



Standard Practice for Responder Family Support Service¹

This standard is issued under the fixed designation E2732; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reappraisal. A superscript epsilon (ϵ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reappraisal.

INTRODUCTION

The delivery of critical emergency response services in time of disaster is largely dependent upon designated individuals (responders) who possess the necessary skill and training to provide relief to those affected. Such designated individuals may come from a variety of public, private, or government sponsored entities depending on the nature and extent of the emergency situation. While their contributions to the relief effort may be diverse, they all share a common concern that has the potential to distract from their focus on emergency response, which is the concern for the safety and security of their families and loved ones.

These responders need to be able to concentrate fully on their response duties, especially in times of a widespread emergency. However, it is recognized that these responders may face the difficult challenge of deciding between professional duty, the welfare of their local community, and the safety and welfare of their families and loved ones. Thus, this practice was developed to provide a framework for the responsible entities to help their response personnel plan for and manage the safety of their families during extended periods of emergency assignment. To avoid unnecessary burden on or reduction in the number of an entity's emergency responders, other available community human resources should be considered to help with this task of ensuring that responder's families are supported. Preferably, such additional human resources would have access, either personally or through their organization, to local resources that might be needed to provide the necessary responder family support.

These additional resources can often be found in local recreational, cultural, and educational programs and organization located within the community. In some communities these programs and organizations may have paid staff, and in other communities such staff may be volunteers or a combination of paid and volunteer staff. Additionally, these resources are likely to be available for such service, because in times of emergency usually recreational and educational programs are curtailed. Also, these programs and organizations often have access to and control of core physical assets (buildings, vehicles, emergency equipment, etc.) that may be valuable for both community and responder family support. They can also be equipped with additional resources as required (food, water, blankets, etc.). Such programs and organizations often have full, part-time or volunteer staff, or both, that can be trained and made available to provide the necessary family assistance support. These programs and organizations often have a command and communications structure that can be expanded to help support such an assistance program. Simply stated, staff in these programs and organizations would be trained and prepared to include assigned members of a responder's family in with the care and support of their own families during the stated emergency or extended responder assignment. This practice outlines a process for responders to identify family members to be included in the program, on strictly a volunteer basis. It is important to note that responder family members included in the program would not be given preferential treatment, but would have someone assigned to look out for them (in the responder's absence) to ensure that they get equal treatment (that is, the same care as everyone else in the community, who have their head of household looking out for them).

1. Scope

1.1 This practice sets forth a standard approach for designated personnel in public, private and not-for-profit organizations that provide recreational, cultural, educational and related services to the public to respond in a support role providing assistance, and as needed to the local family of a responder on assignment in an emergency situation.

1.2 The “responder,” with regard to family support services, may be a first-responder from a variety of responder disciplines (for example, law enforcement, fire service, emergency medical services, public health) or supplementary personnel and may be paid or volunteer.

1.3 This practice describes the roles, responsibility, and actions necessary for designated personnel to provide family care-related services to assigned responder family members under conditions of service during an emergency.

1.4 This practice outlines the approach and system for interrelating with responders and their designated family members in times of emergencies to alleviate responders’ concerns and fears for their family during an emergency assignment.

1.5 This practice does not supersede any current or future official Federal, State, Tribal, or local government policies, laws and protocols that might subsequently be advanced.

1.6 This practice identifies other peripheral professional personnel that could be assigned to assist the designated responder family members during an emergency.

1.7 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 Standards:

[45 CFR Part 164 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act \(HIPAA\) Privacy Rule \(45 CFR Part 164 – Safety and Privacy\)](#)²

[IAEA 2006 IAEA Annual Report for 2006](#)³

[NFPA 1600 Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity Programs, 2010 Edition](#)⁴

[NIMS 2008 National Incident Management System \(NIMS\), December 2008](#)⁵

¹ This practice is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee E54 on Homeland Security Applications and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee E54.02 on Emergency Preparedness, Training, and Procedures.

Current edition approved Jan. 1, 2011. Published March 2011. DOI: 10.1520/E2732-11.

² Available from U.S. Government Printing Office Superintendent of Documents, 732 N. Capitol St., NW, Mail Stop: SDE, Washington, DC 20401, <http://www.access.gpo.gov>.

³ Available from International Atomic Energy Agency, P.O. Box 100, Wagramer Strasse 5 A-1400, Vienna, Austria, <http://www.iaea.org/index.html>.

⁴ Available from National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), 1 Batterymarch Park, Quincy, MA 02169-7471, <http://www.nfpa.org>.

⁵ Available from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), 500 C St., SW, Washington, DC 20472, <http://www.fema.gov>.

Ready America⁶

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.1.1 *authority having jurisdiction (AHJ)*—an organization, office, or individual responsible for enforcing the requirements of a code or standard, or for approving equipment, materials, an installation, or a procedure. **NFPA 1600**

3.1.2 *base home*—the main or primary place of residence for the responder’s household and family.

3.1.3 *congregation center*—the primary location to which the public and a responder’s family will be taken in the event that it is necessary to relocate the family from their base home.

3.1.4 *emergency management/response personnel*—includes Federal, State, territorial, tribal, sub-state regional, and local governments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), private sector-organizations, critical infrastructure owners and operators, and all other organizations and individuals who assume an emergency management role. (Also known as *emergency responder*.) **NIMS 2008**

3.1.5 *emergency medical services (EMS)*—the provision of treatment, support, and other pre-hospital procedures, including ambulance transportation, to patients.

3.1.6 *emergency operations center (EOC)*—the physical location at which the coordination of information and resources to support incident management (on-scene operations) activities normally takes place. An EOC may be a temporary facility or may be located in a more central or permanently established facility, perhaps at a higher level of organization within a jurisdiction. EOCs may be organized by major functional disciplines (for example, fire, law enforcement, medical services), by jurisdiction (for example, Federal, State, regional, tribal, city, county), or by some combination thereof. **NIMS 2008**

3.1.7 *emergency responder*—same as *emergency management/response personnel*.

3.1.8 *emergency response*—the performance of actions to mitigate the consequences of an emergency for human health and safety, quality of life, the environment and property. It may also provide a basis for the resumption of normal social and economic activity. **IAEA 2006**

3.1.9 *entity*—governmental agency or jurisdiction, private or public company, partnership, nonprofit organization, or other organization that has emergency management and continuity of operations responsibilities. **NFPA 1600**

3.1.10 *evacuation*—the organized, phased, and supervised withdrawal, dispersal, or removal of civilians from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas and their reception and care in safe areas. **NIMS 2008**

3.1.11 *family leader*—the designated person in the family, usually the responder, who serves as the key contact with the Support Service Agency (SSA) before any incident.

3.1.12 *family support*—the type and degree of family assistance, which will vary depending upon the nature, extent,

⁶ Available at <http://www.ready.gov/>.

and duration of the emergency. Certain emergencies may require evacuation or medical assistance, or both. Circumstances may occur where relocation is impractical or not prudent. In such situations, support may take the form of delivering necessary services, supplies, and equipment, as well as providing communications to a family. Family assistance providers will need to develop, in conjunction with the respective emergency management organization and individual responders, appropriate protocols for a variety of covered events (for example, fire, flood, hurricanes, terrorist acts, mutual aid assignments in other jurisdictions) that will define family support.

3.1.13 *incident*—an occurrence, natural or man-made, that requires a response to protect life or property. Incidents can, for example, include major disasters, emergencies, terrorist attacks, terrorist threats, civil unrest, wildland and urban fires, floods, hazardous materials spills, nuclear accidents, aircraft accidents, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, tropical storms, tsunamis, war-related disasters, public health and medical emergencies, and other occurrences requiring an emergency response. **NIMS 2008**

3.1.14 *incident command system (ICS)*—a standardized on-scene emergency management construct specifically designed to provide an integrated organizational structure that reflects the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents, without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to aid in the management of resources during incidents. It is used for all kinds of emergencies and is applicable to small as well as large and complex incidents. ICS is used by various jurisdictions and functional agencies, both public and private, to organize field-level incident management operations. **NIMS 2008**

3.1.15 *incident management*—the broad spectrum of activities and organizations providing effective and efficient operations, coordination, and support applied at all levels of government, utilizing both governmental and nongovernmental resources to plan for, respond to, and recover from an incident, regardless of cause, size, or complexity. **NIMS 2008**

3.1.16 *jurisdiction*—a range or sphere of authority. Public agencies have jurisdiction at an incident related to their legal responsibilities and authority. Jurisdictional authority at an incident can be political or geographical (for example, Federal, State, tribal, local boundary lines) or functional (for example, law enforcement, public health). **NIMS 2008**

3.1.17 *preparedness*—a continuous cycle of planning, organizing, training, equipping, exercising, evaluating, and taking corrective action in an effort to ensure effective coordination during incident response. Within the National Incident Management System, preparedness focuses on the following elements: planning; procedures and protocols; training and exercises; personnel qualification and certification; and equipment certification. **NIMS 2008**

3.1.18 *resources*—personnel and major items of equipment, supplies, and facilities available or potentially available for assignment to incident operations and for which status is

maintained. Resources are described by kind and type and may be used in operational support or supervisory capacities at an incident or at an Emergency Operations Center. **NIMS 2008**

3.1.19 *responder family (family)*—spouses, domestic partners, resident children, parents, dependents, co-habitants, and pets/animals normally residing with or in the care of the responder. This definition may be expanded at the option of the AHJ or SSA.

3.1.20 *service profile*—the data file maintained on a responder family unit.

3.1.21 *SSA support member*—the individual from the SSA assigned to a family unit.

3.1.22 *support service agency (SSA)*—the program or organization providing responder family support, as delineated in this practice.

3.1.23 *support service agency (SSA) executive*—the SSA Manager designated to head and lead the SSA family support operations.

3.1.24 *table of organization equipment (TOE)*—equipment, materials, or services included in a list published by the responder family support organization that is acceptable to the AHJ. The equipment, materials, or services on such a list needs to meet designated standards of the AHJ or have been tested and found suitable for a specified purpose by the AHJ.

3.1.25 *termination*—in the context of this standard, is the end of an incident's emergency response operations or mutual aid support assignment, indicating the cessation of family support services for that incident or assignment.

3.1.26 *volunteer*—for purposes of the National Incident Management System, and this practice, any individual accepted to perform services by the lead agency (which has authority to accept volunteer services) when the individual performs services without promise, expectation, or receipt of compensation for services performed. See 16 U.S.C. 742f(c) and 29 CFR 553.101. **NIMS 2008**

3.2 Acronyms:

3.2.1 *AHJ*—Authority Having Jurisdiction

3.2.2 *EOC*—Emergency Operations Center

3.2.3 *ICS*—Incident Command System

3.2.4 *MACS*—Multi-Agency Coordination Systems

3.2.5 *SSA*—Support Service Agency

3.2.6 *TOE*—Table of Organization Equipment

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This practice applies to responders who are charged with and respond to all types of emergencies whether within or outside of their jurisdiction.

4.2 Two types of incidents are distinguished, depending on their location. If the responder's family is not at risk, the goal is to provide support to the family in coping with issues arising from the responder's absence. This would be the case, for example, if the responder responds to incidents outside the local jurisdiction or responds to an extended incident within the local jurisdiction. The goal is to ensure that the responder's