



# Supporting Employees During Times of Extreme Circumstance



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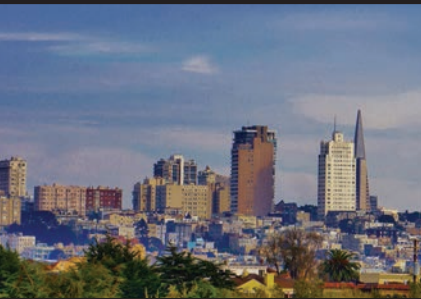
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# Introduction

From hurricanes in the Gulf Coast to active shooter incidents, and wildfires in the west, the United States had its share of extreme circumstances in 2017.

This report serves to provide insights into how public and private sector organizations are supporting their employees during times of extreme circumstance. The anonymous responses from participants, included in each section, hopefully inspire ideas within your own organization.

The survey was designed to capture free-form responses from a variety of organizations in the public and private sectors. This allowed participants to elaborate on the formal and informal methods their organizations have in place to support employees.

The survey was distributed to members of the California Resiliency Alliance (CRA), Business Recovery Managers Association (BRMA), and the California chapters of the Association of Continuity Professionals (ACP). A total of 62 respondents replied to the survey between January 8 and January 31, 2018.

## Breakdown of Responses by Sector

Organization Size (# of Employees)	Public Sector	Private Sector
10,000+	5	20
5,001 – 10,000	3	4
1,001 – 5,000	6	5
501 – 1,000	0	1
100 – 500	2	9
Less than 100	6	1

## Sections of the Report

This report is divided into four sections:

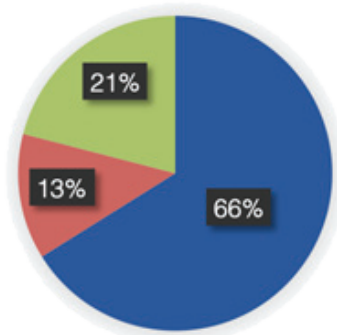
- 1. Accounting for Employees:** the various processes and channels used to account for impacted employees
- 2. Policies, Procedures, & Practices:** formal policies and procedures and/or informal practices used by organizations in regards to:
  - Information Sharing
  - Mental Health & Counseling, Assistance Centers, and Memorial Service Support
  - Time Off / Paid Leave
  - Financial Support
- 3. Supporting Employee Volunteers:** how organizations support their employees volunteering in the response efforts
- 4. Case Study: 2017 California Wildfires:** how organizations implemented their formal policies and procedures and/or informal practices in response to an actual incident

## Overview of Responses

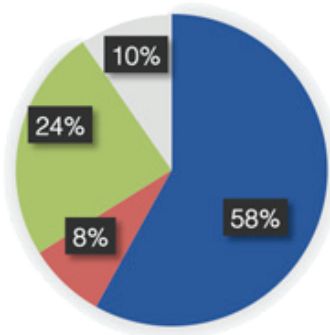
Of the 62 responses:

- 55 replied that their organization has formal policies and procedures and/or informal practices in regards to supporting employees.
- 13 are unsure or do not know if their organization has formal policies and procedures for supporting employees. Of those 13, six are also unsure or do not know if their organization has any informal practices to support employees.
- 8 replied that their organization has no formal policies and procedures. One of these also stated they do not have any informal practices.

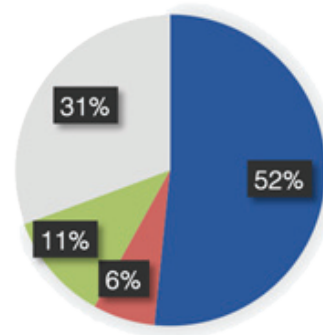
**Organizations with Formal Policies and Procedures\***



**Organizations with Informal Practices\***

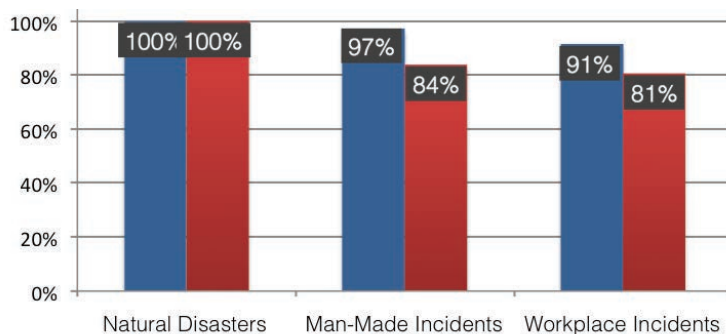


**Organizations that Implemented Them\***



■ Yes
 ■ No
 ■ Unsure / Don't Know
 ■ Did Not Answer

**Types of Extreme Circumstances:**  
 Natural Disasters (e.g., earthquake, flood, fire)  
 Man-Made Incidents (e.g., active shooter, workplace violence, bombing)  
 Workplace Incidents (e.g., building collapse, explosion)



■ Formal Policies and Procedures
 ■ Informal Practices

**All policies, procedures, and practices cover natural disasters, but not all cover man-made incidents and workplace incidents.**

**As one respondent shared,  
 “Recovery is something for all organizations to focus on.”**

\* Note: The data could look different if stratified by organization size and/or sector.





# Distinguishing Between Directly and Indirectly Impacted Employees

Often during an extreme circumstance, it is not just the employees who are affected, but entire families. When employees are indirectly impacted through their families it can directly impact their focus at work. One of the survey questions looked at whether organizations distinguish between directly impacted employees (e.g. those who are impacted themselves) and indirectly impacted employees (e.g. those who have family members / close friends impacted).

Of the 43 respondents who answered this question, 20 said that their organization does distinguish between directly and indirectly impacted employees, 17 said they do not distinguish, and six are unsure or do not know.

## Differentiation in Time Off Policies

*"The time off is for directly impacted employees. Employees must use their personal vacation/sick time for others."*

*"The distinction is made through company policies on paid time off and family and medical leave."*

## Scope of Those Indirectly Impacted

*"Policies refer to family and "partners or significant others" but not friends being impacted."*

*"If an employee is impacted by family members' hardships, then we allow the employee to provide the support necessary."*

*"We distinguish and render assistance mainly to employees and in some cases, family members."*

*"Services offered cover our employees and their immediate families."*

*"We also provide assistance to our customers."*

## Informal Practices to Support Indirectly Impacted Employees

*"If we learn of indirect impacts, we'd assist as appropriate."*

*"Informal practice and discussed at the time of the event."*

*"Only if brought to the attention of the agency."*

# Accounting for Employees

Accounting for employees is key in determining who has been impacted and to what extent. In addition to traditional practices, such as phone call trees, numerous newer technologies were also referenced. This question explored how organizations account for their employees during times of extreme circumstance. Of the 62 survey respondents, 43 shared information about how their organization accounts for employees.

## The Processes

*"We rely heavily on the front line managers reporting into HR and then from Security & Safety reporting from their on-ground staff. We are working to fully document the different permutations within our roles and responsibilities so it is clear as we onboard new crisis team members."*

*"We require employees to call into our emergency operation center and we maintain a computer list of those that call in. We then start tracking who has called in and those that haven't we start contacting their emergency contact to check their status."*

*"We have an informal call tree process and will be formalizing the program when we bring on a mass notification vendor later this year."*

*"We have a robust and formal proprietary process to identify employees in impacted areas and account for them individually using a process that allows self-reporting online or via a call center staffed with live operators."*

*"Supervisors are asked to try and contact personnel in the incident area and employees know they should contact their supervisor."*

*"HR will stand up a unit to assist employees affected by an incident. No formal SOP's; concept only at this time."*

*"Security department will email, call and text if the number of employees affected is not great. Otherwise, we would use our mass notification system and continue to follow up through other means until we capture everyone's status."*

*"We use the geographic mapping of employee home addresses in the [mass notification system] tool. Practices for reaching out to employees varies and may include an email from the crisis management program lead, phone calls from managers. Notifications from the tool using the polling option to reply have been used in the past."*

*"During business hours, we have dedicated floor wardens who report up to the various departments who in turn report up to leadership with head counts. Would also most likely establish a hotline for those to call in and a recorded line for those needing to report to work (Disaster Service Workers)."*

*"Employees who live or work in the affected area, or who are traveling to the area at the time, are contacted and required to respond with their status."*

## Types of Communication Channels

Nineteen respondents highlighted using their mass notification system to disseminate messages in a combination of one or more of the following ways: via text (SMS); phone call to work/home/cell phone numbers; email to work/personal email. One indicated they use their vendor's mobile app. Two stated they use the polling feature which allows the sender to pose a polling question and receive a response. Another uses the geographic mapping feature within their mass notification system so that all within a defined area receives the message.

*"Mass notification system - primary; internal technology tool - secondary; HR/manager – third."*

*"Mass notification system; employee emergency information line (800#); business continuity plan call trees."*

*"Evacuation floor monitors; department emergency plans; personnel accountability procedures."*

*"... wellness check through the company's mass notification system."*

*"Mass notification system, texts, cell phones, home phone, email."*

*"Indirectly, initial query to site managers; directly to employees as welfare inquiry leveraging company's mass notification system."*

*"Initially mass notification system then call out from HR and management teams."*

*"Mass notification system with links on activation or event counts ('press one if you need help,' 'press two if you are sheltering in place,' and etc.); [Red Cross website] Safe and Well."*

*"Multiple ways - email, cell phone, phone trees, WhatsApp, Facebook, other social media."*

*"Onsite security badge/id; offsite automated call trees."*

*"We utilize a two way text notification system to assess employee status; call trees through business units; direct outreach."*

**Most organizations rely on multiple mechanisms to account for employees.**

## Traveling Employees

*"The company's travel reservation system is linked to the mass notification system so that travelers to the affected area can also be reached."*

*"We have an travel disaster assistance program to track employees on work-related travel and perform an accountability check for those in affected areas."*



### Accounting for Employees Who Don't Reply

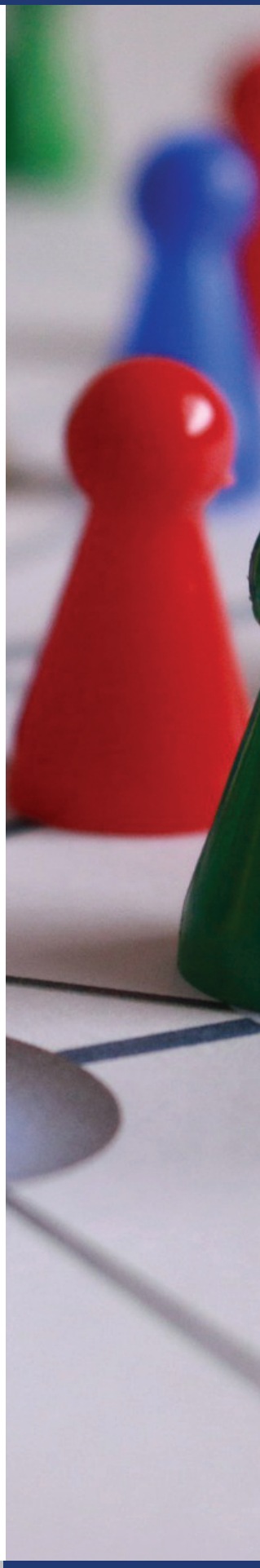
*"Staff are deployed to homes if employees do not report in as required."*

*"If no response received, we can have our HR team follow up with staff."*

Two of the respondents report that their organization only has informal practices or they are not aware of any formal practices in regards to accounting for employees.

Three of the respondents highlighted that employees in their organization are required to acknowledge receipt of check-in messages.

**Mass notification systems are widely used  
to disseminate messages at time of incident.**





# Policies, Procedures, & Practices

## Information Sharing

Forty-four respondents replied to this question. Thirty-two of them indicated that they have formal policies and procedures in place and two are unsure or do not know. Some organizations with informal practices are in the process of bringing more structure to how they share information and contact employees.

*"Our policies and procedures are fairly high level and the interpretation and application is left to our responsible leaders who are more familiar with local customs and laws. There are a lot of what I would call 'informal' practices because they are not documented, prescribed as policy or procedures; however, they would be deployed nevertheless."*

*"In the past, we have been able to get by with addressing custom scenarios as they occur. We are evolving our more informal, ad hoc support policies/procedures to be more routine and repeatable as our program evolves."*

*"We gather employee emergency contact information, advise managers to have the contact information of their direct reports, and in 2018 will be bringing a mass notification vendor on board."*

Twenty-six of the 44 respondents mentioned using a mass notification system as a means of sharing information; this was followed by 22 respondents who indicated using internal and/or external websites, and 16 who mentioned hotlines. Two mentioned sharing information one-on-one with employees via supervisor and HR phone calls.

*"We use a mass notification tool (that includes an app) and have a standard response plan template for all locations to customize that proscribes steps that should be taken to inform and account for personnel and provide support if needed. The tool also has a bulletin board feature that functions as a hotline by which people can obtain updates."*

*"We utilize emergency information hotlines, emergency information websites, incident dashboards, electronic emergency operations center software, mass notification system, brochures, information guides, and our workforce and consumer mobile application."*

*"Employee outreach calls made by HR when possibility of employees impacted by local emergencies."*

Dashboards, intranets, and note sharing platforms were referenced as common tools to make information available to employees. Some organizations are also leveraging additional social platforms such as chat features within existing applications and private Facebook pages.

*"Our internal website and Yammer has also been utilized during disasters ..."*

*"We have sent emails with links or created our own resource, via Box Notes."*

*"We utilize hotlines, mass notification tools, intranet (SharePoint)."*

## Mental Health & Counseling, Assistance Centers, and Memorial Service Support

Of the 41 respondents who stated they have formal policies and procedures and/or informal practices regarding mental health and counseling services, 35 referenced their organization's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) as the channel via which mental health and counseling services are provided to employees. Three respondents are unsure or do not know if their organization has any formal mental health policies and procedures. Two organizations stated their organization does not have any formal policies and procedures.

*"We have an employee assistance counseling line, that also connects to individual counseling as needed."*

*"We offer EAP services which are confidential for all employees and their dependent family members. Employees can speak with representatives in person and receive support for emotional or psychological concerns."*

*"EAP program in place and we're building out regional/office & event specific procedures."*

*"Employee Relations would take the lead, likely implementing EAP and other services."*

*"Mental health services are covered 100% by the company medical plans. There are additional online resources that can be taken advantage of for free as well."*

There were variances of whether the counseling services are available onsite, offsite, online, or via phone:

*"Onsite counseling services available to all employees."*

*"We have mental health services available through our insurance provider. We bring onsite mental health professionals when the need arises."*

*"Counselors available 24x7 via hotline."*


*"Counselors available onsite or offsite."*

*"There are additional online resources that can be taken advantage of for free as well."*

In addition to services provided through the EAP, a few respondents listed some additional channels including the Red Cross, critical incident stress management, peer support, and chaplain support.







One trend that does appear in the responses is a tendency to confuse an EAP with Employee Assistance Centers or Family Assistance Centers, which might be set up during a crisis. Some of the responses that highlighted assistance, excluding mental health and counseling, are:

*"We have at least 4 sites globally that offer employees and their families as well as local citizens safety and sleep-over capabilities to shelter from hurricanes, floods, etc. The company also has a dedicated 200+ seat workspace recovery center in US, computers at each desk, huge kitchen facilities and showers. Bring your own sleeping bag..."*

*"Following a number of incidents, we have opened up our offices (since we had power and water) and employees were welcome to come to the office and shower, charge their devices, check in, etc. In some cases, this is open to family members as well. This would vary [based] on incident, impact, location and whether our office space was secure and functional."*

*"In certain situations the company buys and provides lunch for those able to come in to work. Our facilities are made available to employees, their families and their pets, to utilize the showers and electricity to recharge devices (shower & power)."*

One respondent highlighted that due to regulatory requirements within their industry, under certain circumstances they *"are required to set up a Family Assistance Center for customers and employees."* One other respondent stated, *"We are developing plans for this [Employee Assistance Center] as part of our Bay Area earthquake preparedness program."*

Fourteen respondents stated that their organization has policies and procedures and/or practices covering memorial service support. For one respondent it is a regulatory requirement to provide memorial services under certain circumstances.

*"We subscribe to [a service], so we can provide support with transporting the body were the death to occur overseas. Generally, we would not provide memorial service support on home soil unless the person was killed while at work or as a result of the work they were doing for us."*

*"Our company has a policy around sending flowers/memorial gift in the event of death (or birth) in the family."*

## Time Off / Paid Leave

Thirty-six respondents stated they have formal policies and procedures and/or informal practices relating to time off and paid leave for impacted employees. An additional 4 respondents are unsure or do not know if their organization has any formal policies and procedures related to this topic.

There is no clear trend among respondents in regards to paid, unpaid, and using paid time off (PTO) / vacation time. The one common theme is that *"it depends,"* is *"situational,"* and *"determined on a case-by-case basis."* A few respondents referenced the existence of a formal disaster leave policy.

*"Manager discretion, but generally unpaid."*

*"3 days up to one month with pay; up to one year without pay - per management discretion."*

*"Company grants time off depending on disaster event and impact."*

*"If an office is unsafe, people are expected to work from home if possible. If not, they are allowed to take PTO."*

*"3 days paid leave of absence, expandable to 7 days upon request/review."*

*"Managers have the ability to provide employees with time off in an emergency situation."*

*"They could use their accrued annual or sick leave. Supervisors can give up to 1 week off for administrative time if needed."*

*"Employees are typically paid if they cannot work due to a natural disaster that impacts the work location or the employee's ability to work."*

*"PTO during declared disasters."*

*"Managers do have the flexibility to work with their employees in more one-off events."*

*"As needed and determined by HR and the relevant head of the business unit."*

*"Our employee handbook provides for up to three days paid emergency use by employee as well as flexibility for use of vacation and sick time."*

Some organizations have also established processes for unaffected employees to donate PTO and vacation time to impacted employees.





## Financial Support

Twenty-seven respondents indicated that their organization has formal policies and procedures and/or informal practices relating to financial support for employees impacted by events. Five are unsure or do not know if their organization has any existing formal policies and procedures, and an additional five stated their organization has none. In regards to informal practices, 12 stated their organization has informal practices, 11 are unsure or do not know, and nine said their organization has no informal practices.

### Direct Payments & Grants

*"Up to \$5,000 reimbursement for interim accommodations and incidental expenses that are not covered by personal insurance or government disaster assistance."*

*"Depending on the event and how many impacted, could be a few hundred dollars to thousands."*

*"We will assist with identifying temporary accommodations for employees and their immediate families who have been displaced due to the disaster. The cost for temporary accommodations will be covered for up to two weeks."*

*"We will provide a small monetary grant (up to \$1,000 net) for urgent and immediate needs such as food and clothing. This monetary grant is available to any employee displaced from their primary residence for a minimum of 48 hours. This grant does not require pay back. Employees who have lost their primary residence may receive a \$10,000 grant that does not require pay back."*

*"Employee care packages have set amounts and employees are provided with this financial support depending on their specific needs and circumstances."*

### Advancements & Cash Outs

*"Employees can draw upon next paycheck in advance, if needed for emergency."*

*"We offer financial hardship cash outs of vacation and/or PTO account hours. This is available for employees who suffer sudden and unexpected loss of property due to these extraordinary and unforeseeable circumstances."*

*"Employees who meet eligibility requirements may withdraw a portion of their 401k plan, tax savings retirement, or supplemental retirement plan."*



## Loans

*"Up to \$25,000 company-guaranteed loan (through credit union) if principle residence substantially damaged/destroyed."*

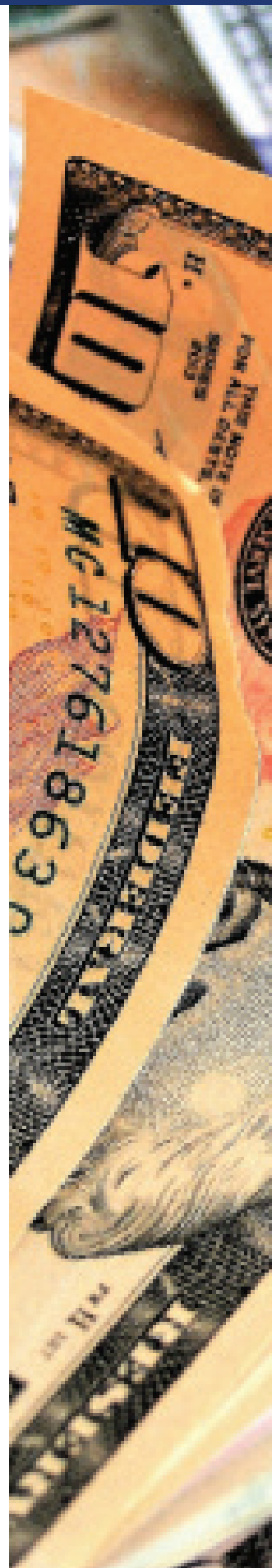
*"Special loans are available for employees who are awaiting other forms of emergency financial aid such as federal programs and insurance claims as a result of full or significant loss of their primary residence. Affected employees may apply for an interest-free loan of up to a maximum of \$10,000 (the IRS permissible amount) and will have up to 18 months to repay the loan in full."*

## Funds

*"We have foundation based programs and an employee donation program where money goes into an account to help other employees, matched by the company."*

*"For certain disasters, the company has established a disaster relief fund."*

*"Organic GoFundMe not provided by organization; however, often supported via peer-to-peer sharing."*





# Supporting Employee Volunteers

Of the 43 respondents who replied to this question, 23 stated that they do have formal policies and procedures and/or informal practices for supporting their employees who volunteer. Nine replied that their organization does not have anything in place, and 11 are unsure or do not know.

There are several ways in which organizations support employees who volunteer as part of disaster response efforts.

## Volunteering as Part of Work Hours

*"Support for volunteering in city EOC [Emergency Operations Center] by Director of Security."*

*"Employees are entitled to use work hours to volunteer."*

## Paid Time Off

*"Employees serving in volunteer response and recovery capacity can take leave during their service. Those covered under Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) receive the balance of their pay during that service."*

*"Employees are paid for volunteer days."*

*"Up to 7 days paid leave is offered in support of American Red Cross services (training also offered in workplace) or other non-profits."*

## Tracking Employee Volunteers & Giving

*"Our organization organizes volunteers to volunteer at the request of local, state or federal government partners."*

*"In the case of the wildfires, our volunteer/corporate giving group used their tool to announce and track employee giving."*

*"The company supports and recognizes volunteer activity. Employees are encouraged to record their volunteer time on an internal website."*

## Donation Drives

*"...[The organization] gather[s] donations for applicable causes."*

*"Company offers matching donations to increase employee donation contributions."*

*"We ran official donation drives and financial giving drives (where there was a corporate match)."*

**Service hours, donation drives, and financial giving campaigns  
are all ways that organizations support their employees.**

# Case Study: 2017 California Wildfires

Over the summer and then especially in October and December 2017, California experienced several large wildfires that threatened and in some cases devastated communities.

Twenty-eight respondents said their organization implemented formal policies and procedures and/or informal practices in response to one or more of the following California wildfires:

Fires	Implemented policies and procedures and/or practices
Canyon I or II Fires (Orange County)	7
Central & Southern LNU Complex (Napa & Sonoma Counties)	23
Creek Fire (Los Angeles County)	6
Detwiler Fire (Mariposa County)	2
La Tuna Fire (Los Angeles County)	3
Lilac Fire (San Diego County)	4
Mendocino Lake Complex (Lake & Mendocino Counties)	8
Neu Wind Complex (Butte, Nevada, & Yuba Counties)	5
Thomas Fire (Ventura, & Santa Barbara Counties)	10

This section compares the actual wildfire response with how the organization described their formal policies and procedures and/or informal practices:

## Accounting For Impacted Employees

### Policies, Procedures, Practices

*"Mass notification system with links on activation or event counts; Safe and Well."*



### Actual Wildfire Response

*"Census list by zip code (HR and registrar office), email, and personal phone call."*

*"Policy mandated employees must call in, as well as mass notification system outreach to confirm safety and availability."*



*"Employee call in, outreach via mass notification system, HR outbound phone calls, and calls from employee's direct managers."*

*"Security department will email, call and text if the number of employees affected is not great. Otherwise, we would use our mass notification system and continue to follow up through other means until we capture everyone's status."*



*"Employees and their managers reached out to let us know their status."*

*"HR will stand up a unit to assist employees affected by an incident. No formal SOP's; concept only at this time."*



*"Accounting of staff was done by individual supervisors."*







## Accounting For Impacted Employees (continued)

Policies, Procedures, Practices	Actual Wildfire Response
<i>"Indirectly, initial query to site managers; directly to employees as welfare inquiry leveraging company's mass notification system."</i>	<i>"Telephone calls from HR."</i>
<i>"We rely heavily on the front line managers reporting into HR and then from Security &amp; Safety reporting from their on-ground staff. ..."</i>	<i>"Front line managers. We did not activate a crisis team for this event as it did not hit a trigger for people, facilities/assets, or business operations. It was handled as one off for HR to manage as a small subset of staff were impacted."</i>
<i>"We have an informal call tree process and will be formalizing the program when we bring on a mass notification vendor later this year."</i>	<i>"It was informal, our company is small, so everyone was aware of who lived in the affected areas."</i>
<i>"We utilize a two way text notification system to assess employee status; call trees through business units; direct outreach."</i>	<i>"Two way text and direct outreach."</i>
<i>"We have technology to locate employees and conduct wellness checks. We use all communication methods to reach out to all impacted employees to contact them and see if they need assistance."</i>	<i>"Used in-house technology to identify employees in impacted areas and used multiple methods to contact them."</i>
<i>"Mass notification system - primary; internal technology tool - secondary; HR/Manager - third."</i>	<i>"Internal technology tool and HR/managers."</i>
<i>"Mass notification tool which sends messages via text, mobile, work phone and work email as well as a mobile app."</i>	<i>"Used geomapping to identify who lived in the affected areas and reached out to them directly."</i>
<i>"Through our mass notification system. When we perform welfare checks, employees can respond to indicate their status."</i>	<i>"Mass notification system was used to determine the number of employees in the impacted area. HR then reached out to determine their safety and status."</i>

## Supporting Employees

This section of the survey looked at how an organization's employees were impacted during the wildfires:

- Directly: employees had to evacuate / lost homes
- Indirectly: family members and/or close friends had to evacuate / lost homes
- Both: employees were both directly and indirectly impacted

**Impact to Respondent's Organizations**  
**11 had employees directly impacted**  
**4 had employees indirectly impacted**  
**13 had employees both directly & indirectly impacted**

Respondents shared ways in which their organization supported employees in the aftermath of the wildfires:

### Paid Time Off

#### Policies, Procedures, Practices

*"Employees are empowered to take off time as needed."*



#### Actual Wildfire Response

*"We have an unlimited vacation policy and it was made known that the company would support employees that needed to take time [off] or have flexibility to address the event."*

*"Depending on the nature of the incident, paid time off or leave policies and procedures apply."*



*"The company's established policies and procedures apply, including PTO (either directed -- if the employee were affected by a company facility closure or inability to access the facility -- or discretionary PTO taken by the employee per company policy)."*

*"Depends on situation."*



*"Provided time off if needed."*

*"3 days paid leave of absence, expandable to 7 days upon request/review."*



*"Leave of absence policy."*

*--\**



*"Establish[ed] a new disaster paid leave policy."*

*"Paid leave; administrative leave [with approval]; family medical leave if necessary."*



*"Time off handled through HR."*

\* Respondent did not describe any related formal policies and procedures and/or informal practices.





**Employee Assistance Program**

Nine respondents referenced their organization’s EAP as one of the ways they supported impacted employees.

**Temporary Housing Assistance**

Policies, Procedures, Practices	Actual Wildfire Response
<i>“We will assist with identifying temporary accommodations for employees and their immediate families who have been displaced due to the disaster. The cost for temporary accommodations will be covered for up to two week. “</i>	→ <i>Implemented</i>
<i>“We are developing plans for this [Employee / Family Assistance Center] as part of our Bay Area earthquake preparedness program.”</i>	→ <i>“This was on a case by case basis....but provided temporary housing, if needed.”</i>
<i>“Generally, if our employees are personally affected, our organization will provide ... support such as emergency housing.”</i>	→ <i>“We had a team of employees who were travelling in the area for work and we moved them out of the affected area and put them up a hotel outside of the impact zone.”</i>
<i>--*</i>	→ <i>“Access to corporate housing.”</i>

**Financial Assistance**

Policies, Procedures, Practices	Actual Wildfire Response
<i>“Employees who have lost their primary residence may receive a \$10,000 grant that does not require pay back.”</i>	→ <i>Implemented</i>
<i>“Financial assistance for employees who lost homes.”</i>	→ <i>Implemented</i>
<i>--*</i>	→ <i>“Create[d] a new employee relief fund.”</i>

\* Respondent did not describe any related formal policies and procedures and/or informal practices.



## Financial Assistance (continued)

### Policies, Procedures, Practices

*"Special loans are available for employees who are awaiting other forms of emergency financial aid such as federal programs and insurance claims as a result of full or significant loss of their primary residence. Affected employees may apply for an interest-free loan of up to a maximum of \$10,000 (the IRS permissible amount) and will have up to 18 months to repay the loan in full."*



### Actual Wildfire Response

*Implemented*

*"We offer financial hardship cash outs of vacation and/or PTO account hours ."*



*Implemented*

*"We will provide a small monetary grant (up to \$1,000 net) for urgent and immediate needs such as food and clothing. This monetary grant is available to any employee displaced from their primary residence for a minimum of 48 hours."*



*Implemented, though grant was only up to \$500 net. "Grant was available to any employee displaced from their primary residence for a minimum of 48 hours under a mandatory evacuation as a result of the wildfires in Napa, Sonoma and Yuba Counties or other wildfires designated as emergencies. This program was available until November 15, 2017."*

## Information Sharing

### Policies, Procedures, Practices

*"Hotlines manned 24/7 to provide assistance, websites to keep them informed and dashboards."*



### Actual Wildfire Response

*"We provide[d] our operating units with regular updates so that when our customers inquired as to what the status of the fires were, we had the correct information to share with them."*



## Volunteers, Donations, & Fundraising Efforts

A number of respondents shared how their organization supported employee volunteers and/or organized supply or monetary donation drives.

Policies, Procedures, Practices	Actual Wildfire Response
Has a <i>"Global Disaster Assistance Committee."</i>	→ <i>"Peer-to-peer sharing (GoFundMe) and donation management (organic), self-driven by departments or individuals."</i>
--*	→ <i>"Our Volunteer/Corporate Giving group used their tool to announce and track employee giving. We ran official donation drives and financial giving drives (where there was a corporate match)."</i>
<i>"We have a volunteer portal that allows employees to volunteer for many different situations and have that tracked as a donation."</i>	→ <i>"Took donations to assist employees."</i>
Only <i>"informal practices."</i>	→ <i>"Create[d] strategy for community contributions and support (immediate needs and long-term)."</i>
<i>"We have an unlimited time off policy and some employees have taken advantage of this to volunteer."</i>	→ <i>"Huge fundraising campaign to support victims (broadly, not specific employees). In situations like these, we try to partner with our [foundation] arm to provide a comprehensive support response."</i>
--*	→ <i>"Employee-led clothing drives and employee-led GoFundMe."</i>
<i>"Up to 7 days paid leave in support of American Red Cross services (training also offered in workplace) or other non-profits."</i>	→ <i>"Employees volunteered for deployment to regional shelters for fire victims."</i>
--*	→ <i>"Employees at headquarters volunteered to participate in fire-related call center functions to better assist fire victims."</i>
<i>"We support paid volunteer days and gather donations for applicable causes."</i>	→ <i>"Several employees took time out of their weekends and schedules to go volunteer."</i>

\* Respondent did not describe any related formal policies and procedures and/or informal practices.

## Additional Support

In addition to time off, EAPs, temporary housing support, and financial support, some respondents also highlighted other ways in which their organization supported employees impacted by the wildfires.

*“Employee care packages.”*

*“Alternate work locations.”*

*“Checked air quality at our local offices and allowed staff to leave the office if they felt it necessary.”*

*“Providing prepared food.”*

*“People would check in on each other for updates or with their managers to make sure everyone was doing okay or to see if there was any support that could be provided.”*

*“The air quality around our office was poor and our building manager provided masks for employees.”*

*“Medical expertise (clinical support by staff-volunteer).”*







## Survey Methodology

This report summarizes a survey that asked respondents from both the public and private sectors to provide insights into their organizations' formal policies and procedures and/or informal practices regarding supporting employees during times of extreme circumstance.

The survey was distributed to members of the California Resiliency Alliance (CRA), Business Recovery Managers Association (BRMA), and the California chapters of the Association of Continuity Professionals (ACP) between January 8 and January 31, 2018 resulting in a total of 62 valid responses.

The membership of these organizations is comprised of professionals with responsibilities in business continuity, emergency management, enterprise resilience, physical security, and cyber security. Members were encouraged to either complete the survey themselves, if appropriate, or forward to a colleague within their organization who could complete the survey.

Survey responses were anonymous and demographic questions were limited to the sector and size of the organization. Sector options included private (business), public (government), and other (please describe). Participants who selected "other" were recategorized as either public or private based on their response.

The survey was designed to capture free form (narrative) responses; thereby, allowing participants to elaborate on the formal policies and procedures and/or informal practices their organization has in place. In addition, the survey also asked how organizations supported their employees during the 2017 California Wildfires, providing a real-life counterpoint to established policies and procedures and informal practices. This qualitative approach to the survey limited quantitative analysis options, but allowed for the capturing of participants' perceptions and how they understand their organization's formal policies and procedures and/or informal practices.

Responses to questions determined a participant's flow through the survey. For example, participants who responded that yes their organization has formal policies and procedures first answered additional questions about various types of policies and procedures before proceeding to the next section. Participants who answered no or unsure / do not know jumped directly to the next section. This resulted in not all participants answering all questions.



# About the Survey Organizers

## California Resiliency Alliance

[www.CAresiliency.org](http://www.CAresiliency.org)

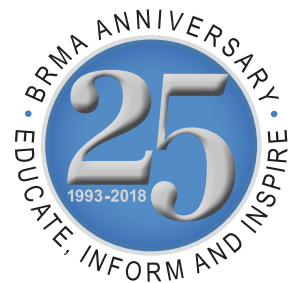


The CRA is a member based organization empowering local and regional resiliency through cross-sector information sharing and partnerships. Our members span the public, private, and NGO sectors and have responsibilities in a diverse array of fields including emergency management, business continuity, physical security, cyber security, and public health. The organization's three focus areas are: **Connecting people and organizations** to build a network of networks, empowering local resiliency efforts; **Supporting Business Operations Centers** in local emergency operations centers to connect the public and private sectors during times of crisis; and **Sharing information, tools, and resources** across sectors to facilitate regional resiliency coordination and planning.

## Business Recovery Managers Association

[www.BRMA.com](http://www.BRMA.com)

Founded in 1993, BRMA is Northern California's largest business recovery association. Our mission is to educate, inform and inspire people working in business continuity, resiliency, and risk management, with the following goals and objectives: **Educate** - Support the continued development and advancement of members' relevant skills, techniques, and approaches; **Inform** - Provide our members access to subject matter knowledge and increase awareness of relevant topics and events; **Inspire** - Provide opportunities for professional networking, mentoring and interaction among members, subject matter experts and leaders in our profession; and **Grow** - Ensure that BRMA remains a thriving association of active members.



## Association of Continuity Professionals

<http://chapters.acp-international.com/sanfranciscobayarea>

<http://chapters.acp-international.com/losangeles>

<http://chapters.acp-international.com/orangeounty>



ACP fosters the growth of the business continuity industry through its network of industry experts, education, and the exchange of information and best practices. ACP offers progressive programs, workshops, and symposiums and is a unifying force in defining and leading the ever-evolving fields of business continuity, disaster recovery and emergency response. ACP is strategically aligned with industry partners such as DRI International, BC Management, and Continuity Housing.

## Supporting Employees During Times of Extreme Circumstance

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Association of Continuity Professionals (San Francisco Bay Area, Los Angeles, & Orange County Chapters)