

The Miami-Dade Police Department utilizes a back-up center. The site was maintained as a clean building and kept sterile. It was available for use in the event we had to move our workforce there due to an employee testing positive for COVID-19 at our primary facility. Once staff was tested and relocated, the primary site would have been disinfected and maintained as a sterile location.

**ROBERT BLOOM AND RENEE GORDON,
ALEXANDRIA DEPARTMENT
OF EMERGENCY & CUSTOMER
COMMUNICATIONS, VIRGINIA**

Yes, our back-up center runs hot and is available 24/7. We usually test and document monthly while deploying staff to work several times a year, which enables all shifts to stay refreshed on its operations. During Phase 2 of the COVID-19 pandemic we split the staff between both centers. Our 3-1-1 staff was also moved to a remote location, which made social distancing a lot easier to manage throughout both sites.

**CHERYL KONARSKI, JOPLIN POLICE
DEPARTMENT, MISSOURI**

We consider our neighboring agency a back-up center and have utilized each other in the past, such as in the event of fiber cable cuts, power outages, etc. I am investigating using our training center as a backup. We do have access to CAD via our training computers at that location and are finishing up the connections for phone and radio.

**DID YOUR CENTER HAVE A MAJOR
EVENT (TORNADO, FLOODING,
EARTHQUAKE, WILDFIRE)
DURING THIS TIME? IF YES, HOW
DID COVID-19 AFFECT THIS?**

**BETH TODD, SALT LAKE
CITY EMERGENCY
COMMUNICATIONS CENTER**

We had a 5.7 magnitude earthquake with the epicenter approximately 12 miles from

our emergency communications center on March 18 just after 7 a.m. The pandemic actually made this a lot more manageable because most everyone was home with their families instead of being at school or work when it happened.

We also had a violent protest on the evening of May 30 that resulted in a county wide 10-33. We are a multi-agency ECC and all of our law enforcement agencies sent officers to assist Salt Lake City during the protest.

COVID-19 did not really impact our ECC during either of these incidents.

We have been very lucky in Utah to not have the number of cases that other larger metropolitan areas have had.

When the earthquake happened our call volume was quite a bit lower than usual, so we had most of our public safety units available to respond to the earthquake. We are also extremely blessed that there were not a lot of injuries and no deaths from the earthquake. There was structural damage and quite a few natural gas leaks, but no fires resulted from those and they were fixed rather quickly. We were pretty much back to normal ECC operations within about eight hours.

**DID YOU LOCK DOWN YOUR
DISPATCH CENTER? IF YES:
A. WHERE DID YOUR
PERSONNEL SLEEP, HANG OUT
WHILE WAITING TO WORK
THEIR SHIFTS?
B. HOW DID YOU DEAL WITH
EMPLOYEES THAT WERE
SINGLE PARENTS OR SINGLE
CAREGIVERS?
C. DID YOU DO ANYTHING
TO DEAL WITH EMPLOYEES'
MENTAL HEALTH?**

**LESLIE WHITHAM, CHINO POLICE
DEPARTMENT, CALIFORNIA**

We “locked” down our center in that only dispatch personnel were allowed inside (all others, like custodial staff, had to have

watch commander approval before entering). For our employees who were faced with home-schooling or other child-care issues, we allowed time off using the FEMA COVID-19 reimbursement codes. Of our 18 employees, only two needed to use time off (as they are married to other “essential” workers). Our city also offered low-cost childcare through our community services program. One of our public safety telecommunicators is also the peer counseling/support team leader, so telephonic check-ins and our ongoing contract with the counseling team (also telephonic and online) were available.

**CHERYL BLEDSOE, CLACKAMAS
COUNTY 911, OREGON**

We locked down our center to external visitors and required all food drop-off to be hands free delivery. We did not require personnel to be locked down during COVID-19. We did regularly message staff to ask them to quarantine outside of work to ensure the health and safety of their peers. Our staff also started a Facebook group so that they could minimize trips to the grocery store, and we worked with local grocers to allow our staff to shop from 4 a.m.-6 a.m. before the general public was allowed in to shop. They did this for all first responders with badge identification. We also established a “community swap room” so people could bring in items that others needed like diapers, formula, toilet paper, paper towels and cleaning agents.

We engaged our on-site peer team and worked with our wellness provider to ensure staff could access additional employee assistance or stress-related resources. Our staff also began working on a community garden during this time as an additional wellness activity.

**ROBERT BLOOM AND RENEE GORDON,
ALEXANDRIA DEPARTMENT
OF EMERGENCY & CUSTOMER
COMMUNICATIONS, VIRGINIA**

We locked down the center and offices were converted to sleeping quarters; the conference room was converted to a recreation room/TV lounge; a washer and dryer were installed; a schedule was established for showers; volunteers were used to mitigate the single parent and single caregiver issue. To help deal with their mental health, we used single sleeping quarters, encouraged exercise, and made a quiet room for prayer and

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- Leslie Whitham, Chino Police Department, California