



Building healthy  
communities



# YMCAs in Canada **Crisis Communications Action Plan**

**YMCA Canada**

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# Introduction

**This document is a step-by-step action guide** to help you when responding to an issue or crisis. The elements and steps of this guide should be fulfilled by the resources available at your YMCA Member Association.

The document focuses on the establishment of a Crisis Response Team (CRT) that can be activated during an issue or crisis. Once activated, this guide provides the CRT with a detailed process on how to respond to and manage a crisis.

This plan is solely focused on YMCAs at the Member Association level and is intended to be used when responding to and mitigating reputational risks and issues as they arise.

As well, this plan's focus is on crisis communications response – not business continuity or disaster recovery. Separate operational plans exist for such situations, including:

This document should be reviewed and updated on an annual basis, at a minimum, by the appropriate person/team at your YMCA, under the guidance and direction of your Member Association Crisis Response Team Lead.

## What is a crisis?

A crisis is any event that threatens the YMCA's reputation and/or presents the possibility of real material risk to the organization, which would significantly impact its relationships with staff, donors, volunteers, government, and key stakeholders.

### *Examples:*

An employee or member notifies appropriate personnel of an issue which could compromise the safety of a child if not addressed, with no significant reputational impact.

A notable incident occurs that results in significant injury or harm involving a child and is publicized in major news outlets and could result in significant reputational harm (e.g. fatality, injury, misconduct involving a child, etc.).

## What is an issue?

An issue is something (e.g. policy, point of conflict, pattern of behaviour, etc.) that carries with it potential to escalate into a crisis if it is not properly addressed. If addressed properly, the issue can often be contained and avoids the need for further escalation. Either way, known issues should be closely monitored so any change in status can be addressed quickly.

### *Example:*

A policy or procedure change impacting YMCA Child Care services has been implemented and members of the community are questioning the update. Limited media coverage/social media conversation on the subject can be found.

# YMCA Crisis Management Philosophy

Crises and issues are an opportunity for organizations to demonstrate their culture, values, and priorities. To ensure the YMCA behaves consistently and in-keeping with its values, all crises and issues should be viewed by the following crisis philosophy.

**Be open.** It is important to be open, honest, accurate, and timely with providing information to all parties affected by the situation at hand, as well as with what key stakeholders can expect during a crisis or issue. By doing so, your YMCA will establish itself as a credible and authentic organization among journalists, members/participants, employees, and other key stakeholders. This will influence the accuracy and tone of news reports and mitigate further negativity from any audience.

**Talk to stakeholders directly, not just through the media.** Employees, government contacts, and other key stakeholders can act as huge advocates for an organization during a crisis or issue. You should make every effort to communicate early and directly with these individuals and groups to help them understand the issue and share appropriate messages and positions.

**Speak with one voice.** Coordinate your communication efforts across all your locations, with all spokespeople and tactics to ensure consistent messaging to internal and external audiences.

**Ensure your words reflect your actions.** Ensure all communications techniques and messaging are authentic and aligned with what your YMCA is doing during a crisis, while maintaining a respectful and inclusive tone.

**Respond rapidly.** The first 24 hours of a crisis or issue situation are critical. Responding quickly will help ensure your YMCA owns and influences the external narrative during these situations and any speculation or rumours are quickly addressed.

**Plan for the unexpected.** By being prepared to handle a wide range of potential issues, your YMCA will be well positioned to minimize disruption of everyday business and services and demonstrate leadership and trust among key stakeholders.

**Manage issues to avoid escalation.** Significant crises can often stem from smaller issues escalating over time. To avoid issues becoming larger, it's important for your YMCA to address issues quickly and effectively as they arise.

**Demonstrate concern and care.** It is important to humanize any organization during a crisis. The absence of care or empathy can cause people to view the YMCA as indifferent and lacking commitment to fix any wrongdoing. Showing concern in these situations is not the same as accepting liability.



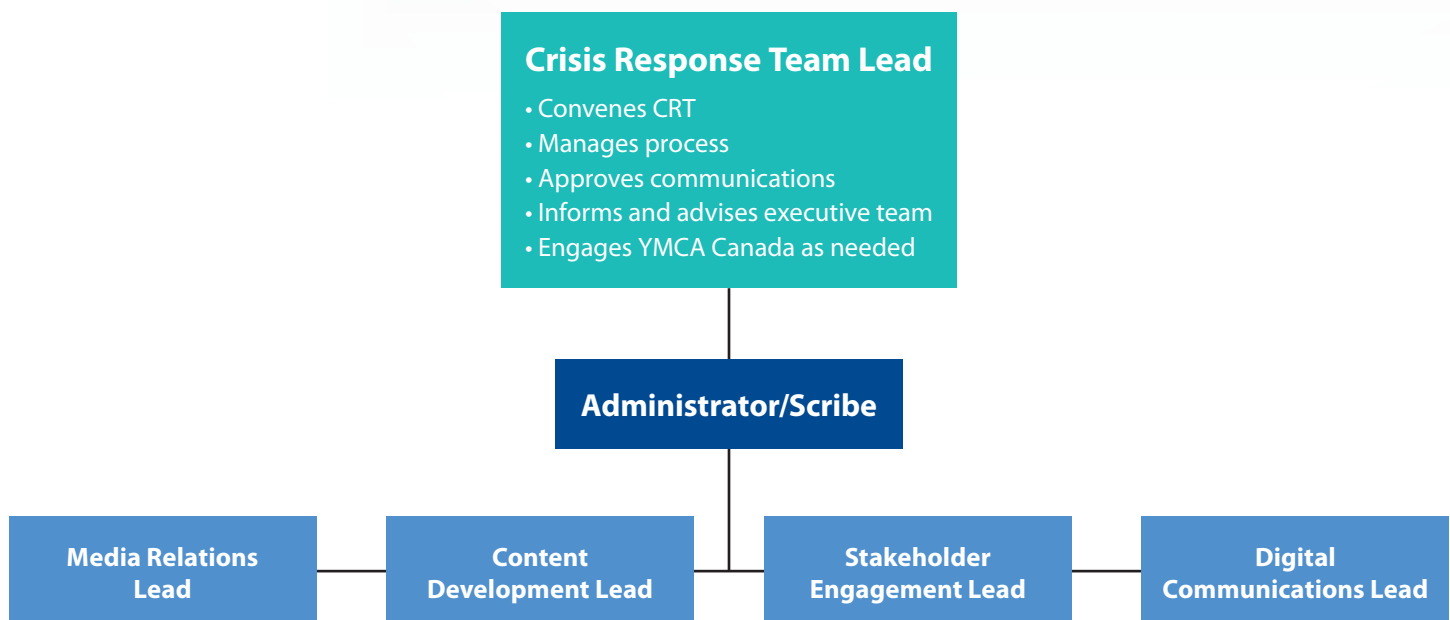
# Crisis Response Team (CRT)

## **YMCA Member Associations face risks every day**

that pose a potential threat to the reputation of your organization and the Federation as a whole. An issue at the Member Association level can have a significant effect that impacts the entire brand, and thus the Federation's entire reputation. Canadians perceive the YMCA to be one brand, and all Member Associations have a duty to protect that brand. As such, it is important that all members of the YMCA Federation are aligned in their priorities, approach, strategy, and key audiences when orchestrating a communications response to a crisis or issue.

The following team structure represents the YMCA Crisis Response Team (CRT). While this structure is ideal for handling a crisis, not all Member Associations will have the resources to fill all roles on the CRT.

If your Member Association does not have the adequate personnel or resources to fill these roles at a specific activation level, you may wish to train staff who are interested in developing their crisis response skills. If a situation escalates beyond initially assessed capabilities, you can reach out to the YMCA Canada CRT Lead to fill roles as needed.





# Roles and Responsibilities

Prior to a crisis, your Member Association CRT Lead should establish which roles and responsibilities your Association can fill using local resources and which roles will require support from the YMCA Canada CRT Lead.

During a crisis, you can also consider engaging YMCA Canada's CRT members as you would engage local team members. Crises above activation Level 2 may require even closer coordination.

Ideally, this is determined in advance of a crisis. Ongoing, it is important to keep your Member Association's CRT Lead in contact with the YMCA Canada CRT Lead.

If you do not require YMCA Canada CRT resources, you should communicate closely with the YMCA Canada CRT Lead as you would with a priority audience member.

Role	Responsibilities
<b>Crisis Response Team (CRT) Lead</b>	<b>PRE-CRISIS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the Crisis Communications Action Plan</li> <li>• Ensure all team members and their backups are trained on how to use the plan and their roles (at least annually)</li> </ul>
	<b>DURING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immediately notify, activate (as required), and maintain communication with the CRT</li> <li>• Assess severity of situation and activate plan</li> <li>• Notify the YMCA Canada CRT Lead for crises above a Level 2 activation, or as required</li> <li>• Activate additional resources as required, including subject matter experts (e.g. Child Protection Lead)</li> <li>• Arrange initial team briefing and ongoing CRT meetings at a set cadence (e.g. frequency to be determined based on severity)</li> <li>• Determine and oversee response strategy and mobilize team to support as required</li> <li>• Determine timeline for dissemination of stakeholder information</li> <li>• Receive media/social media monitoring updates at each CRT meeting and share with executives/key internal stakeholders as required</li> <li>• Receive updates from communications channel owners and other stakeholders across the organization</li> <li>• Approve all tactics and content for dissemination at communications level and coordinate approval from senior leaders (e.g. CEO and legal)</li> <li>• Engage external public relations counsel as required</li> <li>• Ensure executives and appropriate parties are informed and activated if/as required</li> <li>• Act as a spokesperson if required</li> </ul>
	<b>POST</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage/facilitate post-crisis debrief and reporting</li> <li>• Update the Crisis Communications Action Plan if/as required following the post-crisis debrief</li> </ul>
<b>Administrator/Scribe</b>	<b>PRE-CRISIS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in crisis training and plan familiarization</li> <li>• Review plan to become comfortable with its contents</li> </ul>
	<b>DURING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the CRT with logistics, including coordinating meeting times and spaces, convening conference calls and details, and providing meeting minutes at the conclusion of calls/meetings</li> <li>• Maintain activation timelines</li> <li>• Serve as a liaison between the CRT Lead and the broader team</li> <li>• Maintain ongoing list of deliverables for the team, including deliverable timelines. Follow up with team members as required</li> <li>• Assist with CRT activities and logging team activities</li> <li>• Support parties involved, including the CRT Lead with various tasks as requested</li> </ul>
	<b>POST</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in the post-crisis debrief</li> </ul>

Role	Responsibilities
Media Relations Lead	<b>PRE-CRISIS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in crisis training and plan familiarization</li> <li>• Maintain list of approved/trained spokespeople</li> <li>• Review plan to become comfortable with its contents</li> </ul>
	<b>DURING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, gain approval, and disseminate (if required) a standby statement in the first 30 minutes</li> <li>• Provide expertise and insights from a media relations perspective to inform communications</li> <li>• Triage and respond to media inquiries; act as primary contact with the media</li> <li>• Track all media inquiries and correspondence</li> <li>• For lower severity level issues, act as a spokesperson</li> <li>• Identify and prepare appropriate Member Association leaders or the subject matter expert spokesperson</li> <li>• Engage additional media trained team members to support as required</li> <li>• Coordinate with spokesperson on media queries as they arise</li> <li>• Oversee media monitoring and circulate traditional media monitoring reports and clippings with the CRT Lead</li> </ul>
	<b>POST</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in the post-crisis debrief</li> </ul>
Stakeholder Engagement Lead	<b>PRE-CRISIS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in crisis training and plan familiarization</li> <li>• Review plan to become comfortable with its contents</li> </ul>
	<b>DURING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adapt messaging, materials, and content specific to key stakeholders, including but not limited to internal employees, donors, volunteers, community members, municipal, provincial, and federal layers of government as necessary, and other communities (relevant audiences)</li> <li>• Ensure the CRT Lead is informed of any stakeholder-specific incidents or issues that could escalate</li> <li>• Contribute to the development of the communications strategy for key stakeholders, as required</li> <li>• Provide updates on engagement for identified stakeholders as they pertain to specific incidents and/or situations</li> <li>• Oversee communications to stakeholders, working with additional resources as required</li> </ul>
	<b>POST-CRISIS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in the post-crisis debrief</li> </ul>
Content Development Lead	<b>PRE-CRISIS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in crisis training and plan familiarization</li> <li>• Review plan to become comfortable with its contents</li> <li>• Maintain log of issues/crisis specific messaging documents/materials</li> </ul>
	<b>DURING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the CRT Lead and Media Relations Lead to develop messaging and content</li> <li>• Disseminate messaging to stakeholder liaisons for tailoring and distribution</li> <li>• Activate additional resources for support as required</li> </ul>
	<b>POST</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in post-crisis debrief</li> </ul>
Digital Communications Lead	<b>PRE-CRISIS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in crisis training and plan familiarization</li> <li>• Review plan to become comfortable with its contents</li> </ul>
	<b>DURING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support with social media monitoring/reporting (from a digital perspective)</li> <li>• Manage/oversee community management of social/online channels, including triaging/responding to inquiries</li> <li>• Ensure internal and external digital communications channels and tactics are considered in the response strategy, as appropriate</li> <li>• Update/distribute social and digital content onto appropriate channels (once approved by the CRT Lead)</li> <li>• Ensure any dark-site/microsite content regarding an incident is up-to-date</li> </ul>
	<b>POST</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in the post-crisis debrief</li> <li>• Update/maintain content on digital channels, archiving inactive crisis content when/as appropriate once a crisis is fully resolved</li> </ul>

# Crisis Severity Levels

While every crisis is unique and strategies should be tailored, the general response guidelines below should be followed when responding to an incident in order to activate the crisis communications plan and the CRT, if necessary.

## Assessing the Crisis Severity Level

<b>Alert</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No emerging issues beyond business as usual</li></ul>	<b>Level 1 (Issue)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minor event or emerging issue</li><li>• Little disruption to operations</li><li>• No significant reputational impact</li><li>• Little or no news or social media activity anticipated</li></ul>	<b>Level 2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Moderately disruptive event</li><li>• Limited risk of reputational impact</li><li>• Limited news, blog, or social media coverage anticipated</li></ul>	<b>Level 3 (Crisis)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Major destabilizing event</li><li>• High risk of reputational impact</li><li>• Significant news, blog, or social media coverage anticipated</li></ul>
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Not all crises will be handled the same and the CRT should only be convened at certain times, which will be determined by the magnitude or severity of the incident in question. Implementing a consistent process to classify incidents according to crisis level will help to facilitate an effective and standardized approach across the Federation. All incidents should be assigned a crisis level.

The matrix in the appendix outlines severity levels for use by the CRT. Incident severity is determined as a function of two criteria:

- **Impact** – The degree to which an incident (operational or non-operational) has an adverse effect on the YMCA and the Federation's members/participants, employees, volunteers, operations, stakeholders, or reputation.
- **Control** – The degree to which the YMCA (both at the Association and National level) can effectively control (mitigate or stop) adverse impacts on its members/participants, employees, volunteers, operations, stakeholders, or reputation.

## Things to consider when assessing the severity of an incident include:

1. To what extent does the incident impact critical organizational functions?
2. What is the anticipated duration of impact on operations?
3. To what extent will the incident impact members/participants, employees, or other key stakeholders?
4. What are the financial/legal implications?
5. What is the anticipated lifecycle in the media (traditional, online, social)?
6. What impact/effect does it have on the YMCA's brand reputation?
7. Will my Member Association require resources from YMCA Canada?

\*For examples, consult the Crisis Severity Matrix in the appendix section.





## Notification and Activation Procedures

### Incident Notification

When a crisis or incident is identified, the hours immediately following are the most important in terms of managing the message, minimizing impact, and yielding any sort of opportunity to strengthen brand reputation, if possible.

In situations where an event has a high risk of reputational impact, it is important to be prepared to communicate immediately. If it is determined that your YMCA Member Association will require additional resources, YMCA Canada should be notified. If no additional resources are required, YMCA Canada should be included in your communications as a priority stakeholder.

### Plan Procedures

- The CRT Lead and backup must ensure that phone and email messages are responded to in a timely manner
- If activated, the CRT must then follow each step of the plan and all identified members of the team will be responsible for execution as outlined in the plan

The initial notification, which could come from several potential triggers internal and external to the YMCA, should include the following key information (to the extent possible):

- Brief description of what happened
- Occurrence date and time
- Known impacts
- Number of individuals involved
- Any communications already undertaken with internal/external stakeholders

- Stakeholders aware of the situation
- Any media/stakeholder interest received to date

During the first convening of the response team, whether it is a smaller group responding to a Level 1 crisis or the full Crisis Response Team responding to a Level 2 or higher, the initial briefing call is an opportunity to kick-start the response in a deliberate way. Some of the questions that should be addressed during this call include:

- To what extent does the incident impact critical organizational functions?
- To what extent will the incident impact members/participants and other stakeholders?
- To what extent does the incident impact the YMCA's reputation (both at the local and the national level)?
- Does the incident call into question core competencies or ethical/moral concerns?
- What is the anticipated duration of impact on operations, if any?
- What are the financial implications?
- What is the timetable for remediation?
- What is the potential or anticipated lifecycle in the media?

The severity of the crisis will ultimately be determined by the CRT Lead, utilizing the table outlined in the classification and severity level section of the document on page 8.

## Action Checklist

### 1. ASSESS SITUATION

- Collect as much information as possible (who, what, when, where, why) from as many sources as possible (social media, media coverage, incident reports, etc.)
- Assess severity level – If Level 1 and above, determine appropriate team members to engage
- If necessary, convene briefing meeting with CRT team

### 2. DETERMINE RESPONSE STRATEGY

- Hold initial briefing meeting, activating the Crisis Response Team (+15 minutes)
- Draft reactive holding statement (+30 minutes)
- Based on the severity and nature of the situation, delegate tasks to appropriate CRT members
- Activate/heighten issue-specific traditional and social media monitoring
- Identify and prioritize audiences and channels
- Determine audience messaging and content needs
- Identify spokesperson(s), if appropriate
- Plan time of next information release, if necessary
- Determine time of next CRT meeting (*every hour, as needed*)

### 3. DEVELOP MATERIALS

- Draft key messages and secure approvals (+60 minutes)
- Draft content and necessary communications materials based on strategy (+60 minutes)
- Secure approvals and if required, translation of content

### 4. DISSEMINATE MATERIALS

- CRT Lead to approve all stakeholder materials and tactics, and oversee dissemination of information to audiences through identified channels (*ongoing*)
- Respond to and keep a record of all media and stakeholder queries

### 5. MONITOR AND REFINE

- Receive scheduled updates from all CRT members that have been activated regarding their specific areas of expertise. This includes the Media Relations Lead on media engagement/outreach, the Stakeholder Engagement Lead on stakeholder relations, the Digital Communications Lead on social/relevant updates, and the Content Generation Lead on material creation
- Distribute regular internal monitoring reports to the full CRT and key YMCA leadership/individuals
- Respond to inaccurate media reports immediately with updated information
- Return to Step 1 for new developments, escalations

### 6. DEBRIEF AND ANALYZE

- Initiate de-escalation when media/social conversation sees a significant decrease, when stakeholder inquiries lessen, and when media attention lessens
- Upon de-escalation, conduct a debrief meeting with the full Crisis Response Team and all those involved in the response to discuss key learnings from the issue/crisis
- Update the Crisis Communications Plan and processes if/as required based on learnings discussed in the debrief

#### Alert

- Ongoing risk sensing and situational awareness
- Monitoring for potential risks and trends that could impact the organization

#### Level 1 (Issue)

- CRT Lead activated
- CRT members activated as required
- Subject Matter Experts activated as required
- Executive(s) and legal counsel informed as required
- Issue monitored for escalation

#### Level 2

- CRT Lead activated
- CRT members activated as required
- Subject Matter Experts activated as required
- Executive(s) informed and activated as required

#### Level 3 (Crisis)

- CRT Lead activated
- Full Crisis Response Team activated
- Subject Matter Experts activated
- Executive(s), managers, and supervisors activated
- Board of Directors and legal counsel informed/engaged as required

## Communications Strategy and Tactics by Severity Level

The following chart outlines communications posturing, some key strategic considerations, and tactics to consider based on the crisis severity level assessed to a certain situation. Please note while the posturing level assigned to each of the sections is a general approach, it is not intended to be a categorical instruction. The communications posture will vary based on the specificity of the situation, as well as the abilities and resources available.

	Alert	Level 1 (Issue)	Level 2	Level 3 (Crisis)
Communications Posture	Low-level reactive	High-level reactive	Low-level proactive	High-level proactive
<b>Traditional Media</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing media monitoring</li> <li>• Update CRT Lead on narrative trends in media reporting</li> <li>• Consider positioning strategies to mitigate potential reputation impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heightened media monitoring and reporting</li> <li>• Prepare, but do not release, media materials (holding statement, news release)</li> <li>• Provide one-on-one interviews, as requested</li> <li>• Determine positioning strategy to mitigate potential reputation impacts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heightened media monitoring and reporting</li> <li>• Prepare and using discretion, distribute media materials (holding statement, news release) to interested or nearby media outlets</li> <li>• Offer journalists covering the story interviews with subject matter experts/resources if necessary</li> <li>• Conduct select media scrums, as necessary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real-time media monitoring and reporting</li> <li>• Disseminate media materials across wire; send to journalists covering story</li> <li>• Use executive and subject matter expert spokespeople, where appropriate</li> <li>• Consider news conference</li> <li>• Consider paid advertising campaign for broader, more accurate message penetration</li> </ul>
<b>Digital Communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing social media monitoring</li> <li>• Update CRT Lead on social narrative trends, as needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heightened social media monitoring and reporting</li> <li>• Prepare digital holding statements (reactive use)</li> <li>• Suspend pre-scheduled social media content temporarily and use judgement to determine if a social media blackout is required</li> <li>• Update paid media keyword lists and ad copy for the specific scenario, if necessary</li> <li>• Publish any approved information to the YMCA website; Monitor and search web analytics to identify incident-focused insights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heightened social media monitoring and reporting</li> <li>• Publish acknowledgement statement via the YMCA's relevant social media handles/accounts</li> <li>• Publish emergency info on corporate website</li> <li>• Amplify important updates through social channels</li> <li>• Suspend all non-crisis digital/social activity and issue a blackout to any additional social media content</li> <li>• Engage in social media conversation only using approved messaging</li> <li>• Publish any approved information to the YMCA website</li> <li>• Use discretion for any outreach to influencers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real-time social media monitoring and reporting</li> <li>• Publish acknowledgement statement via the YMCA's relevant social media handles/accounts</li> <li>• Publish emergency info on corporate website</li> <li>• Suspend all non-crisis digital/social activity and issue a social media blackout until crisis is resolved</li> <li>• Communicate updates on the situation via social channels if appropriate</li> <li>• Provide updates to top-tier/relevant influencers covering the situation, as appropriate</li> </ul>

	Alert	Level 1 (Issue)	Level 2	Level 3 (Crisis)
<b>Internal Communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular internal communications; specific to department as needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare and share incident-specific talking points based on key messages to relevant departments/managers</li> <li>Heightened internal communications activities to ensure key internal audiences/ departments are updated on the situation, as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Issue Association-wide statement with high-level detail, expectations of employees, protocols for handling media and public enquiries, and reminder of employee social media policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Issue Association-wide statement with high-level detail, expectations of employees, protocols for handling media and public enquiries, and reminder of employee social media policy</li> <li>Contact YMCA Canada to issue Federation-wide statement based on holding statement/news release</li> <li>Develop and issue talking-points to frontline managers for use with direct reports</li> <li>Using existing internal communications channels, highlight key staff efforts</li> <li>If required, coordinate with HR to set up and manage employee hotline</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholder Communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talking points distributed to appropriate resources for use with stakeholders reactively as needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talking points and holding statement distributed to appropriate resources for use with stakeholders</li> <li>CRT Lead to liaise with relevant resources and team members, as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holding statement shared directly with impacted stakeholders proactively</li> <li>CRT Lead to liaise with relevant resources and team members, as required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holding statement and additional communications materials proactively shared with key stakeholders</li> <li>Crisis Response Team member identified to provide ongoing updates and serve as point of contact</li> </ul>

# Appendices

## Crisis Severity Matrix

The following issues matrix outlines how the crisis severity rating system might be applied across the YMCA's key issue areas. This provides a set of examples to better understand the process rather than exact and prescribed issues. Each incident must be considered based on its unique circumstances and the below should not be viewed as a recommended response.

Issue area	Alert	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business as usual</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor event or emerging issue</li> <li>• Little disruption to operations</li> <li>• No significant reputational impact</li> <li>• Little or no news or social media activity anticipated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moderately disruptive event</li> <li>• Limited risk of reputational impact</li> <li>• Limited news, blog, or social media coverage anticipated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major destabilizing event</li> <li>• High risk of reputational impact</li> <li>• Significant news, blog, or social media coverage anticipated</li> </ul>
<b>Child Safety/Protection</b>	N/A	A policy or procedure change impacting children and/or youth programs has been implemented and members of the community are questioning the update. Limited media coverage/ social conversation on the subject is found.	An employee or client notifies appropriate personnel of an issue which could compromise the safety of a child if not addressed, no significant reputational impact.	Notable incident resulting in significant injury or harm involving a child is publicized in major news outlets and could result in significant reputational harm (e.g. fatality, injury, misconduct involving a child, etc.).
<b>Data Breach</b>	N/A	YMCA learns that confidential internal documents/IPs have been shared externally (no Personal Identifiable Information accessed).	Minor contained breach with no Personal Identifiable Information accessed.	Large-scale breach of Personal Identifiable Information affecting a significant number of people.
<b>Workplace Violence and Safety</b>	N/A	An employee or member/participant notifies appropriate individuals of a workplace safety hazard that could reasonably impact them and threatens to escalate it publicly.	A workplace incident occurs resulting in injury to employee or member/participant.	A workplace violence incident resulting in fatality of an employee or member/participant occurs.
<b>Risk or threat to government funding</b>	N/A	News reports are published indicating potential government shift that may impact funding.	Government comments directly on outlook for funding to the YMCA.	Government pulls some or all funding due to change of government, revised budget.



Issue area	Alert	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<b>Employee/ Executive Behaviour</b>	N/A	An employee/executive behaves in a way that goes against the YMCA's code of conduct/values.	Public activism involving a group of employees regarding organizational values, practices of executives.	Media and/or other stakeholders are informed of severe executive misconduct (e.g. sexual harassment, bullying, etc.).
<b>Fraud incident</b>	N/A	YMCA receives a media inquiry speculating about an unconfirmed fraud incident.	An investigation confirms that a low-level fraud incident has occurred involving minor amounts of money.	Large scale fraud incident is committed by a senior employee at the YMCA which impacts a large amount of money and/or donations.
<b>Lawsuits</b>	N/A	Media and/or stakeholders are informed of a minor lawsuit (e.g. member of the public falling outside a facility) that is unlikely to have broader impact on the Federation.	Notable lawsuit against the YMCA is publicized in major news outlets and could result in reputational harm.	Major class action lawsuit is formed against the YMCA which could result in significant financial and reputational impact.
<b>Compliance Issues</b>	N/A	Employees found not complying with internal policies and protocols that may have an impact on business operations.	Regulator or external investigator finds the YMCA noncompliant with requirements and issues fine.	Regulator finds that the YMCA is noncompliant with requirements and cuts program or initiative, resulting in broader implications on business operations.
<b>Financial Mismanagement</b>	N/A	The YMCA becomes aware of ongoing financial issues with the potential to impact the Association if not managed.	A YMCA is experiencing significant financial pressures which could threaten its ability to operate.	Financial pressures facing a YMCA results in the need to close a location, impacting a variety of stakeholders.

# Step-by-Step Checklist

## Crisis Action Guide Checklist

Tactic	Responsible	Completed
<b>ASSESSMENT PHASE</b>		
Review and consider all available information		
Assess severity level - If Level 1 and above, determine appropriate team members to engage		
Draft reactive holding statement		
If necessary, convene briefing meeting with CRT team		
<b>RESPONSE STRATEGY ACTIVATION PHASE</b>		
Hold initial briefing meeting, activating the CRT		
Based on the severity level and details of the situation, delegate tasks to appropriate CRT members		
Activate/heighten issue-specific media/social monitoring		
Identify and prioritize audiences and channels		
Determine audience messaging needs and content		
Identify spokesperson(s), if appropriate		
Plan time of next information release, if necessary		
Determine time of next team meeting		
<b>MATERIALS GATHERING</b>		
Draft key messages and secure approval		
Draft content and necessary communications materials based on strategy		
<b>MATERIALS DISSEMINATION</b>		
CRT Lead to approve materials and tactics, and oversee dissemination of information to audiences through identified channels		
Respond to and keep a record of media and stakeholder queries		
<b>MONITOR AND REFINE</b>		
Receive scheduled updates from team members		
Distribute regular internal monitoring reports to the full CRT and key YMCA executives/individuals		
Respond to inaccurate media reports immediately with updated information		
Obtain feedback from audiences/stakeholder liaisons		
Return to Step 1 for new developments, escalations		
<b>DEBRIEF AND ANALYZE</b>		

# Crisis Response Activity Log

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_

Incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Time	Event/action	Notes	Follow-up required?	
			Y	N
			Y	N
			Y	N
			Y	N
			Y	N
			Y	N
			Y	N
			Y	N
			Y	N
			Y	N
			Y	N
			Y	N
			Y	N
			Y	N
			Y	N

## Standby Statement Template

The rapid pace of information expected from audiences demands that the YMCA immediately acknowledge an incident, reassure stakeholders/the public it is aware of and addressing the issue, and indicate it will provide future updates. The following standby statements should be tailored according to the situation:

### Option 1:

"The YMCA of [Member Association Name] is aware of the situation and is currently gathering more information. While we do not yet have enough information to comment further, we will provide an update as soon as possible."

### Option 2:

"We recently became aware of an [alleged] incident [involving XXX] and are currently investigating. We take these incidents seriously and, as with any investigation of this nature, are not able to disclose specific details at this time. We will provide an update as soon as possible."

## Holding Statement Template

The below holding statement template should be populated according to the instructions provided and updated to reflect situational details.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

At approximately \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ a.m. ☐ p.m. (time zone) on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) an incident occurred involving \_\_\_\_\_ (describe incident with confirmed information only).

[Insert appropriate statement of empathy e.g. We are deeply saddened by this event and our thoughts are with those that are affected; We apologize for any interruption this incident has caused on our members/participants, staff, or partners, etc.]

Our immediate priority is on [outline steps being taken in response to the incident, e.g. cooperating with the authorities throughout the investigation; providing our staff and members/participants with the support they require, etc.]

[Insert appropriate messaging, e.g. The YMCA takes the safety of our staff and members extremely seriously and we are committed to fully understanding the situation; We are conducting a comprehensive investigation to ensure an incident like this does not occur again, etc.]

[Insert communications next steps, e.g. We will provide updates as they become available, etc.]

## Media Release Template

**[DESCRIPTIVE HEADLINE]**

**[Location] – [Month XX, Year] – YMCA [Location] today...**

**[BODY]**

About the YMCA of **[Member Association Name]**  
YMCA of **[Member Association Name]** Boiler Plate

To learn more about the YMCA of **[Member Association Name]**, please visit **[website]**.

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**For more information, please contact:**

**Email:**

**Phone:**



## Media Advisory Template

A media advisory is a tool used to notify and invite media to a news conference where they can address YMCA spokespeople directly. This template shows the basic requirements of a media advisory.

### Media Advisory

---

**[DESCRIPTIVE HEADLINE]**

**[Date]**

**[Location]**

- **What:** Brief description of the nature of the media event
- **When:** Identify the day, month, year, and timing of the media event
- **Where:** Identify the location of the media event
- **Who:** List relevant YMCA and third-party spokespeople that will be present and available to speak with media at the event; include their organization and position
- Instructions regarding media check-in at site (e.g. arrival time, entrance)

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