene.byon@nbcuni.com
Cc: Julie.Goldstein@nbcuni.com; Chelsea.Damberg@nbcuni.com; Hayley.Walker@nbcuni.com
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Interview w/ Mayor Rotering

Thanks, Irene – just confirming that we said 5:45 AM as the mayor has a 5:30 AM already scheduled with another network.

Amanda Civitello
Communications Manager
she / her / hers

City of Highland Park
1707 St Johns Avenue
Highland Park, Illinois 60035

847.926.1043

acivitello@cityhpil.com
cityhpil.com

From: Byon, Irene (NBCUniversal) <irene.byon@nbcuni.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 10:07 PM
To: Civitello, Amanda <acivitello@cityhpil.com>
Cc: Goldstein, Julie (NBCUniversal) <Julie.Goldstein@nbcuni.com>; Damberg, Chelsea (NBCUniversal) <Chelsea.Damberg@nbcuni.com>; Walker, Hayley (NBCUniversal) <Hayley.Walker@nbcuni.com>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Interview w/ Mayor Rotering

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Hi Amanda,
Here is the zoom link:

Topic: NBC Today Show / Mayor Nancy Rotering

Time: Jul 5, 2022 06:30 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

https://nbcumv.zoom.us/j/96156576776

Meeting ID: 961 5657 6776

Passcode: [redacted]

IRENE BYON | BOOKING PRODUCER | NBC NEWS | C: 619-200-1695

On Jul 4, 2022, at 7:53 PM, Byon, Irene (NBCUniversal) <irene.byon@nbcuni.com> wrote:

Thank you so much, Amanda!
Yes, we would love to have the mayor on with us for a pre tape at 5:45amCT/6:45amET.
I'm also cc'ing my colleagues Julie and Hayley who will help with any logistics of the interview overnight leading up to tomorrow morning.
We will send you the zoom link as soon as it is ready!
Also just wanted to double check if there's any chance mayor Rotering would be able to join us in person near the crime site for the pre tape? We totally understand it's so early in the morning and she's had an exhausting day.
Thank you again.

Sincerely,
Irene

IRENE BYON | BOOKING PRODUCER | NBC NEWS | C: 619-200-1695

On Jul 4, 2022, at 7:49 PM, Civitello, Amanda <acivitello@cityhpil.com> wrote:

Hi Irene –

Can Mayor Rotering do 5:45 AM for the Today Show via Zoom?

Let me know, thanks!

Amanda Civitello
Communications Manager
she / her / hers

City of Highland Park

1707 St Johns Avenue
Highland Park, Illinois 60035

847.926.1043

acivitello@cityhpil.com
cityhpil.com

From: Byon, Irene (NBCUniversal) <irene.byon@nbcuni.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 8:01 PM
To: Civitello, Amanda <acivitello@cityhpil.com>
Subject: RE: Media Release: Highland Park Strong: Grieving Together as a Community

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Thank you so much Amanda!

IRENE BYON | BOOKING PRODUCER | NBC NEWS | C: 619-200-1695

From: Civitello, Amanda <acivitello@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 8:56 PM
To: Civitello, Amanda <acivitello@cityhpil.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Media Release: Highland Park Strong: Grieving Together as a Community

Good evening,

Together, the City of Highland Park, the Park District of Highland Park, Highland Park High School / Township High School District 113, and North Shore School District 112 are grieving for the victims and the families of the horrific shooting today at what should have been a happy and joyous celebration. Counseling professionals will be available tomorrow for students, staff and community members at Highland Park High School (433 Vine Ave.) from 9:00 to 2:00. No appointment is necessary. Further details are available in the attached press release, which I have copied below for your convenience.

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions you might have. Thank you for your care and concern for our community.

Sincerely,
Amanda Civitello
Communications Manager
City of Highland Park, IL
acivitello@cityhpil.com / 224.707.7223

Highland Park Strong: Grieving Together as a Community

Highland Park, Illinois – Together, the City of Highland Park, the Park District of Highland Park, Highland Park High School / Township High School District 113, and North Shore School District 112 are grieving for the victims and the families of the horrific shooting today at what should have been a happy and joyous celebration.

Highland Park is a strong community, closely knit with shared values, priorities, and partnerships that were so clearly evident among the organizations, individuals, businesses, and entertainers participating in our parade today. As we grieve together as a community, we need to support each other as a community. In the aftermath of this unthinkable tragedy, we are stronger together.

Counseling professionals will be available tomorrow for students, staff and community members at Highland Park High School (433 Vine Ave.) from 9:00 to 2:00. No appointment is necessary, but only the Vine Street entrance will be open. Anyone who is not a current District 113 student or staff member who wishes to take advantage of counseling services will need to have a valid driver's license to be cleared to enter the school, which is the school's standard procedure for visitors to the school.

Amanda Civitello
Communications Manager
she / her / hers

City of Highland Park

1707 St Johns Avenue
Highland Park, Illinois 60035

847.926.1043

acivitello@cityhpil.com
cityhpil.com

From: Goldstein, Julie (NBCUniversal) <Julie.Goldstein@nbcuni.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 11:59 PM
To: Civitello, Amanda; Byon, Irene(NBCUniversal)
Cc: Damberg, Chelsea (NBCUniversal); Walker,Hayley (NBCUniversal)
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Interview w/ Mayor Rotering
Attachments: image005.png; image006.gif; image008.png; image009.png; image010.png; image011.png

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Hi Amanda!

Yes, 5:45am CT for the interview. As soon as the Mayor is finished with her first engagement, please call directly in to us. We normally ask that guests check in 10 minutes before, so as soon as the Mayor is able, we will be ready for her.

Thank you again for everything.
Best,
Julie

From: Civitello, Amanda <acivitello@cityhpil.com>
Date: Tuesday, July 5, 2022 at 12:57 AM
To: Byon, Irene (NBCUniversal) <irene.byon@nbcuni.com>
Cc: Goldstein, Julie (NBCUniversal) <Julie.Goldstein@nbcuni.com>, Damberg, Chelsea (NBCUniversal) <Chelsea.Damberg@nbcuni.com>, Walker, Hayley (NBCUniversal) <Hayley.Walker@nbcuni.com>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] Interview w/ Mayor Rotering

Thanks, Irene – just confirming that we said 5:45 AM as the mayor has a 5:30 AM already scheduled with another network.

Amanda Civitello
Communications Manager
she / her / hers

City of Highland Park
1707 St Johns Avenue
Highland Park, Illinois 60035

847.926.1043

acivitello@cityhpil.com
cityhpil.com

From: Byon, Irene (NBCUniversal) <irene.byon@nbcuni.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 10:07 PM

To: Civitello, Amanda <acivitello@cityhpil.com>
Cc: Goldstein, Julie (NBCUniversal) <Julie.Goldstein@nbcuni.com>; Damberg, Chelsea (NBCUniversal) <Chelsea.Damberg@nbcuni.com>; Walker, Hayley (NBCUniversal) <Hayley.Walker@nbcuni.com>
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Interview w/ Mayor Rotering

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Hi Amanda,
Here is the zoom link:

Topic: NBC Today Show / Mayor Nancy Rotering

Time: Jul 5, 2022 06:30 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

https://nbcumv.zoom.us/j/96156576776

Meeting ID: 961 5657 6776

Passcode: [redacted]

IRENE BYON | BOOKING PRODUCER | NBC NEWS | C: 619-200-1695

> On Jul 4, 2022, at 7:53 PM, Byon, Irene (NBCUniversal) <irene.byon@nbcuni.com> wrote:
>
> Thank you so much, Amanda!
> Yes, we would love to have the mayor on with us for a pre tape at 5:45amCT/6:45amET.
> I'm also cc'ing my colleagues Julie and Hayley who will help with any logistics of the interview overnight leading up to tomorrow morning.
> We will send you the zoom link as soon as it is ready!
> Also just wanted to double check if there's any chance mayor Rotering would be able to join us in person near the crime site for the pre tape? We totally understand it's so early in the morning and she's had an exhausting day.
> Thank you again.
>
> Sincerely,
> Irene
>
> IRENE BYON | BOOKING PRODUCER | NBC NEWS | C: 619-200-1695

On Jul 4, 2022, at 7:49 PM, Civitello, Amanda <acivitello@cityhpil.com> wrote:

Hi Irene –

Can Mayor Rotering do 5:45 AM for the Today Show via Zoom?

Let me know, thanks!

Amanda Civitello
Communications Manager
she / her / hers

City of Highland Park

1707 St Johns Avenue
Highland Park, Illinois 60035

847.926.1043

acivitello@cityhpil.com
cityhpil.com

From: Byon, Irene (NBCUniversal) <irene.byon@nbcuni.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 8:01 PM
To: Civitello, Amanda <acivitello@cityhpil.com>
Subject: RE: Media Release: Highland Park Strong: Grieving Together as a Community

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Thank you so much Amanda!

IRENE BYON | BOOKING PRODUCER | NBC NEWS | C: 619-200-1695

From: Civitello, Amanda <acivitello@cityhpil.com>
Sent: Monday, July 4, 2022 8:56 PM
To: Civitello, Amanda <acivitello@cityhpil.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Media Release: Highland Park Strong: Grieving Together as a Community

Good evening,

Together, the City of Highland Park, the Park District of Highland Park, Highland Park High School / Township High School District 113, and North Shore School District 112 are grieving for the victims and the families of the horrific shooting today at what should have been a happy and joyous

celebration. Counseling professionals will be available tomorrow for students, staff and community members at Highland Park High School (433 Vine Ave.) from 9:00 to 2:00. No appointment is necessary. Further details are available in the attached press release, which I have copied below for your convenience.

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions you might have. Thank you for your care and concern for our community.

Sincerely,
Amanda Civitello
Communications Manager
City of Highland Park, IL
acivitello@cityhpil.com / 224.707.7223

Highland Park Strong: Grieving Together as a Community

Highland Park, Illinois – Together, the City of Highland Park, the Park District of Highland Park, Highland Park High School / Township High School District 113, and North Shore School District 112 are grieving for the victims and the families of the horrific shooting today at what should have been a happy and joyous celebration.

Highland Park is a strong community, closely knit with shared values, priorities, and partnerships that were so clearly evident among the organizations, individuals, businesses, and entertainers participating in our parade today. As we grieve together as a community, we need to support each other as a community. In the aftermath of this unthinkable tragedy, we are stronger together.

Counseling professionals will be available tomorrow for students, staff and community members at Highland Park High School (433 Vine Ave.) from 9:00 to 2:00. No appointment is necessary, but only the Vine Street entrance will be open. Anyone who is not a current District 113 student or staff member who wishes to take advantage of counseling services will need to have a valid driver's license to be cleared to enter the school, which is the school's standard procedure for visitors to the school.

Amanda Civitello
Communications Manager
she / her / hers

City of Highland Park

1707 St Johns Avenue
Highland Park, Illinois 60035

847.926.1043

acivitello@cityhpil.com
cityhpil.com

