

Administrative Policy No. 9.11

Subject: Emergency Management

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Authorizing Sources: [Chapter 38.52 RCW, Emergency Management](#)
[Directive by the Governor 13-02 Continuity of Government](#)
Operations Preparation

Additional Information: [AP 09.15 Continuity of Operations](#)
[AP 09.16 Closures and Suspension of Operations](#)
DSHS Emergency Operations Plan, as revised
DSHS Emergency Management [SharePoint](#)

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Approved By: Original signed by Lori Melchiori
Senior Director, Office of Policy and Rules

Purpose

To provide guidance, direction, and standards that promote DSHS organizational and individual employee preparedness to respond effectively to emergencies and disasters. Adherence to this policy supports the well-being and life safety of DSHS employees, protects state property, and supports the department's ability to continue its mission essential functions during emergencies and disasters to quickly resume normal business operations.

Scope

This policy applies to all DSHS administrations and employees at all locations statewide.

Further guidance

This policy, and any procedures or guidelines referenced herein, is intended only for internal department use. It is not intended, nor can it be relied on, to create any substantive or procedural rights enforceable by any party involved in matters with DSHS.

Definitions

The terms below are among those commonly used in emergency management; many of them are derived from federal definitions and adapted for use within DSHS. Additional commonly used terms may be found in the DSHS Emergency Operations Plan, Annex C. The terms defined below are used in this policy.

Capitol campus includes government buildings and grounds shown on this [map](#). DSHS headquarters in Capitol View 1 and 2, Blake Office Park, and any other facilities are excluded from Capitol Campus.

Continuity plan is the written document describing the capability of each administration and residential program to support the continued performance of its mission essential functions during a wide range of emergencies or disasters. Continuity plans are developed using a standardized approach based on guidance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and as required by [RCW 38.52.030 \(11\)](#) and the [Directive by the Governor 13-02](#).

Emergency coordination center (ECC) is a DSHS headquarters function activated by the director of emergency management services (EMS) or designee to provide centralized guidance, information sharing, and support to DSHS regional and field services offices, and residential services operations responding to an emergency or disaster. The ECC is staffed by employees representing each administration who are trained by EMS.

Emergency or disaster is defined under [RCW 38.52.010 \(6\) \(a\)](#) as “an event or set of circumstances which: demands immediate action to preserve public health, protect life, protect public property, or to provide relief to any stricken community overtaken by such occurrences, or reaches such a dimension or degree of destructiveness as to warrant the governor declaring a state of emergency pursuant to [RCW 43.06.010](#).

Emergency operations plan (EOP) is maintained by DSHS EMS for DSHS. It provides overarching guidance and procedures describing how DSHS responds as an organization to emergencies and disasters. There is only one EOP for DSHS. All emergency response plans and continuity plans must align vertically and not conflict with the DSHS EOP. The EOP is reviewed annually and revised, as needed.

Emergency response plan describes in writing the actions that management and employees must take immediately during an emergency or disaster to protect life-safety. Emergency response plans address incidents that are generally short term and do not interrupt DSHS’ ability to continue its mission essential functions. Each DSHS location should have a single, integrated emergency response plan incorporating all DSHS programs at that location and in the same building.

GETS/WPS is the Government Emergency Telecommunications Service/Wireless Priority Service. It is funded by the Department of Homeland Security – FEMA. This program allows subscribers enhanced routing of government related calls during emergencies and disasters when lines may otherwise not permit calls to reach their destination. Further information is available at [GETS/WPS](#) and DSHS EMS.

Headquarters is all DSHS offices in the Olympia, Lacey, and Tumwater area that includes the primary work location for the executive leadership of each administration, their staff, and supporting systems, and resources. Note that only the DSHS Office Building 2 (OB2) is on capitol campus.

Incident command system (ICS) is a method of organization used for the command, control, and coordination of an emergency response developed and promulgated by FEMA. It is the nationally standardized approach for incident response and for all levels of government. The ICS organization is flexible, scalable, and arranged in a hierarchy to facilitate communication and collaboration. DSHS uses a modified version of ICS adapted to its business needs.

Location includes DSHS headquarters, regional and field offices, state hospitals, residential habilitation centers, state operated living alternatives, the Special Commitment Center, and other DSHS operated residential programs.

Mission essential functions are the limited set of organization level functions that must be performed continuously, or resumed as soon as possible after a disruption of normal actions. Mission essential functions are required by federal or state statute, a funding source, or direction from the secretary. Some DSHS services must be continued without interruption.

Residential program means the responsible state hospital, child study and treatment center, competency restoration center, residential habilitation center, state operated living alternative, or similar program in which DSHS clients are under the agency's direct care and supervision by DSHS employees.

Policy Requirements

A. Emergency management services

DSHS EMS is in the facilities, finance, and analytics administration (FFAA) and the director of EMS reports to the assistant secretary. During emergencies and disasters, the director may report directly to the secretary or other designated member of the DSHS cabinet. EMS is the emergency management policy, planning and training, and exercising authority for the department and employs the department's related subject matter experts.

1. Delegation of authority

The director of EMS has delegated authority to represent and act on behalf of the DSHS secretary on all matters pertaining to emergency management.

2. Employee and organizational readiness

EMS maintains a comprehensive emergency management planning and response approach for DSHS that promotes preparedness at the organizational and individual employee levels by providing:

- a. DSHS agency level standards for emergency and disaster preparedness, emergency operations, and continuity planning;

- b. Technical assistance, training, and exercises for DSHS headquarters, regional offices, and residential operations; and
 - c. Planning resources, tools, and materials.
3. Emergency coordination center

The emergency coordination center (ECC) is organized based on incident command principles and is led by a DSHS manager trained by EMS. This position may assume the role of incident commander when the incident is directly impacting DSHS headquarters. During activations, the ECC emergency manager reports directly to a DSHS cabinet designee, typically the deputy chief of staff, office of the secretary. The ECC follows procedures established by DSHS EMS, which are included in the DSHS EOP.

- a. EMS is responsible for training and completing drills with the ECC, which convene either in OB2 in Olympia or virtually, or both.
 - b. Each assistant secretary must designate at least two employees to serve as liaisons to the ECC. Liaisons must participate in training, drills, and activations in response to actual incidents.
 - c. Administration liaisons are responsible for updates to the DSHS toll-free employee emergency information line and the internet duty station status report (or successor systems) during incidents that impact DSHS operations.
 - d. Assistant secretaries must designate additional representatives, if requested by the director of EMS, to meet the needs of a response.
 - e. DSHS locations (as defined by this policy) must develop and maintain procedures for emergency coordination at each campus.
 - f. EMS must provide training, exercises, and other technical assistance to DSHS regional offices and locations (as defined by this policy) to support the implementation and maintenance of continuity plans.
 - g. The ECC will occupy the OB2 computer training room for the duration of response activities as necessary.
4. Capitol campus planning and response coordination
- a. EMS is responsible for DSHS agency level coordination with other state agencies in response to any incident on the Capitol Campus. This includes participation on the Washington Interagency Security Committee, convened by the Department of Enterprise Services and the Washington State Patrol.
 - b. The Department of Enterprise Services is responsible for coordinating the immediate facilities response to any incident impacting multiple facilities on the Capitol Campus.
 - c. The DSHS EOP is written to scale up to incidents that extend beyond the capabilities of DSHS resources.
5. State, tribal, and federal level coordination

- a. EMS represents DSHS on matters pertaining to emergency management with local jurisdictions, other state agencies, tribes and tribal agencies, and federal agencies. Any other DSHS representation must be coordinated through the director of EMS.

However, this requirement is not intended to preclude local, direct coordination by DSHS offices and locations (as defined by this policy) with local jurisdictions' emergency management for planning purposes or during a response.

- b. Within available resources, EMS coordinates the provision of DSHS staff with subject matter expertise to the state EOC to support a response.
- c. DSHS organizations and employees must not deploy to the State EOC without advanced coordination with the DSHS director of EMS.
- d. During state level activations DSHS response actions must be coordinated through EMS using the procedures established in the DSHS EOP for the emergency coordination center. DSHS programs and individual staff must not deploy to the incident location or in proximity to it without prior coordination with EMS.
- e. The director of EMS is responsible for overseeing DSHS compliance with the Directive by the Governor 13-02 and any subsequent requirements, and submitting quarterly reports summarizing the continuity planning, and training and exercise actions taken by all DSHS programs during the previous quarter.

B. Emergency response plan

1. When an emergency occurs that impacts DSHS operations and requires immediate action to protect the well-being and safety of employees and clients, every affected DSHS manager and employee must understand their role in the response.
2. Every DSHS location must have a written emergency response plan that aligns with the EOP.
3. Locations shared by two or more DSHS administrations must collaborate in developing an emergency response plan that incorporates the needs of each program in an integrated response plan. Plans must be approved by the responsible manager for each program at that location, reviewed annually, and updated as needed.
4. Management at locations that also house non-DSHS tenants are responsible for working with those tenants and to include them in planning, where feasible. Plans must describe how DSHS services may be impacted by other tenants during an emergency or disaster.
5. Training in accordance with each location's emergency response plan is necessary for employees to understand their role during emergencies and disasters. Training will be provided by qualified staff identified by each administration and in coordination with the preparedness training manager located in DSHS EMS.

C. Continuity planning

Continuity plans are developed at the administration and location (as defined by this policy) level and must align vertically with the EOP as much as practical. Plans are activated when an emergency or disaster significantly disrupts normal operations requiring temporary relocation, reassignment of staff, implementation of alternate care standards, or other actions that must be sustained for 72 hours or longer. (Note that the specific period may be less than or greater than 72 hours depending on the mission essential function(s) that are impacted.) Please refer to AP 09.15 - Continuity of Operations

for additional guidance.

D. Training and exercise coordination

1. DSHS EMS oversees and administers preparedness and response training and exercises at the administration and location (as defined by this policy) levels, providing review, technical assistance, direct training, training resources, and other assistance. EMS will incorporate other federal or state emergency preparedness training requirements, as they are developed and promulgated.
2. As a requirement of the Directive by the Governor 13-02, each administration and location (as defined by this policy) must have a written training plan that describes how employees on all shifts will be oriented to their roles in an emergency or disaster, and that specifies timelines for completing training.
3. Completion of training may be recorded in the learning management system.
4. EMS is authorized to make specific training and exercise recommendations to administrations and locations (as defined by this policy) to improve DSHS organizational and individual employee readiness.
5. EMS provides training resources and assistance at the administration and location (as defined by this policy) level. Within available resources, EMS will support regional offices as well.
6. When requested by an appointing authority, EMS will assist each administration and location (as defined by this policy) in determining what training is necessary for their staff to prepare them to carry out their duties during emergencies and disasters.
7. Administration and location (as defined by this policy) emergency preparedness training plans must be submitted to the preparedness training manager located in DSHS EMS by January 15 of each year.

E. Local jurisdiction coordination

All counties and larger cities are required under [Chapter 38.52 RCW](#) to have an emergency manager. DSHS management at every location are encouraged to acquaint themselves with their local jurisdiction's emergency managers for the purpose of mutual support.

F. Government Emergency Telecommunications Service/Wireless Priority Service (GETS/WPS)

EMS manages the GETS/WPS program for the DSHS cabinet and FFAA. Other administrations wishing to participate in the program may set up and manage separate accounts below the assistant secretary or senior director level. Enrollment information is available through [GETS/WPS](#).