

Crisis Communications Tip Sheet

For Multifamily Affordable Housing Organizations

Violent crime. Data breaches. Fires. Employee terminations. The multifamily affordable housing industry is no stranger to crises like these—or the media attention that goes along with them. Speaking of the press, how you respond to their inquiries can have long-lasting implications for your organization. **We have tips.**



When assembling your crisis communications team, include your social media manager. Stories often break on social channels.



Always respond to media requests, and never attempt to cover up bad news.



Your executive director is not always your best spokesperson. If you have a data breach, for example, your IT head is probably a better choice.



Make sure your spokesperson is authoritative, empathetic, and media trained. (As well as fully briefed.)



If you're still gathering facts, use a holding statement—a brief message of what you know and the steps you're taking. During a crisis, it's important to communicate quickly. A holding statement is a much better option than “no comment.”



Talking to reporters can make anyone anxious, but it can help to think of them as just another tool in your tool box. Use them to help deliver your message.



Show empathy for everyone affected by a crisis. Demonstrating compassion doesn't mean you're at fault.



If your organization is taking steps to prevent a similar situation from happening again, mention it.



If you have a good safety record, tout it.



Keep your employees in the loop. If they know you're addressing the crisis they will be less likely to post damaging information or speculate on the situation in the press.



Continue to communicate until the crisis has passed.

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