

Jefferson County, Alabama
Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

Section 1: Basic Plan

V. DIRECTION AND CONTROL

A. GENERAL.

1. The chief executive of the local government in whose jurisdiction the emergency occurs will exercise direction and control activities within that jurisdiction. He/she will coordinate with the EMA Coordinator who is responsible for implementing this Plan or portions of this Plan. Each jurisdiction shall establish Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to control and direct response actions. The EMA Coordinator will coordinate actions between local governments and agencies as necessary, and direct response actions in unincorporated areas of the county. In cases where local resources to contend with an emergency do not exist or have been depleted, the affected chief executive, in coordination with the EMA Coordinator, should request state aid through the state EOC.
2. The chief executive of the local government may declare a "State of Emergency" to expedite access to local resources needed to cope with the incident. If the needed response exceeds these local capabilities, a disaster has occurred. The chief executive may, by emergency proclamation, use local resources and employees as necessary, and alter functions of departments and personnel, as necessary. The Jefferson County Emergency Management Council has the authority to declare a "state of emergency" in support of a local government emergency. If the situation is beyond local capability, a request for state and/or federal assistance may be in the original proclamation, or included in a second proclamation presented to the Governor through the Alabama Emergency Management Agency. If state and/or federal resources are made available, they will be under the operational control of the EMA Coordinator/EOC.
3. On behalf of the Emergency Council, the EMA Coordinator has the responsibility for coordinating the entire emergency management program. The Coordinator makes all routine decisions and advises the officials on courses of action available for major decisions. During emergency operations the Coordinator is responsible for the proper functioning of the EOC. The Coordinator also acts as a liaison with state and federal emergency agencies, and neighboring counties.
4. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is the central point for emergency management operations. The purpose of this central point is to ensure harmonious response when the emergency involves more than one political entity and several response agencies. Coordination and supervision of all services will be through the EOC section chiefs and the EMA Coordinator to provide for the most efficient management of resources.
5. During emergency situations, certain agencies will be required to relocate their center of control to the EOC. During large scale emergencies, the EOC will become the

seat of government for the duration of the crisis. However, in some situations it may be appropriate for some agencies to operate from an alternate site other than the EOC or their primary location.

6. Specific persons and agencies are responsible for fulfilling their obligations as presented in the Basic Plan and individual annexes. Department/agency heads will retain control over their employees and equipment. Each department/agency shall develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to be followed during response operations.
7. Department/agency heads and other officials legally administering their office may perform their emergency function(s) on their own initiative if, in their judgment, the safety or welfare of citizens of the county are threatened. The EMA Coordinator should be notified as rapidly as possible.
8. During an EOC activation, the appropriate emergency services will be represented in the EOC and will coordinate their activities under the supervision of the EMA Coordinator. EOC procedures are described in Annex 1.
9. Additional information on Direction and Control is found in Annex 1.

B. CRISIS MONITORING.

1. The Jefferson County EMA is the county's 24 hour "crisis monitor." The EMA Coordinator provides an ongoing independent analysis of incoming information. As emergency situations threaten or occur, the EMA Coordinator may convene a "Crisis Action Team (CAT)" to facilitate the process of evaluation and incident planning, and possible activation and implementation of emergency functions and resources. The CAT will also be used to support "Incident Commanders" in field situations.
2. The CAT is a flexible, supporting/coordinating service that could be: One person at home facilitating the coordination of personnel and resources to an incident scene; Several people convening in the EOC or on- scene to assist the "Incident Commander" as needed.
3. Core members of the EMA CAT include: Emergency Management Council Chairperson, EMA Coordinator, Fire Services Coordinator, Law Enforcement Coordinator, Public Works Coordinator, Health Services Coordinator, Legal Services Coordinator, and other services coordinators as required. However, any department (division)/agency could be called upon to provide a representative to the CAT. Exactly who is called and ultimately how many people will serve on the CAT is dependent upon the situation and the emergency functions that will be activated.
4. A CAT may be activated in support of an emergency situation within a particular local government. Normal local government CAT membership includes: Mayor, County EMA Coordinator, Fire Chief, Police Chief, Public Works Director, City Attorney, County Health Officer as needed, and any other municipal department as required.

C. LEVELS OF EMERGENCY.

1. Localized Emergency. The principal of graduated response will be used in responding to localized disasters defined as an incident within a local government. The initial

response will be from emergency personnel dispatched by normal procedures. Their assessment of the situation will determine if additional resources are needed. Departments/agencies may be called upon to provide additional resources. Mutual aid and the local government CAT Team/EOC may provide additional support if resource needs are beyond existing city capability. Activation of the Jefferson County EOC may not be necessary during a “localized” emergency.

2. **Widespread Disaster.** Hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, snow/ice storms are considered the most probable widespread disaster which could impact the entire county and adjacent areas. It is anticipated that a full activation of the EOC will be required to coordinate the county’s response.
3. **Graduated Response.** Most disasters will require a graduated response involving only those persons necessary to handle the situation. For this purpose, four levels of response will be used:
 - a. **Level One Emergency.** A “level one” emergency is a common emergency situation that occurs on a frequent basis. The responsibility for control of the incident rests with the responding department.
 - b. **Level Two Emergency.** Should an incident remain unresolved, the emergency status will rise to a “level two” emergency. Level two incidents involve routine assistance from internal and/or external agencies including mutual aid. Command and control is still the responsibility of the primary response department. Notification of the EMA Coordinator and Emergency Council is necessary. A CAT Team may be activated and/or partial activation of the EOC may occur. The EMA Coordinator or designee may go to the Incident Command Post to facilitate response coordination. The State EOC is notified, and state assistance may be requested.
 - c. **Level Three Emergency.** Should the incident begin or escalate to a situation where non-routine assistance is required or anticipated, a “level three” emergency will be declared. The EOC will activate at this level. A level three could be a major single site event or a county-wide event. This level of emergency will be used for all natural, man-made or major technological disasters. The State EOC is notified, communication and coordination is maintained. State assistance may be requested.
 - d. **Level Four Emergency.** This level of emergency is used for “catastrophic” state-wide or regional events. The Jefferson County EOC is fully activated. State and federal assistance will be requested and is required.

D. ON-SCENE MANAGEMENT/ICS.

1. On-scene response to emergencies follows the concept of the Incident Command System (ICS).
2. The person in charge at the incident is the on-scene Incident Commander who is responsible for ensuring each agency on scene can carry out its responsibilities.
3. Upon arriving at an incident scene, the Incident Commander should:
 - Assess the situation and identify hazards.

- Develop objectives (tasks to be done).
 - Ensure appropriate safety and personnel protective measures.
 - Develop an action plan and priorities.
 - In coordination with the EOC, contact appropriate agencies or personnel with expertise and capability to carry out the incident action plan.
 - Coordinate, as appropriate, with other first responders.
4. When more than one agency is involved at an incident scene, the Incident Command Agency and other responding agencies should work together to ensure that each agency's objectives are identified and coordinated.
 5. Team problem solving should facilitate effective response. Other agency personnel working in support of the Incident Command Agency will maintain their normal chain of command, but will be under control of the on-scene Incident Commander.
 6. The on-scene Incident Commander may designate an Information Officer to work with the news media at an incident. This may include coordinating agency media releases and arranging contacts between the media and response agencies. If additional support is needed, a Crisis Action Team (CAT) and/or the EOC may be activated.

E. EOC ACTIVATION AND STAFFING.

1. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is the key to successful response and recovery operations. With decision and policy makers located together, personnel and resources can be used efficiently. Coordination of activities will ensure that all tasks are accomplished, minimizing duplication of efforts.
2. Depending upon the severity and magnitude of the disaster, activation of the EOC may not be necessary, may only be partially required, or may require full activation. Partial activation would be dictated by the characteristics of the disaster and would involve only those persons needing to interact in providing the coordinated response.
3. The EOC may be fully activated by decision of the Crisis Action Team (CAT) or the EMA Coordinator. When the decision is made to activate the EOC, the EMA Coordinator will notify the appropriate EOC organization staff members to report to the EOC. The EOC Management staff will take further action to notify and mobilize the appropriate organizations and dispatch centers which they are responsible for coordinating.
4. EOC activation levels will generally follow the "emergency levels" as discussed in Section C above.
5. EOC Operations and Staffing. (See Annex 1, Managing Emergency Operations, for further information) Complete details, job descriptions, and checklists of tasks are contained in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Position Checklists Manual, published separately.

F. CONTROLS, CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS.

1. In an emergency there will be two levels of control. The first level of control will be at

the scene of the incident. The second level will be at the EOC where overall coordination will be exercised.

2. In a single site emergency, the government body having jurisdiction will respond to the scene. The on-scene management will fall under the jurisdiction of the local department best qualified to conduct the rescue, recovery and control operations. The department's senior representative at the scene will become the on-scene commander and will be responsible for the overall recovery operations. The field incident commanders are local officials, usually fire or police officers. The local coordination and commitment authority for local resources is retained by the local elected officials, and delegated as appropriate.
3. During wide-spread emergencies, decision making authority and control of the emergency is retained by the Emergency Management Council through the actions of a CAT Team or activation of the county EOC.
4. The county EOC, once activated, directs and controls a response to an emergency or disaster. It is organized and will function according to the National Interagency Incident Management System's (NIIMS) Incident Command System (ICS) principles.
5. EOC Incident Command (EOC Incident Manager position) will normally be vested in the department deciding to activate the EOC to support their emergency response activities, unless otherwise specified by the Emergency Management Council, who will be notified and briefed by the EMA Coordinator as soon as possible. Consistent with the modular component of National Interagency Incident Management System's (NIIMS) Incident Command System (ICS), the EOC may be partially activated to coordinate support for an on-scene incident commander, without activating the full emergency organization.
6. During the effective period of any declared emergency, the EMA Coordinator through the EOC Incident Manager directs and controls all emergency response activities and employs all necessary emergency resources according to the provisions of this plan.
7. To ensure a line of succession, each department/agency is directed to assign 3 or more alternates for each key emergency position. Lines of succession shall be provided to the EMA Coordinator.

G. FACILITIES.

1. Emergency Operations Center.
 - a. The county EOC is located underneath the parking deck adjacent to Birmingham City Hall.
 - b. Each jurisdiction is encouraged to establish an on-scene command post. These facilities will link to the county EOC via radio or telephone.
2. Department/Agency Operating Locations.
 - a. Each department/agency is directed to establish a primary location and alternate location from which to establish direction and control of its respective activities in

an emergency or disaster. This may be from the EOC, or other location, depending upon the circumstances.

3. Communications. (Also see Annex 5, Communication Systems)
 - a. Most departments/agencies involved in disaster operations will maintain operations or dispatch centers that will control the operations of the emergency forces under their control.
 - b. Any department/agency operating from another location will maintain contact with the EOC through direct redundant communication, such as telephone and radio.
 - c. All departments/agencies are responsible to insure that communication systems are in place between EOC representatives and their department/agency.
 - d. Each department/agency will bring to the EOC their own portable radio, charger, spare batteries, and cellular telephones. Additional communications equipment will be provided at the EOC.
 - e. Communications to the general public will be through the media. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) is accessed through the county EOC.

H. MILITARY SUPPORT.

Military support to Jefferson County will be requested through the AEMA. Once assigned, resources shall be coordinated by the county EOC.

I. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT.

1. Succession of Authority (Alabama Code 29-3-15/16).
 - a. A community's ability to respond to an emergency must not be restrained by the absence of an elected official or key department head. Therefore, to ensure continuity of government, each local government in the county will develop a Continuity of Government Succession List. This list will name who will be the decision maker if an elected official or department head is not available. At least two people should be listed and prioritized for each key position.
 - b. The line of succession for the County Commission is from the President to the members of the Commission in order of their seniority on the Commission.
 - c. The City Councils will determine the line of succession to the Mayors.
 - d. The senior EMA officer will succeed the EMA Coordinator followed by officers in order of their seniority.
 - e. Lines of succession to each department head will be determined by the appropriate county or city governing body or by the departments' Standard Operating Procedures.

2. Preservation of Records.

All departments/agencies will develop SOPs to guarantee the preservation of vital public records, to include their reconstitution if necessary, during and after emergencies. In general, vital public records include those: considered absolutely essential to the continued operation of local government; considered absolutely essential to the local government's ability to fulfill its responsibilities to the public; required to protect the rights of individuals and the local government; and, essential to restoration of life support services. Documentation of actions taken during an emergency or disaster is a legal requirement.

J. PLAN MAINTENANCE.

1. If a plan is to be effective, its contents must be known and understood by those who are responsible for its implementation. The EMA Coordinator will brief the appropriate officials concerning their roles in emergency management and this plan in particular.
2. All agencies will be responsible for developing and maintaining their respective segments of the plan. The EMA Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring all officials involved in this plan conduct an annual review of the plan.
3. The EMA ensures that necessary changes and revisions to the plan are prepared, coordinated, published and distributed. The plan will undergo revision whenever:
 - It fails during emergency.
 - Exercises, drills reveal deficiencies or "shortfall(s)."
 - City or county government structure changes.
 - Community situations change.
 - State requirements change.
 - Any other condition occurs that causes conditions to change.
4. EMA will maintain a list of individuals and organizations which have controlled copies of the plan. Only those with controlled copies will automatically be provided updates and revisions. Plan holders are expected to post and record these changes. Revised copies will be dated and marked to show where changes have been made.
5. The plan shall be activated at least once a year in the form of a simulated emergency to provide practical controlled operational experience to those individuals who have EOC responsibilities. Response to radiological and hazardous material incidents must be exercised at least once a year.
6. The Title III, Local Emergency Planning Committee, as a state advisory agency, will review applicable portions of this plan.

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