

I. PURPOSE

A. Introduction

Subsection 7503(1) of the Emergency Management Services Code, (*35 Pa. C.S. Section 7503(1), 1989 Ed. §101*), requires that each political subdivision shall, either individually or pursuant to the provisions of the Act of December 19, 1996, No. 177, P.L. 1158, 53 Pa. C.S.A. § 2301 et seq., referred to as the Intergovernmental Cooperation Law, adopt an Intergovernmental Cooperation agreement with other political subdivisions to:

1. Prepare, maintain, and keep current a disaster emergency management plan for the prevention and minimization of injury and damage caused by disaster, prompt and effective response to disaster and disaster emergency relief and recovery of consonance with the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Plan.
2. Establish, equip, and staff an emergency operations center, consolidated with warning and communications systems to support government operations in emergencies and provide other essential facilities and equipment for agencies and activities assigned emergency functions.
3. Provide individual and organizational training programs to insure prompt, efficient, and effective disaster emergency services.
4. Organize, prepare, and coordinate all locally available manpower, materials, supplies, equipment, facilities and services necessary for disaster emergency readiness, response, and recovery.
5. Adopt and implement precautionary measures to mitigate the anticipated effects of disaster.
6. Execute and enforce such rules and orders as the agency shall adopt and promulgate under the authority of this part.
7. Cooperate and coordinate with any public and private agency or entity in achieving any purpose of this part.
8. Have available for inspection at its emergency operations center all emergency management plans, rules, and orders of the Governor and the agency.
9. Provide prompt and accurate information regarding local disaster emergencies to appropriate Commonwealth and local officials and agencies and the general public.
10. Participate in all tests, drills and exercises, including remedial drills and exercises, scheduled by the agency or by the Federal Government.
11. Participate in the program of integrated flood warning systems under section 7313(6) (relating to powers and duties).

The County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) must be integrated into and coordinated with emergency management plans and programs of the state and federal governments. The County EOP also establishes a framework through which the county and its municipalities may prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the impacts of a wide variety of disasters that could adversely affect the health, safety and /or general welfare of the citizens of and visitors to the county.

The County EOP is the basic strategy for countywide emergency preparedness. This plan will assist county and municipal emergency management personnel to mobilize resources and conduct appropriate action to guide and support emergency management efforts through the four phases of emergency management, namely: preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation. The County EOP utilizes an all-hazards, functional approach that groups the type of assistance to be provided under emergency support functions (ESFs) which then address functional needs at the county and municipal level. The all-hazards principle facilitates effective intergovernmental cooperation. The ESFs used in this plan are modeled from the guidelines provided by PEMA and the Federal Response Plan (FRP). Each ESF is headed by a lead agency, which has been selected based on its expertise, authorities, resources, and capabilities in the functional area.

The County EOP is action-oriented and addresses pre-disaster mitigation operations, deployment of resources, communications and warning, coordinated response to a myriad of disasters and crises, post-disaster recovery, annual exercises, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and continuity of government.

B. Purpose

1. The purpose of the County EOP is to establish uniform policies and procedures for the effective coordination of response to a wide variety of disasters caused by acts of nature, technological accidents, acts of terrorism (or other man-caused disasters), and provide coordination of activities, provide support to the municipalities, and interface with the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) for the purpose of protecting the lives and property of the citizens of the county. Emergencies may differ in size, scope, and severity and affect the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the County in different ways. This plan satisfies the requirements of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Services Code, (35 Pa. C.S.), Section 7101 et seq., as amended. This plan is designated as an "All-Hazards" plan.
2. The County EOP is intended to accomplish the following:
 - a. Reduce the vulnerability of people and communities of the county to damage, injury, and loss of life and property resulting from natural, technological, or man-made disasters;
 - b. Prepare for prompt and efficient response and recovery to protect lives and property affected by emergencies;

- c. Respond to emergencies using all available resources necessary to preserve the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of and visitors to the County;
- d. Recover from emergencies by providing for the rapid and orderly start of restoration and rehabilitation of persons and property affected by emergencies;
- e. Provide an emergency management system that demonstrates all aspects of pre-emergency preparedness and post-emergency response, recovery, and mitigation;
- f. Minimize damage to property, material shortages, and disruptions of essential services that would have an adverse impact on the residents, the economy, and the overall well being of the County; and
- g. Manage emergency operations within the County by coordinating the use of resources available from municipal governments, private industry, civic and volunteer organizations, and State and Federal agencies.

C. Scope

The Basic Plan describes the various types of emergencies that are likely to occur in the County. The Basic Plan further provides procedures for disseminating warnings, coordinating response, ordering evacuations, opening shelters, and for determining, assessing, and reporting the severity and magnitude of such emergencies. The Basic Plan establishes the concept under which the County and municipal governments will operate in response to natural, man-made, and technological disasters by:

- 1. Establishing fundamental policies, program strategies and assumptions;
- 2. Establishing a concept of operations spanning the direction and control of an emergency from initial monitoring through post-disaster response and recovery;
- 3. Defining the responsibilities of elected and appointed local government officials;
- 4. Defining the emergency roles and functions of County departments, and volunteer and civic organizations;
- 5. Creating a framework through the ESF concept for effective and coordinated utilization of County and municipal government resources.

D. Plan Organization

- 1. The County EOP includes the Basic Plan, which is divided into ten supporting sections; and Emergency Operations Plan Annexes, which include seven supporting chapters.

2. The Basic Plan provides a relatively broad conceptual framework and describes the approach to a comprehensive emergency management system emphasizing an “all-hazards” approach to emergency preparedness. It relates information relevant to the whole plan and all of its sections.
3. The ten sections of the Basic Plan are organized according to PEMA standards and describe general functions. These include:
 - a. Purpose;
 - b. Policies;
 - c. Situation and Assumptions;
 - d. Concept of Operations;
 - e. Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities;
 - f. Administration and Logistics;
 - g. Authorities and References;
 - h. Acronyms and Definitions;
 - i. Training and Exercises; and
 - j. Plan Development, Maintenance and Distribution.
4. The Emergency Operations Plan Annexes address emergency operations and vital information. The Annexes contain the operational tools for an all-hazards approach to emergency management. There are six Emergency Operations Plan Annexes, including:
 - a. Emergency Support Function Annex;
 - b. Standard Operating Procedures Annex;
 - c. Incident Specific Annex;
 - d. Emergency Response Notification and Resource Manual;
 - e. Terrorism Incident Annex; and
 - f. Support Annex.

E. Authorities and References

1. Ultimate responsibility for the protection of life and property and the preservation of public health, safety, and welfare lies with local governments in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The authority for local governments to respond to situations, declare emergencies, respond to situations, and take actions necessary to safeguard the life and property of its citizens is set forth in Pennsylvania Emergency Management Services Code, (35 Pa. C.S.), Section 7101 et seq., as amended.
2. For further information on Authorities and References, see Section VII of the Basic Plan.