

#### RELATED TERMS

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#### PRIMARY DISCIPLINES

- Emergency Management
- Community Preparedness
- Mental Health

## PRACTICE NOTE

### Faith-Based Preparedness: Fairfield, Ohio, Fire Department's Clergy Crisis Response Team

#### PRACTICE

Fairfield, Ohio, Fire Department's Clergy Crisis Response Team (CCRT) provides licensed and/or ordained ministers to assist emergency responders and to offer support to citizens who experience traumatic events.

#### DESCRIPTION

Fairfield Fire Department Chief Don Bennett realized that citizens in the Fairfield community who encountered traumatic events needed emotional and spiritual support in addition to emergency medical and response services. In December 2000, Chief Bennett asked the city's clergy to help create an effective program to respond to emergencies. Church leaders responded by establishing a comprehensive chaplaincy program to assist first responders in emergency crises, the CCRT.

CCRT members are compassionate, competent, and qualified ministers from the community. These individuals manifest a broad base of experience, professional maturity, emotional stability, and personal credibility within the church and community. CCRT members all receive training in first response protocol and critical incident stress management. Each team member carries professional credentials and participates in ongoing training to sharpen skill sets and to bring continuity to the team's performance and the program.

Upon arriving at a scene, CCRT members seek to stabilize signs and symptoms of distress and dysfunction and then move to mitigate those signs and symptoms of distress. Their goal is to facilitate a return to adaptive functioning or possibly to assist by seeking continued care. Team members assist emergency responders and city personnel in a variety of ways. The CCRT is often called upon to:

- Make death or serious injury notification;
- Comfort the victim(s) and/or the family at the scene of emergencies involving serious injury and/or death;
- Assist confused or emotionally upset individuals;
- Provide grief counseling and spiritual guidance;
- Serve and fulfill appropriate needs;
- Assist with attempted or potential suicide victims;
- Represent the Fairfield Fire and Police Departments before official bodies and at public functions;

- Be available for the spiritual development of the Fairfield Fire and Police Departments;
- Serve as liaison with other religious leaders and organizations in the community; and
- Provide support and counseling to city employees and their families.

### **CITATIONS**

Fairfield-Fire, Clergy Crisis Response Team Web Site

[http://www.fairfield-city.org/Fire/units/Clergy\\_Crisis\\_Response\\_Team\\_2291.cfm](http://www.fairfield-city.org/Fire/units/Clergy_Crisis_Response_Team_2291.cfm)

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