

TORRANCE COUNTY

RESOLUTION NO. 2025 - 43

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE TORRANCE COUNTY CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORTING POLICY

WHEREAS, a Critical Incident is defined as any incident that: (i) poses a significant threat of harm or health and safety risk to a member of the public, staff, contractors, or volunteers; (ii) causes major damage to public infrastructure, County assets or utilities; (iii) results in road closures or significant disruptions to primary transportation routes; (iv) disrupts essential County services for a prolonged period of time; (v) involves significant legal, financial, or reputational risk to the County; (vi) triggers a local, state or national emergency response; or (vii) is likely to attract media attention or public concern; and

WHEREAS, local government's response to Critical Incidents is a crucial component of maintaining the safety of the general public and County employees, and requires timely notifications to the public to provide greater awareness and increase safety; and

WHEREAS, when responding to a Critical Incident, crucial information may need to be provided to key stakeholders, staff, contractors, volunteers, the general public and the media; and

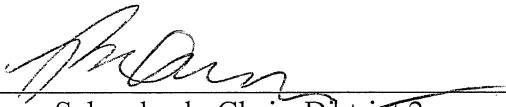
WHEREAS, this Critical Incident Reporting Policy ("Policy") provides general policy guidelines on how Critical Incidents are to be reported within the County, so information can be disseminated to the appropriate stakeholders and public in a timely fashion; and

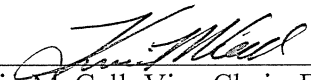
WHEREAS, this Policy further provides requirements for conducting After-Action Reports and Critical Incident Debriefs to aid the County and staff in identifying risks, establishing best practices and identifying areas of improvement in Critical Incident response and communications.

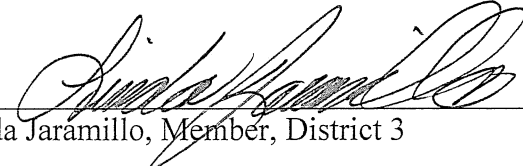
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Torrance County that the Commission hereby adopts the Torrance County Critical Incident Reporting Policy attached hereto as Exhibit A.

PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED THIS 8 DAY OF October, 2025.

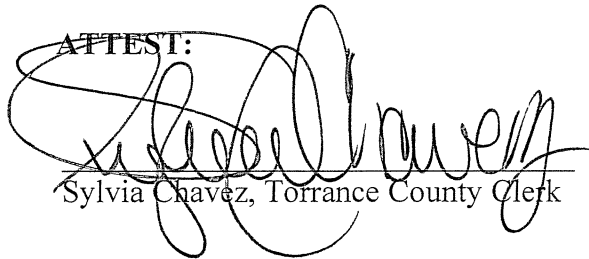
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF TORRANCE COUNTY:


Ryan Schwebach, Chair, District 2


Kevin McCall, Vice Chair, District 1


Linda Jaramillo, Member, District 3

ATTEST:


Sylvia Chavez, Torrance County Clerk

10/8/2025
Date



APPROVED AS TO FORM:

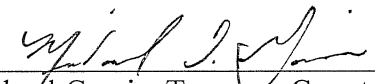

Michael Garcia, Torrance County Attorney

EXHIBIT A



Torrance County Critical Incident Reporting Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Critical Incident Reporting Policy ("Policy") is to ensure that all critical incidents occurring within the jurisdictional boundaries of Torrance County are reported, recorded, and responded to in a timely, consistent, and effective manner. In addition, this Policy ensures that appropriate details regarding the critical incident are disseminated to County personnel, the general public and other agencies impacted by the incident. This process aims to safeguard the public, employees, assets, and other organizations who may be impacted by Critical Incidents that occur in Torrance County.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to all employees, contractors, and volunteers engaged in the operations of Torrance County including:

- a) Public safety and emergency services, including Dispatch, Fire and EMS Service, the Sheriff's Department, Animal Services and Emergency Management;
- b) The Roads Department;
- c) The Maintenance and Facilities Department;
- d) Planning and Zoning;
- e) All County Administrative Departments;
- f) Elected officials and their respective departments; and
- g) All active community and social services programs.

- a) Poses a significant threat of harm or health and safety risk to a member of the public, staff, contractors, or volunteers;
- b) Causes major damage to public infrastructure, County assets or utilities;
- c) Results in road closures or significant disruptions to primary transportation routes;
- d) Disrupts essential County services for a prolonged period of time;
- e) Involves significant legal, financial, or reputational risk to the County;
- f) Triggers a local, state or national emergency response;
- g) Triggers a local, state or national emergency response; and
- h) Is likely to attract media attention or public concern.

Examples of a critical incident include but are not limited to:

- i) A forest, brush or structure fire that has the likelihood of spreading to surrounding areas;
- j) A wide scale power outage;
- k) A motor vehicle crash with injuries that shuts down a major roadway;
- l) High risk police activities that require public notification;
- m) A gas leak at the County Administration building or other County facility;
- n) A crash with injuries involving a County owned vehicle;
- o) A significant flood, snow storm or other weather event that causes disruptions to travel or normal business operations;
- p) A bomb threat at a County building or other public facility;
- q) A plane crash or train derailment; and
- r) A prolonged power outage at the Torrance County Dispatch Center that creates a disruption to emergency communications.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 All Staff, Contractors and Volunteers

All Staff, Contractors and Volunteers of the County must:

- a) Immediately report all suspected or actual Critical Incidents to their manager or first line supervisor; and

- b) Ensure the safety of affected individuals and areas, where safe to do so.

4.2 Managers and Supervisors

All managers and supervisors must:

- a) Assess the situation and determine whether the event meets the definition of a Critical Incident;
- b) Notify the County Manager, Deputy County Manager and/or Operations Manager immediately upon identifying a Critical Incident and complete a Critical Incident Report within 24 hours of the occurrence, if the incident necessitated a formal County response; and
- c) Ensure that any response measures that are taken and documented appropriately.

4.3 County Manager

The County Manager, or his/her designee, must:

- a) Ensure that crucial information related to Critical Incidents is communicated appropriately to relevant stakeholders, including, but not limited to:
 - i. Notifying the County Emergency Manager and other County public safety departments;
 - ii. Notifying surrounding agencies, State agencies, or other organizations impacted by the Critical Incident;
 - iii. Compiling communications to be submitted to the public via social media platforms, the County's website, CodeRed, media outlets, or other communication resources and
 - iv. Establishing a statement to be provided to media outlets, if necessary.
- b) Oversee incident response and initiate investigations, if necessary.

4.4 After-Action Report and Critical Incident Debrief

- a) Following any Critical Incident an After-Action Report shall be completed. This report shall analyze the incident to determine:
 - i. If policies and procedures were followed;
 - ii. If the incident response was handled appropriately;
 - iii. If the incident communications were handled appropriately;
 - iv. What areas of risk have been identified; and

- v. What areas can be improved upon to more effectively respond to similar incidents in the future.
- b) Following the completion of the After-Action Report, staff involved in the Critical Incident shall hold a Critical Incident Debrief with the County Manager's Office to review the After-Action Report.
- c) The Critical Incident Debrief shall include follow-up actions and the County Manager's Office shall be responsible for ensuring that follow-up actions are tracked and completed.
- d) All After-Action Reports shall be documented and shall be reported in brief to the County Commission.
- e) Not every Critical Incident will have a direct response from the County. As such, the County Manager shall determine if an After-Action Report is necessary given the facts and circumstances of the incident.

5. Reporting Procedure

Immediate Action

- a) Ensure safety and activate emergency services if required.
- b) Secure the area and preserve any evidence if the incident is potentially criminal.

Initial Notification

- c) If required, initial contact shall be made to 911 to activate emergency response services.
- d) Reporting party shall notify the supervisor or manager immediately.
- e) Supervisor or manager shall then notify the County Manager's Office.

Documentation

- f) Complete a Critical Incident Report Form within 24 hours, if the Critical Incident necessitated a formal response from the County.
- g) Submit the Critical Incident Report Form to the County Manager's Office.

After-Action Report and Critical Incident Debrief

- h) Following the conclusion of the Critical Incident, an After-Action Report shall be completed. The After-Action Report shall be completed by the Emergency Manager and/or County Manager or his/her designee, depending on the nature of the incident.

- i) A Critical Incident Debrief shall be conducted, whereby the parties involved in response to the Critical Incident review the After-Action Report collectively to discuss best practices and to identify areas of improvement.
- j) A review or formal investigation may be initiated depending on the nature and severity of the Critical Incident.

6. Confidentiality and Record-Keeping

All Critical Incident and After-Action Reports will be handled with strict confidentiality. Records will be maintained in accordance with applicable recordkeeping policies, legislation and data protection laws.

7. Training and Awareness

All County Staff must undergo training on this Policy during induction and participate in refresher training every two years. Managers are responsible for promoting awareness of the Policy within their respective departments.

8. Policy Compliance

Failure to comply with this Policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment or contract. Legal action may also be pursued in cases involving negligence or criminal conduct.