

BEN HILL COUNTY LOCAL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN
BASIC PLAN

I. INTRODUCTION

This plan establishes a framework for emergency management planning and response to: prevent emergency situations; reduce vulnerability during disasters; establish capabilities to protect residents from effects of crisis; respond effectively and efficiently to actual emergencies; and provide for rapid recovery from any emergency or disaster affecting the local jurisdiction.

II. PURPOSE

To prevent or minimize injury to people and damage to property resulting from emergencies or disasters of natural or man-made origin.

III. SITUATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situations - this jurisdiction has identified hazards having the potential to disrupt day-to-day activities and/or cause extensive property damage, personal injury, and/or casualties. (Priority for emergency management planning is based on the Hazard Profile contained in Appendix A.)

B. Assumptions - local government assumes responsibility for emergency management operations and commits all available resources to save lives, minimize personal injury and property damage. Assistance from other jurisdictions, the state and/or federal government may be available, under certain circumstances, when emergency or disaster response and recovery operations exceed local government capabilities and a local state of emergency has been declared.

IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. Program of Emergency Management

The person responsible for the emergency management program within a county will be the Chairperson of the County Commission. For a municipality, the Mayor will have this responsibility. Within a consolidated government, the Chief Executive Officer will be the responsible party. The designated official provides direction and coordination to the EMA director. While during the activation of this Local Emergency Operations Plan each municipality will retain its autonomy, they will be expected to respond according to a standardized unified incident command system.

B. Phases of Emergency Management

1. Mitigation - Mitigation activities may prevent the occurrence of an emergency, reduce the community's vulnerability, and/or minimize the

adverse impact of disasters or emergencies. A preventable measure, for instance, is to enforce the local building codes to minimize such situations.

2. Preparedness - Preparedness activities exist prior to an emergency to support and enhance disaster response. Planning, training, exercises, community awareness, and education are among such activities.

3. Response - Response activities address the immediate and short-term effects of an emergency or disaster. This helps to reduce casualties and damages and speed recovery. Response activities include direction and coordination, warning, evacuation, and other similar operations.

4. Recovery - Recovery activities involve restoring the community to a normal state. Short-term recovery includes damage assessment and the return of vital functions to minimize operating standards, such as utilities and emergency services. Long-term recovery activities may continue for years, when rebuilding and relocating due to damaged property.

C. Local Government Responsibilities

1. Local government is responsible for all emergency management activities in order to protect life and property from the effects of emergency situations. When operating under such conditions, the Emergency Management Agency (EMA) will utilize all available resources within the jurisdiction, including voluntary and private assets, before requesting other assistance. After the emergency exceeds the local government's capacity to respond, assistance will be requested from other jurisdictions and the Georgia Emergency Agency (GEMA). Upon a presidential declaration, assistance as requested by the state, will be provided through federal Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) and/or other resources.

2. Consistent with the state's commitment to comprehensive emergency management, this plan addresses major emergency situations which may develop in the jurisdiction other than those for which the military is primarily responsible. It outlines activities that may address mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. The plan emphasizes the capacity of the EMA to respond and accomplish short-term recovery.

3. The EMA director, in coordination with local government, will implement interagency coordination for emergency operations.

4. The public information designee, in coordination with local government, the EMA director, and other primary/support agencies will release all emergency information.

5. If an agency requests functional support from another agency or organization, assigned personnel and resources will be coordinated by the

agency with responsibility for the ESF.

6. Local government officials and the EMA director, in conjunction with the agency that has functional support responsibilities, will develop Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) for effective emergency response.

7. All agencies will inform the EMA director of assigned personnel to work in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

D. Continuity of Government

1. Succession of Authority is the line of succession for the local government.

2. Preservation of Records addresses the protection of essential records (e.g., vital statistics, deeds, corporation papers, operational plans, resource data, personnel and payroll records, inventory lists, laws, charters, and financial documents) by the appropriate agency following an emergency or disaster.

E. Direction and Coordination

1. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) may be staffed by representatives from agencies and organizations with emergency support functions. The EMA director provides direction and coordination for the EOC. Either full or partial activation may be required based on the severity of the emergency situation. However, if the situation warrants, the EMA director may request that the agency or organization with ESF responsibility report to the site of the emergency. If emergency operations are required within the primary EOC, or alternate EOC, or forward command post the EOC/Incident Command System (ICS) will be utilized.

2. The jurisdictions under this plan will respond to events utilizing the standardized unified incident command system recognized by the state to include the Incident Command System (ICS). ICS is a standardized on-scene incident management concept designed specifically to allow responders to adopt an integrated organizational structure equal to the complexity and demands of any single incident or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. During events involving multiple jurisdictions or agencies, the principles of unified incident command have been universally incorporated into the National Incident Management System (NIMS). This unified incident command not only coordinates the efforts of many jurisdictions, but provides for and assures joint decisions on objectives, strategies, plans, priorities, and public communications..

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3. The combined communications system of the EMA, 911 Centers, Sheriff's Office, police or fire department(s) and/or emergency communications center will be utilized to ensure contact with appropriate agencies and organizations.

4. Upon Declaration of a State of Emergency by the Governor, state resources may be obtained through GEMA.

5. Federal assistance may be requested by the Governor if a disaster occurs and the situation exceeds the capability of the state to respond. Upon a Presidential Declaration, federal disaster assistance is available.

V. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Support Functions

Most agencies and organizations within local government and the community have emergency functions to perform, in addition to their other duties. Each agency and/or organization with ESF responsibilities, in conjunction with support agencies and organizations, will develop and maintain Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). These procedures provide for direction and coordination of ESF responsibilities.

B. Emergency Operations

Organizational responsibilities are included in each ESF. In the event that a MOU becomes necessary, coordination will be handled through the Chairperson of the county commission, Mayor of the municipality, Chief Executive Officer of the consolidated government, EMA director, and/or the agency or organization's designee with ESF responsibilities.

C. Responsibilities

1. The EMA director, under the direction of the local government, is responsible for the following:

- * Assist and advise all agencies and/or organizations in development and coordination of ESFs to ensure necessary planning;
- * Brief and train EOC personnel and volunteers as well as conduct periodic exercises to evaluate support function responsibilities;
- * Manage the EOC and/or alternate facilities for operational readiness;

- * Coordinate with other emergency management agencies, GEMA, and other emergency response organizations;
 - * Maintain a list of all agency contacts including telephone, fax, and pager numbers;
 - * Obtain copies of SOPs for all ESFs;
 - * Update, maintain, and distribute the plan and all major revisions to agencies and organizations contained on the distribution list;
 - * Advise local government officials and agencies with ESF responsibilities on the nature, magnitude, and effects of an emergency; and
 - * Coordinate with public information officials to provide emergency information to the public.
2. Agencies and organizations with primary ESF responsibilities will (there may be only one primary named for each ESF):
- * Develop and maintain the ESF and SOP, in conjunction with the EMA director and other supporting agencies;
 - * Designate agency and organization personnel with emergency authority to work on planning, mitigation, preparedness, and response issues to commit resources (Staff assignments should include personnel who are trained to work in the EOC);
 - * Maintain an internal emergency management personnel list with telephone, fax, and pager numbers;
 - * Provide for procurement and management of resources for emergency operations and maintain a list of such resources;
 - * Participate in training and exercises to evaluate and enhance ESF capabilities;
 - * Negotiate and prepare MOUs that impact the specific ESF, in conjunction with the EMA director; and
 - * Establish procedures for keeping records, including personnel, travel, operations, and maintenance expenditures and receipts.

VI. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

A. Services and Resources

An emergency or disaster may place great demands on services and resources. Priority will be based on essential needs, such as food, water, and medical assistance. Other services and resources will be acquired after establishing the need.

B. Commitment of Services and Resources

1. Local government will commit services and resources in order to save lives and protect property. Response agencies will first utilize services and resources available through their agency or organization. Additional needs may be met from other local governments, agencies and/or organizations through mutual-aid or MOUs. After these sources have been exhausted, additional resources will be requested from GEMA. (A service and resource directory will be developed, maintained, and updated by the EMA director. This list will be available in the EOC.)
2. Detailed records of expenditures are required by all agencies and organizations responding to a disaster for possible reimbursement, such as through an authorized federal declaration.

VII. PLANNING AND OPERATIONS

A. Local Involvement

The EMA director will coordinate the efforts of agencies and organizations responsible for plan development of ESFs and major revisions. The plan will be reviewed annually and major revisions completed, as necessary. An updated plan shall be submitted to GEMA every four years.

B. State and Local Involvement

It is necessary for emergency management planning and operations to be coordinated as well as services and resource being shared across jurisdictional boundaries. Consequently, the state may be able to assist in the local planning process (e.g., radiological, hurricane planning). The type and level of assistance will be coordinated by the EMA director. Agencies and organizations with ESF responsibilities will be involved in such planning. This assistance should be interpreted as supporting agencies with ESF responsibilities and enhancing emergency capabilities.