

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](#)
[Ch. 38.52 RCW](#)

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Revised: New

Approved By: [Original signed by Sharon Swanson](#)
Senior Director, Policy and External Relations

A. 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.

B. 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 and Suspensions of Operations](#)

C. 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.

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 and from a physical location at DSHS headquarters in Olympia. The ECC serves three primary purposes: 1) It facilitates the exchange of information within the agency and with other state agencies; 2) It facilitates the coordination of resources among DSHS programs; and 3), it 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: (i) 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 (ii) 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 and continuity plans must align vertically with the DSHS EOP, which Emergency Management Services reviews and revises annually. The target audience of this document includes executive leadership, senior management, and designated employees from each Administration who support an agency-level response to an emergency.

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.

Government Emergency Telecommunications System/Wireless Priority Services ([GETS/WPS](#)): The Government Emergency Telecommunications Service/Wireless Priority Service. The Department of Homeland Security – Federal Emergency

Management Agency (FEMA) 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 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, pager, fax, and/or text to DSHS executives, managers, and staff.

WebEOC: A Web-based software that provides real-time emergency information management. It allows authorized users to immediately access information related to the emergency and the response. The state Emergency Management Division administers the system and DSHS Emergency Management Services controls access for DSHS.

D. 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 ECC.
- 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 (see III. Emergency Coordination Center), and assign tasks.
- d. Guides development of procedurally focused annexes, which may be developed by programs responsible for certain functions. Its primary audience is DSHS Executive Leadership. Functional annexes may include but not be limited to activities related to emergency:
 - i. Facility leasing and supply
 - ii. Safeguarding essential records
 - iii. Purchasing and contracting
 - iv. Assessment and repair of capital facilities
 - v. Transportation of clients who are in DSHS operated residential programs after an evacuation
- e. Emergency Management Services may develop hazard or incident specific annexes related to:
 - vi. Wildfire
 - vii. Flood
 - viii. Severe storms

- ix. Earthquake
- x. Pandemics
- xi. Chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or explosive incidents
- xii. Catastrophic incidents

II. Emergency Coordination Center (ECC)

- a. Emergency Management Services has established a primary physical location for the agency ECC at headquarters in Office Building (OB2) in Olympia, Washington. The ECC may also operate virtually.
- b. DSHS 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. The procedures detail how the ECC activates, is staffed, and its function in supporting the 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. Three positions are necessary to provide reasonable assurance that at least one will be available during actual emergencies. Designating by position, rather than employee, is necessary in order to support 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.
- c. Be available for emergency response activities. At least 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 [DSSR](#), employee emergency information line, WA SECURES, and WebEOC.
- e. Carry a [GETS/WPS](#) card at all times and participate in regular tests, as required by Emergency Management Services.
- f. Successfully complete the following training within six months of designation as a liaison, in the order of this presentation:
 - i. [IS-100.b](#). Introduction to Incident Command System
 - ii. [IS-200.b](#). ICS for Single Resources and Initial Actions
 - iii. [IS-700.a](#). National Incident Management System (NIMS)
 - iv. DSHS EOP – ECC (classroom)
 - v. WebEOC (classroom)

The liaison must verify successful completion of each training by providing each completion certificate to the Training Manager, Emergency Management Services.

- g. Receive and participate in additional training, testing and exercise activities as may be required by Emergency Management Services.