Example Emergency Response Plan

This plan outlines how the programs and ministries of [insert name of church] will prepare for and respond to emergencies, including medical emergencies, intruders and fire/evacuation.

### **Preparation**

All ministry supervisors and staff will be provided a copy of this plan and will take their leaders through it annually at a ministry/staff meeting.

This will include a review of emergency exit locations and the emergency assembly point.

### **Illness/injury**

Someone with first aid qualifications will attend all ministries/programs. First aid kits will be regularly checked and re-stocked.

If someone is ill or injured, use the first aid kit if this is adequate. Alternatively, organise for the person to be taken to the nearest medical centre or hospital. Suitable transport must be organised for someone who is under 18 or who is too unwell or injured to drive themselves. This may include calling an ambulance to transport them.

For under 18s, parents/caregivers must be advised immediately their child becomes ill or is injured if medical treatment is required to be organised. If first aid is administered, parents/caregivers must be informed upon picking up their child.

For situations that are serious or urgent in nature, have someone remain with the person/s and **call 000**.

For programs operating away from the church, ensure a first aid kit is taken and the ministry leader/s are aware of the location of the nearest medical centre or hospital.

### **Fire/evacuation**

Should a fire, explosion or chemical emergency occur, a leader should yell ‘emergency, evacuate’ and call 000 immediately.

Leaders must calmly assist all attendees to evacuate and move immediately to the emergency assembly point. One or more leaders must also be designated/instructed to check all spaces and bathrooms if it is safe to do so. A head count should be undertaken to ensure no attendees are missing. No one should be allowed to leave until emergency services have arrived.

### **Intruder/lockdown**

This is of specific importance for youth/children’s activities, but all program/ministry leaders should be aware of this protocol.

Should a member of the public who is not a participant in the program/ministry and is displaying unsafe or inappropriate behaviour (e.g. may appear affected by drugs or alcohol, or make verbal or physical threats), come onto the site during a program/ministry, leaders should immediately initiate lockdown by separating program participants from the individual. The police should also be called via 000.

Lockdown may include calmly closing and locking all doors to the part of the building the participants are in and instructing them to remain in the room and to sit/stand at a distance from the door/s. If need be (e.g. the person tries to enter), participants could be exited in a direction away from the intruder, into a safer space. If participants are outside, they should be instructed calmly by leaders to move away from the person, without drawing undue attention to the person’s presence, and to move into a more secure/distant location.

A minimum of two leaders should politely and sensitively approach the intruder (only if safe), seek to engage in casual conversation, asking them to leave while the program is running. If it is not safe to approach the person, leaders should remain in lockdown with participants and wait for the police to arrive.

### **Emergency contacts**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name of Service | Details | Phone Number |
| Emergency Services | Ambulance/Fire/Police | 000 |
| Nearest Medical Centre |  |  |
| Nearest Hospital with Emergency Department |  |  |
| Poisons Information Centre | Australia wide | 13 11 26 |
| Nearest Police Station |  |  |
| Senior Pastor |  |  |

### **Reporting and debrief**

A leader should contact the Senior Pastor to inform them of the incident/emergency as soon as possible. The Senior Pastor should flag the incident with the Chair of the Governing Group and ensure any immediate or ongoing actions to ensure the safety of all and follow up of the incident, including any responses or changes to processes required, are carried out/implemented.

As soon as practical after an incident/event, an incident report form should be completed and placed on file. Leaders should be debriefed, including sharing any lessons learned.

If a significant incident (e.g. critical injury, violent intruder) occurs during a program involving children, ensure a communication is sent to all parents/caregivers debriefing the incident as soon as possible, while maintaining privacy. If the incident has been particularly serious or traumatic, offer for a pastor to debrief with the family.