**Crisis Management Plan**

This Crisis Management Plan is intended to provide communication guidelines for [YOUR PROGRAM NAME HERE] (hereinafter referred to as [YOUR PROGRAM NAME HERE]) employees, governing body members and volunteers when dealing with a crisis or emergency situation within the [YOUR PROGRAM NAME HERE] network. The goal of this plan is to ensure that those who are employed by or are representatives of [YOUR PROGRAM NAME HERE] are familiar with their role in the event of a crisis.

**Media and Public Relations Policy**

In the event of a crisis, all staff members, board members and volunteers are to direct all questions to the [YOUR PROGRAM NAME HERE] Executive Director and/or Board President. Only the Board President and the Executive Director are to make direct contact with the media.

**Crisis Communication Action Plan**

1. When any staff member, board member or volunteer receives information, which can be considered a crisis to the organization, they are to notify the Executive Director and Board President immediately. The Executive Director, with the assistance of the Executive Committee, will review the issue and evaluate the impact of the issue to the organization. The Executive Director will also notify National CASA and local programs if appropriate.

2. Any and all media requests will be directed to the Executive Director or the Board President. At no time is it appropriate to say “no comment” as it may lead the media to believe that you are trying to hide something. The best response to the media, if you are not the designated spokesperson, is to provide them with the Executive Director or Board President’s contact information or say something like: “I’ll get back with you or have our Executive Director or Board President call you.”

3. At no time shall any staff, board members or volunteers speak with members of the media or community members regarding a situation of this nature until directed to do so by the Executive Director or Board President.

4. It is policy for the Executive Director or Board President, when called by the media during a crisis situation, to request what the press would like to know; reporter’s deadline; and to take time to formulate a response before returning the call.

5. It is important for the Executive Director or Board President to respond to the media in a timely fashion. The information given to the media should be considered when updating social media, websites or other communication outlets. Information sharing between [YOUR PROGRAM NAME HERE] and others should be honest, timely and direct.

6. As the extent of the crisis becomes clear, the Executive Director will contact the [YOUR PROGRAM NAME HERE] Board, National CASA and local programs to inform them of the crisis, what steps have been taken, to request guidance, and to ask for their help in disseminating information to other partners.

7. Every crisis is documented by the Executive Director and includes the following points at a minimum:

• Detail of the Crisis

• Position of the Organization

• How the crisis was communicated internally and externally

• Resolution of the crisis

• Any policy or procedural changes that should occur as a result of the crisis or communication process

**Preparation of Crisis Responses**

When preparing policy statements, the following general principles can help:

• When responding to a crisis situation, the response should be honest, timely and direct. Having a prepared, approved and distributed policy document will help you resist the temptation to say “no comment” or have your agency appear uncooperative or secretive during a crisis situation.

• Incorporate your ethical standards into the policy. Do the right thing, being fair to all parties to the best of your ability. Think now about how your business practices will be interpreted by the media during an emergency.

• In addition to specific policy statements, it is important to have background information on your agency available. It is your responsibility and in your best interest to provide current, complete information.

Preparing Specific Responses

After issues have been identified, specific responses for each should be prepared. Consider the following checklist when drafting position statements.

• Define the scope of the crisis – local, regional, national or international.

• Establish a unified response – one spokesperson, one person established to distribute statements to the media, etc.

• Keep the message simple, clear, consistent and tailored to each audience.

Understand that the media wants to know three things:

• What happened?

• Why did it happen?

• What are you going to do to make sure that it never happens again?

In addition to the policy statements and press releases, anticipate questions that will be asked by the media.

List the questions with developed answers that the Executive Committee and Executive Director are comfortable with and continually update the list as new questions are identified.

**Key Elements**

1. Remember our mission: New Mexico Court Appointed CASA Association champions

the needs of abused and neglected children by supporting and expanding local CASA programs.

2. Remember to utilize online communication tools:

a. https://www.newmexicocasa.org/

b. https://www.facebook.com/NewMexicoCASA

c. https://twitter.com/newmexicocasa

3. Always return media inquiries and communicate often.

4. Remember and enforce your confidentiality requirements.

5. Refer to the [YOUR PROGRAM NAME HERE] Fact Sheet: See Attached

6. Key Contact List – See Attached

7. Board/Staff Roster – See Attached

8. Media Contact List – See Attached