

Lesson 1: Course Overview

Course Welcome

This course provides an introduction to Mass Care and Emergency Assistance (MC/EA) support, with a focus on Whole Community, by outlining the importance of collaboration and coordination between government, non-profit, public, and private sectors.

This course should take approximately 1 hour to complete. You must complete the course in its entirety to receive credit.

Course Objectives

At the end of this course you will be able to:

- Explain the importance of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Response Framework (NRF), and the Whole Community approach to emergency management.
- Identify MC/EA activities.
- Describe a suggested sequence of support for MC/EA.
- Explain the importance of thinking about MC/EA activities in an interoperable way.

Lesson Overview

This lesson provides an overview of the course by introducing the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the Whole Community approach to emergency management, the National Response Framework (NRF), and Mass Care and Emergency Assistance (MC/EA) activities.

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Describe the purpose of the course.
- Explain the importance of NIMS, the NRF, and the Whole Community approach to emergency management.
- Identify MC/EA activities.
- Explain the importance of thinking about MC/EA activities in an interoperable way.

This lesson should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Course Purpose

The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of MC/EA support focusing on Whole Community by outlining the importance of collaboration and coordination between government, non-profit, public and private sectors.

Before you learn about specific MC/EA activities, it is important that you understand the importance of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), Whole Community, and the National Response Framework (NRF).

You will begin by learning about NIMS.

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

What? Provides a systematic approach of working together...

Who? For the various segments of the community...

When? In response to all disaster incidents, ranging from daily occurrences to incidents requiring a coordinated Federal response...

Why? In order to reduce the loss of life, property damage, and harm to the environment.

National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Mass Care

NIMS provides a consistent approach and framework for responding to all disaster incidents and it is within that framework that MC/EA activities occur.

One of the key focus areas of NIMS is resource management; NIMS describes standardized resource management practices such as typing, inventorying, organizing, and tracking. Mass care resources are currently being typed. For up to date information on resource management, visit <http://www.fema.gov/resource-management>.

Throughout this course, as you learn about MC/EA activities, keep in mind the importance of consistent implementation of NIMS to ensure effective preparedness, planning, and response.

Whole Community

Now that you understand the importance of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) to MC/EA, you will learn about the Whole Community approach to emergency management.

As a concept, Whole Community is a means by which residents, emergency management practitioners, organizational and community leaders, and government officials can collectively:

- Understand and assess the needs of their respective communities; and
- Determine the best ways to organize and strengthen their assets, capacities, and interest.

Whole Community Principles

Understand and meet the actual needs of the whole community

Community engagement can lead to a deeper understanding of the unique and diverse needs of a population, including its demographics, values, norms, community structures, networks, and relationships. The more we know about our communities, the better we can understand their real-life

safety and sustaining needs and their motivations to participate in emergency management-related activities prior to an event.

Engage and empower all parts of the community

Engaging the whole community and empowering local action will better position stakeholders to plan for and meet the actual needs of a community and strengthen the local capacity to deal with the consequences of all threats and hazards. This requires all members of the community to be part of the emergency management team, which should include diverse community members, social and community service groups and institutions, faith-based and disability groups, academia, professional associations, and the private and nonprofit sectors, while including government agencies who may not traditionally have been directly involved in emergency management. When the community is engaged in an authentic dialogue, it becomes empowered to identify its needs and the existing resources that may be used to address them.

Strengthen what works well in communities on a daily basis

A Whole Community approach to building community resilience requires finding ways to support and strengthen the institutions, assets, and networks that already work well in communities and are working to address issues that are important to community members on a daily basis. Existing structures and relationships that are present in the daily lives of individuals, families, businesses, and organizations before an incident occurs can be leveraged and empowered to act effectively during and after a disaster strikes.

Whole Community Resources

There are many community resources available to support disaster activities. Often, as the community gets involved, they discover many “gems” or specialties not previously considered that are valuable to the disaster response.

Nonprofit Sector

- Voluntary organizations
- Faith-based organizations
- Community-based organizations
- Foundations
- Professional associations
- Academic institutions

Private Sector

- Chambers of commerce
- Businesses
- Professional groups

- Other for-profit organizations

Government

- Local
- State
- Tribal
- Territories and Commonwealths
- Federal

Public Sector

- Individuals with specific skills (i.e., chefs)
- Unions
- Spontaneous volunteers
- Community members

The National Response Framework (NRF)

The second edition of the NRF, updated in May 2013, provides context for how the whole community works together and how response efforts relate to other parts of national preparedness. The NRF reinforces a comprehensive, national, all-hazards approach to domestic incidents. It guides local, State, and Federal entities, enabling partners to prepare for and respond under a unified command structure.

The NRF established Emergency Support Functions (ESFs).

The ESF #6 Annex is entitled “Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing, and Human Services.”

ESF #6: Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing, and Human Services Annex

The ESF #6 Annex of the National Response Framework describes how the Federal government coordinates these four functions:

- Mass Care
- Emergency Assistance
- Temporary Housing
- Human Services

This course will focus only the first two functions: Mass Care and Emergency Assistance (MC/EA).

Mass Care and Emergency Assistance (MC/EA) Activities

Now that you have learned about the National Incident Management System (NIMS), Whole Community, and the National Response Framework (NRF), you will learn about MC/EA activities including:

- Sheltering
- Feeding
- Distribution of Emergency Supplies
- Reunification Services
- People with Disabilities and Other Access and Functional Needs
- Mass Evacuation Support
- Household Pet and Service Animal Support

In Lesson 2, you will learn more about sheltering, feeding, distribution of emergency supplies, and reunification services. You will also learn how mass evacuation support, people with disabilities and other access and functional needs support, and household pets and service animals support are a part of each of these MC/EA activities.

Interoperability of Mass Care and Emergency Assistance (MC/EA)

As you learn about the MC/EA activities, remember they are all interrelated. For example, sheltering is not just about housing individuals and families in a school facility. When providing sheltering, you must also consider the demographics of the community in order to address dietary concerns and provide support of people with disabilities and other access and functional needs.

Providing sheltering will also involve coordination with other MC/EA activities such as reunification services and mass evacuation support.

MC/EA activities cannot be addressed in isolation, but rather as an interdependent process.

Lesson Summary

Let's summarize what you have learned in this lesson:

- This Course provides an overview of MC/EA activities, focusing on Whole Community involvement.
- The National Incident Management System provides a systematic approach of working together with the various segments of the community in response to all disaster incidents.
- Whole Community is an approach that reinforces that the entire community should be involved in disaster preparedness, prevention, response, recovery, and mitigation activities.
- The National Response Framework established ESF #6 Annex, which is the primary source of direction and information for the MC/EA activities.
- MC/EA activities include sheltering, feeding, distribution of emergency supplies, and reunification services. Support for mass evacuation, people with disabilities and other access

and functional needs, as well as household pets and service animals are a part of these activities.

- MC/EA activities should be thought about in an interoperable way.

Now that you've been introduced to the main topics of this course, you'll learn more about the MC/EA activities.

Lesson 2: Mass Care and Emergency Assistance Activities

Lesson Overview

The purpose of this lesson is to provide an overview of the mass care and emergency assistance (MC/EA) activities, including the types of support that are provided throughout these activities.

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Explain the importance of providing support to the affected community.
- Identify the seven MC/EA activities.
- Describe the types of support that are provided throughout all of the MC/EA activities.

This lesson should take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Voluntary Agency Liaison (VAL) Support

Before you learn more about MC/EA activities, it is important to remember that throughout the provision of these support activities, there should be close coordination and collaboration with Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VALs).

Their role is to identify and develop relationships with the voluntary organizations. MC/EA then utilizes the organizations' capabilities to meet and support the needs of the community, including assisting the jurisdictions with volunteer and donations management.

Mass Care Activities

There are four mass care and three emergency assistance activities described in the National Response Framework, ESF #6 Annex: Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing, and Human Services.

The mass care activities include:

- Sheltering
- Feeding
- Distribution of Emergency Supplies
- Reunification Services

In this lesson, you will learn more about each of these activities and how the services are delivered.

Sheltering

Sheltering is the provision of life-sustaining services in a safe, sanitary, and secure environment for survivors who have been affected by disasters and people who evacuate before a disaster strikes.

Sheltering includes:

- Identifying facilities
- Providing life sustaining and essential services
- Supporting the closing of shelters and placement of shelter residents into other congregate or non-congregate housing solutions

Voices from the Field: Sheltering

As a Mass Care Specialist during a hurricane last summer, I assisted the local church that was being used as shelter with finding an organization capable of providing child care services.

It was important that we were able to provide a quiet area for the really young children within each of the shelters. The stress that is created during and after a disaster is often increased as a result of the noisy and crowded conditions of a shelter.

Without access to a quiet room or space, some people such as parents with very young children will be unable to function in a shelter environment.

Feeding

Feeding is the provision of food, snacks, and hydration to the affected population and emergency workers.

It often begins with the whole community, starting with the local food banks, restaurants, and caterers and then transitioning to non-profit organizations that are noted for their disaster feeding expertise.

Feeding can be provided at fixed and mobile sites. Feeding requirements are based on the demographic, cultural, dietary, and the ethnic diversity of a community.

Voices from the Field: Feeding

As a Mass Care Crew Leader assigned to a State Emergency Operations Center, I assist the State in completing a situational analysis of the area to determine the demographics of the community.

Once we have completed a situational analysis, we are better able to determine the best feeding options for that community. For example, if we learn that there's a large elderly population in the community, then we might establish a mobile feeding route or coordinate with the local meals on wheels program. This helps us make sure that we reach that demographic.

We also make sure we consider any dietary restrictions that certain individuals might have, such as people with diabetes.

Distribution of Emergency Supplies

Emergency supplies are divided into three categories:

- Life sustaining
- Comfort
- Other essential supplies

MC/EA activities include acquiring and delivering life-sustaining resources, hygiene items, and clean-up items to meet the urgent needs of disaster victims. Additional support includes transportation, warehousing, equipment, technical assistance, and other mission-critical services.

Categories of Emergency Supplies

Life sustaining

Life sustaining supplies include food, water, non-prescription medicine, and first aid kits.

Comfort

Supplies that provide comfort include hygiene kits including items such as toothpaste, towels, wash cloth, soap, and toothbrushes.

Other essential supplies

Other essential supplies including but not limited to shovels, masks, gloves, lanterns, lantern fuel, tents and sheeting, sleeping bags, household kits, cots, blankets, cooking kits, comfort kits, household pet and service animal needs, and clean-up kits (detergents, bucket, sponges, mop, trash bags, disposable gloves).

Voices from the Field: Distribution of Emergency Supplies

In a recent disaster, I collaborated with the Voluntary Agency Liaison, or VAL, to identify organizations that could help gather comfort supplies quickly.

We identified an organization that assembled comfort kits including toothpaste, tooth brushes, and soap.

Reunification Services

Reunification services provide mechanisms that help displaced disaster survivors; including children, reestablish contact with family and friends. This service is critical for the personal reconnection of disaster survivors and their relatives who may have limited means to communicate and reunify.

Communities can help constituents, who are separated from family and friends, by developing and implementing a comprehensive and integrated reunification services program.

Reunification services should include:

- Awareness of mechanisms, e.g. social media as a means of communication
- The physical reunification, especially for missing and unaccompanied children

Voices from the Field: Reunification Services

Families may need help locating loved ones after any emergency. And, if disaster strikes while parents are at work and children are at school, or when everyday communications are unavailable, the challenge becomes even greater.

In our community outreach program, we emphasize the importance of communication plans as part of every family emergency plan. We also develop an outreach strategy to inform people of what help will be available to them in locating family members and pets after a disaster.

In addition, we put agreements in place with our partners that outline what types of information will be needed and how it will be shared so we can reunite families as quickly as possible.

Emergency Assistance Activities

Now that you have learned about the four mass care activities, you will learn about the three emergency assistance activities described in the National Response Framework, ESF #6.

The emergency assistance activities include:

- Support of People with Disabilities and Other Access and Functional Needs
- Household Pet and Service Animal Support
- Mass Evacuation Support

Planning for and responding to any disaster, MC/EA needs to:

“...consider the needs of all members of the whole community, including children; individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs; those from religious, racial, and ethnically diverse backgrounds; and people with limited English proficiency. The potential contributions of all these individuals toward delivering core capabilities during incident response (e.g., through associations and alliances that serve these populations) should be incorporated into planning efforts.

Staff must also consider those who own or have responsibility for animals both as members of the community who may be affected by incidents and as a potential means of supporting response efforts.

This includes those with household pets, service and assistance animals, working dogs...”

National Response Framework, May 2013, page 8

Support of People with Disabilities and Other Access and Functional Needs

Providing support to people with disabilities and other access and functional needs includes assisting individuals in maintaining independence in congregate care settings and when receiving mass care and emergency assistance services.

The American Disabilities Act and its amendments require that all facilities not only be accessible to everyone, but it also requires them to make reasonable accommodations to meet individuals' needs in order that they may maintain their independence.

People with Disabilities and Other Access and Functional Needs

People with Disabilities

It is important to remember that all services available for the general population need to be available for all individual; that means equal access to programs, physical access and effective communication systems.

Children

Children represent approximately 25% of our nation's population, and their specific needs (different than the general population) must continue to be identified and addressed throughout all planning and guidance documents. It is recommended that individuals responsible for mass care planning and services recognize "children and children with access and functional needs" specifically, rather than bulking them in with the overall population. Specific needs related to mass care "response" include, but are not limited to:

- Evacuation and sheltering for all children and families, to include those with disabilities and other access and functional needs and/or medical needs
- Inclusion of infant and toddler supplies, durable medical equipment, and consumable medical supplies
- Emotional/mental health needs, to include bereavement counseling
- Reunification with family members or guardians

Household Pet and Service Animal Support

Household pet and service animal support is about people and their pets, not people and pets separately as previously practiced.

The MC/EA role in providing household pet and service animal support is supporting the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals during evacuation, rescue, and coordination of veterinary care.

The Stafford Act, as amended, places the primary responsibility for addressing the needs of owners and their household pets and service animals on the State/Territory and/or local jurisdictions.

Prior to legislation in 2006, there were no specific Federal authorities related to pet evacuation, rescue, or shelter and a limited number of states had laws addressing these issues. When Congress passed, and the President signed, the Pet Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act and the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA) into law in October 2006 they established FEMA's authority for household pets and service animals by amending the Stafford Act.

Although Federal law has created new authorities for FEMA regarding household pets and service animals, the responsibility for planning, and execution of response and recovery actions to ensure evacuation, rescue, and care of household pets is primarily a State/Territory role (or jurisdictionally dependent – e.g., in Texas evacuation and sheltering of household pets is a local/county responsibility).

Service Animal Support

The ADA mandates that service animals remain with a person with a disability through all phases of disaster response and recovery.

Mass care providers should consider how they may need to collaborate to address a service animal's needs (feeding, veterinary care, routine exercise) within a general population shelter.

Mass Evacuation Support

MC/EA does not provide for the physical evacuation of individuals. The State (or local jurisdiction) is responsible for evacuation of their citizens and for making arrangements with host states for sheltering individuals if the affected state does not have sufficient shelter space.

MC/EA supports the government assisted evacuees with the provision of congregate care support and registering and tracking services when requested by the State. There are multiple systems in place to assist MC/EA in providing mass evacuation tracking support, which you'll learn more about in Lesson 3.

Voices from the Field: EA Activities

My team recently supported the State with a mass evacuation event by providing tracking services. During events like these, it's absolutely critical that we consider the needs of people with disabilities and other access and functional needs as well as people with household pets and service animals.

One way we were able to do so was by using the National Mass Evacuation Tracking System, or NMETS. This software was developed by FEMA to help us provide tracking support to States that have yet to implement an evacuation system. This system has the capability of tracking people and their family members, household pets and service animals, and also other items like necessary medical equipment.

Keeping track of all of these items in the same system helps us better assist individuals with different needs.

Lesson Summary

Let's summarize what you have learned in this lesson:

- Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VAL) identifies and develops relationships with the voluntary organizations and MC/EA utilizes the organizations capabilities to meet and support the needs of the community.
- Sheltering includes identifying facilities and providing life sustaining services in a safe, sanitary, and secure environment.
- Feeding begins with the whole community and then move to a more organized approach.
- Distribution of Emergency Supplies includes identifying life sustaining and essential supplies and the means to distribute them.
- Reunification Services provide systems and mechanisms to allow individuals that are separated to contact one another and facilitate the reunification of children with their parents or guardians.
- MC/EA supports the government assisted evacuees in Mass Evacuation with the provision of congregate care support and registering and tracking services when requested by the State.
- The MC/EA role in providing Household Pet and Service Animal Support is supporting the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals during evacuation, rescue, and coordination of veterinary care.
- Providing support to People with Disabilities and Other Access and Functional Needs includes assisting individuals in maintaining independence in congregate care settings and when receiving MC/EA services.

Lesson 3: Mass Care and Emergency Assistance Resources

Lesson Overview

The purpose of this lesson is to provide an overview of the processes and the resources used to support mass care and emergency assistance (MC/EA).

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Describe the MC/EA sequence of support.
- Identify resources used to support MC/EA.
- This lesson should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

MC/EA Sequence of Support

Although the sequence of support is a continuous loop, the process begins with monitoring because when you join the operation, you begin by gathering information, surveying, and monitoring what's occurring. Then you can begin to analyze the information by validating (or grounding) and determining whether to act on the information. If action is needed, then resources are identified, and the sequence of support is completed by tracking the resources.

Monitor

In the monitor phase of the MC/EA sequence of support, the following will occur:

- Data is gathered to contribute to situational awareness and reports.
- Stakeholders, partners, and points of contact are identified and MC/EA data is shared with them.
- Specific requests for support from organizations providing MC/EA services are received and tracked.

Analyze and Validate

During the analyze and validate phase of the MC/EA sequence of support, the following will occur:

- Information and data are analyzed and validated to ensure accuracy.
- Situational awareness of MC/EA activities is developed and tracked.
- Resource requirements are anticipated and/or identified in coordination with other MC/EA stakeholders and the NIMS resource typing guidance.
- Changes in MC/EA resource needs are anticipated and options considered.
- MC/EA support requests are prioritized and appropriate action is recommended.

Support

In the support phase of the MC/EA sequence of support, the following may occur:

- Provide and/or coordinate resource support and technical assistance.
- Track to ensure requests are fulfilled.

MC/EA Sequence of Support

You may repeat the sequence of support multiple times to resolve a single request, and you will be engaged in all three tasks until MC/EA activities conclude.

MC/EA requests are initially addressed at the local jurisdictional level. If the request cannot be filled at the local level, the request is elevated to the next level of government. Support from the federal government may include a cost share with the State.

Next, you will learn about MC/EA resources.

Resources (1 of 2)

There are many MC/EA resources that have been developed to support the whole community with planning and preparedness to successfully respond to disasters.

Visit the National Mass Care Strategy Resource Center at:

<http://nationalmasscarestrategy.org/resources/> for more information about resources for sheltering, feeding, distribution of emergency supplies, family reunification, household pets and other general resource documents. As additional resource documents and training courses become available, they will be posted on the site.

Resources (2 of 2)

In addition to the resources listed on the National Mass Care Strategy Resource Center, there are several software applications available to support MC/EA activities.

National Mass Evacuation Tracking System (NMETS)

FEMA has developed a tool for evacuation tracking called the National Mass Evacuation and Tracking System (NMETS) to support states if they do not have their own system. NMETS will be offered to States/Territories for their use. NMETS can track household members, their possessions brought through the evacuation process, their household pets, and service animals, and durable medical equipment.

National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System (NEFRLS)

FEMA has developed an online system required by the Stafford Act where family and friends can go or call the toll-free number to search for displaced loved ones. This system is only activated at the request of the state. Missing children, and individuals searching for children, are automatically redirected to the National Emergency Child Locator Center (NECLC).

National Emergency Child Locator Center (NECLC)

Individuals who access NEFRLS to report, register as, or search for a displaced child age 21 or younger are directed to NECLC, which is managed by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), with support from FEMA. NECLC works with NCMEC to deploy Team Adam to disaster-affected areas. Team Adam gathers information about displaced children to facilitate State efforts to locate and reunite missing children with their families.

Safe and Well

An American Red Cross online application that allows people affected by a disaster to list themselves as “safe and well.” Family members can also view the messages left by their loved ones who have self-registered on this site.

National Shelter System (NSS)

FEMA and the Red Cross each have software applications that are able to input data about shelters, locations, capacity, current populations, as well as other data points. The FEMA system can also report feeding locations, Points of Distribution (PODs) and other pertinent MC/EA information. The system is tied into mobile mapping applications to plot MC/EA locations in regards to shelters, pet shelters, and other locations.

Lesson Summary

Let’s summarize what you have learned in this lesson:

- The MC/EA sequence of support represents the fundamental tasks that are performed in coordination with and support of the State. It consists of three phases: monitor, analyze and validate; and support.
- The National Mass Care Strategy Resource Center website contains useful information about resources for sheltering, feeding, distribution of emergency supplies, family reunification, household pets and other general resource documents.
- In addition to the resources listed on the National Mass Care Strategy Resource Center, there are several software applications available to assist MC/EA activities, including the National Mass Evacuation Tracking System (NMETS), the National Emergency Child Locator Center (NECLC), the National Emergency Family Registry and Locator System (NEFRLS), Safe and Well, and the National Shelter System (NSS).