

Lake-Geauga United Head Start, Inc.

Emergency Response Plan



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INTRODUCTION

Lake-Geauga United Head Start is a preschool program serving children ages 3 through kindergarten eligibility. We do NOT provide services to infants or toddlers.

This plan is intended to define emergency response operations and drills for a wide range of emergency situations from a naturally occurring weather condition to a terrorist attack. While this plan spells out general guidelines for center staff to follow in each situation, the agency realizes that any emergency situation will present a unique set of circumstances and expects that staff will use their experience, common sense and good judgment during their efforts to maintain the safety of children, staff and visitors.

This plan will be reviewed by the LGUHS Management Team at least annually and revisions will periodically be approved by the Policy Council and Board of Trustees. Staff will receive training on the Emergency Response plan at least annually or at the time of any significant changes to the plan. Parents will receive the Emergency Response plan at the time of enrollment (with the Parent Handbook) and will be asked to sign a verification of receipt. The plan will also be available for review in the office of each center as well as on the LGUHS website (lguhs.org).

EMERGENCY DRILLS

Fire Drills

It is the duty of each LGUHS, Inc. facility to conduct fire drills. According to the Ohio Revised Code 3737.29, there must be drills at least once a month. Doors and exits should be kept unlocked during school hours. Each classroom teacher must post a map, near the door and in plain sight, indicating in red the safest route to the nearest exit. An alternate exit should also be indicated in another color. Children are to be instructed to exit the building quickly, quietly and in an orderly manner. One staff member should lead the children out of the building while the other checks to make sure that all children are out.

Evacuation Drills

Evacuation drills will be completed pursuant to the County policy developed by the local Emergency Management Agency. This policy will be posted in the office of each facility. The center will be notified by telephone by the Emergency Operations Center if there is an alert, site area emergency or a general emergency at the Perry Nuclear Power Plant.

Other Emergency Drills

Each center will also conduct periodic tornado drills, shelter in place drills and lock down drills. Drills are not intended to be disruptive to the daily activities, but should be scheduled at varying times to include both morning and afternoon classes. Each center will coordinate with the relevant law enforcement agency for emergency drills, as necessary.

SEVERE WEATHER

Site Administrators or their designee will monitor the National Weather Service for any severe weather threats.

- *Severe Thunderstorm Watch*- all activities, including those scheduled to occur outside, will continue as planned. If outside, staff will stay aware of weather conditions and will move inside if conditions (including rain, wind or lightning) worsen.
- *Severe Thunderstorm Warning*- activities planned for outside will be moved indoors. Staff will stay aware of weather conditions and will move children away from windows if conditions worsen.
- *Tornado Watch*- all activities will continue as planned. If outside, staff should ensure that shelter is near and will stay aware of weather conditions. Staff will move promptly inside if conditions worsen in any way.
- *Tornado Warning*- Site Administrators or designees will monitor National Weather Service or other weather alert site continuously. Staff will follow tornado procedures:
 - Open classroom windows slightly (if time allows);
 - Close shades or drapes (if time allows);
 - Open all classroom doors to hallways;
 - Move children promptly to designated tornado locations within their centers;
 - Remain there until they are notified by the Site Administrator or designee;
 - Notify the Executive Director of any significant situations or damage.
 - If necessary, staff will initiate the Emergency Release to Parents procedure (see page 10).
- ** All centers will conduct Tornado Drills at least 4 times yearly, in September, March, April and May.
- *Winter Storm*- LGUHS will closely monitor winter weather threats, including major snowfall, blizzards and ice storms, and cancel school when appropriate. School closures will be announced on the agency's Facebook page as well as on television on WKYC, WEWS and Fox 8.

If a winter storm occurs after children have arrived at school, staff will monitor weather and road conditions. If deemed necessary and appropriate, children may be sent home from school early to avoid worsening conditions. Parents will be notified via a telephone call, regular bus routes will be run (if applicable) and self-transporters will be asked to come early for pick-up. Staff will remain with children until all children have been picked up or delivered home on the bus.

- *Flooding*- LGUHS will monitor threats of excessive rain or flooding. If deemed necessary and appropriate, children may be sent home from school early to avoid worsening conditions. Parents will be notified via a telephone call, regular bus routes will be run (if applicable), if deemed safe, and self-transporters will be asked to come early for pick-up. If buses are not able to run, parents will be contacted to pick their child up. Staff will remain with children until all children have been picked up or delivered home on the bus.
- *Earthquake*- Staff and children will take cover under a heavy piece of furniture, in a doorway in or against an inside corner or wall and will cover their head and neck, remaining in the safe spot until the earthquake has passed. If necessary, staff will provide

First Aid, contact authorities and/or initiate the Emergency Release to Parents procedure (see page 10).

UTILITY OUTAGE

In the case of an electricity, heat or water outage, the Site Administrator will assess the circumstances, report the outage to the appropriate authority and gather information about the suspected length of the outage. If possible, all activities will continue as planned. If the length or scope of the outage will affect the health and safety of the center, classes will be released early. Parents will be notified via a telephone call, regular bus routes will be run (if applicable) and self-transporters will be asked to come early for pick-up. Staff will remain with children until all children have been picked up or delivered home on the bus. Cellular phones may be used as the primary means of contact if the center phone lines are disabled.

FIRE

- If staff observes a fire, they will evacuate the immediate area and engage the alarm system. Depending on the size of the fire, staff may attempt to extinguish the fire using one of the center's fire extinguishers, however, this should only be done if there is no imminent danger and if there are no children present.
- In the case of a fire or a fire alarm, all staff, including those who are not in the classroom, will assist children with evacuation from the building using the closest exit that is clear of hazards. If time allows, all windows and doors should be closed and lights turned off.
- Teachers will conduct a head count upon exiting the building to ensure that all children are accounted for. Teachers should have emergency information on each child with them at the time of evacuation.
- Staff and children will report to their designated area to wait for the fire department to assess the situation.
- If cleared by the fire department, staff and children will return to the building.
- If the building is not cleared for return, staff will move children to the designated evacuation location (see page 10) and will initiate the Emergency Release to Parents procedure (see page 10).

** All centers will conduct Fire Drills at least once per month during the school year.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

Minor medical situations for children or staff will be handled using First Aid, as trained. All treatments will be documented in an incident report and if the injured or ill person is a child, it will also be reported to the parent.

If a major medical situation occurs for a child or staff, staff should consult any medical plan that has been developed. In the absence of a medical plan, staff should proceed using First Aid and/or CPR techniques, as trained. As one staff attends to the injured or ill individual, another staff will call 911 if necessary. If an injured adult requires medical attention, but not emergency medical attention, arrangements will be made to transport them to the closest Urgent Care or physician.

If an injured child requires medical attention, but not emergency medical attention, the parent or emergency contact will be contacted for further direction.

In the case of a serious illness or injury to a child that requires medical treatment, ODJFS will also be notified within 24 hours and an incident report will be filed within three days.

OUTBREAKS, EPIDEMICS OR OTHER INFECTIOUS DISEASE EMERGENCY

In the event of an outbreak, epidemic or other infectious disease emergency within the agency, the following steps will be taken:

- The Site Administrator will notify the Health Coordinator and Executive Director.
- The Health Coordinator will contact the county Department of Health to report the issue and get guidance on steps to take, including whether or not the center needs to be closed.
- Based on guidance from county Department of Health, the Executive Director and Site Administrator will make a decision regarding closing the center and will notify staff, parents and the Regional Office.
- Information regarding any infectious health issue that presents in the center or on the bus will be sent home to each family and will be reported to ODJFS Licensing, if necessary.
- Each classroom within the center will be cleaned and disinfected prior to resuming classes.

In the event of an outbreak, epidemic or other infectious disease emergency locally, statewide or nationwide, the agency will follow the direction of the following resources:

- Locally- the Lake and Geauga County Health Districts and local governments as appropriate.
- Statewide- the Ohio Department of Health, the Governor's Office, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, the Ohio Department of Education and other state agencies as appropriate.
- Nationwide- the Office of Head Start, the Center for Communicable Disease, the President of the United States and other national agencies as appropriate.

EVACUATION

Hazardous Material Spill or Gas Leak

- If staff or children witness a hazardous material spill or detect the smell of gas or other strong chemicals, staff and children will evacuate the area and notify the Site Administrator immediately.
- The Site Administrator will ensure that all employees and children are evacuated from the area.
- Staff will contact 911 immediately to report the spill, leak or other possible chemical issue.
- Teachers will conduct a head count upon exiting the building to ensure that all children are accounted for. Teachers should have emergency information on each child with them at the time of evacuation.
- Staff and children will not return to the building until authorized to do so by the fire department or other authorities. If the building is not cleared, staff will move children to

the designated evacuation location (see page 10) and will initiate the Emergency Release to Parents procedure (see page 11).

Bomb Threat

- Any bomb threat will be treated as legitimate until proven otherwise.
- Any unidentified or suspicious objects will be reported to authorities and will NOT be touched or handled in any way. If an unidentified or suspicious object is detected, staff will call 911 immediately and notify their Site Administrator to begin evacuation procedures.
- Upon receiving a bomb threat on the telephone, the answering employee will:
 - Notify another employee while remaining on the phone.
 - Attempt to keep the caller on the line as long as possible, asking questions like:
 - Where is the bomb located?
 - When will the bomb go off?
 - What does the bomb look like?
 - Who the caller is and why they planted the bomb.
 - Record the answers, along with the exact time the call came in, the caller's exact words and any observations about the caller's voice and surrounding noises.
 - Not hang up the phone, even if the caller does, in case the call can be traced.
 - The other employee will contact 911 immediately, then notify the Site Administrator or designee.
- If a written threat is received, staff will handle it as little as possible, will contact 911 immediately, then notify the Site Administrator or designee.
- Upon notification of a threat, the Site Administrator or designee will notify all staff that the evacuation procedures should begin immediately. All staff and children will move to an outdoor location that is as far away from the building as safely possible.
- Staff and children will wait for law enforcement to assess the threat and determine next steps. Site Administrator or designee will assist as requested.
- If the building is cleared, staff and children will return to the building.
- If the building is not cleared for return, staff will move children to the designated evacuation location (see page 10) and will initiate the Emergency Release to Parents procedure (see page 10).

Threats of Violence, including active shooter, bioterrorism or terrorism

- If a threat of violence is detected, the Site Administrator will be notified immediately.
- The Site Administrator will contact 911 and along with local officials will determine if evacuation is appropriate and safe.
- Staff will move children to the designated evacuation location (see page 10) and will initiate the Emergency Release to Parent Procedure (see page 10).
- If it is determined that evacuation is not safe or appropriate, lockdown and/or shelter in place procedures (see page 9) will be initiated.

PERRY NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

The Lake County Emergency Management Agency has developed an area wide plan for evacuations in the event of a nuclear emergency at the Perry Plant. Centers in the danger radius will have that plan available in the office. The Emergency Operations Center will notify any center in the radius if there is an alert, an emergency or a need for evacuation. Centers located outside of the radius may be called upon for assistance during a Perry Plant emergency.

LOCKDOWN AND SHELTER IN PLACE

Lockdown is an emergency alert and response to imminent danger, including active shooter, terrorism or bioterrorism either in or near the school. Lockdown means that all children, staff and visitors will remain in their classrooms, office or designated safe space until the building or area is cleared and it is determined safe to resume activities or release children for the day.

During Lockdown, no one will be allowed in or out of the building. Lockdown will be utilized when a center receives a report from an outside source (law enforcement, local school) that there is a threat nearby or when a threat is detected in the school. The employee receiving notification or witnessing the threat will announce that the building is to go into Lockdown immediately and give any other information that is relevant and helpful for staff to know.

During Lockdown, all inside and outside doors will be locked, lights will be turned off and children and staff should not be visible through doors or windows. Staff will help children stay calm and quiet. If children are outside at the time of a Lockdown, they will be taken inside immediately to follow Lockdown procedures, unless there is an immediate threat in the building. If there is an active threat within the building, the staff will take the children to the designated evacuation location (see page 10).

When staff is able to, they will notify parents of the Lockdown situation. This may not be until the situation has been fully assessed for safety, as the children and staff's wellbeing will be our first priority. During Lockdown, parents may not come pick up their children for any reason. Once the building has been cleared staff will initiate the Emergency Release to Parents procedure (see page 11). If at any point during Lockdown it becomes evident that it is safer to evacuate, staff will follow evacuation procedures, including moving children to the designated evacuation location (see page 10) and initiating the Emergency Release to Parents procedure when able. Lockdown can only be cleared by the Site Administrator or Executive Director with law enforcement's assistance.

Centers may utilize a modified Lockdown procedure if circumstances warrant. In a modified Lockdown, all doors and windows are closed and locked and staff and children stay clear of open areas such as gyms, playgrounds or hallways, but all planned activities continue in classrooms and offices.

** All centers will conduct Lockdown drills at least quarterly during the school year.

Shelter in Place is the need for children and staff to take shelter in the building for a period of time longer than the normal school day. This situation may occur if there is a nuclear or hazardous material accident near the center or some other type of terrorist, bioterrorist or criminal activity that prevents us from safely releasing children from school. Each center will designate and label a Shelter in Place location that can hold all of the staff and children comfortably and can also be sufficiently locked down and protected from airborne threats. When entering Shelter in Place, staff will take attendance of children on attendance sheet before leaving classroom and after arriving to designated shelter in place area. Staff will carry all emergency medical forms along with medications (if needed). Staff will also have Child Enrollment and Health Information For Child Care forms for each child enrolled in program.

Each center will maintain a Shelter in Place kit that includes food, water and supplies to support all staff and children for at least 24 hours, if necessary. The Shelter in Place kit will be stored in the designated area to ensure access during an emergency. If Shelter in Place becomes necessary, parents will be notified as soon as it is safe for staff to do so. Parents will be notified again when it is safe to initiate the Emergency Release to Parents procedure (see page 11).

TRANSPORTATION and FIELD TRIPS (if applicable)

When transportation is provided, staff will be prepared to handle emergencies on their buses or to divert their buses in the case of emergencies at the center. All transportation staff members are trained on bus emergencies and evacuations as well as First Aid and CPR.

** All buses will conduct emergency evacuation drills at least once per month.

SEVERE WEATHER ON THE BUS

The agency will make every effort to cancel bus routes if severe weather is imminent, however if weather conditions worsen unexpectedly, bus operators and monitors are trained to stay aware of weather conditions and make decisions based on their observations.

CENTER EMERGENCY WHILE CHILDREN ARE ON THE BUS or ON A FIELD TRIP

In the event that a fire, serious utility outage, bomb threat, lockdown or shelter in place takes place at a center while there are children in route to school on a bus or out of the center on a field trip, the Site Administrator or designee will notify the bus as soon as possible. The bus staff will contact parents to notify them of the situation and will attempt to return all children to their homes, if circumstances allow. If safety issues prevent the bus from returning the children to their homes, the bus(es) will report to the center's designated evacuation location (see page 10) and staff will initiate the Emergency Release to Parents procedure.

OTHER SITUATIONS

LGUHS staff will actively monitor their surroundings for any situation that may pose a threat to the health and safety of the children and employees. If any threat or possible threat is detected, staff will report the situation to their Site Administrator as soon as possible and the Site Administrator will contact the appropriate authorities and will make determinations about the next steps, including following procedures listed herein.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS OR HEALTH CONDITIONS

In any emergency circumstances staff will pay particular attention to any child with a special need or health issue to ensure that they receive any necessary assistance.

EMERGENCY RELEASE TO PARENTS

If a situation has occurred that requires the early release of children to their parents, either from the center or from the center's designated evacuation location (see page 11), the following procedure will be followed:

- Parents will be notified using Center Communication Procedures (see page 11) if the children are no longer at the center.
- If possible, regular bus routes will be run to transport those children who typically are transported home. Parents choosing to pick up their child must notify staff as soon as possible.
- All self-transport parents will be contacted and asked to come to either the center or the designated evacuation location to pick up their child.
- If circumstances prevent the buses from transporting children, all parents will be contacted to pick their child up.
- All parents will be required to sign children out of the center or evacuation location to ensure that each child is accounted for.
- Only people listed as emergency contacts may pick up a child. Emergency contacts must bring a photo identification with them and must also sign children out of the center or evacuation location.
- In an emergency situation where no parent or emergency contact is able to pick up a child, the Site Administrator or designee will work with the parent or emergency contact over the telephone to identify a suitable option for pick up.

CENTER DESIGNATED EVACUATION LOCATIONS

Geauga Center:

- The Huntsburg Township gymnasium, located behind the Head Start outdoor playground
- The center is not in the danger radius of the Perry Plant

Painesville Center:

- For Center Emergencies: Heritage Middle School, 135 Cedarbrook
- For Perry Plant Emergencies: Willoughby Middle School, 5000 Shankland Road
(with assistance from Lake Co. EMA)

West Center:

- Bethel Lutheran Church, 32410 Willowick Drive
- The center is not in the danger radius of the Perry Plant

CENTER DESIGNATED COMMUNICATION PROCEDURES

Geauga Center (440) 636-5387:

- If the building is open and phone lines are working, parents will be contacted via center phones.
- If the children have been evacuated or phone lines in the building are not working, staff will utilize agency and personal cellular phones to contact parents.

Painesville Center (440) 350-5636:

- If the building is open and phone lines are working, parents will be contacted via center phones.
- If the children have been evacuated or phone lines in the building are not working, staff will utilize agency and personal cellular phones to contact parents.

West Center (440) 943-0388:

- If the building is open and phone lines are working, parents will be contacted via center phones.
- If the children have been evacuated or phone lines in the building are not working, staff will utilize agency and personal cellular phones to contact parents.

CONTINUED SERVICES DURING EXTENDED EMERGENCY CLOSURES

If centers are closed for extended periods due to any of the above emergencies, the program will make every effort to continue to serve and engage children and families in whatever way possible. Using web-based platforms, apps, telephones, home visits and other resources as needed and appropriate, the program will continue to offer learning opportunities, parent support and engagement and assistance with basic needs for all children and families enrolled in the program. The agency recognizes that the nature of extended emergency closures will vary and planning specific operations for such closures would be difficult. Therefore, in the provision of emergency services the program will follow guidance from the appropriate agency or agencies, making sure to abide by all situational safety and health regulations and guidelines.