



## Administrative Policy No. 9.11

**Subject:** Emergency Management

**Information Contact:** Director, Office of Emergency Management (OEM)  
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**Authorizing Source:** [Chapter 38.52 RCW, Emergency Management Directive by the Governor 13-02 Continuity of Government](#)

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**Approved By:** Original signed by Pearlette J. Ramos  
Senior Director, Office of Justice and Civil Rights

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### Purpose

To provide guidance, direction, and standards to promote Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) organizational and individual employee preparedness and readiness to respond effectively to emergencies and disasters. Adherence to this policy supports the life safety of DSHS employees, protects state property, and supports the department's ability to continue its essential functions when disruptions happen.

### Background

When the emergency management function was established for DSHS, AP 9.11 was the inaugural policy to establish the authorities for the office of emergency management (OEM). Subsequent emergency management policies have since been adopted as capabilities evolved. Sections from the original AP 9.11 expanded into AP 9.15 continuity of operations, AP 9.16 emergency closures, delayed openings, and suspension of operations, and AP 9.17 emergency operations. To avoid duplication, the dated references for these respective sections have been removed from this policy.

### Scope

This policy applies to all DSHS administrations and employees.

### Additional 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.

[DSHS administrative policy 9.15 continuity of operations](#)

[DSHS administrative policy 9.16 emergency closures, delayed openings, and suspension of operations](#)

[DSHS administrative policy 9.17 emergency operations](#)

## Definitions

The terms below are commonly used in emergency management and are derived from federal definitions 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 not shown on the map are excluded from Capitol Campus.

Continuity plan is a 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.

Emergency coordination center (ECC) is a DSHS enterprise level headquarters function activated by the office of emergency management to coordinate emergency response activities. The ECC establishes situational awareness, sources resources, coordinates communications, and provides support to field service offices and residential facilities responding to an emergency or disaster.

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 a plan developed and maintained by DSHS office of emergency management providing overarching guidance and procedures to describe how DSHS responds to emergencies and disasters from the enterprise level.

Emergency response plan describes the actions management and employees must take immediately during an emergency or disaster to protect life-safety.

Government emergency telecommunications system/wireless priority services (GETS/WPS): The federal department of homeland security – cybersecurity & infrastructure agency funds and administers this service, which allows priority routing of government calls and text messages through landline and wireless networks during emergencies, when lines may otherwise be overwhelmed.

Headquarters refers to 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 resources. Only the DSHS Office Building 2 is located 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 endorsed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. It is the national standard doctrine for incident response for all levels of government. ICS organization is flexible, scalable, and organized in a chain of command hierarchy to facilitate communication, collaboration, and achieving mission objectives. DSHS uses a modified version of ICS adapted to its business needs.

Essential functions are critical activities an organization performs that are directly related to accomplishing the mission of the organization. The limited set of functions that must be continued throughout or resumed rapidly after a disruption to normal activities. They are mandated by state or federal statute, funding source, or direction from the secretary.

Residential program means the responsible state hospital, child study and treatment center, competency restoration center, residential habilitation center, state-operated community residential, youth transitional care facility, or similar program in which DSHS clients are under direct care and supervision of DSHS employees.

Integrated Preparedness Plan: The purpose of the Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP) is to document a DSHS's preparedness priorities for a rolling multi-year period. The IPP identifies the planning, organizing, equipping, training, and exercising (POETE) elements that will help DSHS Administrations build and sustain the core capabilities needed to improve their preparedness priorities.

Training, testing, and exercise (TT&E) are activities designed to familiarize, teach skills, and validate plans. TT&E aids in verifying that plans are viable, and staff is capable of supporting emergency operations throughout the duration of an emergency.

## **Policy Requirements**

### **A. Emergency management**

The DSHS office of emergency management is the emergency management policy, planning, training, and exercising authority for DSHS and employs the department's related subject matter experts. DSHS OEM is part of the office of the secretary and the director of OEM reports to the chief of staff. During emergencies and disasters, the director or another OEM team member may report directly to the secretary or other designated members of the DSHS cabinet.

#### **1. Delegation of authority**

The director of OEM 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

OEM 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 management, 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 is a headquarters function activated by the office of emergency management to coordinate response activities when an enterprise level response is required. The ECC follows procedures established by DSHS OEM which are included in the DSHS Emergency Operations Plan. The ECC operates virtually or from a physical location. The ECC is organized based on incident command system principles and is led by an OEM team member serving in an emergency manager role.

Its primary functions are to facilitate the exchange of information between administrations and other state agencies, to provide resource request support, and to assist with the continuity of DSHS services during an emergency or disaster. When necessary, the ECC may support communication with law enforcement, fire departments, and hospitals in collaboration with local DSHS incident commanders.

The ECC does not activate if an incident directly impacts DSHS headquarters. The exception is catastrophic level incident such as a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake that causes DSHS headquarters to be nonoperational. These circumstances will require activation of the department's devolution framework plan to temporarily transfer department leadership and response responsibilities to region one.

- a. OEM is responsible for training and completing drills with the ECC.
- b. Each assistant secretary must designate a minimum of three employees to serve as administration liaisons to the ECC. Liaisons must participate in training, drills, and activations in response to actual incidents.
- c. Administration liaisons are responsible for being the primary point of contact for OEM emergency management initiatives within their respective administration. Further responsibilities for administration liaison duties are found in AP 9.17 Emergency Operations.
- d. Assistant secretaries must designate additional representatives, if requested

by the director of OEM, to meet the needs of a response.

- e. DSHS locations must develop and maintain procedures for emergency coordination at each campus.
- f. OEM provides training opportunities, exercise development consultation, and other technical assistance to DSHS regional offices and locations to support the implementation and maintenance of emergency response plans.
- g. The ECC will occupy the OB2 computer training room on the second floor for the duration of response activities as necessary.

4. Capitol campus planning and response coordination

- a. OEM is responsible for DSHS agency level coordination with other state agencies in response to any incident on the capitol campus. This includes participation with 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 appropriately scale up to address incidents that extend beyond the capabilities of DSHS resources.

5. State, tribal, and federal level coordination

- a. OEM represents DSHS on matters pertaining to emergency management with other state agencies, tribes, tribal agencies, and federal agencies. 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. An exception to this is the economic services administration's coordination with the federal Office of Human Services Emergency Preparedness and Response for the State Emergency Repatriation Plan.
- b. Within available resources, OEM coordinates the provision of DSHS staff with subject matter expertise to the state emergency operations center to support a state level response.
- c. DSHS organizations and employees must not deploy to the state EOC without advanced coordination with the DSHS OEM director.
- d. During state level activations DSHS response actions must be coordinated through OEM 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 OEM.
- e. OEM is responsible for overseeing DSHS compliance with the [Directive by the Governor 13-02](#) and any subsequent requirements such as submitting quarterly

reports summarizing executive 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 or emergency action 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. The administration with the largest staffing footprint is the lead to develop the plan.
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.

## **C. Continuity planning**

1. Continuity plans are developed at the administration HQ and residential facilities level as defined by [A.P. 9.15 Continuity Planning](#). The plans must align vertically with the EOP as much as practical. Please refer to A.P. 9.15 for detailed continuity planning guidance.

## **D. Training and exercise coordination**

1. DSHS OEM oversees and administers emergency management training, continuity planning, exercise development, and technical consultation at the administration and location levels. OEM incorporates federal or state emergency preparedness training requirements as appropriate for DSHS.
2. As a requirement of the [Directive by the Governor 13-02](#), each administration and location 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. OEM is authorized to make specific training and exercise recommendations to administrations and locations to improve DSHS organizational and individual employee readiness.
5. OEM provides training resources and assistance at the administration and location (as defined by this policy) level.
6. When requested by an appointing authority, OEM 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.

#### **E. Integrated preparedness planning**

The integrated preparedness planning (IPP) process incorporates all training and exercises conducted by administrations that support emergency management, incident command, and continuity operations. The IPP process is an iterative process aligned with the budget cycle to better coordinate funding and training across state agencies, local governments, and tribal nations. This process will identify administration needs over a rolling multi-year period, allowing DSHS OEM to request resources and coordination to meet those needs. The IPP process includes:

1. Each administration will conduct a self-assessment to determine their training and exercise needs.
2. Each fall, OEM will issue the IPP Workshop (IPPW) Request Matrix. The matrix informs OEM about specific training and exercises each administration plans to conduct over the next several years to address their identified gaps.
3. All IPPW Request Matrices are due to the OEM emergency management training manager by January 1st of each year.
4. OEM will host an annual IPPW to identify and coordinate training and exercises conducted by administrations and the agency and any need for additional support from WA EMD.
5. OEM will attend the WA Emergency Management Division's IPPW and submit DSHS's training and exercise support needs identified through the internal IPPW process.
6. OEM will coordinate training and exercise support between administrations and, if



needed, from Emergency Management Division.

7. OEM will publish an annual consolidated training and exercise calendar for the next fiscal year by July 1.
8. Administrations are responsible for updating the consolidated calendar as training and exercises are conducted, postponed, or cancelled.

#### **F. Whole Community Planning**

Inclusive emergency preparedness planning is an enterprise-wide requirement to address the access and functional needs for all employees. The strategy to “plan with, instead of for” promotes informed solutions that work for all employees. All emergency response planning documents are required to follow guidance provided in the DSHS [Americans with Disabilities](#) and [Language Access](#) Plans.

#### **G. Local jurisdiction coordination**

All counties and larger cities are required under chapter 38.52 RCW to have an emergency manager. DSHS leaders and emergency management personnel are encouraged to acquaint themselves with their local jurisdiction’s emergency managers for the purpose of mutual support.

#### **H. Government Emergency Telecommunications Service/Wireless Priority Service (GETS/WPS)**

OEM administers the GETS/WPS program for DSHS and coordinates with multiple points of contact in each administration who are responsible for maintaining accurate records for their administration’s respective subscribers. Each administration determines the business need for their employees to become subscribers. The service is reserved for key leaders and people who have a role in emergency response or continuity of operations.