



Public Safety Advisory Partners

"Helping city leaders navigate public safety with confidence"

561-299-0601

City Manager's Pre and Post Incident Governance Checklist

Pre-Incident Governance Checklist

Executive Readiness Before a Critical Incident

Purpose

This checklist helps city managers and chief executives ensure that the **governance systems surrounding public safety are ready before a critical incident occurs**. These are not operational response tasks. They are the structural, policy, and coordination decisions that are most often examined after an incident exposes gaps.

This checklist is intended to support executive judgment and governance discussions and should be reviewed periodically by the city manager or chief executive. It does not replace local policy, legal counsel, or incident-specific decision-making.

1. Authority and Role Design

- The respective roles of the city manager and public safety chiefs during critical incidents are clearly defined
 - Decision authority and escalation thresholds are documented, not assumed
 - Executive notification expectations are understood and consistently followed
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2. Training and Readiness Oversight

- Executive leadership understands how readiness and training are assessed
 - Gaps between policy, training, and practice are visible at the executive level
 - Accreditation is treated as a baseline, not proof of preparedness
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3. Accountability and Investigation Framework

- Internal investigative processes are clearly defined and resourced
 - Criteria for referral to outside or independent investigations are established in advance
 - Authority for investigative decisions is documented
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4. Communication Governance

- Public Information Officer authority and structure are clearly defined
 - The roles of the chief, PIO, and city manager in public communication are documented
 - Crisis communication expectations are established before they are tested
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5. Evidence and Transparency Policy

- Body-worn camera and video governance policies are clearly defined
 - Authority and criteria for release decisions are established in advance
 - Leadership understands how delayed transparency affects public trust
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6. Performance and Early-Warning Systems

- CompStat or equivalent systems provide executive-level visibility into risk
 - Early-warning indicators are reviewed routinely, not only after incidents
 - Leadership can explain how emerging risk is identified before failure
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7. Technology and Information Governance

- Systems that provide situational awareness (video, data, analytics, AI) operate under executive-approved policy
 - Leadership understands what information exists, who can access it, and when
 - Data retention, access, and audit rules are clearly defined before an incident
 - Technology vendors do not set policy by default
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8. Workforce Resilience and Mental Wellness

- Mental wellness is treated as an organizational risk factor
 - Support resources are accessible and normalized before crisis occurs
 - Leadership expectations regarding wellness are clear and consistent
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9. Critical Site Preparedness

- High-risk or high-occupancy locations are identified in advance
 - Emergency staging areas are pre-designated for critical sites
 - Family reunification areas are identified and documented
 - Executive leadership understands how these plans are activated and communicated
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10. Critical Interdependency Readiness

- Coordination expectations with local hospitals and EMS partners are established
- Executive leadership understands hospital surge assumptions and limitations
- Patient offload and medical coordination roles are defined in advance
- Backup and redundant communications capabilities are identified
- Leadership understands how communications continuity is maintained if primary systems fail



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11. Executive Scenario Planning and Interagency Coordination

- Executive-level roundtables are conducted for high-impact or high-risk scenarios
 - Scenarios include police, fire rescue, EMS, public works, parks, transportation, and hospitals
 - Public works assets (cones, barricades, trucks, buses, heavy equipment) are understood
 - Parks, facilities, and parking resources are identified for staging, reunification, or overflow
 - Executive leadership participates to understand system interdependencies, not to direct tactics
 - Lessons learned are documented and incorporated into governance decisions
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Executive Framing Statement

These activities do not require the city manager to direct emergency operations. They ensure that **authority, coordination, and system interdependencies are understood before they are tested under public scrutiny.**

Executive Test

If a critical incident occurred tomorrow, could you clearly explain:

- Who had authority
- How decisions were governed
- How interdependent systems were expected to function

If not, governance gaps already exist.



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Post-Incident Executive Checklist

Maintaining Governance, Credibility, and Control After a Critical Incident

Purpose

This checklist guides city managers and chief executives through the **governance responsibilities that follow a critical incident**. It is not a response guide. It is a discipline guide—focused on leadership posture, sequencing, and protection of institutional trust.

This checklist is intended to be used by the **city manager or chief executive**, not delegated.

1. Executive Posture and Role Discipline

- The city manager remains focused on governance responsibilities rather than operational direction
 - Oversight remains centered on systems, authority, and accountability
 - Leadership presence is calm, deliberate, and visible
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2. Information Discipline

- Executive briefings are timely, factual, and clearly sourced
 - Information gaps are identified and acknowledged early
 - Leadership avoids speculation or premature conclusions
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3. Communication Control and Sequencing

- A single, authorized spokesperson is clearly identified
 - Messaging follows established policy, not external pressure
 - Silence is avoided when it undermines trust or credibility
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4. Investigative Pathway Integrity

- The appropriate investigative pathway is determined early
 - Independence and credibility are prioritized over convenience
 - Decisions regarding internal or external investigations are documented
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5. Evidence Stewardship

- Video, data, and physical evidence are secured promptly
 - Release decisions follow pre-established governance rules
 - Delays are intentional, explainable, and defensible
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6. Organizational Alignment

- All departments understand communication boundaries
 - Conflicting or unauthorized messaging is corrected quickly
 - Public safety leadership actions are addressed through established governance and accountability processes
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7. Executive Review of System Performance

- Leadership examines whether governance systems functioned as designed
 - Training, policy, or oversight gaps are identified without assigning blame
 - Conclusions are delayed until facts stabilize
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8. Workforce Stability and Care

- Employee support and wellness resources are activated
 - Supervisors are equipped to manage stress and morale
 - Leadership acknowledges human impact without presuming fault
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Executive Framing Statement

Post-incident leadership is measured by **discipline, clarity, and the ability to maintain governance under pressure**, not by visibility or speed alone.

Executive Test

After the incident, can you clearly explain:

- What leadership knew and when
- Why governance decisions were made
- How credibility and trust were protected

If yes, governance held—even if outcomes were imperfect.