



MASS FATALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

What is a FATALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN?

A pandemic influenza or other disaster event may result in more deaths than can be handled by local mortuary resources. Operations that can experience surge include death investigations, morgue capacity, funeral home capacity, cemetery capacity, and transportation of the deceased. The Fatality Management Plan can be employed to help alleviate the stress experienced by the mortuary system. A Central Processing Unit may be activated to ensure that the deceased are handled with respect.

What is a Central Processing Unit?

Hospitals, funeral homes, or the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner may run out of space to store the deceased. A Central Processing Unit can provide the necessary resources to ensure operations that are more efficient.

When would a Central Processing Unit be necessary?

A Central Processing Unit will be considered if:

- A one-time mass fatality event exceeds 75 deaths.
- An ongoing mass fatality event exceeds 300 deaths per week.

The Mass Fatality Task Force, through the State Health Operations Center, will monitor operations at local funeral homes, morgues, and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner to make a final determination.

Does the plan consider religious and cultural concerns?

While traditional burials and funeral services within several days of death may not be possible due to extended time needed to process remains, the State of Delaware addresses and considers religious and cultural issues and sensitivity when handling the deceased during a mass fatality event. The appropriate and respectful treatment of the deceased is a moral obligation necessary to comfort both the family of the deceased and the larger community.

For more information:

To view the Mass Fatality Management Plan, visit:
<http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dph/php/files/mfmplan.pdf>.

24/7 Emergency Contact Number: 1-888-295-5156

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