

**Working with Victims of Mass Casualty Incidents:**

**A Roundtable Discussion for Victim Assistance Professionals**

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**Workshop Objectives**

- o Provide an overview of OVC Mass Violence and Terrorism Project
- o Discuss the role of victim assistance professionals when planning a community emergency response.
- o Review the Importance of partnerships and collaboration which is the key to an effective response.
- o Discuss the challenges communities often face during and after an incident occurs.

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Since 1995 when the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, OK was bombed, the Department of Justice (DOJ) has increasingly been involved in responding to incidents of mass violence or terrorism. Since 1995, numerous incidents of mass violence have occurred:

- o April 19, 1995 - Oklahoma City, OK (168 people killed by bombing, 680+ injured)
- o May 21, 1998 - Springfield, OR (4 people killed by gunfire, 22 injured)
- o April 20, 1999 - Columbine, CO (13 people killed by gunfire, 21 injured)
- o September 11, 2001 - New York City, Arlington, VA, Shanksville, PA (2,997 people killed, 6,000+ injured)
- o April 16, 2007 - Virginia Polytechnic and State University (32 people killed by gunfire, 23 injured)
- o April 3, 2009 - Binghamton, NY (13 people killed by gunfire, 4 injured)
- o November 5, 2009 - Fort Hood, TX (13 people killed by gunfire, 29 injured)
- o January 8, 2011 - Tucson, AZ (6 people killed by gunfire, 13 injured)
- o July 20, 2012 - Aurora, CO (12 people killed by gunfire, 58 injured)
- o August 5, 2012 - Oak Creek, WI (6 people killed by gunfire, 4 injured)
- o December 14, 2012 - Newtown, CT (27 killed by gunfire, 2 injured)
- o April 15, 2013 - Boston, MA (3 people killed by bombing, 260+ injured)
- o September 16, 2013 - Washington, DC (12 people killed by gunfire, 3 injured)
- o April 2, 2014, 2014 - Fort Hood, TX (5 people killed by gunfire, 16 injured)
- o April 13, 2014 - Overland Park, KA (3 people killed by gunfire)

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**Overview of Mass Violence and Terrorism Project**

In April 2013, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), in coordination with the Office for Victim Assistance (OVA), and the Office for Victims of Overseas Terrorism (OVT), assembled a team of consultants to develop a *Community Resource Toolkit* designed to assist communities in building their capacity to prepare for timely and effective responses to incidents of mass violence and terrorism.

This presentation is a high-level overview of the project where our discussion will focus on the role of Victim Assistance Professionals when working as a team within your communities on the Planning, Response and Recovery efforts of a mass violence or terrorism incident.

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**Stakeholder Forums**  
(Experts were sought to help design the Toolkit)

o First and Emergency Responders	o VOCA Administrators
o Victims	o Community-Based Organizations
o Victim Advocates	o Faith-Based Organizations
o Emergency Management Agencies	o Education
o Representatives of communities affected by mass violence	o Health Care
o Local, State and Federal Agencies	o Mental Health
	o Attorneys

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**Three (3) Phase Project**

- > **Phase I**
  - o Design and Development of the Community Resource Toolkit (interviews, research, forums, discussion groups)
- > **Phase II**
  - o Provide Technical Assistance to Communities
- > **Phase III**
  - o Training and Community Outreach

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**Toolkit Key Themes**

- o The *Toolkit* will provide the needed **tools and resources** for developing a **victim assistance plan** which can be **incorporated into a community's existing emergency response plan.**
- o The *Toolkit* will also provide community responders with an understanding of the importance of the **lessons learned** through a review of recent incidents, why **creating and updating protocols are vital to community planning, response and recovery building, and best practices and partnerships with stakeholders and collaborators.**

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**Who Should Use the Toolkit?**

- o State and City Government Officials
- o Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Administrators - Compensation and Assistance
- o Emergency Planning Managers
- o Law Enforcement Officials
- o Prosecutors' Offices
- o Victim Service Providers

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**Essential Elements of the Toolkit**

- o Planning and Preparedness
- o Response and Recovery
- o Victim Assistance Protocols
- o Collaboration
- o Communication
- o Community Resiliency
- o Technology
- o Donation Management
- o Emergency Funding
- o Evaluation

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### Responding to Incidents of Mass Violence

Responding to incidents of mass violence and terrorism requires a coordinated approach across the spectrum of government and non-governmental organizations, with each incident presenting unique challenges to the communities in which they occur and the victims and family members impacted by these incidents.

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### What is Planning and Preparedness



Planning and preparedness is essential in terms of community readiness should an incident occur. The major challenge for many communities is the lack of a comprehensive mass violence and terrorism emergency response plan that also includes a victim assistance strategy, capacity for an effective response, and sufficient resources.

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### Who are the Community Partners, Stakeholders & Collaborators?

#### Local

- o Business Leaders
- o City Managers
- o College/University Representatives
- o County Commissioners and City Councilmembers
- o Emergency Managers/Coordinators
- o Faith/Spiritual Leaders
- o Financial Institution Representatives
- o Fire, Search and Rescue Teams
- o Foundation/Philanthropic Organization Leaders
- o Funeral Home Directors
- o Hospital Chaplaincy Coordinators
- o Law Enforcement Officials
- o Mayoral Representatives

#### Local

- o Media Representatives
- o Mental Health Specialists
- o National/Regional Nonprofit Organizations - Local Affiliates
- o Nonprofit Organizations - Local
- o Public Health Officials
- o Public Information Officers
- o Public/Private School Officials
- o Public Works Representatives
- o Shipping Companies
- o Trauma Hospital Administrators and Social Workers
- o Victim Service Providers

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**Partners, Stakeholders & Collaborators**

<p><b>State</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Attorney General Representatives</li> <li>o Corporate Leaders</li> <li>o Crisis Response Teams</li> <li>o District Attorney's Office (State Attorney and Prosecutor's Office) Representatives</li> <li>o Governor's Office Representatives</li> <li>o Law Enforcement Officials</li> <li>o Medical Examiners/Coroners</li> <li>o Transportation Services Representatives</li> <li>o Tribal Government Leaders</li> <li>o Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) State Compensation and Assistance Administrators</li> </ul>	<p><b>Federal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Victim Specialists</li> <li>o Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)</li> <li>o U.S. Attorney's Office Representatives</li> <li>o U.S. Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)</li> <li>o U.S. Postal Representatives</li> </ul>
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**Partnerships & Collaboration**

Well-established partnerships help to drive an effective response and recovery.



- > Begin by assembling a multidisciplinary planning committee (team, cadre, advisory group, task force, working group, etc.) composed of local, state, and regional partners to create and maintain a victim assistance response plan.
- > Identify roles and responsibilities of Committee members. (primary Agents)
- > Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the Committee.

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**Planning**

The effectiveness of Response and Recovery efforts are greatly enhanced by planning and the establishment of victim assistance protocols in advance of an event of mass violence or terrorism.

**Steps Needed:**

- o Review local, state, and federal crisis response plans and current Incident Command System (ICS) protocols to understand which victim assistance response protocols, if any, are included in the existing crisis plans.
- o Identify existing resources and resource gaps within the community.
- o Develop the necessary Victim Assistance Protocols.

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**Victim Assistance Protocols**  
*(the official procedure to be followed in formal situations)*

- o Meeting Protocol (for the Committee)
- o Contact List Protocol (Primary Agencies)
- o Practice Drills/Exercises Protocol (Community Disasters)
- o Incident Command System (ICS) Protocol
- o Communications Protocol
- o Family Assistance Center (FAC) Protocol
- o Victim Identification Protocol (Mass Fatalities)
- o Notification Protocol (missing persons, tentative notifications, and death notifications)
- o Planning & Preparedness Grants and Emergency Funding Assistance Protocol
- o Volunteer Management Protocol
- o Donation Management Protocol (funds, goods, and services)
- o Criminal Justice - Victim Support Protocol
- o Community Resiliency Protocol

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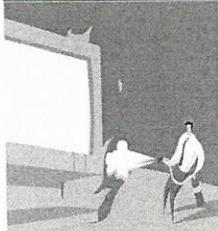
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**Technology can be an effective tool for Communities in the Planning, Response and Recovery Phases**



*Utilized strategically, technology can have a tremendous impact on the following:*

- > Communications, Information and Social Media
- > Case and Data Management
- > Donation Management
- > Managing resources
- > Financial assistance and a myriad of other innovative approaches to enhance service delivery for victims and family members.

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**Challenges Communities often face During and After an Incident Occurs**

> **How to Manage a Myriad of Anticipated and Unanticipated Issues:**

- o Real-time Communication & Information
- o Developing Case and Data Management
- o Donation Management (Funds, Goods, Services)
- o Anniversaries and Memorials
- o Criminal Justice System

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### Short and Long-Term Recovery Resources

Communities may often face the unanticipated short and longer term resources that will be needed.

- ❖ **Temporary Safe Shelter Location**
  - In the immediate aftermath of an incident for families of victims and missing persons to gather as they await information. (Church, Fire Station, Schools, Community Center)
- ❖ **Family Assistance Centers Resources (Short Term)**
  - Local, State and Federal Victim Services
  - Community-Based Organizations
- ❖ **Resiliency Centers can be established to assist families (Longer-Term)**
  - Mental Health, Social and Financial Services
- ❖ **Criminal Justice System Planning - Victim Support**

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### ✓ Checklist for an Effective Response

- ✓ **Planning and Preparedness**
- ✓ **Create those all Important relationships**
- ✓ **Identify non-traditional partnerships**
- ✓ **Collaboration (Cannot operate in Silos)**
- ✓ **Communication (Meeting on a regular basis)**
- ✓ **Roles and Responsibilities have been Identified**
- ✓ **Victim Assistance Protocols are In place**

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### Resources & References

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| <p><b>National Organizations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Boards</li> <li>○ National Association of VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) Assistance Administrators (NAVAA)</li> </ul> <p><b>Community-based Organizations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ American Red Cross</li> <li>○ Salvation Army</li> <li>○ National Volunteers Active in Disasters</li> </ul> <p><b>Links</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/ncj2600.pdf">https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/ncj2600.pdf</a></li> <li>○ <a href="http://www.ovc.gov/publications/infores/2edoc084/mc200981.pdf">http://www.ovc.gov/publications/infores/2edoc084/mc200981.pdf</a></li> <li>○ <a href="http://www.oivcincjms.gov/crime.html">http://www.oivcincjms.gov/crime.html</a></li> <li>○ <a href="http://salvationarmyusa.org/">http://salvationarmyusa.org/</a></li> <li>○ <a href="http://www.fema.gov/planning-templates">http://www.fema.gov/planning-templates</a></li> <li>○ <a href="http://www.evoad.org/">http://www.evoad.org/</a></li> </ul> | <p><b>Federal Agencies/Offices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Centers for Faith and Neighborhood Partnerships</li> <li>○ Executive Office for United States Attorneys (EOUSA)</li> <li>○ Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)</li> <li>○ Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)</li> <li>○ National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS)</li> <li>○ U.S. Department of Education</li> <li>○ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services</li> <li>○ U.S. Department of Homeland Security</li> <li>○ U.S. Department of Justice Office for Victims of Crime</li> </ul> |
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