



Crisis Communication Plan

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Introduction

What is a crisis?

A crisis is a period when an individual or group undergoes sudden difficulties due to a dangerous or troubling event.

Why is this plan needed?

The purpose of this crisis communication plan is to help Operation Jump Start prepare in the event of a crisis. This plan outlines the appropriate contacts and steps needed to inform the employees of the organization and the target publics during a crisis. Most crises happen unexpectedly, so a crisis communication plan is needed to ensure the organization is properly prepared. It is crucial for Operation Jump Start to maintain its relationship with its students and their families, staff, stakeholders and the media.

Goal

This plan was created to help guide and prepare the staff at Operation Jump Start for a crisis.

Crisis Task Force

What is a crisis task force?

A crisis task force is a small group of individuals with a variety of knowledge who come together during a crisis to accomplish a specific goal.

Team members

Since Operation Jump Start has a small team, the crisis task force includes seven employees.

- Maria Alvarez, Program Director
- Rebecca Ridge, Community Outreach Supervisor
- Irene Quevedo, Executive Director
- Kevin Melvin, Student Access Coordinator
- Emily Garcia, Program Manager
- Chelsea Chamroeun, Community Outreach Coordinator
- Valeria Tellez, Office Coordinator

Command center

- In-person command center: 3515 Linden Ave, Long Beach, CA 90807
- Virtual command center: Slack, email and Zoom calls with team members

In preparation of a crisis the following materials should be stocked at the command center:

- First aid kits
- Non-perishable food
- Water
- Flashlights
- Toiletries
- Whistle (to sound for help)

Contact information

The following are local emergency and media contacts for quick access during a crisis.

Long Beach Police Department

- Address: 400 W Broadway, Long Beach, CA 90802
- Phone: (562) 435-6711

Long Beach Fire Department

- Address: 2890 E Wardlow Rd, Long Beach, CA 90806
- Phone: (562) 570-2500

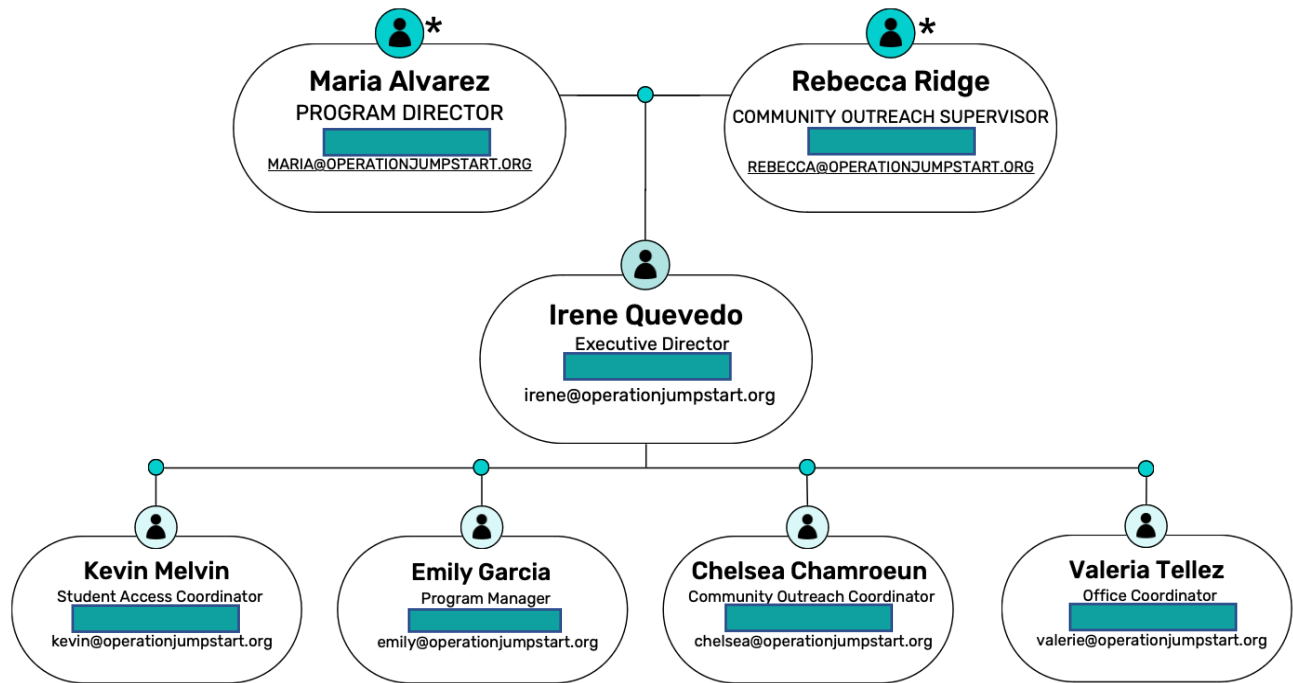
Press Telegram

- 5150 E. Pacific Coast Highway, Suite 200, Long Beach CA 90804
- Phone: (562) 435-1161

Long Beach Post

- Address: 211 E. Ocean Blvd. Suite 400, Long Beach, CA 90802

OPERATION JUMP START PHONE TREE



*Contact whoever is in charge of the event first.

Key stakeholders

What are key stakeholders?

Key stakeholders are individuals or groups who are directly impacted by the organization.

Who are the key stakeholders?

- Volunteers
- Donors
- Clients
- Board members
- Employees/staff
- Media

Potential Crises

Crises are grouped into different categories including malevolence, rumors and natural disasters. Below, we have grouped four potential crises under appropriate categories.

Malevolence

- An intruder opens fire at an Operation Jump Start event, putting students and staff in danger.

Accident

- An accident involving transportation where Operation Jump Start students and/or staff members are in danger or harmed.
- A student goes missing or is kidnapped during an Operation Jump Start college tour.

Financial

- A mishandling of funds makes it difficult for the organization to continue certain programs/activities.

Key Messages

What is a key message?

A key message is a short statement with the essential information that an organization's target audience needs to know.

How to create a key message

Key messages are created by outlining the main points that the organization wants their audience to know. Then, they are tailored to specific channels and target audiences to reach them effectively.

Key messages should be:

- **Concise:** Each statement should only be about 2-3 sentences.
- **Strategic:** Clearly outline and address the benefits or value proposition.
- **Relevant:** Balance the necessary information you need to communicate to your audience with the information that they are interested in.
- **Compelling:** Include information that is meaningful and compels action.
- **Simple:** Use clear, easy-to-understand language.
- **Memorable:** Use short sentences that are easy to recall.
- **Real:** Use active voice and avoid slogans.
- **Tailored:** Adapt the language and the depth of information to the different target audiences.

Sample key messages

Key message samples are listed below. They follow the four potential crises mentioned in the previous section.

Malevolence

- An armed intruder threatens to harm students and staff at an Operation Jump Start event.
 - Key messages
 - A (describe intruder) interrupted our (insert event) and (briefly summarize what the intruder did) at (insert location, time and day).
 - (Insert whether those involved were unharmed, injured or killed).
 - The police have been contacted and they are currently investigating the cause of the situation. Please remember to always be aware of your surroundings and call for help when you feel unsafe.

Accident

- An accident involving a bus with Operation Jump Start students inside left several students and staff members harmed.
 - Key messages
 - A bus holding (insert number) members from Operation Jump Start, consisting of (insert description of those from the organization involved), (insert summary of what happened and nearby location so that readers can have a better understanding) at (insert time and day).
 - We've contacted the families of those who were killed or injured.
 - We give our condolences to the families of those who have passed. Please remember to keep your loved ones close and practice safe driving.
- A student goes missing during an Operation Jump Start college tour.
 - Key messages
 - An Operation Jump Start student was (insert what specifically happened to the student if applicable) around (insert location, time and day).
 - (Insert any known details about the situation)
 - (Insert information regarding safety protocols and if they were or were not met)
 - The police have been contacted and they are currently investigating the cause of the situation. Please remember to always be aware of your surroundings and call for help when you feel unsafe.

Financial

- A mishandling of funds makes it difficult for the organization to continue certain programs/activities.
 - Key messages

- A (insert description of the person or group who mishandled the funds) has caused Operation Jump Start to lack the appropriate funds to continue certain programs.
- (Insert what happened to the funds and when this occurred)
- We are informing you all to help keep Operation Jump Start open by making a small contribution to our program. Any donation will help us prepare students for their future.

Response Strategies

How to inform the public

In the event of a crisis, the Crisis Task Force should contact key stakeholders with any available information. This can be done through several methods including email, internal memos, social media posts and phone scripts. Slack and email are current, popular methods with the organization. Stakeholders will likely receive messages through these platforms. If these are not available, phone calls and voice messages are an alternative delivery method.

Sample response strategies can be found in the appendices.

Dark Website

What is a dark website?

A dark website is one that is hidden from the public but is available to all team members for use during a crisis. It's meant to be activated during a crisis to inform the organization's target audience of critical information quickly and efficiently.

Why is a dark website important to have?

A dark website is important to have because it is a quick and easy way to inform an organization's target audiences during a crisis. It can be launched within minutes since it would likely have all the necessary information that people need to know. In addition, it

serves as a central communication center for all audiences. Once it's launched, team members can quickly advertise it across all social media platforms and direct people to the website instead of attempting to disseminate all the critical information on all the platforms. It is best to activate this as soon as a crisis is occurring and notify other team members through the most popular communication channel for a more immediate response.

Crisis Handling

Activation criteria

A crisis communication plan should be activated when one or more of the following criteria are met:

- There is an immediate, negative impact on the organization
- The organization's reputation is at risk
- Finances may be negatively impacted
- Team members or stakeholders are in immediate danger

Procedure

The procedure for internal communication requires all team members to put in team effort. The department each team member belongs to determines which key stakeholders they will contact. The program manager, program director and the student access coordinator would oversee contact with the students. Mentors/volunteers would be contacted by the community outreach coordinator.

All external communications are handled by the community outreach supervisor. External communications involve those such as donors, supporters and the media.

Communication between those who work for and/or are involved with Operation Jump Start programs often receive messages through Slack and email, so that those are the platforms that will be used.

Crisis Recovery

Assess the crisis communication

Once the initial phase of crisis communication is over, the recovery of the organization continues. The reputation of a company is fragile after going through a crisis. To ensure that the crisis communication was effectively reached by key stakeholders, surveys and new guidelines may be used.

Surveys can be sent out via email to key stakeholders. In these surveys, key stakeholders would provide their feedback on how the organization handled the crisis. This can be done by entering their thoughts in a textbox and/or rating their execution on a scale from 1-10.

Post-crisis communication ideas

Once a crisis period has passed, Operation Jump Start can continue to support its public reputation and relationship with its key stakeholders by regularly following up on their well-being. This can be done by promoting self-care activities, such as yoga and art, and mental support services. Depending on what the crisis is, it can ultimately leave an impact on stakeholders and it's the organization's responsibility to ensure their well-being after the fact.

Preparing for the next crisis

To prepare for when another crisis may occur, it is important for the organization to replace/restock any items that were used for the prior crisis.

Appendix

Sample response strategies

Crisis

An intruder opens fire at an Operation Jump Start event, putting students and staff at harm.

Social media post

An armed intruder imposed a threat to Operation Jump Start students and staff at 2:30 p.m. this afternoon at a peer mentor event at the office.

Everyone is safe and the intruder is now in custody. We do not take this encounter lightly and sincerely apologize for the fear and discomfort this has caused for our team, volunteers, students and their families.

Phone script – external audience

Good evening, Operation Jump Start family and friends. At 2:30 p.m. this afternoon, an armed individual interrupted our peer mentor event and threatened to harm the students and volunteers present. We do not take this encounter lightly and sincerely apologize for the fear and discomfort this has caused for our team, volunteers, students and their families. The police have been notified and the situation is currently under investigation. We apologize for this alarming event and will be taking higher security precautions at the Operation Jump Start office and future events. If there are any questions regarding the situation, please call back at (562) 988-2131. Thank you and good night.

Internal memo

Due to this afternoon's event, we have carefully made the decision to have security guards present in the office and at future Operation Jump Start events. This will go into effect tomorrow morning once the office opens and remain until the end of the day. This safety precaution will be in force until the police have cleared the situation of danger.

We believe implementing security guards at our office and events will protect those at Operation Jump Start while the police continue to investigate the situation. We take the

safety of our team and students at Operation Jump Start seriously. It is our responsibility to take safety precautions immediately and ensure that an incident like this will never happen again. Your safety and wellbeing are our top priorities.

The identity of the armed individual remains unknown, and details are still under investigation. More information about this situation will be released as the investigation continues. In the meantime, we are confident in the effectiveness of these safety precautions.

We acknowledge the fear and discomfort that has come from this incident and are confident that this will provide a sense of safety for students, staff and their families after this unforeseen incident.

Crisis

An accident involving transportation where Operation Jump Start students and/or staff members are in danger or harmed.

Social media post

At 10:30 a.m. this morning, two students and two staff members involved in Operation Jump Start died in a bus accident outside of UCLA. We send our condolences to the families of those we have lost.

Phone script – internal audience

Good evening, Operation Jump Start family and friends. A bus holding eight Operation Jump Start members, including students, staff and volunteers, collided with another bus this morning at 10:30 a.m. Two students and two staff members were killed in the accident. Please prepare messages to be sent to our students, their families and the media. Thank you.

Employee newsletter

Headline: The Decision on the Future of College Travel Tours

Dear Operation Jump Start Team,

After this morning's bus accident, we have collectively made the decision to cancel the upcoming Operation Jump Start travel college tours until further notice.

We understand that students, staff and volunteers may not feel comfortable going on another tour after what had happened today. It is our responsibility make others comfortable and to take precautions immediately.

Time is needed to process this tragedy and ensure that an accident like this will never happen again. Our decision to cancel the rest of the college tour was difficult, but it was highly necessary in respect for those we have lost. The wellbeing and comfort of our team and students are our top priorities.

We do not take this accident lightly and send our condolences to the families of those we have lost and who are currently hospitalized. As we work through this difficult period, we are in communication with the remaining colleges, scheduled for the rest of the tours, to provide our students with virtual tours and information to help inform them of what their schools have to offer.

We acknowledge the fear and discomfort that has come from this accident. Because our team is now short in staff, we ask for your patience during this crisis.

Mental support services and activities will be provided to our team as we work through this difficult period.

Once more information is available, we will release more information and discuss the future of college tours and Operation Jump Start travel events.

Best,

(Name & position of person in charge of college tour events)"

Crisis

A student goes missing or is kidnapped during an Operation Jump Start college tour.

Social media post

One of our 10th grade students went missing. The student is a 15-year-old girl, about 5'4" and has brown eyes and hair. She was last seen on Tuesday at 3 p.m. by the Washington Monument during a college tour in D.C. We have contacted the family and are doing everything we can to find the student. We sincerely apologize and acknowledge that this is a difficult situation. We will provide more information on our website as we learn more.

Note: For this specific scenario, a social media post would be appropriate if the police would like more help.

Internal Email

Good afternoon,

This is an emergency. All crisis task force members report to the main office immediately. One of our D.C. students went missing. More information will be provided at the meeting.

Best,

(Team member responsible for internal communications)

Note: Send email with high importance to all team members.

Internal Email to Board Members

Dear Board Members,

I hope you all are well. I am emailing you today to inform you that a 15-year-old girl went missing on Tuesday, December 8 at approximately 2 p.m. on our Washington, D.C. college tour, she was last seen by the Washington Monument.

The 15-year-old girl was part of a group that was visiting the monuments in Washington, D.C. when the chaperone realized she was gone. The other students did not see where she went or if she was kidnapped.

We are working closely with the Washington D.C. police and doing everything we can to find the missing girl. We will provide updates as more information is available. If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know. Thank you.

Sincerely,

(Insert name of team member)

Crisis

There is a decrease of donations or investors due to a recession.

Social media post

Operation Jump Start has been guiding low-resource, high-potential students through the college application process for 25 years. We truly want to continue to help students reach their goals through the power of education, but the current recession is impacting us.

We would greatly appreciate all donations during this difficult time. Please consider donating at the link in our bio. Together, we can create a better future!

Slack message

Good morning, Operation Jump Start Team!

Today we are going to focus on brand awareness to generate more donations! Please have three social media post ideas across different platforms by our 2 p.m. team meeting. I can't wait to hear all your wonderful ideas.

Best,

Maria Alvarez, program director

Email Pitch

(Insert first and last name of journalist)

(The journalist's title)

(Name of publication)

Operation Jump Start Hosts Funds for Friends

Dear (insert name of journalist),

Operation Jump Start is hosting, "Funds for Friends," a fundraising gala for the first time to raise proceeds for prospective college students. The event will be held on (insert time, date and place of the event). Everyone is welcome to attend, but RSVPs are required; the form is on their website.

This gala will allow local community members to view all the hard work Operation Jump Start does, as well as hear success stories from students who participated in the program and have since gone on to work in their respective fields.

Food and drinks will be served at the gala. In addition, the event will include live music by (insert the band's name). (Include other gala specific details that potential donors may be interested in to encourage them to attend the event.)

For more information, feel free to contact me via email or phone at (insert phone number). Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,

(Operation Jump Start team member's name)

(Team member's title)

3515 Linden Ave

Long Beach, CA 90807

(562) 988-2131

Social Media Policy

A social media policy is not in place. However, one should be implemented to maintain the organization's image and establish rules to determine what can and can't be posted on social media.

DISCLAIMER:

This crisis communication plan was created for the purpose of a school assignment. It is intended to help guide the organization through the process of creating a crisis communication plan.

The instructor who graded this assignment did not review and edit every detail in this plan. Please contact your legal team for further support and assistance with crisis handling.