

Administrative Policy No. 9.17

Subject: Emergency Operations

Information Contact: Director, Emergency Management Services
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Authorizing Source: [Homeland Security Presidential Policy Directive -8](#)
[National Response Framework](#)
[Chapter 38.52 RCW](#)

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Approved By: Original signed by Pearlette S. Ramos
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Purpose

This policy establishes minimum standards and requirements for DSHS agency level emergency operations. It provides for an agency-level emergency response organization and sets forth related responsibilities for all administrations.

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

Scope

All DSHS administrations are subject to this policy. This policy applies to management and designated employees within each administration in support of DSHS emergency response.

Additional Guidance

[Joint Commission on Hospitals and Accrediting Organizations](#)
[Medicare and Medicaid programs emergency preparedness requirements](#)
[DSHS emergency operations plan](#)
[Administrative policy 9.11 emergency management](#)
[Administrative policy 9.15 continuity of operations](#)
[Administrative policy 9.16 emergency closures, delayed openings, and suspensions of](#)

[operations](#)

Definitions

Administration liaison: A formally designated position with responsibilities related to emergency management that includes emergency response and related training and exercises. Employees in these positions support the DSHS emergency coordination center and participate in response, training and exercise activities as required by emergency management services.

All hazards incident management team (IMT): A highly trained team to provide leadership and management for emergency incidents or events. Members require a high-level of commitment to follow a formalized process to obtain professional credentialing and certification for a specific incident command system position.

Duty station status report (DSSR): An Internet tool for DSHS employees to gain information regarding the operational status of their assigned duty station. Assigned staff in each administration update the system as conditions change.

Emergency coordination center (ECC): Operates virtually or from a physical location at DSHS headquarters in Olympia. The ECC serves three primary purposes:

1. Facilitates the exchange of information within the agency and with other state agencies.
2. Facilitates the coordination of resources among DSHS programs.
3. Assists in the overall coordination of continuity of DSHS services during an emergency or disaster.

Activation of the ECC provides support, coordination, and prioritization of agency resources during an emergency response. All DSHS administrations support the ECC with personnel and by adhering to its organization and following its procedures, which follows a modified incident command system structure.

Emergency or disaster: Defined under RCW 38.52.010 (6) (a) as “an event of set of circumstances which:

1. 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
2. Reaches such dimension or degree of destructiveness as to warrant the governor declaring a state of emergency pursuant to RCW 43.06.010 (12).” Emergencies excluded from this policy (as defined under RCW 38.52.010 (6) (b) are those that “require a normal police, coroner, fire, rescue, emergency medical services, or utility response.”

Emergency operations plan (EOP): A plan developed and maintained by DSHS

emergency management services providing overarching guidance and procedures to describe how DSHS responds to emergencies and disasters. All other administration emergency response plans align vertically with the DSHS EOP, which emergency management services reviews and revises annually. The target audience for this document includes executive leadership, senior management, and designated employees from each administration who support an agency-level response to an emergency.

Emergency response team: A trained and exercised team using incident command system principles to provide leadership and management for emergency incidents or events.

Employee emergency information line: A toll-free number (1-866-374-7367) available to DSHS employees that provides the same operational status information as displayed in the DSSR. Assigned staff in each administration update messaging as conditions change.

Government emergency telecommunications system/wireless priority services (GETS/WPS): The Department of Homeland Security - Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Agency administers this service and funds this program, which allows subscribers enhanced routing of government related calls during emergencies and disasters when lines may otherwise not permit calls to reach their destination.

Washington secure electronic communications, urgent response and exchange system (WA SECURES): A cloud-based and secure alert and notification system supported by the WA Department of Health and used by DSHS to deliver emergency messages and other information. Emergency management services controls DSHS access to the system. Emergency management services uses the system to deliver messages via email, telephone, and/or text to DSHS executives, administration liaisons, and other employees supporting emergency response activities.

WebEOC: A Web-based software that provides real-time emergency information management. It allows authorized users to immediately access and share information related to the emergency and the response. The Military Department, Emergency Management Division administers the system and allows usage for state agencies and jurisdictions. DSHS emergency management services manages access for DSHS.

A. Policy requirements

- I. Emergency operations plan (EOP)
 - a. Emergency management services must maintain the DSHS EOP, which provides an overview of the agency approach to emergency operations and includes procedures for the emergency coordination center.

- b. To the extent feasible and relevant to DSHS operations, emergency management services must adhere to the Federal Emergency Management Agency Comprehensive [Planning Guidance 101](#) in developing and maintaining the EOP.
- c. Must include emergency response policies, describe the response organization and assign tasks.
- d. The emergency operations plan focusses at the enterprise level for an all hazards planning approach. EMS may develop hazard or threat based specific annexes as directed or deemed necessary. For example, catastrophic level incidents such as a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake may severely impact DSHS operations in Western Washington. The DSHS executive continuity of operation plan, devolution framework outlines the temporary transfer of cabinet level leadership and emergency coordination center response activities to Region 1.

II. Emergency coordination center (ECC)

- a. Emergency management services primarily operates the ECC virtually using the WebEOC platform. Response requirements may require EMS to operate the ECC from a physical location at DSHS headquarters, Office Building 2 in Olympia, Washington. The 2nd floor computer training room is the designated space however, another room or DSHS office building may be utilized based on resource requirements to support an effective response.
- b. Emergency management services must maintain procedures for a single, agency-level emergency coordination function to provide a unified response to all incidents that exceed the capability of any single DSHS location or administration. The procedures detail how the ECC activates, is staffed, and its function to support DSHS emergency response and executive decision-making. Operating procedures are incorporated in the EOP.
- c. Emergency management services must support the ECC during all activations.
- d. Designated staff from each administration (see IV. below) must support the ECC during all activations.
- e. Individual DSHS administration or residential programs may maintain an emergency coordination space or function specific to that administration or residential program. However, if the impact of the incident exceeds or is likely to exceed the response capability of the administration or residential program, the director of emergency management services may scale up the response coordination to the agency's ECC. In such instances, all responding DSHS personnel must report to the DSHS ECC, in accordance with established DSHS procedures.

III. Administration support and participation

- a. For DSHS to have a viable and unified agency-level emergency response capability to support agency operations anywhere in the state, all DSHS administrations must commit a sufficient level of resources to sustain the ECC.
- b. Every DSHS administration must designate a minimum of three positions for assignment as administration liaisons to support agency-level emergency operations and shall send the names in writing to the director, emergency management services. This provides reasonable assurance at least one representative will be available during actual emergencies. Designation by position, rather than employee supports continuity of the function.
- c. Administrations must consider whether employees who are in positions designated to support the ECC have the interest and ability to learn new skills, work as a team member, be able to communicate clearly, be able to work extended hours during emergencies, and work well under the time pressure of an emergency.
- d. Designated employees must not be bargaining unit members unless the appointing authority intends that the designation be a developmental assignment. (Also, see IV. roles and duties of administration liaisons, below.)
- e. Administration liaisons to the ECC must be available for related training, exercises, and response activations during actual emergencies. During emergency response activations of the ECC, at least one designated position from each administration must be available 24/7, including weekends.

IV. Roles and duties of administration liaisons

Liaisons shall:

- a. Demonstrate familiarity with the EOP through related training, exercises, and actual emergency response actions.
- b. Perform duties related to emergency operations and as assigned by the ECC emergency manager or an ECC section chief. Activations of the ECC for the department's emergency response require administration liaisons to prioritize response activities.
- c. Be available for emergency response activities. One liaison from each administration must be available during business hours to assume ECC duties during emergencies.
- d. Use agency-level emergency alert and notification, information sharing, and resource tracking systems such as the [DSSR](#), employee emergency information line, WA SECURES, and WebEOC.
- e. Maintain [GETS/WPS](#) access at all times and participate in regular tests, as

required by emergency management services.

- f. Successfully complete the following training requirements. The liaison verifies successful completion of each training by providing each completion certificate to the emergency preparedness training manager, emergency management services.

Within six months of designation as a liaison:

- i. IS-100 Introduction to incident command system
- ii. IS-200 ICS for single resources and initial actions
- iii. IS-700 National incident management system
- iv. IS-800 Introduction to national response framework
- v. DSHS Emergency operations plan
- vi. WebEOC Orientation

Within one year of designation as a liaison:

- vii. ICS-300 Intermediate ICS for expanding incident
- viii. ICS-400 Advanced ICS command and general staff-complex incidents

- g. Participation in additional training, testing and exercise activities as may be required by emergency management services.

V. Administration emergency response team readiness

- a. Each administration is required to develop and maintain a headquarters-level trained and exercised emergency response team to address incidents and events that impact delivery of mission essential functions or to provide support to clients served. Administrations may choose to develop and maintain an all-hazards incident management team model with credentialed positions.
- b. An administration's emergency response team includes a minimum of six designated employees. These employees are either assigned to the team as a function of their job or may volunteer to participate with their supervisor's approval.
- c. The activation of an administration's emergency response team is at the discretion of the respective administration's leadership or emergency management lead.
- d. When applicable, emergency response teams will follow modified incident command system guidelines for organization, reporting, roles, and responsibilities.
- e. The scope and complexity of a disaster or emergency may require administration emergency response teams to organize under the emergency coordination center to optimize the DSHS's response capabilities.

- f. Response team members may be asked to provide support to another administration's team if the response activities exceed the respective administration's capabilities. Supervisor approval is required.
- g. Administrations confirm their emergency response team member roster with emergency management services annually by January 15.
- h. Administration response team members are required to participate in exercises and training to maintain their response readiness.

Within six months of designation as an emergency response team member:

- i. IS-100 Introduction to incident command system
- ii. IS-200 ICS for single resources and initial actions
- iii. IS-700. National incident management system
- iv. IS-800 Introduction to national response framework
- v. DSHS emergency operations plan (EMS)
- vi. Administration emergency response plan

Within one year of designation as an emergency response team member:

- vii. ICS-300 Intermediate ICS for expanding incidents
- viii. ICS-400 Advanced ICS command and general staff-complex incidents
- ix. ICS Position specific training (optional)