Do

* Ensure that you clarify your role with the family even if the news bearer has introduced you.
* Work with the press office / ICT department and the family to encourage closure of the field worker’s social networking sites. This should be done as soon as possible.
* Be prepared to listen and learn.
* Be empathetic not sympathetic. Be a sounding board not a therapist.
* Be aware of the family’s cultural, religious / personal beliefs and traditions. *The Needs of Faith Communities in Major Emergencies* may be helpful.
* Only make commitments you can deliver.
* Make sure you do deliver on those commitments, for example, be available to call when you say you will.
* Aim to establish the family’s trust early on. If possible and appropriate, invite the family to visit the office to meet the people dealing with the incident. In this case, consider what information may be on view and make sure all staff are aware that the family will be visiting.
* Ask the family what they want to know. Some families want every detail, some only certain information.
* If more than one field worker is involved in the crisis, give each family identical information, where doing so would not breach either field worker’s privacy.
* Use the same words when delivering messages to different families. Subtle differences may be analysed by families looking for underlying meaning in the terms used.
* ****

**Different families may ask for different levels of information but be aware that they may talk to each other.**



* Know that it is OK to say ‘I don’t know’ or ‘I will have to go and find out’ in response to a question. Always ensure that you do follow up and come back with an answer.

*Based on source material available at* [*www.eisf.eu*](http://www.eisf.eu)

* Ensure that you respond verbally and in writing to each of the family’s questions.
* Keep records secure.
* Encourage the family to share information with as few people as possible.
* Use clear language, avoiding jargon and euphemisms.
* At the request of the family, accompany them to the government office or other agencies to ensure a coordinated response.
* Call on internal advisers, for example salary administration, to answer specific questions.
* Seek advice from the CMT to minimise the possibility of damage to negotiations if the family starts its own investigation or opens a channel of communication with perpetrators.
* Ensure that you keep accurate records of all your conversations with the family. Agree with the CMT / HR when records should be shared.
* Ask occupational health for help when you need it.

Don’t

* Get involved in family politics.
* Lie or make promises of any kind.
* Raise the family’s expectations or reassure them that ‘everything will be alright’: you cannot guarantee this will be the case.

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