



Houston Department of  
Health and Human Services

# Speaker Biography



**Francisco Sanchez, Jr.**  
Liaison and Public Information Officer  
Harris County Office of Homeland Security &  
Emergency Management

Francisco Sanchez is liaison and public information officer for the Harris County Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (OHSEM). OHSEM is responsible for disaster preparedness and response in the nation's third largest county. Sanchez joined Harris County in 2004 and was lead public information officer during the local response to both Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005. Most recently, he led the region's Joint Information Center operations during Hurricane Ike and the highly active 2008 hurricane season.

Sanchez is spearheading a nationally recognized effort to integrate the Joint Information Center concept into local emergency response efforts. The initiative integrates technology and best practices to deliver timely and accurate information to decision makers, stakeholders, media and the public during times of crisis. He is also heavily involved in the county's National Incident Management System integration and compliance effort, training first responders, emergency managers and risk communicators. He has been a featured speaker on these topics at the National Hurricane Conference; National Conference of State Legislatures; Texas Homeland Security Conference; *Emergency Management Magazine* road show; the National All-Hazard Incident Management Team Training and Education Conference and other forums.

Sanchez is also a member of the highly regarded San Jacinto Type-III All Hazards Incident Management Team, one of only eighteen such teams sanctioned by the state for deployment. He also serves on the Department of Homeland Security's Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) Practitioner Working Group. As a member of the Houston Area Urban Area Security Initiative Regional Collaboration Committee, he works to build consensus on a variety of measures critical to local preparedness and response capabilities. Membership organizations include the National Association of Government Communicators, International Association of Emergency Managers and others.

Sanchez is a graduate of the University of Houston and has served on boards and leadership groups of numerous local and national organizations. He is also a member of the Ponderosa Volunteer Fire Department and serves on the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo's Ticket Services Committee. He received in the President's Volunteer Service Award in 2010 and was a 2009 nominee for the City of Houston Mayor's Hispanic Heritage Award in Public Safety.

**Whole Community Pandemic and All-Hazards Readiness Summit**  
August 30, 2012