

Responding to a Mass Violence Incident: Victim Assistance Agency/Organization “Go Kit”

There are many state and local level victim/survivor assistance agencies and organizations that provide leadership in responding to mass violence incidents (MVIs). It is important to *prepare in advance* in order to be ready to establish an initial response center, a family assistance center, and provide services and support to MVI victims, survivors and witnesses in the immediate- and short-term following a MVI.

The recommendations below for an agency/organization “Go Kit” are based upon the personal experiences of the leaders of agencies/organizations that have responded in the past to MVIs. Your organization can add or remove items from this “Go Kit” based upon the type, scope and location of the MVI it’s responding to.

Important Information

- Electronic database of MVI Victim Assistance Professional (VAP) responders with current cell phone numbers and email addresses
- Paper copy of electronic database of MVI VAP responders
- Sign-in sheets for MVI VAP responders (name, agency or organization, cell phone number or email address)
- Electronic database and paper copies of *all intake forms* for the MVC response:
 - Victim/survivor/witness intake/documentation forms
 - Victim/survivor needs assessment forms
- Victim compensation information and forms, including:
 - Victim compensation brochure
 - Abbreviated versions of the victim compensation application for victims/survivors of MVI
 - *Forms may be color coded to indicate different types of MVI survivors; or that it is a “MVI- specific victim compensation application”*
 - Written information/fact sheet about how to access the state’s (or states’) victim compensation program website(s)
 - If MVI victims are from multiple states, information about victim compensation benefits and applications should be posted on the websites of *all* relevant victim compensation programs
- Written information or brochure about victims’ rights and services (which will vary depending on the nature of the MVI – international, Federal, state, Tribal or a cross-jurisdictional MVI)

Signage

Signage for designated tables and response areas (*that is prepared in advance and laminated, for example*):

- American Red Cross
- Cell Phone charging station
- Crime Victim Compensation
- Kids' Play Area
- Lost or missing property
- Restrooms
- Transportation assistance
- Victim/survivor/witness sign-in here
- Witness interviews

Technology

- Cell phones **and** a roster of cell phone numbers of key MVI response leaders
- Cell phone chargers (a variety of chargers for different types of cell phones, including plug-in and fully charged portable chargers)
- Multiple USB charging cable adapter connectors
- Solar charger; portable dual USB waterproof solar power bank
- Cradle Point Mobile Broadband Router
- Tablets (such as iPads) which, based upon experience, are easier to connect to the internet than laptops (fully loaded with relevant databases, victim/survivor/witness information, forms, etc.)
- Laptops (fully loaded with relevant databases, victim/survivor/witness information, forms, etc.)
- Portable printers
- Megaphones/portable amplified speakers with batteries *and* backup batteries

Basic Office Supplies

- Chalk (for posting signage on sidewalks)
- Clipboards in bulk
- Dental floss (which can be used as "string" for a variety of purposes)
- Extension cords
- File folder labels
- File folders (and box with folder drop-bins to organize files)
- Highlighter pens (in multiple colors to help color-code different aspects of the response)
- Notepads
- Paper clips
- Paper for printers (several 500 page packs)
- Pens and pencils
- Permanent markers
- Post-it Notes (in different sizes and colors – notes can be "color-coded" depending on their specific use)
- Scissors
- Staplers and staples
- Tape (including masking tape, duct tape and clear tape)
- Tear sheet pad markers/felt pens
- Tear sheet pads (with adhesive backing)

Additional Supplies

- Activity books, crayons/markers, and stuffed toys and games for children and adolescents
- Aspirin
- Bottled water
- Brightly-colored vests for VAP responders
- Color-coded bracelets that indicate the language(s) spoken by the VAP
- Diapers (in various sizes for infants, toddlers and adults)
- Feminine hygiene products
- First-aid kits
- Hand sanitizers (individual and/or large bottles)
- Kleenex tissues
- Name tags for responders and volunteers
- Paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Wet-naps