

Mahoning County District Board of Health

COMPREHENSIVE COMMUNICATION ANNEX



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

**Mahoning County
District Board of Health**

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Plan Creation Information

Created On:

September 20, 2004

Communication Lead:

Patricia Sweeney, Health Commissioner

Tracy Styka, Lead PIO and Website and Social Media Support

Ryan Tekac, PIO Team

Erica Horner, PIO Team

Julie Thompson, PIO Team and Website and Social Media Support

Susan Kovach, Preparedness Coordinator

Managers, Subject Matter Experts

Reviewed/Modified On:

August 1, 2017

January 5, 2017

July 15, 2016

June 23, 2015

May 14, 2015

January 14, 2015

July 15, 2014

December 16, 2013

Next Plan Review Date:

July 2018

The Mahoning County District Board of Health recognizes the need to communicate timely, accurate, and credible information.

Communication planning helps the Mahoning County District Board of Health deal effectively with both crisis/emergency and daily processing/release of information to the community. The following communication plan is a framework of action incorporating the ethical, professional, and guiding principles needed to communicate to the media, public, and employees with confidence and credibility.

Therefore, this Comprehensive Communication Plan, approved by the Mahoning County District Board of Health December 16, 2013 is the policy that the District's employees shall follow to communicate during daily and extraordinary events that impact our community.

Patricia Sweeney, Health Commissioner
Mahoning County District Board of health

Effective: 12/16/2013

I. INTRODUCTION

A Comprehensive Communication Plan is essential for successful communications with internal and external stakeholders on a daily basis and during crisis response. The purposes include:

- Build trust
- Disseminate accurate, timely information to protect the public's health
- Minimize or dispel misinformation or rumors
- Inform and instruct widely divergent audiences (e.g., employees, customers, emergency responders, and the news media)
- Minimize panic or fear
- Encourage the adoption of appropriate protective actions by individuals

The Mahoning County District Board of Health's Communication Plan provides a framework for timely, accurate, and credible communication and information dissemination. It is based on a coordinated approach between the Mahoning County District Board of Health (MCDBOH) and other community partners.

Communication is intended to ensure the delivery of timely and accurate messages through appropriate channels and to support the department's public health protection efforts.

The plan outlines the roles and responsibilities for Mahoning County District Board of Health personnel in communicating with employees, response partners, the media, government entities, and the community.

II. KEY OPERATIONAL ROLES AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Roles

- Ensure an efficient flow of timely, accurate, and credible information before, during, and after an event.
- Facilitate communication among key internal and external stakeholders.
- Provide a system of information to affected or interested target audiences through the media and other information channels.

B. Assumptions

- Dissemination and sharing of timely, accurate, and credible information among stakeholders (affected, interested, and influential target audiences) is one of the most important facets of communications.
- Education will be an important part of the communication plan.
- It is likely that particular individuals and groups will be hard to reach, including people who are hearing and visually impaired.
- Different types of information will have to be communicated to different target audiences.
- Communication must be coordinated among all relevant individuals and groups to ensure consistent messages.

- In an emergency, it is highly likely there will be widespread circulation of conflicting information, misinformation, and rumors.
- Demand for information by affected and interested individuals and groups will be high.
- Negative consequences will affect those who experience a large-scale crisis or emergency, either first hand as survivors or as observers. The effects can include anxiety, depression, family disruption and violence, substance abuse, absenteeism, and other related physical and mental health symptoms. Every effort needs to be made to prevent such negative outcomes.

III. STANDARD COMMUNICATION PLAN PROCEDURES

A. Internal Clearance & Approval for Written Material

1. Situational (Internal/External) Communications

All information to be released to employees, the public, the media, and to community partners must be pre-approved by the PIO Team and/or the Health Commissioner. Based on time constraints, efforts will be made to obtain pre-event clearance of all communication messages.

Brochures, Flyers, and other awareness documents

- All brochures, flyers and similar documents providing education and information that are disseminated externally must be approved by the divisional management.
- Peer review is strongly encouraged for all documents with timeliness being a critical factor.

Press Releases

Programs that wish to issue a press release should submit draft releases with divisional management approval to the lead PIO for review. The press release will be reviewed by the PIO Team with final approval by the Health Commissioner prior to distribution to the media.

Information will be released to appropriate media contacts. (*See Appendix E, Local Media Contact List*).

See Appendix G, *News Release Template*, for the approved template for press releases issues by the Mahoning County District Board of Health.

2. See Section IV. for Emergency Communication Management

3. Social Media Communications

Social Media (Website, Facebook, and Twitter) will be used for educational purposes to promote Mahoning County District Board of Health messages.

- Only designated staff will have authority for social media access to post/delete information.
- When appropriate, subject matter experts are to be consulted prior to posting and/or responding to Facebook and Twitter messages from the public.
- Social media sites are reviewed daily by designated staff and public responses/messages are disseminated on a regular or priority basis depending on content.
- Messages are reviewed for appropriateness and are subject to the Social Media Public Comment Policy. (*See Appendix P*)

B. Public Disclosure of Non-Identifying, Individual Data

Reports received by the Mahoning County District Board of Health may contain identifiable private data about individuals. Pursuant to the HIPPA and other privacy

laws as well as ethical standards of public health practice, identifiable private data about individuals shall **not** be disclosed, except as noted below.

The Health Commissioner will evaluate the personal information it has obtained in the context of only permitting disclosures of the minimum amount necessary for public health /emergency response purposes, and will determine if it is necessary to share this information to accomplish that purpose. The content of any release will depend on the nature of the crisis or emergency, how the information was acquired, who may be affected or at risk if the information is/is not disclosed, and what interest there may be in identifying the subject of the report.

C. News Media Communications (Media Inquiries and Requests for Interviews)

The PIO Team and/or Health Commissioner is responsible for coordinating responses to media inquiries.

- If the Mahoning County District Board of Health is participating in a Joint Information Center (JIC) See Section IV. EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT

All media inquiries and requests for interviews to the Mahoning County District Board of Health must be referred to the PIO Team and/or Health Commissioner at 330-270-2855.

The PIO Team or Health Commissioner will arrange an interview with the designated Mahoning County District Board of Health staff member or refer the reporter to another source.

In a major event, news conferences will be held on a regular basis to engage the media and to inform the public. (See Section III. F).

D. Criteria for Authorizing Interviews

Decisions regarding the authorization of an interview are made by the Health Commissioner or PIO Team (in consultation with designated spokespersons/subject matter experts) and are based on:

- Appropriateness of the interview, topic, and venue
- Availability of selected key staff in light of primary responsibilities
- Potential for exacerbating versus calming public fear or anxiety
- Potential for relating information that cannot or should not be disclosed
- The impact the information conveyed could have on other organizations
- The assessed intent of reporter or other media representative

The PIO Team has established a media room for conducting interviews located at the conference room or library at the Mahoning County District Board of Health, 50 Westchester Drive, Youngstown, Ohio 44515.

E. News Dissemination Methods

Several options for disseminating information to the public via the news media may be used:

1. Individual Interviews - Used to respond to individual media inquiries and requests for information.
2. News Releases - Used to disseminate important information to news media (Distributed via the Appendix E. *Local Media Contact List*).
3. Updates - Posted to the Mahoning County District Board of Health social media sites as an efficient way of responding to repetitive requests for the same information. Updates may also be distributed as news releases.
4. News Conferences - Held only when major developments occur or major announcements need to be made, to convey information to all interested news media at once.
5. Media Briefings - Similar to news conferences but held daily (or regularly scheduled throughout the day) to provide information to all interested news media at once. Briefings are rarely held, except in times of extensive and continuing media interest in developing situations. See Section III. F for additional information regarding news conferences.
6. Website – press releases will be posted to our website.
7. Other - Video news releases, audio news releases, and news features also may be used, typically to provide background or more in-depth information.

F. News Conference

Communicating with the media is a critical component of ensuring that the public receives accurate, actual and appropriate information. Often, media communication includes news conferences that enable the health department to provide media representatives with the facts of conditions or events as known and not known, provide information on steps being taken in response to an event or situation, and provide opportunities for reporters to ask questions.

Possible sites for news conferences are Mahoning County District Board of Health library or conference room.

Basic elements of a news conference agenda generally include:

- What Happened/is Happening? - Opening remarks to provide confirmed and appropriate facts of the event.
- What is Being Done by the Mahoning County District Board of Health? - For example, steps personnel are taking, are appropriate to discuss
- What is Being Done for Affected Individuals or Groups?
- Questions and Answers - The person opening the news conference should moderate, should direct any undirected questions to the appropriate person, and should close with a repetition of key messages.
- Possible handouts
 - Agenda with names and title of participants
 - Situation Fact Sheet
 - Issue Fact Sheet

G. Spokespersons

The Health Commissioner or a subject matter expert can be designated (by the Health Commissioner or the PIO) as a spokesperson. When an approved spokesperson responds to a media inquiry or request, the Health Commissioner will be informed of the inquiry and briefed on the general response. Once an interview is completed, spokesperson should promptly send a brief update via email to the lead PIO (provide reporter's name, media outlet, city, phone number, general topic and any unique questions or responses). Spokesperson should immediately call the Health Commissioner if post-interview concerns are urgent.

If Mahoning County District Board of Health staff is contacted by a reporter off-site or after-hours on a public health issue, the staff person should direct the reporter to a member of the PIO Team or the JIC, if appropriate.

H. Inter-Agency Communication Coordination

Coordination of communications between the Mahoning County District Board of Health and its partners is extremely important to foster consistent messages to employees, the media, and the public. A primary purpose for centrally coordinating information dissemination to the news media is to improve the chances that information is credible, consistent, and accurate. Information released to the media through several sources also must be coordinated to assure that information released is not confusing.

To facilitate this coordination, the PIO Team will issue advisories and other information to key partners (via the JIC if activated). The PIO Team will also share press releases and media advisories with select partners in advance of their release to the media.

If the Mahoning County District Board of Health has overlapping jurisdiction with response partners, such as local health authorities, health care organizations, or law enforcement, the PIO Team will coordinate with appropriate partners **prior** to the release to the media. Media inquiries and request about any criminal investigation will be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency or legal authority.

I. Channels and Formats

Communications channels that can be used include:

1. Mahoning County District Board of Health Network - The Mahoning County District Board of Health has established a communications network based on fax and computer network capabilities. The network links the Mahoning County District Board of Health to its emergency response partners. Through the network, information can be exchanged on a 24/7 basis among key emergency response partners.
2. Website – www.mahoninghealth.org - The Mahoning County District Board of Health maintains a public access website and an internal website for employees. The websites include a crisis and emergency risk information page as well as an “Advisories” section for important press releases and information. The PIO Team and the Website and Social Media Support staff will post press releases, fact sheets,

- advisories and articles, and other information in a timely fashion as it becomes available.
3. Social Media - The Mahoning County District Board of Health will utilize the social media site such as Facebook and Twitter to distribute public information.
 4. Main Telephone Line - The Mahoning County District Board of Health uses a public access telephone line (330-270-2855) and employee access telephone line during normal working hours. Calls are screened (via an automated phone system and staff who cover the line) and referred to the appropriate program or individual. After business hours, the same telephone number acts as a warm-line for Communicable Disease, Foodborne Disease, and Dog Bite reporting mailboxes. The calls via the warm-line are answered by the Health Commissioner. The appropriate manager will then be contacted by the Health Commissioner depending on the type of emergency reported.

Primary means of communication used by MCDBOH include:

External/Public

- Mass Media – See Appendix E, *Local Media Contact List*
- Facebook www.facebook.com/pages/Mahoning-County-District-Board-of-Health and Twitter <https://twitter.com/mahoninghealth>
- I-Contacts – www.icontact.com
- OPHCS- An internet program used to communicate health and emergency messages
- Website – www.mahoninghealth.org
- Functional Needs - See Appendix O, *Notify Now Procedure for Notification of Functional Needs Agencies*
- Blast Fax - Appendix K, *Blast Fax Procedure for Physicians and Veterinarians*

Internal

- Phone/landline – provided to all staff including voice mail capabilities - See Appendix C
Department Emergency Response List
- Mobile phone – mobile phones are provided to MCDBOH staff - Appendix C
Department Emergency Response List
- Radios-
 - Mahoning County Disaster Response Radios (EMA)
 - Multi Agency Radio Communication System (MARCS) - See Appendix M, *MARCS Radio Protocol*
- Ohio Public Health Communication System (OPHCS) - See Appendix L, *Mahoning County OPHCS Alert Protocol* (OPHCS is a secure, web-based electronic emergency notification system operated by Ohio Department of Health and used to alert all public health emergency response staff of an event requiring a public health response.
- E-mail
- Amateur Radio – coordinated by EMA and EOC when activated
- Emergency Alert System (EAS) – national warning system

Special Populations

The Mahoning County District Board of Health will work with its partners to communicate crisis and emergency risk communication information to audiences who are likely not to receive messages through mass media channels

The Mahoning County District Board of Health has a contract in place with Vocalink to provide translation services. See Appendix R, *Procedure for Meeting Americans with Disabilities Act Requirements for Communication Services*.

For the purpose of this section, “vulnerable” or “special needs” populations are individuals who feel they cannot comfortably or safely access and use the standard resources offered in disaster preparedness, relief, and recovery. This population may include individuals with physical or mental disabilities, (visual or hearing impaired, cognitive disorders, and/or mobility limitations), limited or non-English speaking, geographically or culturally isolated, medically or chemically dependent, homeless, frail/elderly, and children.

J. Demographics:

Mahoning, Trumbull, and Columbiana Counties compared to the Ohio and the United States- July 1, 2016.

(Data Source: Census.gov)

	Mahoning County	Trumbull County	Columbiana County	State OH	U.S
Population size	230,008	201,825	103,685	11,615,373	323,127,513

Race/Ethnicity	Mahoning County	Trumbull County	Columbiana County	State (Ohio)	U.S
White	80.7%	88.7%	95.4%	82.5%	76.9%
African American	15.9%	8.6%	2.5%	12.8%	13.3%
American Indian	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	1.3%
Asian/ Pacific Islander	0.9%	0.5%	0.4%	2.2%	5.7%
Hispanic Origin	5.6%	1.7%	1.6%	3.7%	17.8%

Age Distribution	Mahoning County	Trumbull County	Columbiana County	State (Ohio)	U.S
Under 5	5.2%	5.2%	5.1%	6.0%	6.2%
Under 18	20.3%	20.8%	20.7%	22.5%	22.8%
65 and over	19.9%	20.4%	19.2%	16.2%	15.2%

K. Functional Needs and Vulnerable Populations:

The Mahoning County District Board of Health works with and through many of the county’s advocacy, civic, school, and religious groups to reach out for preparedness planning and response. Many of these partner groups have participated in the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnership (MAPP) program aimed at building healthy and safe communities.

In order to notify Functional Needs populations within the county utilize the Notify Now Procedure in Appendix O: and select Call Group 03 Emergency Agencies.

Whenever there is an emergency, the department will work with these community partners to reach out to Mahoning County's vulnerable population. The following chart identifies these groups:

Local Organization	Vulnerable Group
ACTION	Impoverished, Disabled, Children, Immigrant
Austintown Local Schools	Children
Austinwoods DBA Woodlands at Austinwoods	Seniors, Disabled
Beatitude House	Impoverished, Children, Homeless
Boardman Local Schools	Children
Briarfield at Ashley Circle	Seniors, Disabled
Camelot Arms Care Center	Seniors, Disabled
Campus Healthcare Center	Seniors, Disabled
Canfield Local Schools	Children
Caprice Health Care	Seniors, Disabled
Catholic Charities Regional Agency	Immigrants, Impoverished
Clare Bridge Austintown	Seniors, Disabled
Comfort Keepers	Seniors, Disabled
Community Support Network	Mental Health Services
Compass Family and Community Services	Addiction Services
Dandridge Burgandi Manor	Seniors, Disabled
Early Childhood Learning Center-Holy Family	Children
Early Childhood Learning Center-St. Luke's	Children
Gospel Baptist Church	Homeless, Impoverished
Greenbriar Commons	Seniors, Disabled
Guardian Health Care Center	Seniors, Disabled
Habitat for Humanity	Homeless, Impoverished
Hampton Woods	Seniors, Disabled
Hands on Volunteer Network of the Valley	Volunteer Agency
Help Hotline Crisis Center	Mental Health, Suicide
Heritage Manor	Seniors, Disabled
HM Home Health Services	Seniors, Disabled
Home Instead Senior Care	Seniors, Disabled
Homecare with Heart, LLC	Seniors, Disabled
Hospice of the Valley	End of Life
Humility House	Seniors, Disabled
Immaculate Heart of Mary Church	Families, Seniors, Disabled
Inn at Christine Valley	Seniors, Disabled
Jackson-Milton Local Schools	Children
Levy Gardens	Seniors, Disabled

Mahoning County Board of Developmental Disabilities	Physically and Mentally Disabled
Mahoning County Children's Services Board	Children
Mahoning County Educational Service Center	Children
Mahoning County Emergency Management Agency	All
Mahoning County Homeless Continuum of Care	Homeless, Impoverished
Mahoning County Job & Family Services	Impoverished, Children, Non-English, immigrant
Mahoning County Sheriff's Office	Disabled, Crisis response
Mahoning County Veterans Service Commission	Seniors, Disabled
Mahoning-Youngstown Community Action Partnership	Children
Maplecrest Nursing Home	Seniors, Disabled
Meridian Arms Living Center	Seniors, Disabled
Meridian Community Care	Addiction Services
Neil Kennedy Recovery Clinic	Addiction Services
OCCHA Inc.	Non-English/Hispanic
Omni West Assisted Living	Seniors, Disabled
Paisley House	Seniors, Disabled
Park Vista Retirement Community	Seniors, Disabled
Pembroke Place	Seniors, Disabled
Poland Board of Education	Children
Potential Development Program	Disabled Children
Red Cross	Disaster Victims
Rescue Mission of Mahoning Valley	Homeless
Safehouse Ministries Inc.	Addiction Services, Mental Health
Salvation Army	Impoverished, Children
Sateri Homes Inc.	Seniors, Disabled
Sebring Local Schools	Children
Shepard of Valley: Boardman	Seniors, Disabled
South Range Local Schools	Children
Springfield Local Schools	Children
St. Charles School	Children
St. Christine School	Children
St. Mary's Alzheimer's Center	Seniors, Disabled
St. Nicholas School	Children
Stambaugh Charter Academy	Children
Struthers Local Schools	Children
Sunrise of Poland	Seniors, Disabled
The Inn at Ironwood	Seniors, Disabled
Ursuline High School	Children
Vista Care Center	Seniors, Disabled

West Branch Local Schools	Children
Western Reserve Joint Fire District	First Responder, Crisis Response
Windsor House at Omni Manor HCC	Seniors, Disabled
Youngstown City School District	Children
Youngstown Community Center for the Deaf	Deaf, Hard of hearing
Youngstown Community School	Children
Youngstown Developmental Center	Physically and Mentally Disabled
Youngstown Metropolitan Housing Authority	Impoverished
Youngstown State University Police Department	First Responder, Crisis Response

L. Training and Plan Maintenance

The lead PIO is responsible for the Communication Plan development, distribution, periodic review, and updating. The plan will be reviewed as necessary based on lessons learned during emergencies, exercises, county or state public health organizational changes, and state planning guidance or as other events warrant. The lead PIO is responsible for assuring routine quarterly and annual review of contact information, as well as organizing exercises designed to test emergency risk communication strategies.

The PIO roles need to complete National Incident Management System (NIMS)/ICS training as required including:

- Core ICS Courses-100, 200, 250, 700, 702, 800

PIO Team will receive training on Crisis and Risk Communications and when possible, attend regional or state trainings on communication and Public Information.

PIO Team members must also complete the following two independent study online courses within six months of hire and at least once every five years thereafter: CDC Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication Basic and CDC Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication for Pandemic Influenza found at www.bt.cdc.gov/cerc

The PIO Team members needs to complete at least 8 hours of public information professional development per year (conferences, workshops, distance learning, or another related activity).

PIOs will also be responsible for assuring that an evaluation is conducted and an After-Action Report is completed on all exercises or real events related to the function of the Emergency Risk Communications Annex.

Public Input for Local Emergency/Preparedness Plans

The public may view and comment on local emergency/preparedness plans in the following fashion:

1. Visit our website at www.mahoninghealth.org.
2. Click on the sub-heading “Emergency Preparedness” on the home page.
3. Scroll down to bottom of page to “Local Emergency Preparedness Plans.”

4. Click on individual links to read over plans.
5. Click on the link info@mahoninghealth.org, located at the bottom of the page, to send input.

Any public input regarding the Local Emergency Preparedness Plans will be reviewed by the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator and Planner. The public input will be evaluated for relevance toward the overall scope of the plans and planning effort.

IV. EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

A. Incident Command System and Public Information Officer Appointment/Duties

In the event of a public health crisis the Mahoning County District Board of Health will utilize the Incident Command System (ICS), including the appointment of an Incident Commander (See Appendix B, *Incident Command System*). ICS is a standardized on-scene emergency management system that enables multiple agencies and jurisdictions to respond to single or multiple incidents using an integrated organizational structure. The Incident Commander (IC) is the individual responsible for all incident activities, including the development of strategies and tactics and the ordering and release of resources. The IC has overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations and is responsible for managing all incident operations at the incident site.

- If the event is large, the responsibility for Incident Command, mitigation, investigation, and recovery will progress through appropriate agencies.
- If the event is small enough, response can be handled by a Communicable Disease Team, composed of nurse, sanitarian, and epidemiologist for example.

The Incident Command System, depending on the size, scope, and complexity of the incident, may be activated according to stages outlined in Appendix H, *Graduated Response to Demand for Public Health Information*.

Emergency Preparedness Plans will be activated at any time that the MCDBOH Department of Operations Center (DOC) is activated or at other times as determined by the Incident Commander or designee.

Under the ICS structure, the Health Commissioner, or designee of the Mahoning County District Board of Health shall designate a lead Public Information Officer (PIO) to coordinate risk communication and information dissemination activities. The Lead PIO must be named within one hour of the establishment of incident command by the Incident Commander (health commissioner or designee) and the PIO will report to the IC. Such activities are conducted in concert with the Mahoning County Emergency Management Agency (EMA).

PIO activities may include: Media Briefings, News Releases, postings to the Mahoning County District Board of Health's website and social media sites, monitoring of media reports, and initiating rumor control measures.

B. Joint Information Center (JIC)

In certain circumstances, such as in the event of large-scale crisis or emergency involving multiple organizations, an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and Department Operations Center (DOC) will be activated. Staff will be notified by a call down list established by Incident Commander if they must report to the EOC or DOC.

Communication activities are coordinated through a Joint Information Center (JIC). A JIC is a facility established to coordinate all incident-related public information activities. It is the central point of contact for all news media. It is designed to disseminate a variety of information and instructions to interested and affected parties through press briefings, news releases and advisories. Public and news media queries are also coordinated through the JIC.

The designated PIO will facilitate communications via the JIC, coordinate all press inquiries, briefings, interviews, information releases, rumor control activities, and all other media relations functions. If the EOC is activated, all press inquiries to the Mahoning County District Board of Health shall be referred to and processed via the JIC. All public information is released through the JIC.

Once a JIC is established, the Mahoning County District Board of Health must:

- Assure that the lead PIO participates in the JIC and serves as a liaison with other organizations
- Assure that the JIC is staffed by a PIO during all operational hours (potentially 24-hours/day)

Important Notes on the JIC:

- After an emergency has been declared, the local Joint Information Center (JIC) will coordinate all public information efforts and media relations activities.
- In the event that a JIC is established, the JIC will be housed near the EOC. (See Appendix J, *Equipment and Supplies Checklist*)
- The media will not come to the JIC unless they can speak with decision-makers; Media will instead report physically where the story is located.
- Every participating response organization with a PIO should send a representative to the JIC.
- Every participating response organization should refer journalists and other media representatives to the JIC, rather than attempt to deal with them directly.
- It may be necessary to make arrangements at the JIC to credential the press and to route lay people who want information.
- At least one JIC representative must be available during all operational periods to report to the incident command or unified command center.

C. Policies

Mahoning County Emergency Operations Plan (MCEOP) - In the event of an incident, the MCDBOH would coordinate efforts with the Mahoning County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) and the State of Ohio Emergency Management Agency through the Mahoning County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The Mahoning

County Emergency Management Agency maintains plans for the residents of Mahoning County.

D. Emergency Risk Communications

In a crisis or emergency, information voids could possibly be filled by others in the public with erroneous information. What would normally take several days to coordinate and get proper clearances needs to be done in minutes.

- Communications will be coordinated in the Department Operations Center (DOC) and/or JIC (if applicable).
- Communications will be documented, recorded, and approved by DOC personnel and under the structure of the Incident Command System.
- Only the Health Commissioner (or designee) or designated PIO will release information to employees, the media, the public, or government entities (Appendix D, *Emergency Notification Roster*).
- The following Mahoning County District Board of Health staff will approve information before it is released.

Senior Leadership/Incident Commander	Health Commissioner or designee
Subject matter expert	Will vary according to the nature of the crisis or emergency and level of expertise
Public Information Officer	Assigned by Health Commissioner or designee

- In the case of a multiple agency involvement and JIC activation, then the lead PIO designated by the Emergency Manager at the EOC will release information to the media. The above referenced staff will clear information provided to the JIC for release to the media.
- See Appendix F, *Message Development for Emergency Communication* for assistance in message development.

E. Timing of Public Information and Warning

After a public health crisis has been identified, the lead PIO must be able to provide basic information to the media and allow for initial questions within one hour of the onset of the emergency. The lead PIO must be able to draft a news release and secure approval and publish the news release within two hours of onset of the public health emergency. If necessary, a news conference must be conducted within three hours of notification.

For addition information regarding MEDIA INTERVIEWS, ETC. see Section III. C.-III. L.

V. ABBREVIATIONS

DOC	Department Operations Center
EMA	Emergency Management Agency
EAS	Emergency Alert System
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
MCEOP	Mahoning County Emergency Operations Plan
ICS	Incident Command System
JIC	Joint Information Center
MCDBOH	Mahoning County District Board of Health
MARCS	Multi Agency Radio Communication System
NIMS	National Incident Management System
OPHCS	Ohio Public Health Communication System
PIO	Public Information Officer

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 - Appendix S, *Health Alert Network*
 - Appendix T, *Vocalink Information*