



Village at Vistancia Association Crisis Communications Plan

Adopted Aug. 23, 2016

PURPOSE

Crises come in all sizes and can happen at any time. Being prepared enables the Village at Vistancia Association to successfully handle the situation and control outgoing messaging during and immediately following the crisis.

DEFINITION

A crisis is any situation threatening the integrity or reputation of the Association. Crises can range in nature, including, but not limited to: legal dispute, theft of Association property, accident, fire, flood, weather-related catastrophe or criminal activity. A crisis can also arise if perception exists in the public or media that the Association failed to address a situation, such as those detailed above, correctly.

PHILOSOPHY

Responding in a timely manner is crucial to managing communications during a crisis. Word spreads quickly across social media, and public opinion and emotion will set in. Being ahead of public discourse ensures accurate and up-to-date information is at the forefront of conversation. Advance planning and preparation make this quick reaction possible.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The first step to being prepared for crisis is to develop relationships with key community partners. This includes City of Peoria officials and emergency responders, as well as school district leaders and other community dignitaries.

CORPORATE SERVICES

CCMC's corporate office provides a number of services to the Association. Experts are available to assist with strategy, communications, information technology and human resources. These resources can be beneficial during a crisis and should be utilized. CCMC has also retained a public relations firm specializing in crisis management, if the situation requires.

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

Assigning staff members to the Crisis Communications Team clarifies who will be involved in crisis response. The Association's Crisis Communications Team will include the Community

Manager, Assistant Community Manager, Communications Coordination, Board of Directors President and appropriate representatives of the CCMC corporate staff. Other staff or Board members can be added on an as-needed basis, given the nature of the situation. Contact information will be shared among the team members to allow for reachability outside of normal business hours.

PROTOCOL

In the event of a crisis, these measures should be taken:

- Notify the Community Manager immediately. If Community Manager is unavailable, contact the Assistant Community Manager. The Communications Coordinator should also be contacted as soon as possible.
- The Community Manager will notify appropriate corporate representatives and the Board of Directors President, as well as officially assemble the Crisis Communications Team.
- The Crisis Communications Team will collectively assess the situation, potential for elevation and need for additional resources. The team should also identify the immediate message to be released.
- Once an initial message has been determined, the Communications Coordinator will disseminate information through official Association channels.
- The team will then prepare a plan of action, including monitoring social media, gathering regular updates and determining a release schedule for additional information.
- All employees will support public safety personnel in any way possible, while allowing them to conduct their official duties.
- Staff will be informed of how to address the situation with residents and others. Continue providing the highest level of customer service possible, while maintaining a calm, consistent and confident message.
- Work back to normal. While it is likely essential to monitor the situation for an extended period, returning to a state of normalcy – hosting events, conducting routine maintenance, responding to resident requests, etc. – is crucial. This reassures residents and others that the crisis will clear.

OUTGOING COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Coordinator will employ as many strategies as possible to spread the messages. This includes prominently placed website content, special email newsletters and social media. Other tools that could aid a particular situation will be discussed.

MEDIA

Depending on the severity of the crisis, media relations will be coordinated by the Communications Coordinator, Community Manager or appropriate corporate representative. Only the Community Manager, Board of Directors President or corporate representatives should serve as official Association spokespeople. The Communications Coordinator can release basic information updates to the media.

AFTER THE CRISIS

In the days and weeks following a crisis, there is still work to be done. Members of the Crisis Communications Team will debrief about the situation, how it was handled and what could be done differently. A log will be created of all communication during the crisis and will be included in a final crisis report. Following that process, review of this policy may be prudent to consider updates based on successes and failures of the effort.