

The Colorado Mountain Club Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

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Purpose

The purpose of the CMC Emergency Action Plan (EAP) is to outline the actions to be taken in the event of a serious accident, incident, injury, or other emergency involving CMC members, program participants, staff, visitors, or property. An incident may be related to persons or property and may be behavioral as well as accidental.

Groups, CMC departments, and CMC Adventure Travel are expected to supplement this EAP with additional emergency procedures for their trips and educational activities. Information such as evacuation plans, nearest medical assistance, and other specific emergency details may be needed for effective emergency response.

This emergency information should be added to the CMC trip database when available.

The EAP facilitates the CMC's response so that the problem is addressed in an efficient, compassionate, and professional manner. The following procedures are in place as a guide, and are to remain flexible.

An Emergency Action Plan is not to be a substitute for the common sense, training and knowledge of CMC leadership or those responsible for its implementation.

Definitions

CEO: Chief Executive Officer of the Colorado Mountain Club

BOD: Board of Directors

Crisis Response Team (CRT): The team of people compiled by the CEO (or his/her designate) who have the skills needed to respond to an emergency. The team may consist of staff, individuals from the Board of Directors, or other key leaders in the CMC. Periodic crisis response training will be offered to potential CRT members.

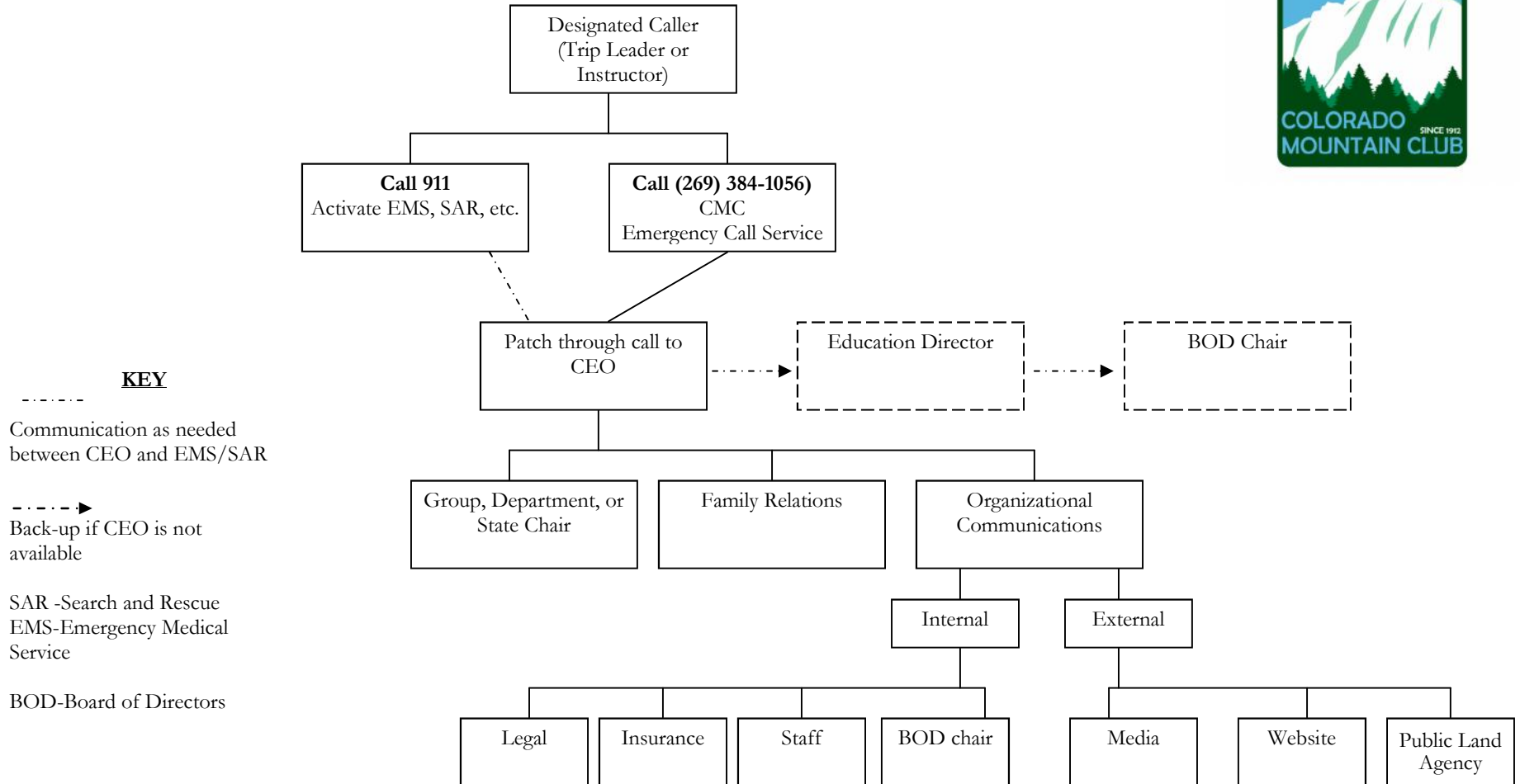
Emergency: Any serious incident or situation concerning the health, injury, missing person(s), or fatality of a CMC member, volunteer, program participant, guest, or employee while participating in a CMC activity. This includes extensive property damage.

EMS: Emergency Medical System.

Field Staff: The trip leader(s) or instructor(s) of a CMC trip, class, or activity. This includes a Group trip leader, a YEP instructor or volunteer, or an Adventure Travel trip leader.

SAR: Search and Rescue. County Sheriff departments (or other entity such as national park) authorize search and rescue operations.

CMC Crisis Communication Chart



Implementing the Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

The following section of the EAP outlines the roles and responsibilities of staff and volunteers:

I. FIELD STAFF (trip leader or school instructors) Emergency Procedures

- A. At the scene of the emergency:
 1. Manage the situation in the field with human health, safety and well-being as the top priority. Work to ensure that scene is safe for all uninjured parties. If at any point managing the situation requires accessing outside assistance before notifying the CMC, use your best judgment.
 2. **Assess the scene** for safety for everyone (injured, first aiders, and uninjured parties)
 3. **Stabilize the situation** - Limit the possibilities for further injury to people or extensive property damage.
 4. **Administer first aid.** Attend to the well-being of injured or ill persons.
 - a) Provide pre-hospital emergency care according to the accepted procedures for the level of training you have.
 - b) Comfort and reassure the patient and others present.
 - c) Start CMC First Aid Treatment Form/ CMC Patient Care form *or other appropriate documentation.*
 - d) If the patient is over 18 and refuses care that is apparently needed, have the patient sign a release acknowledging their refusal of care.
 - e) Minors cannot legally refuse treatment.
 5. Assess emergency needs and develop a plan.
 6. **Call 911**, if outside assistance is necessary. The dispatcher will connect with the relevant emergency medical response
 - a) Determine the closest (in time) emergency vehicle or phone location and mark the route to this point on a map.
 - b) Make a plan for next contact once initial contact is made.
 - c) If unable to call from your location, send at least two “runners” to initiate outside assistance. The “runners” should take the following:
 - d) Emergency report (may include copy of patient care form; names of all persons with patient; condition of group, time, temperature, precipitation, and wind upon departure; map marked with patient's location; and other pertinent information regarding location and state of patient's condition).
 - e) Pertinent information from patient's medical form (if applicable) including emergency contact information.
 - f) Necessary equipment, food, water, maps and other items to maintain health and well-being of the “runner” team.
 - g) Document what time they left the scene of the accident.
 7. Work to ensure the scene is safe and calm for all uninjured parties.
 - a) **Call CMC Emergency Call Service at 269-384-1056.** The purpose is to activate CMC services (any additional services needed at scene, notified key people in group/AT/YEP, handling of media, _____, etc.)
 - b) CMC contracts with the Michigan Message Center for 24-hour emergency call service. Field staff can make one phone call to connect to the Colorado Mountain Club.
 - c) After gathering essential information, the caller will be placed on hold while the call is patched through to the CEO. If the cell phone, office phone, and home phone are not answered, the service automatically calls the second contact, the Education Director; if there is no answer, the CMC President is contacted. This process may take several minutes, but eliminates the need for the field staff to make numerous calls if there is no answer.
 8. **Document site of accident.** Designate a person to document the accident site with photographs, written description.
 - a) **Start initial CMC Incident Report Form** (see Appendix)
 - b) Documentation is important. The **Accident and Incident Reports begin with and are based on what is written on the scene.**
 - c) Start taking notes immediately on the CMC Patient Care Form. If it is necessary to send for help, take a copy of the first aid treatment and pertinent information from the patient's medical form so that responders know what to expect.
 - d) Ask that other witnesses complete written account.

9. The CEO will work with you further for additional information needed and if a review committee is implemented.

B. Evacuations

1. The mode and urgency of the evacuation should be appropriate for the injury, illness or problem. Field staff must use their judgment to determine the seriousness of each situation; however, the following conditions supersede instructor judgment and **require** an evacuation from the field:

2. Head injury or blow to the head resulting in loss of consciousness or altered mental status
3. Any injury or illness related loss of consciousness
4. Seizure
5. Suspected spinal injury
6. Use of epinephrine
7. Near drowning
8. Lightning strike

9. Evacuation of participants may be considered for medical or behavioral reasons. When considering an evacuation, the following items should be performed/analyzed in an attempt to match the evacuation method and expediency with the nature and severity of the problem:

C. Work to ensure the participant's condition is stabilized as much as possible.

D. The well-being of the rest of the group should be a priority.

E. The type of evacuation should be determined by:

1. Patient's condition – Can they walk out or do they need transport?
2. Group location.
3. Availability of outside help if required. (The safety of in-coming rescuers must be considered).
4. Group age, group condition, resources and equipment.
5. Terrain and weather.

F. Some evacuation options include:

1. Participant walks out escorted by a self-sufficient evacuation team.
2. CMC staff/leader(s) are sent into the field to meet the group and evacuate the participant.
3. Patient is carried out in a litter by group or by a rescue team.
4. In winter – snowmobiles, snowcats or sled litters may be a transport option.
5. Patient is carried to helicopter landing site and evacuated from there.
6. If a participant is 18 years of age or older and chooses to leave a trip or program, it is their right to do so. However, efforts should be made to address issues that are contributing to the participants desire to leave. If these efforts fail, participants should be encouraged to remain with the group until reaching the most ideal evacuation point.
7. In the event that an adult participant chooses to self evacuate from the group and the instructors have (a) made all attempts to convince them to stay with the group and (b) determined that it is not in the best interest of all of the participants to evacuate the entire group, field staff should attempt to obtain written refusal of treatment and desire to leave the trip, signed by the patient and a witness.

G. Fatality in the Field

H. In the event of a fatality, the primary job of Field Staff is to work to ensure the mental, emotional, and physical well-being of the rest of the participants. **Do not disturb the scene of the incident or move the body.** Keep someone in the vicinity of the body unless the scene becomes unsafe. Send for assistance (stick to the facts only). Field Staff should contact the CEO through the emergency answering service (269-384-1056) and direct all media inquiries to the CEO.

CMC CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM (CRT)

In the event of an emergency, the CEO (or his/her designated replacement) will appoint people to the Crisis Response Team (CRT) who will carry out individual responsibilities outlined below including the Emergency Coordinator, Family Relations and Organizational Communication:

- 1) Restrict external (CMC) communication about the emergency only to those parties vital to the emergency response, and refer any outside inquiries (e.g. media) to the CEO.
- 2) See the Crisis Response Team Manual for additional guidelines for this team.

A. Emergency Coordinator Responsibilities:

The primary role of the Emergency Coordinator is to notify the CEO as soon as possible and assist with the emergency response in the field. Typically this will be someone on the Crisis Response Team. However, CMC Membership Services or another person in the CMC who is initially contacted about the incident may fill this role until directed otherwise.

- 1) Take the call and act as communications relay.
- 2) Keeps a brief communication log outlining the date, time, contact, subject, action, responsibility, and phone number of each communication. It is important to state only the facts in the communication log; avoid speculation or opinion in this written record. (See Appendix I.)
- 3) Follow the Crisis Communications Chart. Call appropriate county sheriff to mobilize Search and Rescue (SAR), if required.
- 4) Contact CEO or designate. If directed/and/or appropriate, contact the related School Director, Adventure Travel Chair, or YEP Program Manager.
 - a) Depending on the type of activity, the Emergency Coordinator or CEO will contact the Group Chair, Adventure Travel Chair, or Department Director.
 - b) The Chair or Director will provide information about the type of activity and participants, including number of people in attendance, goal(s) of the activity, original plans, field staff names and qualifications, outfitter contacts, or other pertinent information.
 - c) Note: Group and Committee Chairs and Directors are responsible for providing the current trip information and contact phone numbers in the CMC database prior to the start of every activity.
 - d) Handle appropriate communications within the Group/Staff. Notify the Safety and Leadership Committee. See sample scripts as communication examples.
- 5) Maintain contact with SAR, and refer media calls to the CEO or appointed spokesperson.
- 6) Gather information and forms.
- 7) Appoint someone to monitor telephone and maintain a detailed log of events.
- 8) Continue communication with and give direction to the field staff.
- 9) Assess needs of staff and participants for physical and emotional support.

B. Maintain Family Relations:

1. Identify the family/next of kin contact information. This depends on the situation and the CEO will advise the CRT regarding contact.
2. In the event of a fatality or critical injury, the CEO will notify the family or next of kin, if this has not already been handled by civil authorities.
3. Assess need for critical incident debriefing or professional therapeutic intervention. This intervention is highly recommended in cases of fatalities or serious injuries.
4. Consider follow-up with the patient's family in event of an extreme incident. Without admitting any fault, extend possible means of support, such as lodging, meals, transportation, or counseling.
5. Approve expenditures that exceed program budget such as airfare.
6. Determine appropriate follow-up with participant's family or next of kin.

C. Organizational Communications:

External Communications

1. Handle public relations.
2. Obtain accurate information about the emergency from the emergency coordinator and other applicable staff.
3. Identify an appropriate CMC spokesperson to communicate with the media. Make sure spokesperson has current and accurate information about the emergency.
4. Write press release and media response.
5. Post press release on CMC web site.
6. Maintain communications with the appropriate Public Land Agency representative, as needed.

Internal Communications

1. Keep the Board Chair informed of the situation.
2. Notify relevant staff via e-mail with brief description of incident and directions to refer press inquiries to CEO or designated CRT member.
3. Determine when and how to notify CMC staff, board, Groups and other stakeholders.
4. Contact insurance agency and provide requested information, as directed by CEO.
 - a. In the event that staff is injured, follow up with the appropriate workers compensation procedures.
5. Contact the CMC Legal counsel, as directed by CEO.
6. Initiate formal review process for serious incidents, critical or disabling injuries, and fatalities.
7. Keep a communication log of all internal communications.

Serious Incident Review Process

When to Consider an Internal or External Review of an Incident

1. When a fatality occurs to a participant
2. When a fatality occurs to a staff member while on duty
3. When a permanently disabling injury occurs to a participant or staff member
4. When a life threatening injury occurs to a participant or on duty staff member

Determination of the Need for a Review Team

1. The CEO will determine the necessity of a review and initiate such a review. This should occur as soon as possible after an incident.
2. The CEO will consult with the president of the CMC board, chair of the state Safety and Leadership Committee, Education Director, and the management of the program in which the incident occurred in making a decision regarding conducting a review.
3. The CMC will look to accepted industry standards in determining whether an internal or external review is appropriate.
4. The CEO must approve external reviews.
5. Appropriate funds will be set aside if an external review is found to be appropriate.

Role of the Review Team

1. The overall mission of the Review Team is to help the CMC as well as outdoor education/recreation industry prevent fatalities and permanently disabling injuries.
The Review Team will provide recommendations and suggestions on prevention of further incidents and related improvements in quality. The Review team will also provide recommendations and suggestions on improvements in emergency response as well as highlight areas of effective procedure for continuation in the future.

Composition of the Review Team

1. To be determined by the CEO.
2. Review team members should have expertise or have access to expertise relevant to the type of incident.

Ground Rules

1. The Review Team will work with the Crisis Response Team and keep the CRT updated of all processes.
2. All findings, discussions, and written materials of the review team will be confidential.
3. The scope of distribution of the findings within the CMC will be determined in advance of the preparation of the review team's report. CEO will make this determination.
4. The Review Team will operate independently and its findings will be based on the facts discovered.
5. The program will follow all recommendations of the Review Team.
6. No review team member will speak with the media. All media inquiries will be handled by the CEO or her/his designee.

Guidelines for Conducting the Review

1. The CEO should begin appointing the review team immediately following the incident. There should be a Team Leader and one to five other members depending on the magnitude and kind of incident. *(See sample email introduction)*
2. Kickoff the team via telecom or face-to-face. Determine tasks to do.
3. For an external review team, a written agreement as to the scope of work, process, costs, and distribution of the Final Report will be drawn up.
4. Review Team steps:
 - a. Team leader communicates with other members as to timing, process, and task assignments.
 - b. Visit the site of the incident when environmental factors are part of the cause, deploy at least one review team member to the site as soon as possible (before conditions change). Photographs, and perhaps video, of the scene should be part of this process. Consider visiting other relevant locations as appropriate.
 - c. Review all pertinent written materials.
 - d. Gather all reports from external sources (park service, coroner, SAR)
 - e. Assign the following tasks:
 - Chair – determines the timeline for activities, manages all actions of committee, ensures a final report is completed and submitted to State Safety & Leadership Committee, CEO, Board, and legal committee.
 - Interviewees – a minimum of two people must conduct all interviews. Personal phone calls to set up interview.
 - Communication manager – notifies trip leader of temporary suspension (personal phone call.) Notifies all interested parties in the process and timeline of the review. Group Chair, Board, Parties involved in incident.
 - Report writer – writes the final report.
 - Note organizer – manages all notes, documents, and communications.
 - EAP updater – makes note of any EAP changes that need to be made.
 - f. Interviews with appropriate administration, staff, and external individuals and agencies involved. All interviews must be conducted by a minimum of two people and set up by a personal phone call.
5. The Review Team will write a final report (within a reasonable scheduled time) that should include the primary and secondary causes of the incident, recommendations and suggestions on prevention of further incidents and related improvements of quality, and recommendations and suggestions on improvements in emergency response.

Development and Delivery of a Final Report

1. The report writer will write a DRAFT report for the CRT, based on a discussion with all members of the review team.
2. The Team Leader meets with the CRT to discuss the draft report and possible revisions.
3. The Team Leader submits the Final Report to the Chief Executive Officer, Chair of the Board of Directors, Group or Committee Chair, or Department Director of the program involved in the incident, and others as identified prior to the writing of the report.

Name of person completing form: _____
 EAP Role: _____
 Date: _____ Time: _____

Appendix I: Communication Log (For Office Use)

It is important to state only the facts in your communication log; avoid speculation or opinion in this written record.

Trip Snapshot			
Trip location/details:			
Trip date:			
Trip Leader:			
Affected person(s):			
Trip Participant names:			

Name person on call:	Contact phone number:
Affiliation (CMC group, media, etc):	
Position/role:	
Communication Subject:	
Action:	
Follow-up:	