PLN SERIES · PLN-08

PLN-08 — Ethics Under Pressure

Scale, Horizon, and Household

A discussion framework for reasoning through disaster ethics dilemmas before an event forces the decision.

BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT

PLN-08 is a discussion framework for reasoning through disaster ethics dilemmas — allocation, medical scope, end-of-life care, force, and group authority — organized around three axes that change the weight of each dilemma without changing it. It is not a rulebook, not a set of moral verdicts, and not a substitute for the medical, use-of-force, or governance policy your MAG sets elsewhere in this curriculum.

The people who navigate a disaster ethics dilemma well almost never found a clever answer in the moment — they already had a position.

Every dilemma this course covers has already happened to someone, in under a minute, with people watching and waiting on the answer. PLN-08 puts the hard questions in front of a household or MAG now, while the cost of thinking is a discussion instead of a decision.

> *"Two people can hold the exact same values and never realize their disagreement isn't about values at all."*

THE THREE AXES

Term	What it changes
Scale	Localized versus cascading or regional — how many people compete for the same help.
Horizon	Bounded versus unbounded recovery — whether outside help is coming and roughly when.
Household	Solo, partnered, kids, or multigenerational — what's actually at stake if a decision goes wrong.

COURSE LESSONS

#	Lesson	What it covers
01	**Why Think About This Now**	Sets up the three lenses and three axes used throughout the course.
02	**Feeding People: Allocation Ethics**	Rationing logic, the horizon trap, and who's actually asking at the door.
03	**Medical Help: How Much, For Whom, By What Authority**	Capability, training, and authorization — and what disappears when oversight does.
04	**Care for the Dying: The Limits of Intervention**	"We can't" versus "we won't," and who has standing to decide.
05	**Security, Force, and the Shifting Threshold**	Why the acceptable use of force moves as social order degrades.
06	**Authority, Consent, and Dissent Inside the Group**	A MAG leader's fiduciary-style duty and the noncompliant-member problem.
07	**Scale, Horizon, and Household: Running the Grid**	Re-runs earlier dilemmas across combinations of all three axes.
08	**Building Your Position Before the Event**	Capstone: a written position on allocation, medical scope, force, and authority.

DOCTRINAL SOURCES

Source	Publisher	Relevance
Cuthbertson & Penney, "Ethical Decision Making in Disaster and Emergency Management: A Systematic Review," 2023	Prehospital and Disaster Medicine	Documents the lack of a common ethical framework across emergency disciplines — the gap this course addresses at the household/MAG level.
Leider et al., "Ethical Guidance for Disaster Response, Specifically Around Crisis Standards of Care: A Systematic Review," 2017	American Journal of Public Health	Source for the allocation, triage, and duty-to-care concepts this course adapts to household and MAG-level decisions.