

PROCEDURE

Series:	Risk Management/QA	COA:	ASE 6
		CFOP:	
Procedure Name:	Planning for Large Epidemics and Pandemics		
Procedure Number:	RQ-509		
Review Date:	4/14/24		
Revision Date:	07/11/2025		
Effective Date:	1/14/2022		
Applicable to:	Family Partnerships of Central Florida (FPOCF), All FPOCF Staff, Officers, and Contracted Providers		

SUBJECT: Planning and Mitigating Risk during environmental outbreaks

PURPOSE: To establish a process within the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (COSO) Enterprise Risk Management framework (ERM) to identify and diminish potential risk exposure from an epidemic or pandemic outbreak that has a significant impact on the local or global environment and to formulate a strategic response where the risk acceptance is mitigated by the actions of Executive and Senior Leadership and the Board of Directors.

References FPOCF Governance Policies: GOV203 Risk Management

Definitions

Risk: A possible event or circumstance that can have a negative effect on the FPOCF.

COSO: Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission

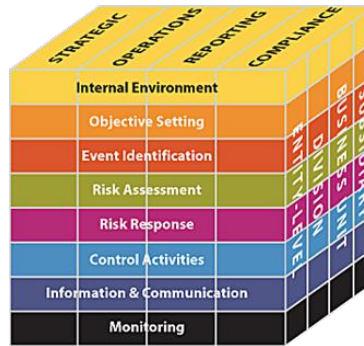
Outbreak: A sudden rise in the number of cases of a disease. An outbreak may occur in a community or geographical area or may affect several countries. It may last for a few days or weeks, or even for several years.

Epidemic: A sudden outbreak of a disease in a certain geographical area or the rapid spread of disease to a large number of people in a given population.

Pandemic: An outbreak of a disease that has spread across several countries or continents or a disease that is prevalent over a whole country or the world.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

The COSO Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) framework comprises both objectives and components. There is a direct relationship between objectives, which are what an entity strives to achieve, and enterprise risk management components, which represent what is needed to achieve them. The relationship is depicted in a three-dimensional matrix as shown:



Objectives

The FPOCF Board of Directors (Board) establishes the mission of FPOCF and sets the risk tolerance of the organization. The FPOCF Board of Directors regularly reviews specific issues at the monthly Board meetings, and at the Board Risk Management Committee meeting and provides the risk tolerance accordingly.

Within the context of the mission for FPOCF, management has established strategic objectives, selected strategies, and set aligned objectives implemented throughout the organization. The ERM framework for FPOCF is geared to achieving established objectives, set forth in four categories:

Strategic – High-level goals, aligned with and supporting FPOCF’s mission.

Operations – Efficient use of FPOCF resources.

Reporting – Reliability of capturing data for reporting and analysis.

Compliance – Compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

The Board realizes that objectives relating to reliability of reporting and compliance with laws and regulations are within the entity’s control; therefore, ERM can be expected to provide reasonable assurance of achieving those objectives.

Achievement of strategic and operations objectives, however, is subject to external events not always within the entity’s control; accordingly, for these objectives, the Board acknowledges that ERM can provide reasonable assurance that management, and the Board in its oversight role, are made aware, in a timely manner, of the extent to which the entity is moving toward achievement of the objectives.

Components

ERM consists of eight interrelated components. These are derived from the way management runs an enterprise and are integrated with the management process. These components are:

- Internal Environment –

The internal environment encompasses the tone of an organization and sets the basis for how risk is viewed and addressed by an entity’s people, including risk management philosophy and risk appetite, integrity and ethical values, and the environment in which they operate.

- **Objective Setting –**
Objectives must exist before management can identify potential events affecting their achievement. Enterprise risk management ensures that management has a process to set objectives in place and that chosen objectives support and align with the entity's mission and are consistent with its risk appetite.
- **Event Identification –**
Internal and external events affecting the achievement of an entity's objectives are identified, distinguishing between risks and opportunities. Opportunities are channeled back to management's strategy or objective-setting processes.
- **Risk Assessment –**
Risks are analyzed, considering likelihood and impact, as a basis for determining how they should be managed. Risks are assessed on an inherent and residual basis.
- **Risk Response –**
Management selects risk responses – avoidance, elimination, reduction, sharing/transferring or acceptance of risk – developing a set of actions to align risks with the entity's risk tolerances and risk appetite.
- **Control Activities –**
Policies and procedures are established and implemented to help ensure the risk responses are effectively carried out.
- **Information and Communication –**
Relevant information is identified, captured, and communicated in a form and timeframe that enables people to carry out their responsibilities. Effective communication also occurs in a broader sense, flowing down, across, and up the entity.
- **Monitoring –**
The entirety of enterprise risk management is monitored, and modifications are made as necessary. Monitoring is accomplished through ongoing management activities, separate evaluations, or both.

It should be remembered that ERM is not strictly a serial process, where one component affects only the next. It is a multidirectional, interactive process in which almost any component can and does influence another.

Roles and Responsibilities:

All staff of FPOCF have some responsibility for ERM.

The President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for the organization's risk and should take ownership of the process. The President and CEO's role will primarily focus on establishing strategic objectives, selecting strategies to meet the existing objectives, and to set aligned objectives throughout the FPOCF.

The Executive Team will assist the President and CEO in establishing the strategic objectives and selecting the strategies that will best diminish the associated risk to the organization.

Organizational Identified Environmental Risk

Outbreaks: A sudden rise in the number of cases of disease. An outbreak may occur in a community or geographical area or may affect several countries. It may last for a few days or weeks, or even for several years. Some outbreaks are expected each year, such as influenza. FPOCF experienced an outbreak during the fall of 2019 when two-thirds of the FPOCF workforce had influenza. The FPOCF reported high numbers of staff also out during this period.

Epidemics: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) describe an epidemic as an unexpected increase in the number of disease cases in a specific geographical area. Yellow fever, smallpox, measles, and polio are prime examples of epidemics that occurred throughout American history.

Pandemics: A pandemic is a global disease outbreak. It differs from an outbreak or epidemic because it:

- Affects a wider geographical area, often worldwide.
- It infects a greater number of people than an epidemic.
- It is often caused by a new virus or strain of virus that has not circulated among people for a long time. Humans usually have little to no immunity against it. The virus spreads quickly from person-to-person worldwide.
- Causes much higher numbers of deaths than epidemics.
- Often, it creates social disruption, economic loss, and general hardship.

Pandemic preparation:

FPOCF is dedicated to providing our staff, providers, and community partners with the most up-to-date information on an existing pandemic.

Pandemic preparedness and response touch many ethical issues, including the relationship between the individual and the state, and there is no one-size-fits all approach.

During the onset of a pandemic, FPOCF's President and Chief Executive Officer will organize an epidemic/pandemic response task force comprised of the Executive and Senior Leadership of FPOCF.

The key roles and responsibilities of the Leadership Support Team include:

- Team Leader: (President and CEO)
- Operations Lead: (VP of Operations and COO)
- Logistics Lead: CAO
- Communications Lead: Human Resources Director and Public Relations and Communications Director
- Technical Lead: (Data Analytics & IT) MIS Director

Case Management: Case Management and Permanency Administrator Using the ERM framework, the leadership team executed the four categories and the components related to the framework to mitigate the risk to FPOCF staff and with our system- of-care network providers.

The Process:

The team uses an application called Trello. It was organized into categories to efficiently track information and give quick reporting. The categories include administration, plans, resources, exposures, provider impacts, direct care, foster community, extended foster Care, residential group care, on-call, facilities, technical support, stakeholders, future engagements, HR functions, PR functions, legal functions, QA/training functions, travel-related information.

It should be noted that strategic and operational objectives may be influenced by external events and regulatory compliance that is outside the organization's control.

Administration – Track Florida Department of Health Epidemic/Pandemic Statistics, Pandemic Live updates from the Worldometer, setup video conferencing platforms such as, GoToMeeting, Zoom, and Teams, and establish communication control that the President and CEO delivers all communication to the FPOCF.

Plans – Establish a telework schedule for all staff, implement the Pandemic Strategy Plans by Department, if available, outlining roles and responsibilities within the departments and detailed points of contact information. Create a planning single point of tracking. Create a Return to Office Plan outlining the requirements for creating a safe work environment. The Return to Office Plan is a comprehensive 39-page document that was created using many government agencies and regulatory compliance guidelines surrounding the epidemic/pandemic. *Note: Depending on the crisis, research and resources will vary, the possible resources are listed here:

Resources –

- Monitor the Office of the Governor/Executive Orders regarding current epidemics/pandemics
- Brevard's Emergency Operation Center (EOC) Testing Information
- FCC epidemic/pandemic Tools and Resources
- Resources from Opening America
- Insperity Resources on Return to Work
- Department of Children and Families Central Region Checklist
- Helpful practice guides from Central Region CBC's (Heartland for Children and Embrace Families)
- State and Federal Resources
- Tools used to mobilize your workforce (Virtual Teams and Platforms)
- New York State Guidance on Child Welfare Activities
- FedEx Procedures for Delivery of Parcels
- Council on Accreditation Information regarding site visits
- OSHA 3990 Guidance on preparing workplaces for COVID-19
- Faith Community Organizations Serving during epidemics/pandemics
- FDA information on PPE and Hand Sanitizer

Epidemic/Pandemic Exposures – Implement tracking system for tracking exposures and confirmed COVID-19 cases related to staff, clients, providers, system-of-care partners.

- Critical Incident Reporting used for (Foster Parents, Children in Care, Relative/Non-Relative Caregiver's, Group Homes)

- Mindshare Epidemic/Pandemic Tracking Workspace (Provides accurate data capturing and reporting of Children in Care). The Provider Workspace tracks our Foster Families and highlights those Foster Parents at high-risk due to age.
 - Exposure date
 - Test status
 - Cleared date
 - Recovered date
 - Quarantine Status
 - Vaccination Date

During the leadership calls, the FPOCF Director of Contracts and Compliance will update the team regarding new reports of epidemic/pandemic confirmed cases, exposures (if applicable), deaths, etc. reported throughout the Critical Incident reporting process. The Case Management Leadership will report known staff cases and possible exposures.

- Provider Impacts – Reporting of service-related closures that impact children and families is critical. During an epidemic/pandemic, FPOCF will track dental providers, daycare providers, and other health providers impacting disruption of health and medical services to children and families.

Direct Care Impacts – Reporting of services related to those processes that can be interrupted by epidemic/pandemic protocols. FPOCF requires the submission of telework agreements and telework tracking logs be submitted for approval to their immediate supervisor.

Direct Care services that are monitored closely for impact on operations include:

- Permanency Tracking
- Home Visits
- Home Studies
- Court Functions
- Internal Operations Meetings
- High Risk Cases
- Livescan Services

Foster Community – Our foster community is vital to the mission. FPOCF closely monitors the activities that could impact the organization's ability to continue with foster recruitment activities and foster training. The areas monitored during an epidemic/pandemic include:

- National Training and Development Curriculum (NTDC) Training
- Foster Parent Association
- Support Groups
- Day Care Closure and Financial Support
- Administration support for communication to our licensed care network

Strategies implemented:

- Creating a safe environment for continued foster parent training (classroom/virtual)
- President and CEO video platform for communicating with foster parents on a regular basis
- The creation of GoToMeeting accounts for foster parent support groups
- Distribution of day care closures and financial support information
- Increased administrative support and communication to our foster parent network

Extended Foster Care – FPOCF recognizes that some young adults may need assistance during an epidemic/pandemic. To ensure their safety, contact with youth is initiated and periodic check-ins are made under the leadership of the Youth Services Administrator.

Strategies implemented:

- Check-in with youth to provide emotional support and reliable information
- Reach out to youth in college or training programs to offer assistance with food, health care and other mental health support.
- Assist youth in college or other settings find and secure housing while schools are closed.
- Assist and guide youth with financial information
- Assisting youth with reemployment information

Residential Group Care – FPOCF established monitoring procedures to track staff/children's exposures and the impact on placement options. Each residential group home provider is required to annually supply FPOCF their plan regarding operations during an emergency/disaster which includes an epidemic/pandemic event.

- Facilities – At the onset of an epidemic/pandemic, CDC guidance will be taken into consideration. FPOCF will quickly establish facility protocols to address the impacts to its operations.
 - Establish and address mail delivery and package drop-off/pickup procedures
 - Develop containment strategies
 - Procure infection control supplies (DCF/FCC) supply chains and resources
 - Develop procedures for epidemic/pandemic Office Guidelines
 - Health Checks
 - Possible contact with confirmed or suspected infected people
 - Precautionary Measures if staff feel sick and other safety measures to prevent spread
 - Keeping staff safe procedures
 - Increase cleaning and disinfection (Professional Sanitization)
 - Enforce social distancing (Create barriers)
 - Issue PPE
 - Controlling Access
 - Adjusting work schedules
 - Staffing of facilities
- IT Technical Support – FPOCF maintains a virtual environment using many different video platforms to ensure staff stay connected when working remotely or telecommuting. It is important to create a means that people can still feel connected in an environment that is isolating people from one another.
 - IT maintains a Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection for staff to access local and state resources
 - IT provides electronic communication methods to minimize impacts to training, home visits, and other activities that minimize possible exposure to the current epidemic/pandemic such as:
 - MS Team

- GoToMeeting
 - Zoom
 - Text Messaging
 - Remind Notification System
 - Provide Tutorial videos on using the different video platforms
 - Provide information about the security risks of using video platforms (Don't make connections to meetings "Public.")
- Stakeholders are important to the overall mission of FPOCF. As such, communication is essential to keep them informed of impacts to our System of Care.

Strategies Implemented:

- Ensure regular contact with the DCF Contract Oversight Unit
- Ensure regular communication with our Providers
- Ensure regular contact with Children Legal Services
- Ensure regular contact with Guardian Ad-Litem Program
- Ensure regular contact with Youth Thrive
- Ensure regular communication with FPOCF Board of Directors

Future Engagement planning is part of the FPOCF Plan. FPOCF leadership will evaluate for safety and necessity all work related employee travel plans CDC guidance will be considered regarding non-essential travel. During the onset of an epidemic/pandemic, travel plans may be suspended to include:

- Travel to state and out-of-state conferences
- Travel for training
- Travel to FPOCF offices for scheduled meetings

Internal future engagements, like company and department meetings that are scheduled for in person attendance may be cancelled or rescheduled to be held via virtually. In addition, meetings that required in-person presence may be limited to the CDC guidelines for social distancing. Local community gatherings and workgroup meetings may be discouraged and guidance to hold the meeting virtually may be recommended depending on State and Federal guidance.

Public Relations – Public Relations is instrumental in establishing procedures for communication and procurement of PPE equipment and resources.

Strategies Implemented:

- Create a newsletter that contained important information related to the operations of FPOCF during the pandemic and also as a means to keep staff engaged
- Develop periodic employee emails
- Update and test the text alert system
- Post epidemic/pandemic information on the organization's website
- Create a call-in voice recording regarding hours of operation and other important information for clients
- Set-up conference bridge with designated call times
- Ensure communication with customers in relation to delays in service.
- Create a President and CEO Facebook Live Message

Provider Communication Notification outlining:

- General practices
- Prevention to clients receiving home visits
- Establishing services that can be provided via Telehealth
- Provide a weekly conference call to providers that establish two-way dialogue addressing concerns that impact children and families
- Provide local health websites for epidemic/pandemic guidelines

Legal Functions – FPOCF will monitor information provided by the Attorney General's office on court proceedings. This function is extremely important as it impacts the possibilities of family reunification, adoptions, and permanency measures. Delayed hearings have a direct impact on the system of care.

Strategies Implemented:

- Establish a communication tree by establishing points of contact with our Children Legal Services in Brevard, Seminole, Osceola and Orange counties.
- Monitor and communicate all information published by the Florida Supreme Court referencing Administrative Orders and Amendments on how court proceedings will be held with continuing to support public safety
- Monitor and communicate how Brevard, Osceola, Orange, and Seminole County Courts proceedings will be held as this would impact case management practices.

Quality Assurance and Training Functions – FPOCF will evaluate options to conduct Pre-Service Training. Consultation with the Florida Certification Board and implementation of remote training requirements will be considered. In addition to fulfilling necessary case management training requirements, implementation of new processes to conduct reviews will be initiated.

Ongoing monitoring and communication will be implemented in response to local, state and national epidemic/pandemic events. FPOCF will continue to assess its operational capabilities and reevaluate practices to ensure the safety of our employees, providers, stakeholders and all the children and families served in Brevard, Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties.

BY DIRECTION OF THE PRESIDENT AND
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:



PHILIP J. SCARPELLI

President and Chief Executive Officer
Family Partnerships of Central Florida

Signature Date: 10/15/2025