



## **Critical Incident Response & Recovery Playbook**

### **Purpose**

This toolkit establishes WhiteWater Express Car Wash's coordinated response framework for critical workplace incidents, including workplace violence, serious bodily injury, fatalities, active threats, armed robbery or carjacking incidents, employee shootings or stabbings, major accidents requiring hospitalization, and any event likely to result in OSHA involvement, media attention, or significant employee trauma.

The purpose of this toolkit is to ensure that critical incidents are managed quickly, consistently, and professionally across all departments. The response process is designed to prioritize employee and customer safety, support emergency response efforts, preserve evidence and documentation, maintain compliance with legal and regulatory obligations, provide appropriate employee support resources, and establish clear communication expectations during high-risk situations. This toolkit is also intended to reduce operational confusion by clearly defining departmental responsibilities and escalation procedures during crisis response.

### **Emergency Response Team (ERT) Activation & Governance**

The Emergency Response Team (ERT) is activated when a serious workplace incident requires coordinated leadership response across Operations, Human Resources, Safety/Risk Management, IT, Marketing/Communications, Legal, and Executive Leadership.

The purpose of the ERT is to ensure critical incidents are assessed quickly, decisions are made based on confirmed facts, communication is controlled, employee and customer safety are prioritized, and required documentation, reporting, and follow-up actions are completed.

### **ERT Activation Criteria**

The ERT should be activated immediately upon awareness of any incident that may significantly impact employee safety, customer safety, operations, legal or regulatory compliance, business continuity, or company reputation.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Employee injury, hospitalization, or fatality
- Workplace violence, threats of violence, robbery, carjacking, weapons-related incidents, assaults, or active threat situations
- Mental health crises, including suicide attempts, suicidal ideation, welfare check situations, or acute emotional distress requiring intervention
- Customer or public safety incidents
- Operational disruptions, facility emergencies, or natural disasters
- Cybersecurity incidents, data breaches, or significant IT outages
- Regulatory, legal, or compliance matters
- Media inquiries, social media escalation, or reputational events
- Any incident deemed high-risk by leadership

Any incident involving threats, weapons, assault, robbery, carjacking, workplace violence, or active threats requires ERT activation, compliance with the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy, and completion of a Site Security Assessment as part of the post-incident review process.

### **ERT Structure**

The ERT may include the following functions depending on the nature and severity of the incident:



| Function                          | Primary Responsibilities                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Operations</b>                 | Site coordination, operational stabilization, business continuity, reopening decisions, vendor/facility coordination                                 |
| <b>Human Resources</b>            | Employee communication, family support, EAP coordination, personnel matters, leave/accommodation support, documentation, return-to-work coordination |
| <b>Safety / Risk Management</b>   | OSHA review, workers' compensation coordination, regulatory communication, incident investigation support, corrective action tracking                |
| <b>IT / Cybersecurity</b>         | Surveillance footage preservation, access/system log preservation, communication systems support, cybersecurity response, data protection            |
| <b>Marketing / Communications</b> | Media response, social media monitoring, internal/external messaging, brand protection                                                               |
| <b>Legal</b>                      | Legal guidance, privilege considerations, regulatory risk review, communication review                                                               |
| <b>Executive Leadership</b>       | Strategic decisions, approvals, escalation management, organizational alignment                                                                      |

### Incident Commander

An Incident Commander should be designated at the time of ERT activation. The Incident Commander is responsible for coordinating the overall response, assigning workstreams, scheduling update meetings, ensuring documentation is maintained, and confirming that required actions are completed.

The Incident Commander may vary depending on the incident type. For operational emergencies, this may be an Operations leader. For employee-impact or mental health crisis incidents, HR may serve as the lead coordinator or Single Point of Contact.

### Initial ERT Meeting Agenda

The initial ERT meeting should occur as soon as practical after activation and should focus on confirmed facts, immediate risk, ownership, and communication control.

Discussion topics should include:

1. What happened?
2. What facts are confirmed?
3. What remains unknown?
4. Is there an immediate risk to employees, customers, operations, or the public?
5. Are emergency services, law enforcement, OSHA, or other authorities involved?
6. What actions have already been taken?
7. What evidence or documentation must be preserved?
8. What employee support is needed?
9. What internal or external communication is required?
10. Who owns each response workstream?
11. When is the next update or leadership check-in?

After the initial ERT meeting, the response should follow the phased Critical Incident Response Framework outlined below.



## **PHASE 1 — Immediate Emergency Response**

**Timeline: First 0–30 Minutes**

### **Site Leadership Responsibilities**

1. Call 911 immediately.
2. Render aid only if safe to do so.
3. Secure the area.
4. Prevent unauthorized access.
5. Account for all employees onsite.
6. Suspend operations if necessary.
7. Notify:
  - o Area Director
  - o Regional Director
  - o HR
  - o Safety
  - o Executive Leadership (RVP, VP)
8. Preserve the scene.
9. Do not speculate or discuss details publicly.

### **Operations Responsibilities**

- Coordinate emergency response
- Determine temporary closure or delayed opening
- Support law enforcement access
- Secure cash handling and operational assets
- Arrange staffing coverage if needed

## **PHASE 2 — Department Coordination**

**Timeline: First 30 Minutes–4 Hours**

### **Safety Responsibilities**

#### **Required Actions**

- Open workers' compensation claim immediately
- Determine OSHA reporting requirements
- Notify OSHA when required
- Coordinate with insurance carriers
- Obtain preliminary facts/timeline
- Coordinate scene preservation with Operations and IT
- Maintain incident documentation and regulatory response logs
- Prepare the site for potential OSHA, regulatory, or law enforcement inspections
- Support corrective action planning and regulatory follow-up activities
- Utilize the OSHA Quick Reference Guide for reporting requirements and timelines

### **OSHA Reporting Reference**

Reportable events may include:

- Fatality (within 8 hours)
- Inpatient hospitalization (within 24 hours)
- Amputation (within 24 hours)
- Loss of eye (within 24 hours)

### **HR Responsibilities**

#### **Required Actions**

- Identify impacted team members
- Confirm emergency contact information
- Coordinate employee support resources
- Send EAP communication when appropriate
- Coordinate leave/accommodation processes



- Document witness information
- Support internal investigation
- Coordinate with Legal as needed
- Ensure no retaliation related to safety concerns

### **HR Investigation Focus**

HR investigations should focus on:

- Workplace impact
- Policy compliance
- Security/process gaps
- Operational issues
- Employee support needs

HR should NOT interfere with criminal investigations.

### **IT Responsibilities**

#### **Required Actions**

- Immediately preserve all surveillance footage
- Preserve access logs/system logs
- Suspend auto-delete settings where applicable
- Preserve relevant emails/messages if directed
- Coordinate secure evidence transfer
- Restrict unauthorized footage access

#### **Footage Preservation Standards**

Preserve:

- Minimum 2 hours before incident
- Entire incident duration
- Minimum 2 hours after incident

Maintain chain-of-custody documentation.

### **Marketing & Communications Responsibilities**

#### **Required Actions**

- Coordinate internal communications
- Coordinate external/media communications
- Align messaging with Legal and Leadership
- Monitor social media exposure when necessary
- Ensure consistent messaging across regions

### **Media Guidance**

All media inquiries must be directed to [media@whitewatercw.com](mailto:media@whitewatercw.com)

Employees should not:

- Provide interviews
- Share photos/videos
- Comment publicly
- Speculate online

### **PHASE 3 — Stabilization & Follow-Up**

#### **Timeline: First 24–72 Hours**

#### **Leadership Responsibilities**

- Determine reopening plan
- Conduct operational security review
- Assess staffing impacts
- Coordinate counseling resources
- Review temporary security enhancements
- Prepare executive summary



## **Workplace Violence Review Topics**

Following any serious incident, leadership should review:

- Camera coverage
- Lighting
- Staffing levels
- Opening/closing procedures
- Cash handling practices
- Security vulnerabilities
- Prior threats or incidents
- Training effectiveness

## **Checklists**

### **Immediate Emergency Response**

- ☐ 911 called immediately
- ☐ Emergency medical response initiated
- ☐ Scene secured if safe to do so
- ☐ Immediate threat assessed
- ☐ Team members onsite accounted for
- ☐ Operations paused or site closed if necessary
- ☐ Area restricted from unauthorized access
- ☐ Leadership notified immediately

### **Escalation & Notification**

- ☐ Regional Director notified
- ☐ Human Resources notified
- ☐ Safety / Risk Management notified
- ☐ Executive Leadership notified
- ☐ Legal notified if appropriate
- ☐ Marketing / Communications notified if media exposure possible
- ☐ Law enforcement contact information documented
- ☐ Incident number obtained if available

### **Evidence Preservation**

- ☐ IT directed to preserve surveillance footage
- ☐ Auto-delete settings suspended if applicable
- ☐ Witness list created
- ☐ Witness statements initiated
- ☐ Photos/videos preserved
- ☐ Schedules/timecards preserved
- ☐ Access logs preserved
- ☐ Scene left undisturbed pending clearance from law enforcement or Safety
- ☐ Chain-of-custody documentation initiated if applicable

### **Biohazard / Scene Remediation**

- ☐ Biohazard exposure risks assessed
- ☐ Team members removed from trauma scene cleanup responsibilities
- ☐ Qualified third-party biohazard remediation vendor contacted if needed
- ☐ Area restricted pending cleanup and clearance
- ☐ Bloodborne pathogen concerns evaluated



- ☐ Cleanup completion documented prior to reopening if applicable

### **Safety / Regulatory Response**

- ☐ Workers' compensation claim initiated
- ☐ OSHA reportability assessed
- ☐ OSHA notified if required
- ☐ Insurance carrier notified
- ☐ Incident response log opened
- ☐ Site prepared for possible OSHA or law enforcement follow-up visit
- ☐ Initial operational risk review conducted

### **Team Member Support**

- ☐ Emergency contacts verified
- ☐ Impacted team members identified
- ☐ EAP communication sent
- ☐ Team member support resources communicated
- ☐ Leave/accommodation needs reviewed
- ☐ Follow-up support conversations scheduled if appropriate

### **Communications**

- ☐ Internal communication drafted and reviewed
- ☐ Broader team/store communication assessed
- ☐ Media response reminder communicated
- ☐ External inquiries routed to approved communication channel
- ☐ Leadership talking points prepared if necessary

### **Site Security & Operational Review**

- ☐ Exterior lighting reviewed
- ☐ Camera functionality verified
- ☐ Gate/lock/access concerns reviewed
- ☐ Security vulnerabilities documented
- ☐ Suspicious activity concerns reviewed
- ☐ Lone-worker considerations reviewed if applicable
- ☐ Corrective actions assigned

### **Recovery & Follow-Up**

- ☐ Reopening plan approved
- ☐ Corrective action tracking initiated
- ☐ Leadership debrief scheduled
- ☐ Post-incident review completed
- ☐ Documentation retained appropriately
- ☐ Additional training or policy review assessed
- ☐ Final follow-up with impacted team members completed

### **SAMPLE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

**Subject:** Support Resources Available

Team,

We are aware of the serious incident that occurred today involving one of our team members.



At this time, law enforcement and emergency responders are handling the investigation and response. Support resources are available to any employee who may be impacted by this event. Employees may contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for confidential counseling and support services. Please avoid speculation or sharing unverified information.

Any media inquiries should be directed to [media@whitewatercw.com](mailto:media@whitewatercw.com).

Additional updates will be shared as appropriate.

### INCIDENT DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

The following documentation must be retained:

- Incident timeline
- Witness statements
- OSHA reports
- Workers' compensation documentation
- Surveillance preservation logs
- Internal communications
- Photos/videos
- Leave/accommodation documentation
- Security review findings
- Invoices or receipts related to the incident
- Police report information if available

Retention should follow Legal guidance and applicable records retention requirements.

### DO NOT

Employees and leaders should NOT:

- Speculate on fault or motive
- Share photos/videos externally
- Discuss medical details
- Provide media interviews
- Clean or alter the scene prematurely
- Delete communications or footage
- Retaliate against employees raising safety concerns

### ESCALATION MATRIX

| Incident Type                            | Required Escalation                                    |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Serious injury requiring hospitalization | HR, Safety, RD, Executive Leadership                   |
| Fatality                                 | Immediate Executive Leadership + Legal                 |
| Shooting/stabbing                        | HR, Safety, Legal, Marketing, IT, Executive Leadership |
| Armed robbery                            | HR, Safety, Operations                                 |
| Active threat                            | Immediate emergency escalation                         |
| Media exposure likely                    | Marketing + Executive Leadership                       |
| OSHA reportable event                    | Safety + Legal                                         |

### TRAINING EXPECTATIONS

The following teams should receive annual review/training on this toolkit:

- Regional Directors
- Area Directors
- General Managers
- HR Team
- Safety Team
- IT Team



- Marketing/Communications Team

Training should include:

- Escalation expectations
- OSHA basics
- Evidence preservation
- Trauma-informed response
- Media handling
- Documentation standards

### **TOOLKIT ATTACHMENTS**

1. Incident Timeline Template
2. OSHA Quick Reference Guide
3. EAP Resource Flyer
4. Media Holding Statement Template
5. Site Security Assessment Checklist
6. Return-to-Work Coordination Checklist
7. Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

### **POST-INCIDENT DEBRIEF QUESTIONS**

Following stabilization, leadership should evaluate:

- What worked well?
- What created delays/confusion?
- Were escalation paths followed?
- Was communication effective?
- Were employees adequately supported?
- Were evidence preservation steps sufficient?
- Are additional security controls needed?
- Are policy or training changes necessary?

### **OWNERSHIP & REVIEW**

Policy Owner: Human Resources & Safety

This toolkit should be reviewed:

- Annually
- Following any major incident
- Following regulatory changes
- Following operational restructuring