

Emergency Management for Senior Officials: Checklist

Step 1: Understand the Emergency Management Mission

Does your jurisdiction's emergency management mission:

- Promote coordination and integration?
- Include preparedness?
- Address all hazards?

Do you integrate emergency management into daily decisions, not just during times of disaster?

While protecting the population is a primary responsibility of government, it cannot be accomplished without building partnerships among disciplines and across all sectors, including the private sector and the media.

Preparedness is the actions taken to plan, organize, equip, train, and exercise to build and sustain the capabilities necessary to prevent, protect against, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from those threats that pose the greatest risk.

Step 2: Review Your Authorities

Do you know what your authorities are for:

- Developing and promulgating emergency plans and standards for emergency management?
- Proclaiming a state of emergency?
- Requesting assistance from other jurisdictions and the State?
- Disseminating information and warnings?
- Designating highways as emergency management routes?
- Imposing restrictions during an emergency (e.g., controlling traffic, closing or restricting areas, or imposing curfew)?
- Ordering evacuation and restricting reentry?

Has your jurisdiction met requirements that:

- Officials are trained in emergency management?
- A local emergency operation plan is developed and maintained?
- A director of emergency management is appointed?
- The National Incident Management System (NIMS) is adopted?

A state of emergency is a governmental declaration that may suspend some normal functions of the executive, legislative, and judicial powers; alert citizens to change their normal behaviors; or order government agencies to implement emergency preparedness plans.

NIMS provides a consistent nationwide template to enable all government, private-sector, and nongovernmental organizations to work together during domestic incidents.

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Step 3: Learn About Your Team

- Do you know:**
 - How the emergency management organization is structured?
 - Emergency management roles and responsibilities?
 - Reporting authorities?
- Have you met with:**
 - The emergency management director?
 - Key department directors and staff?

In an ideal situation, the emergency manager answers directly to the jurisdiction's chief elected official. In this arrangement, the elected official has direct access to unfiltered information from the emergency manager.

Step 4: Review Your Plans and Resources

- Does your jurisdiction's emergency operations plan (EOP):**
 - Address all hazards?
 - Outline how all actions will be coordinated?
 - Include plans for protecting the whole community?
 - Detail who is responsible for carrying out specific actions?
 - Identify the personnel, equipment, facilities, supplies, and other resources available?
- Does your jurisdiction have other types of plans that support and supplement the EOP, such as a:**
 - Preparedness plan?
 - Continuity plan?
 - Recovery plan?
 - Mitigation plan
 - Prevention and protection plan?

An emergency operations plan is an ongoing plan for responding to a wide variety of potential hazards.

Continuity plans outline essential functions that must be performed during an incident that disrupts normal operations, and the methods by which these functions will be performed.

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Step 4: Review Your Plans and Resources (Continued)

Have you visited these emergency management facilities?

- Communications/Dispatch Center:** The agency or interagency dispatch center, 911 call center, or emergency control or command dispatch center that handles emergency calls from the public and communication with emergency management personnel.
- Emergency Operations Center (EOC):** The physical location at which the coordination of information and resources to **support** incident management (on-scene operations) activities normally takes place. An EOC may be a temporary facility or may be located in a more central or permanently established facility, perhaps at a higher level of organization within a jurisdiction.

Before a crisis, you should be familiar with the physical layout and roles of the emergency resources and facilities.

Does your jurisdiction have resource management procedures for:

- Describing, inventorying, requesting, and tracking resources?
- Activating and dispatching resources?
- Managing volunteers and donations?
- Demobilizing or recalling resources?
- Financial tracking, reimbursement, and reporting?

Resources include personnel and major items of equipment, supplies, and facilities.

Do mutual aid agreements:

- Provide a mechanism to quickly obtain emergency assistance from other jurisdictions or organizations?
- Specify request, response, and administrative procedures?

Mutual aid agreements provide a mechanism to quickly obtain emergency assistance.

Is training provided to:

- All personnel and partners with roles in emergency management?

Are exercises used to:

- Test and evaluate plans, policies, and procedures?
- Identify resource gaps and shortfalls?
- Improve interagency coordination and communication?

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Step 5: Know How To Lead During a Crisis

- Are you prepared to lead during a crisis by:**
 - Delegating authority to on-scene responders?
 - Instilling confidence in the public that the incident is being managed effectively?
 - Making policy decisions and securing needed resources?
 - Building partnerships and alliances?
- Do you know how to request additional resources from:**
 - The private sector and nongovernment organizations?
 - Other jurisdictions?
 - The State?
- Do you have public information procedures for:**
 - Disseminating accurate and timely information to the whole community?
 - Ensuring consistency – that everyone is speaking with one voice?

Your role is not to set command objectives or direct tactical operations. Rather, officials delegate this role to Incident Commanders and first responders who are qualified to manage the incident.

Step 6: Promote Community Preparedness

- Does your community preparedness program foster:**
 - Collaboration with community leaders from all sectors for effective planning and capacity building?
 - Integration of nongovernmental assets and resources into government plans, preparations, and disaster response?
 - Individual and family preparedness on how to prevent, protect, mitigate, prepare for, and respond to all threats and hazards?
 - Volunteer service for supporting community safety and critical surge capacity in response and recovery?

Individuals and households are at the core of our Nation's preparedness. A community's ability to respond to or recover from a disaster depends on the level of preparedness of every member.