

Jefferson County, Alabama
Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

Section 1: Basic Plan

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. GENERAL.

1. The Emergency Management Council is responsible for the direction, control, and coordination of emergency management activities in Jefferson County.
2. The primary objective for emergency management in Jefferson County is to provide a coordinated effort from all supporting county and city departments in the preparation for, response to, and relief from injury, damage and suffering resulting from either a localized or widespread disaster. The EMA Coordinator is the focal point for emergency management activities within the county. However, emergency management responsibilities extend beyond this office, to all city/county government departments/agencies, and ultimately, to each individual citizen.
3. It is important to note that a basic responsibility for emergency planning and response also lies with individuals and heads of households. When the situation exceeds the capabilities of individuals, families and volunteer organizations, a city/county emergency may exist. It is then the responsibility of government to undertake comprehensive emergency management activities to protect life and property from the effects of disasters. Local government has the primary responsibility for emergency management activities. When the emergency exceeds local government capability to respond, the EMA Coordinator will request assistance from mutual aid counties and/or the state government; the federal government will provide assistance to the state when requested, if possible. In addition, private sector and voluntary organizations may be requested to provide aid and assistance.
4. In addition to the EMA Coordinator, emergency management is the day-to-day function of certain city and county agencies, such as the Police and Fire Departments. While the routine functions of most city and county agencies are not of an emergency nature, pursuant to this plan, all officers and employees of the cities and county will plan to meet emergencies threatening life or property. This entails a day-to-day obligation to assess and report the impact of an emergency or disaster event. It requires monitoring conditions and analyzing information that could signal the onset of one of these events. Disasters will require city and county departments to perform extraordinary functions. In these situations, every attempt will be made to preserve organizational integrity and assign tasks which parallel the norm. However, it may be necessary to draw on people's basic capacities and use them in areas of greatest need. Day-to-day functions that do not contribute directly to the emergency operation may be suspended for the duration of any emergency. Efforts that would normally be required to perform those functions may be redirected to accomplish emergency tasks.
5. This plan does not contain a listing of resources. The EMA Coordinator will ensure that a resource inventory including source and quantity is kept current. The resource list will be maintained in the EOC. The EMA Coordinator should also be famil-

iar with resources available from local private sector and volunteer organizations as well as from state government. Unique resources which may not be available locally (i.e. radiological and chemical analysis, environmental assessment, biological sampling, contamination survey, etc.) should be requested through the AEMA.

B. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PHASES.

The county will meet its responsibility for protecting life and property from the effects of hazardous events by acting within each of four phases of emergency management.

1. **Mitigation.** Actions accomplished before an event to prevent it from causing a disaster, or to reduce its effects if it does, save the most lives, prevents the most damage and are the most cost effective. See also Section 2, Mitigation of this plan. County and city departments will enforce all public safety mandates include land use management and building codes; and recommend to governing bodies legislation required to improve the emergency readiness of the county.
2. **Preparedness.** Preparedness consists of almost any pre-disaster action which is assured to improve the safety or effectiveness of disaster response. Preparedness consists of those activities that have the potential to save lives, lessen property damage, and increase individual and community control over the subsequent disaster response. Departments/agencies within the county will remain vigilant to crises within their areas of responsibility. All departments/agencies shall prepare for disasters by developing detailed SOPs to accomplish the extraordinary tasks necessary to integrate the department/agency's total capabilities into a city/county disaster response. Disaster SOPs must complement this plan. Departments/agencies shall ensure that their employees are trained to implement emergency and disaster procedures and instructions. Departments/agencies shall validate their level of emergency readiness through internal drills and participation in exercises selected by the EMA Coordinator. Other government jurisdictions within and outside city/county boundaries shall also be encouraged to participate in these exercises. Exercise results shall be documented and used in a continuous planning effort to improve the county's emergency readiness posture. This joint, continuous planning endeavor shall culminate in revisions to this plan in the constant attempt to achieve a higher state of readiness for an emergency or disaster response.
3. **Response.** The active use of resources to address the immediate and short-term effects of an emergency or disaster constitutes the response phase and is the focus of department/agency emergency and disaster standing operating procedures, mutual-aid agreements, and this plan. Emergency and disaster incident responses are designed to minimize suffering, loss of life, and property damage, and to speed recovery. They include initial damage assessment, emergency and short-term medical care, and the return of vital life-support systems to minimum operating conditions. When any department/agency within the county receives information about a potential emergency or disaster, it will conduct an initial assessment, determine the need to alert others, and set in motion appropriate actions to reduce risk and potential impacts. Emergency response activities will be as described in department/agency SOPs and may involve activating the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for coordination of support. Departments/agencies will strive to provide support to warning and emergency public information, save lives and property, supply basic human needs, maintain or restore essential services, and protect vital resources and the environment. Responses to declared emergencies and disasters will be guided by this plan.

4. **Recovery.** Emergency and disaster recovery efforts aim at returning to pre-disaster community life. They involve detailed damage assessments, complete restoration of vital life-support systems, financial assistance and long-term medical care. There is no definite point at which response ends and recovery begins. However, generally speaking, most recovery efforts will occur after the emergency organization is deactivated and departments/agencies have returned to pre-disaster operation, and will be integrated with day-to-day functions.

C. FUNCTIONAL ANNEX CONCEPT.

1. “Functional Annexes” represent groupings of types of assistance activities that citizens are likely to need in times of emergency or disaster. In Alabama, county and state Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans, are organized by related emergency functions. The Federal Response Plan is similarly organized into “emergency support functions (ESFs).” During emergencies within Jefferson County, the EMA Coordinator will determine which functional annexes or ESFs are activated to meet the disaster response needs. See “Section 4, Response- Functional Annexes” for further details. The federal government, through the State EOC will respond to Jefferson County requests for assistance through the federal ESF structure.
2. Within the EOC, requests for assistance will be tasked to the particular “emergency function” or “EOC Branch or Unit” for completion. A lead agency for each emergency function is indicated, and will be responsible for coordinating the delivery of that assistance to the emergency area. The lead agency will be responsible for identifying the resources that will accomplish the mission, and will coordinate the resource delivery.

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