

# Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan



Lee County  
*Southwest Florida*

## Advisory

*This plan represents general guidelines, which can be modified by emergency personnel as appropriate. This plan does not create any right or duty that is enforceable in a court of law.*



LEE COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 24-12-10

A RESOLUTION OF THE LEE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA ADOPTING THE LEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

WHEREAS, Lee County is vulnerable to a number of human and natural caused hazards including hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, fires, chemical releases and terrorist activities, and faces potential damage to life, property, natural resources and the local economy; and

WHEREAS, State law requires each county to develop and adopt a comprehensive emergency management plan in compliance with the requirements, format and standards contained in Florida Statutes 252 and Chapter 27P-6, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.); and

WHEREAS, the county prepared and submitted an update to its comprehensive emergency management plan to the Executive Office of the Governor, Division of Emergency Management, for review; and

WHEREAS, on (date), the Florida Division of Emergency Management provided written notice to Lee County that the Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan meets the plan compliance criteria established by rule 27P-6, F.A.C.; and

WHEREAS, the plan must now be adopted by resolution by the Board of County Commissioners in accordance with Rule 27P-6.006(1 I) F.A.C.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Lee County, Florida, that:

1. The Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan is hereby adopted to serve as the operational document in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from natural and human caused hazards requiring emergency actions by local government officials.

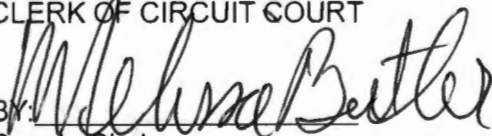
2. The respective parties and individuals identified in the plan are hereby directed to implement their assigned duties and responsibilities as current or future policy directives governing these parties and individuals allow.
  
3. The principles and policies of the National Incident Management System as recognized and adopted by Lee County Resolution No.05-12-29, dated December 20, 2005 as the standard for Incident Management remain in place.
  
4. This Resolution becomes effective immediately upon its adoption by the Board of County Commissioners.

Commissioner Pendergrass made a motion to adopt the foregoing resolution, seconded by Commissioner Hamman. The vote was as follows:

Kevin Ruane	<u>Aye</u>
Cecil L Pendergrass	<u>Aye</u>
David Mulicka	<u>Aye</u>
Brian Hamman	<u>Aye</u>
Mike Greenwell	<u>Aye</u>

DULY PASSED AND ADOPTED this 3rd day of December 2024.

ATTEST:  
 KEVIN C. KARNES  
 CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT

BY:   
 Deputy Clerk

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
 OF LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA

BY:   
 Chair



APPROVED AS TO FORM FOR THE  
 RELIANCE OF LEE COUNTY ONLY

  
 County Attorney's Office

# Approval and Implementation Page

The *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)* establishes the frameworks used by Lee County to manage the pre-incident, incident, and post-incident operations that address the onset of hazards or threats in the jurisdiction. The document provides extensive information useful to those responsible for executing public safety responsibilities, as well as to the public and visitors to the County. It integrates the efforts of public, private, and nonprofit sectors to ensure the protection and preservation of life, property, and the environment. The plan applies to all individuals, organizations, and groups involved in such operations within the County's boundaries.

The CEMP is an operational extension of the *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment* and a companion document to the *Joint Local Mitigation Strategy* and the *Disaster Recovery Plan*. It is supported by numerous operational guides, procedural manuals, and incident-specific plans. It works in conjunction with existing County policies, procedures, and protocols. Input from each of the County's departments and critical stakeholders in the plan's development and maintenance ensures it is integrated across organizational boundaries and helps unify efforts to achieve the best outcomes in times of emergency.

This document supersedes previous versions of the Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

Approved by:

X \_\_\_\_\_

Benjamin Abes, Director of Public Safety

Lee County

Date:



# Record of Changes

Lee County Emergency Management maintains an active Record of Changes in Smartsheet.

# Record of Distribution

Lee County Emergency Management maintains an active Record of Distribution in PowerDMS, where this document is stored electronically.



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# Chapter 1 Introduction

The *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan* (CEMP, also referred to as the CEMP Basic Plan) represents the coordinated structure by which Lee County and its public and private stakeholders address and manage disasters. Accordingly, the plan is an operational document applicable to all hazards that threaten Lee County. To create the plan, officials used a repetitive, collaborative process that adheres to Federal and State guidance and incorporates recognized industry practices and lessons learned. Ultimately, the CEMP unifies the jurisdiction’s information management, decision-making, and resource management processes to help ensure public safety before, during, and after a disaster occurs.

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*This plan unifies and coordinates all available personnel, resources, and information to protect life, property, and the environment in Lee County.*

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The CEMP Basic Plan provides a broad overview of the County’s approach to managing threats and hazards before, during, and after incidents occur. Content is kept to key points that convey general knowledge. The Basic Plan summarizes Lee County’s situation, briefly discussing its community profile and identifying threats and hazards. It outlines the assumptions underpinning the comprehensive emergency management plan and the operational priorities guiding planning and decision-making. It then describes the

County’s concept of operations, followed by explanations of how the County will direct, control, and coordinate operations, manage information and communication, and account for logistical, financial, and human resource needs. The Basic Plan concludes by addressing the maintenance of the CEMP and the plan’s authorities.

The plan includes chapters describing critical emergency management functions, with a predominant focus on response and short-term recovery. Each chapter addresses the scope of operations relevant to each emergency

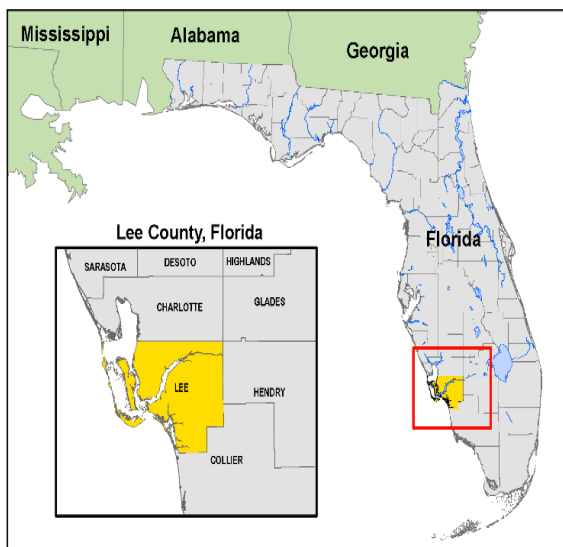


Figure 1 Lee County, Florida



management function and assigns roles and responsibilities. Additional documents and supporting plans provide greater detail on functions and tasks of emergency management before, during, and after a disaster occurs. The Basic Plan references these additional policies, plans, standard operating guides, and standard operating procedures where applicable. In this manner, the County's emergency management structure is modular and adaptive to situational needs.

## **Purpose**

The CEMP organizes and coordinates County personnel, resources, and information to save lives, protect property, and safeguard the environment from the consequences of natural and human-caused threats and hazards. The CEMP unifies the County's response and recovery efforts. Per Federal guidance, the plan sequences emergency management efforts according to prevention, protection, preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery. It allows for overlap between efforts as a given situation requires.

Altogether, the plan establishes Lee County's whole community emergency management framework. It matches the County's available personnel and resources against potential hazards and identifies means for closing any gaps between them. The document establishes and reaffirms necessary relationships between stakeholders and forms the context for how interactions will occur. As outlined in this CEMP, the County's personnel, resources, and decision-making authorities are ideally organized to allow for adaptive, flexible, effective, and unified operations.

The audience for this plan is the County's leadership, personnel, residents, and visitors, to inform them of how the jurisdiction will manage its threats and hazards and the consequences of their occurrences.

## **Scope**

The CEMP and its supporting documents apply to all County departments and personnel, as well as any nonprofit organization, private sector entity, or volunteer involved in response and recovery operations within the jurisdiction. Whereas normal County authorities, plans, policies, and operations are sufficient to address regular incidents, this plan applies to those efforts requiring extensive multi-department and/or multi-jurisdictional coordination to respond to one or more onsets of hazards or threats. Furthermore, insofar as applicable laws and regulations allow, it applies to federal, state, and local mutual aid and resources provided to Lee County during such response and short-term recovery operations. This plan incorporates all necessary jurisdictional and



functional authorities of County departments to manage disaster incidents according to established operational priorities, goals, and objectives.

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*The CEMP applies to preparedness, response, and short-term recovery operations for all hazards, not just severe weather.*

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## Situation

Lee County is in the southwest region of the State of Florida, abutting the Gulf of Mexico. The jurisdiction is adjacent to two other coastal counties (Charlotte and Collier) and two inland counties (Glades and Hendry) (see Figure 1 on page 1). In addition to its unincorporated territory, the county encloses four cities, one town, and a village (see Figure 2 on page 3). Lee County covers approximately 785 square miles of land (12.5% of which is salt-water wetland) and 428 square miles of water.

Per estimates from the 2020 US Census and subsequent updates, over 880,000 people reside in Lee County. The largest concentration of residents occurs in the unincorporated portions of the county. The City of Cape Coral is the largest municipality in the county, with over 187,000 residents. The cities of Fort Myers Beach and Sanibel have the smallest populations in the county with less than 7,000 residents each (see Table 1). Fort Myers and Fort Myers Beach have the highest density in the County, while Sanibel and unincorporated areas have the lowest.

In the last ten years, the County's overall population has grown steadily. Most of the growth occurred in the cities of Bonita Springs, Cape Coral, and Fort Myers, in addition to growth in unincorporated areas. Since 2010, the City of Bonita Springs has grown by 27%, while the City of Cape Coral has grown by 21%. The largest relative growth occurred in the City of Fort Myers, which increased its population size by nearly 50%. Conversely, Fort Myers Beach and Sanibel experienced decreased populations over the last decade.

The County's climate is humid subtropical and thus apt to severe weather, storm surge, and inland flooding. In addition to weather, the County is susceptible to several natural and human-caused threats and hazards (see Table 3). Lee County's population, economy, built environment, natural environment, and cultural resources are vulnerable to the onset of one or more of these dangers. The interconnectivity of the population, the economy, and the environment also presents the County with the potential for cascading consequences should one or more threats or hazards occur.



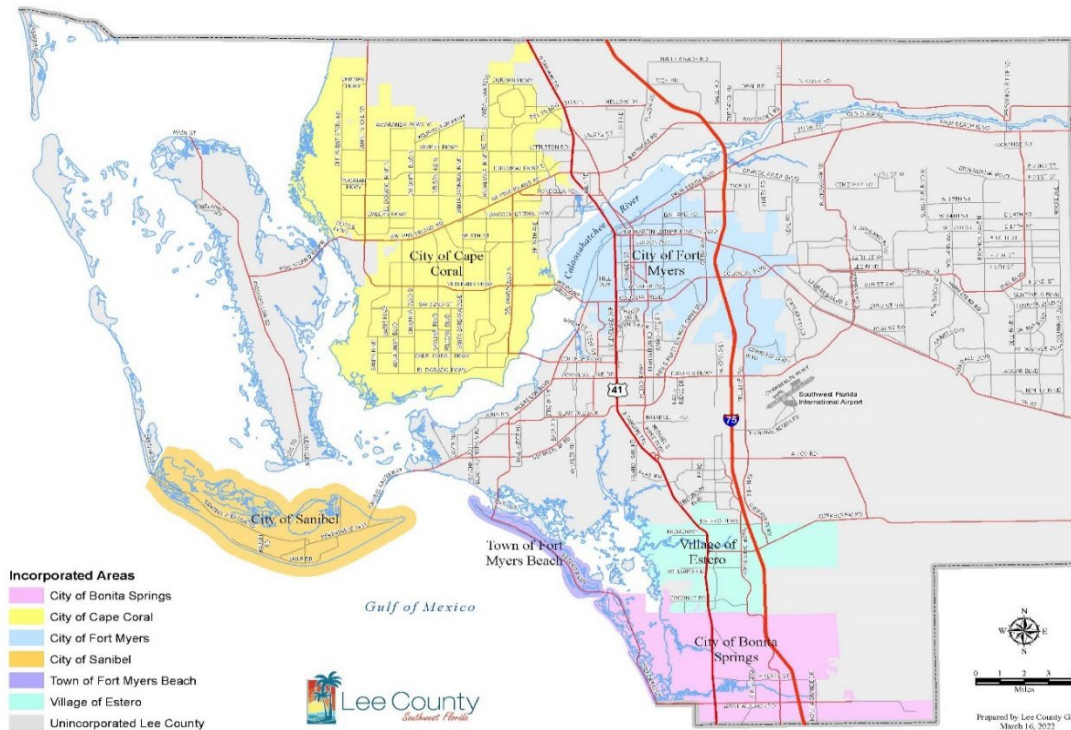


Figure 2 Lee County and its Political Subdivisions

Table 1 Lee County and Municipal Populations (2010-2020)

Subdivision	2010 Census	2020 Census	Change	% Change
Bonita Springs	43,857	53,644	9,787	22%
Cape Coral	154,305	194,016	39,711	26%
Estero	NA	36,939	NA	NA
Fort Myers	62,298	86,395	24,097	39%
Fort Myers Beach	6,277	5,582	-695	-11%
Unincorporated	345,548	377,864	32,316	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>618,754</b>	<b>760,822</b>	<b>142,068</b>	<b>23%</b>

Lee County's economy is a significant contributor to the state of Florida, accounting for nearly 3% of the overall Real Gross Domestic Product (RGDP). In 2019, the county's economy generated over \$28 billion in RGDP, ranking it as the eighth-largest economy in the state. Notably, between 2015 and 2019, the county experienced a robust growth rate of 16%.

Within Lee County's economy, healthcare services play a pivotal role, constituting nearly

14% of its economic output. In 2019, the healthcare industry employed nearly 45,000 individuals and generated \$5.2 billion. Lee Health emerges as the largest employer in both the healthcare sector and the county as a whole.

Furthermore, the education sector also holds substantial economic importance, comprising nearly 8% of the County's economy and employing approximately 25,000 individuals. The Lee County School Board stands as the second-largest employer in the county, with around 45,000 employees, contributing nearly 13% to the economy. It's noteworthy that a vast majority, approximately 95%, of businesses in Lee County employ fewer than 50 people.

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*The Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment provides more detailed descriptions of the County's demographic, economic, and geographic profiles.*

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In addition to healthcare and education, tourism significantly contributes to Lee County's economic vitality and its political subdivisions. Between 2013 and 2017, an average of three million visitors entered the county annually, with about 30% originating from outside the United States. During this period, visitor expenditures surpassed \$14.75 billion, averaging \$3 billion annually. In 2018, nearly five million people visited Lee County, resulting in \$3.1 billion in direct visitor spending. This spending supported approximately 60,000 jobs within the county, indicating that one out of every five jobs is directly linked to tourism.

Area topography for Lee County is generally flat and low. Land elevation ranges from sea level west to about 30-35 feet above mean sea level in the east. Approximately 351 islands, forming about 80 square miles, help make up the coastline. The Caloosahatchee River, which empties into San Carlos Bay, and other rivers and creeks that empty into Estero Bay make up the County's two major drainage areas. Rivers and creeks, such as Sanibel, Estero, and Imperial Rivers, empty into the Gulf of Mexico. Major creeks in the area include the Mullock, Spring, Hendry, Whiskey, Yellow Fever, Hancock, Daughtrey, Powell, Popash, Jug, Stroud, Otter, Telegraph, Billy, Hickey, Bedman, and Cypress. The City of Cape Coral's boundaries enclose nearly 400 miles of canals.

The County's climate and topography combine to create several environmentally sensitive areas. The *Lee Plan* addresses multiple environments, such as wetlands, estuaries, mangroves, natural water system features, critical habitat for listed wildlife species,



undeveloped barrier islands, beach and dune systems, aquatic preserves, wildlife refuges, undeveloped tidal creeks and inlets, critical wildlife habitats, benthic communities, and marine grass beds. Lee County maintains 63 environmental and wildlife preserves, in addition to several parks and recreation areas.

According to the American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, Lee County has nearly 395,000 housing units. Seventy percent of that inventory consists of occupied housing. Fifty-five percent of the inventory consists of single-unit, detached housing, while 11% consists of housing made of 20 or more units. One-fifth of housing in the County was constructed between 1980 and 1989. Thirty percent of housing was constructed between 2000 and 2009. Nearly 40% of houses in the County were built after the year 2000.

About 72% of houses in the County are owner-occupied and about 28% are renter-occupied. The average household size is 2.5 for owner-occupied residences and 3 for renter occupied. Nearly 60% of residents moved into the County or one of its political subdivisions in 2010 or thereafter. One out of ten residents have lived in the County or its political subdivisions since 2017. This mirrors closely with the composition of residents in the State of Florida, where 55% of residents have lived in the state since 2010.

There are over 320,000 buildings in Lee County and its political subdivisions. Half of these are in unincorporated areas; a quarter are in the City of Cape Coral. The Town of Fort Myers Beach and the Village of Estero have the smallest building inventories of the political subdivisions. All the same, the property in those two subdivisions has greater relative value (i.e., on average, each building is worth more). See Table 2 below.

*Table 2 Total Buildings and Property Value*

Subdivision	Buildings	% of Total	
		Buildings	Property Value
Bonita Springs	26,375	8%	\$10,811,897,279
Cape Coral	82,884	25%	\$16,337,442,249
Estero	16,739	5%	\$6,436,764,722
Fort Myers	27,441	9%	\$8,435,515,114
Fort Myers Beach	3,403	1%	\$2,796,940,251
Sanibel	5,254	2%	\$3,660,251,306
Unincorporated	159,453	50%	\$34,596,578,713

Interstate 75, U.S. Route 41, and Florida State Road 82 comprise the County’s major vehicular thoroughfares. The prevalence of large water features, such as the



Caloosahatchee River, the bays, and the barrier islands necessitates the construction and use of bridges to facilitate movement throughout the area. Major bridges include the Cape Coral Bridge, the Midpoint Bridge, the Cleveland Avenue Bridge, the Edison Bridge, and the I-75 overpass. Other important routes over water features include Pine Island Road, the Sanibel Causeway, and the Boca Grande Causeway. Some barrier islands are not connected to the mainland via roads or bridges and must be accessed by boat.

*Planning assumptions are parameters used as a context, basis, or requirement for the development of response and recovery plans, processes, and procedures. If a planning assumption is not valid for an incident's real-time, specific circumstances, the plan may not ensure response success. Alternative methods may be needed once circumstances are known.*

In addition to its roadways, the County's infrastructure includes railways, seaports, and airports. This includes two airports, Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW), Page Field, and Seminole Gulf Railway. RSW covers 13,555 acres and is ranked by the TSA as 17<sup>th</sup> in the nation for passenger traffic. Seminole Gulf Railway connects the Southwest Florida region with 118 miles of track and hauls building materials, gas, plastics, stone, steel, and other commodities.

For additional and more detailed descriptions of the County's demographic, economic, and geographic profiles, see the *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA)*.

Lee County may experience one or more disasters that carry the potential for significant loss of life, degradation of the environment, and/or disruption to social and economic systems. Incidents may occur simultaneously or follow closely with one another. Just as well, some incidents (like severe weather) can cause the onset of other incidents to occur (like flooding). Operations to mitigate, respond to, and recover from the consequences of disasters may be short or long in duration and may occur with little to no warning. In all these situations, the County will implement one or more portions of this CEMP to save lives, protect property, and safeguard the environment. The HIRA describes the County's natural and human-caused hazards more extensively, including their likelihood of occurring and expected consequences. Table 3 below lists the identified hazards for Lee County and its political subdivisions.





Table 3 Lee County Natural and Human-Caused Hazards

Natural Hazards		Human-Caused Hazards
Animal/Plant Disease Outbreak	Flood	Aircraft Crash
Coastal Erosion	Freeze	Cyberattack
Drought	Severe Weather	Hazardous Materials Release
Epidemic/Pandemic Disease	Tornado	Mass Casualty/Mass Fatality
Excessive Cold	Tropical Cyclone	
Excessive Heat	Wildfire	

In response to the onset or potential onset of one or more hazards, County officials will implement the CEMP in conjunction with the *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment*, the *Joint Local Mitigation Strategy*, the *Lee County Integrated Preparedness Plan*, the *Lee County Disaster Recovery Plan*, and if needed, the County department’s continuity of operations plans.

## Planning Assumptions

Assumptions enable planners to create an adaptable framework in anticipation of one or more hazards or threats occurring. Beyond that, during response and short-term recovery operations, personnel make necessary adjustments to the plan and its execution as facts become available and replace assumptions.

The number of assumptions underlying the CEMP, supporting plans, policies, and procedures are too many to enumerate in the Basic Plan. These supporting documents enumerate additional assumptions to the ones listed here. A summary of basic assumptions for any operation in Lee County is provided below:

- Authority for executing decisions and operations will be held by local officials.
- The onset of a hazard or threat will not eliminate the County’s capability to respond to it.
- The County will implement the Incident Command System to coordinate response and short-term recovery operations.
- The County will activate the Emergency Operations Center to coordinate response and short-term recovery operations.
- Response and short-term recovery operations will adhere to established plans, policies, and procedures and make use of existing decision-making and support systems.
- County officials and stakeholders will adjust response and short-term recovery



operations as needed to meet the specific situational needs of an incident.

- The County will acquire and make use of sufficient personnel to execute operations.
- The County will maintain sufficient communications capability internally and externally throughout most operations.
- The County will maintain the CEMP using standard practices, after-action reports, and corrective action plans to ensure it reflects operational realities as closely as possible.
- Established protocols and agreements will be honored and executed during operations.
- External partners will be able to meet mutual aid and resource requests in a timely fashion.
- This plan represents general guidelines, which can be modified by emergency personnel as appropriate. This plan does not create any right or duty that is enforceable in a court of law.





## Chapter 2 Concept of Operations

This chapter outlines the County’s intent for managing the consequences of disasters that occur within its jurisdiction. While the County, its political subdivisions, and its stakeholders maintain and operate systems to manage crises daily, the concept of operations described here addresses the integration of these systems and many others across multiple departments, jurisdictions, and sectors to respond to significant social, economic, and geographic disruptions brought about by the onset of one or more hazards. The concept provided in this chapter is drawn from Federal and State requirements and guidance, industry model practices, lessons learned from previous operations, and the assumptions underlying the CEMP. Adjustments to this concept will likely occur in real-life situations, based on operational needs and priorities.

This chapter first defines incident operations. It then describes how the County will direct, control, and coordinate responses to and short-term recovery from disasters. Next, the chapter describes the concept of managing information collection, analysis, and dissemination, as well as coordination of incident communications. The chapter concludes with a summary description of administration, finance, and logistics and their role in supporting incident operations.

Overall, this chapter affords response and recovery personnel, as well as the public, a broad understanding of how the County will accomplish its operational priorities. More detailed descriptions of operational activities appear in annexes, appendices, attachments, and other supporting documents to the CEMP. Such ancillary material is referenced throughout the plan where relevant.

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*The concept of operations explains in broad terms the County’s intent regarding disaster response operations.*

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## Incident Operations

Efforts toward managing hazards and threats can be divided into the following three general, sequential phases of operation: pre-incident, incident, and post-incident (see below). Pre-incident activities include daily operations, as well as specific hazard or threat-related operations just before occurrence. Daily operations cover normal County

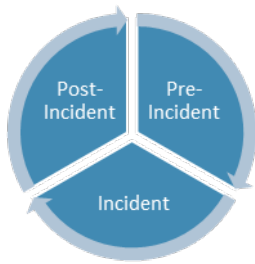


Figure 3 Incident Operations Cycle

operations, when possible, such recovery operations seek to restore damaged infrastructure, reconstitute critical facilities, and provide for the immediate needs of affected individuals, families, and groups. Additional incident activities involve gathering, analyzing, and disseminating information; coordinating resource requests; and ensuring the safety and protection of life and property. Incident activities are most defined by their significant multi-agency and/or multi-

jurisdictional nature.

Post-incident activities involve operations intended to restore the County to a stable state and to ensure the long-term well-being of its people, environment, and economy. Long-term recovery efforts encompass such activities as housing for affected residents, financial assistance, and mitigation projects. Incident activities transition over time to pre-incident activities as the community achieves stability and normalcy. During such transitions, County staff and stakeholders gather lessons learned and gap analyses to then improve the Emergency Management Program in preparation for the next incident.

The level of response to any minor, major, or catastrophic disaster will correlate directly with the size and scope of the event, maintaining the appropriate span of control, and providing all resources necessary to recover and return to normal as quickly and efficiently as possible.

### ***Pre-Incident Operations***

Normal business routines and command structures define most of the pre-incident operations undertaken by Lee County. During this stage, first responders will typically handle minor incidents directly, often requiring no action from the County's Emergency Management Program. Other County functions will likely operate according to standard authorities and lines of reporting, as illustrated in the County's organization chart<sup>1</sup>. This period is often referred to as "blue sky" operations.

During this stage, the Emergency Management Program engages in prevention, protection, mitigation, and preparedness activities, such as those described in portions of Chapter 3. Depending on situational circumstances, this stage may also include long-term recovery activities related to previous incidents. The Emergency Management Program uses blue-sky activities to build capabilities, mitigate the impacts of hazards, and develop community resilience. This includes the implementation of surveillance and intelligence-gathering systems. Before the onset of a hazard or threat, Emergency Management Program stakeholders develop relationships, enter into agreements, and form communication protocols. Administration of most pre-incident activities occurs with coordination between stakeholders and is outside the scope of this document.

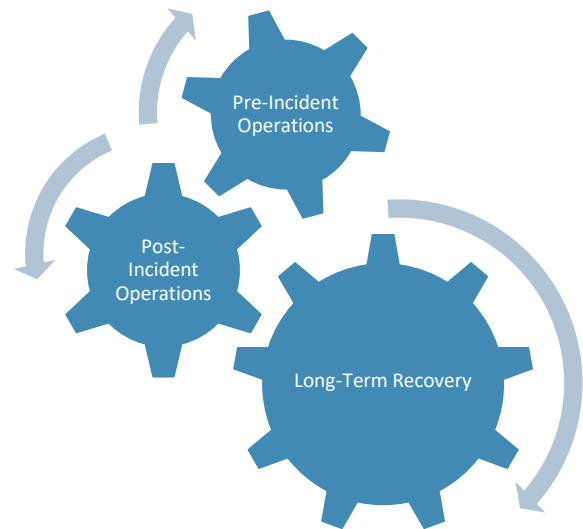


Figure 4 Operations and Long-Term Recovery

Some hazards or threats, such as hurricanes, have some notice and lead-up time to their onset. In such instances, pre-incident operations include increased monitoring of the hazard or threat. They involve increased communication between stakeholders and between personnel and decision-makers. If time allows personnel review plans, policies, and procedures and begin to gather facts to either support or replace relevant planning assumptions. If necessary, public information and life safety messaging begin during this stage.

### **Incident Operations**

Incident Operations begin when the County initiates response activities to the onset or likely onset of a hazard or threat. Response and short-term recovery operations will involve personnel, decision makers, information, plans, policies, procedures, and capabilities from several government entities, non-profits, and private businesses. Depending on the situation, support from other local governments, the State of Florida, other states, or the Federal government may be involved. Additional participants will also include the media, the public, and those affected by the hazard or threat. Figure 4 on the next page provides further detail on those involved in incident operations.

Personnel will implement one or more components of the Basic Plan and its supporting plans, policies, and procedures to guide decision-making and activities, as addressed in Chapter 5. Relevant hazard or threat-specific support plans will be used as well. Activities during incident operations consist of immediate life safety actions, such as public messaging, evacuations, and shelter operations. They also will consist of short-term recovery actions such as damage assessments, resource distribution, temporary housing, and utility restoration. The County will scale response and short-term recovery operations according to the needs of the situation and in accordance with the CEMP and operational priorities.

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*The County Manager, Assistant Managers, Public Safety Director, and Chief of Emergency Management will determine when and how to activate the Lee County CEMP.*

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Lee County's executive leadership will provide overall direction and execute legal ordinances and resolutions in support of operations. If necessary, executive leadership will secure a State of Local Emergency (SOLE) as outlined in Lee County, Florida Ordinance No. 87-01. Personnel will achieve unified command through the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the Incident Command System (ICS). The "Direction, Control, and Coordination" subsection below elaborates more on incident management, as does Chapter 4 and Chapter 5.

Lee County coordinates most incident operations from the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Numerous communications and support systems exist within the EOC. County personnel will use these systems, including WebEOC, to coordinate activities and decisions within the County and with the County's external partners. The Emergency Management Program will achieve coordination by staffing the EOC with representatives from County management, departments, law enforcement, fire, utilities, and municipalities. EOC staffing will be determined by the needs of the situation and County actions being taken. Chapter 4 provides additional information on the County EOC. The *Lee County EOC Standard Operating Procedure* provides instructions for the activation, operation, and deactivation of the EOC.

Lee County incident operations will take into consideration the needs of vulnerable populations and children. This will be accomplished through pre-incident planning, as well



as coordination of incident messaging and services. Lee County will execute programs designed to address the needs of individuals with special medical needs, children, and those with language or economic barriers impeding or excluding them from taking protective actions or advantage of recovery activities. Messaging with the public and media will also include means to communicate with individuals who are visually or hearing impaired.

### ***Post-Incident Operations***

Transitioning from incident to post-incident operations will occur over time. Many post-incident activities will occur simultaneously with incident operations. Similarly, many incident operations, such as those associated with short-term recovery, will naturally lend themselves to long-term recovery efforts. Thus, there will not be a single point in time when incident operations end, and post-incident operations begin.

Post-incident operations will occur generally along two paths. First, incident operations will begin drawing down to monitoring levels and deployed resources will be demobilized in phases. The Emergency Management Program will then review the gathered incident documentation. It will use the documentation to support decision-making for long-term recovery and to facilitate reimbursement, if available. The program will use incident documentation and other data to assess its pre-incident and incident operations. This assessment will result in an after-action report and corrective action plan if deemed necessary, that identifies successes, deficiencies, and actions needed to improve the program. In time, many parts of the County will resume pre-incident operations.

Second, the County will, if necessary and available, seek reimbursement for incident expenditures. It will assess unmet needs and other impacts, and then apply for disaster assistance to address them. The program will provide messaging and coordination with affected individuals and communities, in conjunction with local, state, and federal programs and non-profit entities. All these efforts to restore the County and its residents to a normal, steady state may take years or even decades to complete. The *Lee County Disaster Recovery Plan* addresses post-incident recovery operations in greater detail.

## **Direction, Control, and Coordination**

Before an incident occurring, Lee County will manage operations according to daily policies and procedures along lines of communication and accountability depicted in the County's organization chart. During response and short-term recovery, Lee County implements its Incident Command System (ICS) to direct, control, and coordinate



operational tasks, as described in greater detail in Chapter 4. Typically, this will occur at the County EOC under direction from elected officials and senior leadership. Integration with political subdivisions, the private and nonprofit sectors, and the State and Federal government will occur through ICS and the EOC. Once response or short-term recovery operations cease, the County will transition back to its daily direction, control, and coordination structure, and if needed, will adopt coordinating structures for recovery as outlined in the *Lee County Disaster Recovery Plan*.

## Information Collection, Analysis, and Dissemination

Information is a critical element of pre-incident, incident, and post-incident operations. It allows the Emergency Management Program to verify or correct planning assumptions, make sound and effective decisions, and request and allocate necessary resources. Information aids in planning; communicating with the public to convey protective life-saving measures; determining incident costs; determining the need for the involvement of additional personnel, resources, and decision-making authorities; identifying safety issues; and resolving information requests<sup>2</sup>.

Program personnel and supporting stakeholders derive information from data gathered through a host of monitoring, detecting, and measuring systems and applications. Personnel use numerous methodologies to validate and analyze data to produce actionable information. Once produced, program personnel disseminate the information to build and maintain situational awareness and to inform decision-making. If applicable, the program also disseminates the information to the media and the public.

During pre-incident operations, County departments and stakeholders use their systems and applications to collect and analyze information. Daily communication networks, such as personal conversations, in-person and remote meetings, email, phone calls, reports, and so forth disseminate information through the County’s Emergency Management Program. Protocols and procedures help determine when extraordinary action is required throughout this daily practice. In this way, information management is a shared responsibility between the County and its various stakeholders.

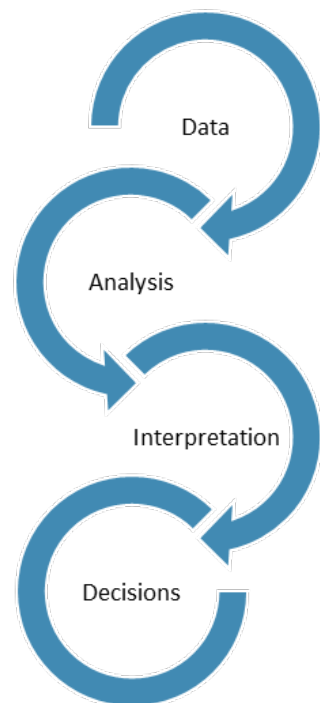


Figure 5 Data to Decisions

Some systems and applications give particular attention to monitoring and detecting hazards and threats. These include monitoring by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the National Weather Service (NWS), and their affiliates; surveillance programs operated by Federal, State, and local law enforcement; surveillance and prevention programs operated by Federal and State health officials; network observation by cyber security personnel; and so forth. Numerous means of daily exchanges exist that facilitate the dissemination of information collected and analyzed from these systems.<sup>3</sup>

Additional networks and systems will likely be used during incident and post-incident operations. These will facilitate and manage the heightened level of interconnectivity and coordination between personnel, resources, and decision-making that accompanies response and recovery. Although personnel will formalize some additional networks and systems before such operations, they may develop ad hoc systems as the need arises. The County EOC will be activated to manage most of these networks and systems.

Lee County maintains a public information capability that it uses before, during, and after an incident occurs. Pre-incident public information involves gathering and analyzing data on hazards and threats that can be turned into awareness and preparedness messaging and programming. The *Lee County Public Information Standard Operating Guide* details these activities.

Management of incident and post-incident public information entails leveraging the Emergency Management Program's numerous networks, systems, and applications to gather and provide accurate, timely, and life-preserving information. It also encompasses integrating the Program with the media. The *Lee County Joint Information System and Center Standard Operating Guide* addresses these incident-related public information processes further. The *Lee County Communication, Notification, and Alert and Warning Systems Standard Operating Guide* adds further detail on the dissemination of immediate information to the public and Program personnel and stakeholders.

## Communications

Lee County maintains continual and consistent communication throughout and between its departments and stakeholders daily, including with those who monitor developing hazards and threats. Daily communication is achieved through myriad forms, such as in-person conversations, phone calls, meetings, remote sessions, information sharing, online platforms, and so forth. Lee County Emergency Management maintains consistent





contact with the Florida Division of Emergency Management, the State Watch Office, and its regional partners. The County works with local, national, and social media to engage and communicate with the public. County departments and their external stakeholders maintain physical assets, such as radios, HAM radios, satellite phones, and so forth to ensure an appropriate and redundant communication capability.

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*Human behavior is the most common and significant part of communication, and it is most likely a determiner of success or failure.*

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## **Administration, Finance, Logistics, and Mutual Aid**

Incident response and recovery operations carry general support requirements that need to be met to achieve operational priorities and objectives. Operations must be able to acquire appropriate staffing and adhere to correct financial policies and processes. Additionally, operations require sufficient resources to meet the needs of personnel, equipment, and the affected community. Lee County maintains plans, policies, and procedures, in addition to robust capabilities, to meet such support requirements and resource needs.

This section briefly outlines these plans, policies, procedures, and capabilities. This section summarizes administrative practices used during incident operations. It outlines financial protocols that must be observed by response and recovery personnel. It describes in brief detail the County's methods for managing logistics and resources to meet operational requirements.

### **Administration**

Lee County relies initially on the availability and expertise of its staff and select external stakeholders to meet operational needs when addressing the onset or potential onset of a hazard or threat. The County maintains policies<sup>4</sup> that assign responsibility for public safety to all County staff and requires that each staff member be assigned an emergency role (E-Role). Human Resources maintains and implements an E-Role Program to ensure County staff receive training for their assigned roles during incident operations. When staff availability or expertise is not sufficient, the County will procure additional resources through mutual aid agreements with professional associations, neighboring jurisdictions, and the State of Florida.

In some instances, members of the local community and others will want to volunteer their





efforts or resources to aid incident operations, particularly those focused on assisting affected individuals, families, and groups. When needed, Lee County and the United Way will implement a volunteer coordination program to integrate volunteers and donations with response and recovery operations. This coordination will be executed either from the Lee County Emergency Operations Center or another location deemed most appropriate for a given incident.

County personnel are responsible for documenting incident information throughout response and recovery efforts. This helps ensure a common operating picture among personnel, decision-makers, and the public. Accurate documentation aids in keeping with correct financial practices, and if applicable, helps ensure reimbursement and other financial assistance occur in a timely manner. Post-incident activities rely heavily on sufficient documentation to correct errors, close gaps, and improve capabilities in preparation for the next incident.

## **Finance**

Lee County uses sound financial management practices to ensure effective and accountable usage of financial resources during incident response and short-term recovery operations. The County uses these practices daily so that incident operations will require only minimal adjustments to meet operational demands. The County's financial management system is scalable and works in conjunction with the Administration and Logistics to ensure the acquisition and application of resources to save lives, protect property, safeguard the environment, and stabilize affected communities.

During incidents in Lee County, coordination among various departments and partners is crucial for resource procurement. Lee County Procurement Management takes the lead in guiding emergency purchases during a declared State of Local Emergency, working alongside the Logistics Section and its Resource Request Process. In normal operations, County departments submit a Request to Initiate Procurement to acquire goods or services, which then initiates a solicitation process. Procurement Management identifies the best vendor based on the County's needs and acquisition conditions, and contracts are executed with the approval of the Board of County Commissioners.

Lee County prioritizes local sources to meet resource needs during response and short-term recovery operations. Procurement Management collaborates with the Logistics and Resource Management Framework and County departments to identify required resources. If internal resources are insufficient, Procurement Management enacts



contracts according to established rules and policies at the federal, state, and local levels. The County primarily utilizes its internal resources and existing contracts to fulfill requests, maintaining a catalog of active contracts on its website for quick resolution. In case of a State of Local Emergency, normal solicitation and bidding requirements are removed, allowing the County to acquire goods and services expeditiously.

Procurement Management increases spending limits on certain County-issued purchase cards before, during, and after an incident to meet resource requirements promptly. Documentation of purchases is done through various means, such as WebEOC, Purchase Orders, Smartsheet, receipts, and the E1 Financial System. Deviations from normal procurement policies must be documented for reimbursement, and purchases above a threshold require ratification by the Board of County Commissioners. Private property use follows state statutes and FEMA guidelines for reimbursement, and once the State of Local Emergency expires, the County reverts to its normal procurement process.

During incident response and short-term recovery operations, the County will adhere to Ordinance 23-21 County Procurement, the *Lee County Cost Recovery Plan*, and all relevant policies, regulations, and acceptable accounting practices. Personnel will use the E1 Financial System for financial recordkeeping, as well as WebEOC for resource procurement and disposition. If necessary, Finance and other personnel will use ICS 214 forms to account for time worked by response and short-term recovery staff.

## Logistics

Lee County's approach to managing logistics and resource management during response and short-term recovery operations is comprehensive and well-coordinated. The county relies on key components to ensure effective and efficient use of resources to respond to and recover from incidents. Departments and stakeholders source resources from available stockpiles or acquired through procurement, mutual aid agreements, or assistance from the State of Florida. The process involves stakeholders working together to plan for resource requirements, with support from resource inventories.

Before, during, and after incidents occur, Lee County continuously monitors resources from their deployment to disposition to make informed decisions about allocation and deployment. Various tools, such as WebEOC, LeeCOP, Geographical Information Systems, asset management platforms, and in-person ground-truthing, will track resource availability, location, and use. The Plans Section will oversee resource tracking during incidents and will collaborate closely with the Logistics Section for coordinated reporting.



The two sections will share responsibility for demobilizing resources and ensuring proper documentation is achieved during operations.

During response and short-term recovery operations, the County will use staging areas for assembling and holding resources until they are needed at the incident scene. The Logistics Section takes responsibility for staging resources, determining area types and locations, and overseeing the mobilization process. If a requesting entity requires immediate resources, the County directly transports the resources to the incident scene, with the requesting entity managing them.

If needed, Lee County will establish Points of Distribution (POD) during response and short-term recovery operations to ensure members of the community have necessary food and water resources. The County will coordinate POD operations with the State of Florida. To ensure equitable distribution of resources, the County will conduct outreach to vulnerable populations, utilize data analysis, and collaborate with community-based organizations.

As volunteers and donations come to Lee County following a disaster, the Logistics Section will collaborate with nonprofit and faith-based stakeholders to establish a Volunteer Reception Center and a Donations Center, if necessary.

## **Mutual Aid**

In certain situations, Lee County acknowledges that its internal resources may be insufficient to effectively address response and recovery efforts. To bridge this gap, the County has established mutual aid agreements with partner agencies, enabling them to acquire external resources during disasters. These agreements involve participating in the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement (SMAA)<sup>5</sup>, the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), and making other arrangements with NGOs, local agencies, and jurisdictions. Specific associations are also available for fire and law enforcement entities to request aid. Jurisdictions hold the authority to decide whether to provide or receive mutual aid, and the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) issues a Mission Number to finalize the agreements.

Various incident scenarios may require the County to request mutual aid, including the provision of additional staff during extended activations of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), allocation of extra medical resources during pandemics or epidemics, staffing of hurricane shelters, facilitating evacuation transportation for flooding or



hurricanes, deployment of fire resources for structure or brush fires, and augmentation of medical and law enforcement personnel during civil unrest situations. When a State of Local Emergency is declared, the County assumes the role of the Requesting Party for all mutual aid requests, requiring approval from operational command staff.

The EOC facilitates the mutual aid process for Lee County. The Logistics Section, through a designated Mutual Aid Coordinator, serves as the point of contact for deployed assets. All requests for mutual aid must receive local approval before deployment to safeguard local capabilities.

## **Access and Functional Needs Considerations**

Lee County integrates access and functional needs into its incident assessment process to guarantee that all impacted individuals and families receive response and recovery services. The Access and Functional Needs Framework is part of the Emergency Management Program frameworks outlined in Chapter 3 and aligns with frameworks detailed in Chapters 4 through 11. Through the utilization of comprehensive community emergency management, Lee County and its stakeholders involve all communities, pinpoint unmet needs, and address them equitably. Collaborative partnerships across all sectors identify needs, procure resources and capabilities, educate the public, and interact with trusted community leaders.

## **Operational Priorities**

Operational priorities anchor decisions to a set of core values shared among stakeholders that ultimately serve to guide operational decision-making. They unify the Emergency Management Program to the single ideal of “one team, one mission” and help to ensure all decisions and actions taken serve to achieve the goals and objectives of County leadership. As their name implies, operational priorities order decision-making and actions taken by response and recovery personnel. The *Lee County CEMP* establishes the following six priorities for Lee County’s Emergency Management Program:

1. Life, safety, and health of County staff, residents, and visitors.
2. Protection of public and private property.
3. Protection of the environment.
4. Restoration of essential utilities.
5. Restoration of essential program functions.
6. Stakeholder coordination.



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<sup>1</sup> The most current version of the County's organization chart is located at:

<https://www.leegov.com/Pages/About%20Us/orgchArt.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> FEMA (2017). *National Incident Management System*, p. 54

<sup>3</sup> See Table 8 beginning on p. 72 for a detailed list of agencies responsible for monitoring and detection.

<sup>4</sup> For example, see Lee County Administrative Code (AC) 7-6 and Lee County Policy 504

<sup>5</sup> Lee County is a signatory to the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement



## **Chapter 3 Emergency Management Program**

The Lee County Emergency Management Program is a comprehensive framework designed to prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the impacts of disasters and emergencies within the county. This chapter outlines the roles and responsibilities of the key stakeholders involved in the program, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations, private sector entities, and the community at large. It also details the Program Frameworks, which provide a strategic and systematic approach to emergency management, including Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment, Prevention, Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. By integrating the Program Stakeholders and Program Frameworks, the Lee County Emergency Management Program can effectively address the unique needs and challenges faced by the community during times of crisis.

### **Authorities and Policies**

The following authorities and policies empower and direct the Emergency Management Program before, during, and after disasters occur. (See Chapter 14 for a full list of applicable authorities and policies during disasters.)

- F.S. 252.38
- Lee County Resolution 75-10-15
- Presidential Policy Directive 8: National Preparedness

### **Lee County Emergency Management Program**

The Lee County Emergency Management Program is a comprehensive and collaborative effort designed to provide effective and efficient emergency management services to the community. The program engages a wide range of stakeholders from the government, private sector, and community to develop and implement emergency management plans and strategies. The program incorporates a variety of frameworks, including the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment, Prevention, Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery frameworks, to guide its operations.

The program recognizes the critical role stakeholders have in ensuring that emergency management plans and strategies are effective and meet the needs of the community. The various frameworks developed and implemented through stakeholder engagement and coordination guide the Lee County Emergency Management Program's operations. These frameworks help the program to identify, prevent, mitigate, prepare for, respond

to, and recover from emergencies and disasters. Each of these elements is addressed in more detail below.

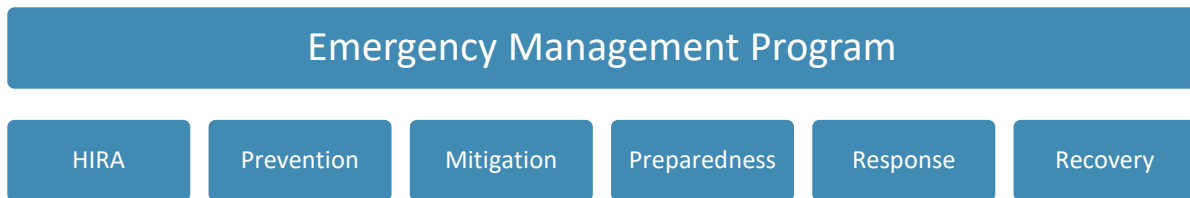


Figure 5 Lee County Emergency Management Program

### **Program Stakeholders**

Stakeholders are individuals, groups, organizations, or entities that have a vested interest in the outcomes of the Emergency Management Program. In the context of emergency management, stakeholders can be divided into various types based on their affiliations, such as local, state, and federal government agencies, private businesses, nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, and individuals. These stakeholders play an essential role in ensuring effective planning, response, and recovery from disasters.

Lee County’s Emergency Management Program emphasizes the whole community<sup>1</sup> approach to emergency management, recognizing that the community’s involvement and active participation in preparedness, response, and recovery efforts are critical to the program’s success. The program involves stakeholders at all levels of government, as well as private, business, faith-based, and nonprofit organizations.

Lee County’s Emergency Management Program incorporates stakeholder involvement in all phases of emergency management. For example, in the *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment*, stakeholders were included in the identification of hazards and risks that are unique to Lee County. In the *Joint Local Mitigation Strategy*, stakeholders collaborated to identify mitigation strategies that would reduce the impact of hazards and risks. In the *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan*, stakeholders’ roles and responsibilities are identified for all phases of emergency management, including preparedness, response, and recovery. The *Lee County Disaster Recovery Plan* outlines how stakeholders can participate in the recovery process to ensure that the community returns to normal as quickly as possible.

Stakeholders are also incorporated into response operations through the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). During an emergency, the EOC serves as a central coordination point for response efforts. Stakeholders are invited to participate in the EOC to provide situational awareness, share resources, and coordinate response efforts. This ensures that all stakeholders are working together to respond effectively to emergencies and minimize the impact on the community.

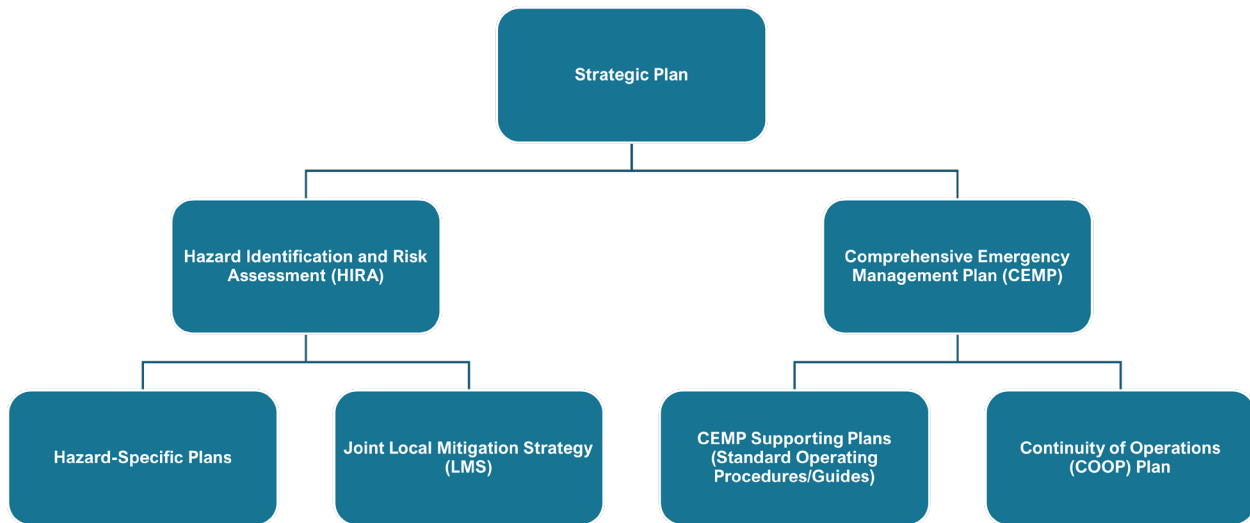


Figure 6 Plan Hierarchy

The Lee County Emergency Management Program maintains a hierarchical organizational structure for its planning documents, as seen in Figure 6 above. This structure may be altered as planning needs evolve.

**Program Frameworks**

The Lee County Emergency Management Program utilizes a comprehensive approach to emergency management, incorporating six key program frameworks: Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment, Prevention, Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. Each framework serves as a critical component in the development and implementation of the program, ensuring that the county is equipped to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from a range of hazards and disasters. Each framework includes whole-community participation in the planning, development, and execution of programs and procedures, drawn from the stakeholders mentioned above. Each framework and its part of the Emergency Management Program is described below.





## ***Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Framework***

Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) is a fundamental aspect of the Emergency Management Program. It involves identifying and analyzing hazards that threaten the community, followed by assessing associated risks. This process is essential for devising effective strategies to minimize hazards' impact and safeguard the community.

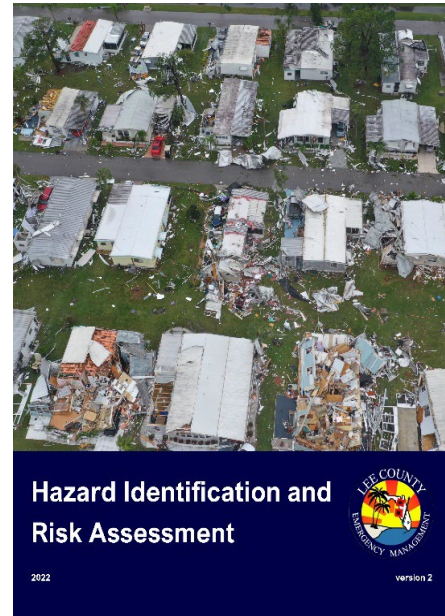
The primary goal of HIRA is to pinpoint potential hazards and evaluate their risks, enabling emergency management personnel to make informed decisions regarding disaster preparedness and response. Hazard identification identifies likely hazards in a specific area, while risk assessment gauges their likelihood and potential consequences. These processes are integral to prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery initiatives.

Lee County's HIRA documents the county's hazard and risk assessment procedures, starting with identifying potential hazards such as natural disasters, technological mishaps, and human-caused incidents. Each hazard undergoes thorough evaluation to determine associated risks, considering their likelihood and potential impact. Using this information, the county formulates strategies to mitigate risks and guides prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery actions.

Lee County's HIRA is pivotal in shaping the overall strategy of the Emergency Management Program. By identifying hazards and assessing their risks, the county can prioritize mitigation and preparedness efforts, minimizing potential disasters' impact. This ensures response and recovery actions are tailored to specific hazards, with resources allocated efficiently. The HIRA thus integrates all facets of emergency management into a cohesive program, ensuring a unified approach to safeguarding the community.

### ***Prevention Framework***

Prevention is defined as the capabilities necessary to avoid, prevent, or stop a threatened or actual act of terrorism. In the context of emergency management, prevention refers to the actions taken to prevent or mitigate the impact of hazards before they occur. The



Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment process is critical in identifying potential hazards and assessing the associated risks, which then informs the development and implementation of prevention strategies.

The National Prevention Framework (NPF) provides a comprehensive framework for integrating prevention efforts across all levels of government, private sector organizations, and the whole community. The framework is designed to complement other national frameworks, such as the National Response Framework (NRF) and the National Preparedness Goal (NPG). The framework emphasizes the importance of a risk-based approach to prevention and the need for collaboration and coordination among stakeholders. Industry practices also emphasize the importance of prevention in the context of emergency management and provide specific standards related to prevention planning, training, and exercises.

Lee County localizes the NPF and other standard practices for prevention by using the whole community concept to develop and implement the Prevention Framework. This involves engaging community members, businesses, and other organizations in the planning and implementation of prevention strategies. Lee County's prevention efforts focus on a range of hazards, including natural disasters, technological hazards, and terrorism. Prevention strategies include public education and awareness campaigns, hazard-specific training and exercises, and partnerships with local businesses and community organizations. Through these efforts, Lee County effectively identifies and addresses potential hazards, prevents, or minimizes risks, and enhances the resilience of the community.

### ***Mitigation Framework***

Hazard mitigation is the effort to reduce the impact of natural and human-caused disasters by lessening the likelihood of their occurrence and minimizing their effects. It is one of the four phases of emergency management, which also includes preparedness, response, and recovery. Mitigation aims to promote a safer, more resilient community by identifying and reducing risk through comprehensive planning, partnerships, and projects.

Mitigation is an essential part of the emergency management cycle and is closely linked with the hazard identification and risk assessment process. The HIRA helps prioritize mitigation efforts to minimize the risk of disasters. By implementing mitigation strategies, communities can reduce the severity of damage and recover more quickly in the event of a disaster.



The *Joint Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS)*<sup>2</sup> outlines the Mitigation Framework, which serves as a guide for local communities to mitigate the risk of hazards. The framework includes Coordinating Structures, Mitigation Core Capabilities, and Mitigation Priorities. Coordinating Structures are defined as the organizational and operational systems that allow for coordinated implementation of mitigation actions. The Mitigation Core Capabilities are a set of 13 capabilities that local communities should possess to effectively mitigate the risk of hazards. The Mitigation Priorities, which are determined by the community, prioritize mitigation actions based on the level of risk and potential impact.

Lee County's whole community approach involves identifying, developing, and achieving multi-jurisdictional mitigation goals and objectives. This approach aims to create partnerships between the public, private, and non-profit sectors to develop a unified mitigation strategy that addresses the needs of the entire community. Lee County also has a Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group, which plays a critical role in the development and implementation of mitigation strategies. The working group consists of representatives from various community sectors and serves as a forum for discussing mitigation issues, sharing information, and coordinating mitigation efforts across the county.

Moreover, the LMS Working Group assists the County, and its political subdivisions incorporate the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and the Community Rating System (CRS) into community risk reduction efforts. For example, as part of the hazard identification and risk assessment process<sup>3</sup> and implementation of the Mitigation Framework<sup>4,5</sup>, Floodplain Managers coordinate with the Working Group to identify damaged structures in Special Flood Hazard Areas. The two partners also ensure that NFIP and CRS considerations are included in the Mitigation Framework's priorities, goals, and objectives.

### ***Preparedness Framework***

Emergency preparedness involves the ongoing process of identifying potential risks and hazards, building capabilities, developing plans, educating the public, and engaging in activities to ensure effective response and recovery from disasters. It is a collaborative effort that engages all aspects of a community, including government agencies, emergency responders, businesses, and individuals, to mitigate the impact of disasters and to protect lives, property, and the environment. Effective emergency preparedness requires the continuous assessment and improvement of resources, plans, and procedures to ensure readiness and resilience in the face of potential threats.





Figure 6 Community and Stakeholder Engagement

The Emergency Management Program continually prepares for one or more threats or hazards in the community through a Preparedness Framework consisting of myriad cross-functional and intergovernmental activities that engage all aspects of Lee County and its municipalities. These activities include assessing risks and vulnerabilities, building capabilities, educating the public, building relationships and lines of communication, planning, training, and exercising. By effectively preparing, the Emergency Management Program enables Lee County to respond to and recover from disasters.

To prepare for disasters, the Emergency Management Program develops core capabilities, as described in the National Preparedness Goal. Examples of these core capabilities include planning, public information and warning, and operational coordination. Through a collaborative and iterative process, the County and its stakeholders identify strengths and weaknesses, which are documented in the *Lee County Capability Assessment* conducted by the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) Regional Coordinators. Plans, policies, and procedures are then developed to leverage strengths, and strategies are executed to remove or compensate for weaknesses. The process works through the improvement of existing resources, acquisition of additional or better resources, continued training and exercising that is targeted and coordinated across the Emergency Management Program, and when necessary, through mutual aid agreements, as outlined in Chapter 11.

Lee County develops and maintains capabilities in various ways. County Emergency Management staff engage stakeholders in Readiness: Training Identification and Preparedness Planning (RTIPP) to develop the *Integrated Preparedness Plan* (IPP) for training and exercises. County staff acquire physical resources, such as communication hardware or decision-support software, to be used in prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery situations. Stakeholders engage in regular advisory meetings to exchange information, discuss problems and solutions, and develop vital relationships necessary for effective emergency management operations. LCEM's primary advisory group is the Lee County Disaster Advisory Council (DAC). LCEM will establish additional advisory groups as needed. Moreover, planners work closely with internal and external

stakeholders to develop strategies and plans for managing disasters before, during, and after they occur.

The Emergency Management Program also prepares the community for disasters by applying a robust public education program. Outreach to the community informs the public about the hazards identified in the HIRA, threats to public safety, and risk reduction. The program conveys information through various forms of traditional and social media, as well as seminars, interviews, flyers, and other means. The County produces an annual *All Hazards Guide*, as well as useful web pages. The Program also uses the LeePrepares application to provide additional information to the public, including information relevant to developing hazardous situations. The *Lee County Public Outreach Standard Operating Procedure* provides procedures for these educational efforts.

### **Response Framework**

Response focuses on actions taken to address the immediate impacts of an incident. This includes measures to save lives, protect property, safeguard the environment, stabilize the community, and meet basic human needs (see Figure 8 below). Response efforts can include executing plans, policies, procedures, training, and agreed-upon roles to respond to community impacts from disasters. Response operations represent a culmination of all previous hazard and risk assessment, prevention, mitigation, and preparedness efforts brought to bear to aid the community during times of significant disruption.



Figure 8 Emergency Response Actions<sup>6</sup>



Lee County and its stakeholders leverage the Response Framework, consisting of capabilities developed through emergency preparedness, to rapidly assess hazardous situations, accurately identify community needs, and expeditiously execute plans to address them. Response efforts involve coordination and communication between various stakeholders, including municipal, regional, state, and federal partners, as well as private sector and nonprofit sector partners. The National Response Framework and other federal guidance and standard practices guide the County's response activities. All these elements working together provide principles for engaged partnership, tiered response, scalable, flexible, and adaptable operational capabilities, unity of effort through unified command, and having the readiness to act. The County also adheres to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and has adopted the Incident Command System (ICS) for effective coordination and communication during response operations, as established in Resolution No. 05-12-29.

Lee County's response to incidents also involves engagement with the whole community. This includes integrating local, regional, state, and federal partners into the EOC, coordinating with community stakeholders, and leveraging pre-existing partnerships with business, community, and interest groups to ensure community needs are identified, particularly for vulnerable populations. In addition, the County engages affected communities through information gathering, public inquiries, and public alerts, notifications, and outreach during a response.

### ***Recovery Framework***

Recovery is defined as the process of returning a community to a pre-disaster state, or a new state of resiliency, following a disaster. Recovery involves addressing the physical, emotional, and economic impacts of a disaster. Short-term recovery involves addressing the immediate needs of the community, such as search and rescue, emergency shelter, and debris removal. Long-term recovery involves the rebuilding of infrastructure, the restoration of services, and the revitalization of the community.

The HIRA process plays a critical role in the recovery process. It identifies the potential hazards and risks that a community faces, which informs the development of plans and strategies to mitigate those risks. These plans and strategies are instrumental in reducing the likelihood and impact of disasters, ultimately leading to a faster and more effective recovery. The HIRA also provides important information regarding the community's demographic, economic, and environmental profiles, including the built and natural environment; information that in addition to needs assessments provides a more



comprehensive understanding of the community.

Response is closely connected to short-term and long-term recovery. The immediate response to a disaster sets the foundation for short-term recovery efforts. Response activities, such as emergency search and rescue, medical care, and the provision of necessities, are essential for saving lives and addressing immediate needs. Long-term recovery efforts, on the other hand, focus on rebuilding and restoring the community. Lessons learned during the response phase inform these efforts and are critical for ensuring the community's long-term resiliency.

Lee County has a comprehensive Recovery Framework in place, as outlined in the *Lee County Disaster Recovery Plan*. The plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, including local government, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. The plan also outlines critical recovery processes, such as debris removal, infrastructure repair and replacement, and the restoration of essential services. Lee County implements recovery through a coordinated and collaborative effort involving all stakeholders.

Lee County's Recovery Framework is closely aligned with the National Disaster Recovery Framework and other federal guidance and industry standards and best practices. The Recovery Framework integrates and coordinates with state and federal recovery frameworks and programs, ensuring a cohesive and effective approach to recovery.

The whole community concept is critical to Lee County's recovery efforts. The county recognizes that a successful recovery requires the participation and collaboration of all members of the community, including individuals, families, businesses, and organizations. This approach ensures that recovery efforts are inclusive, equitable, and effective.

It is important to note that the *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan* addresses short-term recovery as an extension of response operations (see Chapter 5), while the *Lee County Disaster Recovery Plan* addresses long-term recovery. The two plans work in concert to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated approach to disaster recovery in Lee County.

### ***Response Roles and Responsibilities***

The Emergency Management Program's success is dependent on a collaborative approach, and therefore, the involvement of stakeholders from various sectors is critical. Emergency management stakeholders include federal, state, and local governments,



private entities, volunteer organizations, and the public. Each stakeholder group plays a vital role in the Emergency Management Program’s planning, response, mitigation, and recovery efforts.

Table 4 on the following pages outlines the specific tasks and functions assigned to each stakeholder group. By defining each stakeholder’s roles and responsibilities, the Emergency Management Program can ensure that all participants are aware of their duties and can work together seamlessly in response to an emergency or disaster.





Table 4 Emergency Management Program Primary and Support Organizations

Area of Responsibility	Primary Lead	Support
<b>Administration and Finance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee County Procurement Management</li> <li>• Lee County Human Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee County Office of Management &amp; Budget</li> </ul>
<b>Agriculture and Natural Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee County Natural Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee County Parks &amp; Recreation</li> </ul>
<b>Alert and Notification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee Control</li> <li>• Lee County Emergency Management (LCEM)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications</li> </ul>
<b>Communications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee Control</li> <li>• LCEM</li> <li>• Sheriff's Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ARES</li> </ul>
<b>Critical Infrastructure and Key Resource Restoration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee County Public Utilities</li> <li>• Lee County Solid Waste</li> <li>• Lee County Transportation</li> </ul>	
<b>Damage Assessment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee County Community Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee County GIS</li> <li>• Lee County Emergency Management</li> <li>• Lee County Facilities</li> <li>• Lee County Economic Development</li> <li>• Lee County Visitor and Convention Bureau</li> </ul>
<b>Debris Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee County Solid Waste</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contracted Vendors</li> </ul>
<b>Detection and Monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee Control</li> <li>• LCEM</li> <li>• Sheriff's Office</li> <li>• Municipal Police Departments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Florida Department of Law Enforcement</li> </ul>
<b>Direction, Control, and Coordination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Administration</li> <li>• Lee County Emergency Management (LCEM)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee County Attorney's Office</li> </ul>
<b>Donation Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LCEM</li> <li>• The United Way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faith-Based Organizations</li> </ul>
<b>Emergency Public Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Administration</li> <li>• LCEM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The United Way</li> </ul>



Area of Responsibility	Primary Lead	Support
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications</li> </ul>	
<b>Energy and Utilities Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee County Utilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Florida Power &amp; Light</li> <li>• Lee County Electric Cooperative</li> </ul>
<b>Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LCEM</li> <li>• Sheriff's Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee Control</li> <li>• Emergency Medical Services</li> <li>• Lee Department of Health</li> <li>• Lee Tran</li> <li>• Lee School District</li> <li>• Lee County Animal Services</li> </ul>
<b>Fatality Management and Mortuary Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical Examiner's Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee County Sheriff's Office</li> </ul>
<b>Firefighting / Fire Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire Districts</li> <li>• GeoDivisions</li> </ul>	
<b>Food, Water, and Commodities Distribution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LCEM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee County Human and Veteran Services</li> <li>• Lee County Parks and Recreation</li> </ul>
<b>Hazardous Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fire Districts</li> <li>• GeoDivisions</li> </ul>	
<b>Information Collection, Analysis, and Dissemination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LCEM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee County Departments</li> <li>• Stakeholders and Partners</li> </ul>
<b>Law Enforcement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee County Sheriff's Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipal Police Departments</li> <li>• Florida Department of Law Enforcement</li> <li>• FHP</li> <li>• Florida Wildlife Commission</li> </ul>
<b>Mass Care and Sheltering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LCEM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lee County Human and Veteran Services</li> <li>• Lee County Emergency Medical Services</li> <li>• Lee County Department of Transportation</li> <li>• Florida Department of Health – Lee</li> </ul>
<b>Military Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Florida National Guard</li> </ul>	
<b>Mutual Aid</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LCEM</li> </ul>	



Area of Responsibility	Primary Lead	Support
<b>Private Sector Coordination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Economic Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Visitors and Convention Bureau</li> <li>Lee County Sports Development</li> </ul>
<b>Public Health and Medical Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Emergency Medical Services</li> <li>Florida Department of Health – Lee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LeeHealth</li> </ul>
<b>Public Works and Engineering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Utilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Facilities Construction and Management</li> </ul>
<b>Resource Management and Logistics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LCEM</li> <li>Lee County Public Safety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Procurement Management</li> </ul>
<b>Search and Rescue</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire Districts</li> <li>GeoDivisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sheriff's Office</li> </ul>
<b>Transportation Systems and Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Transportation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Transit</li> </ul>
<b>Volunteer Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LCEM</li> <li>The United Way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Human and Veteran Services</li> </ul>
<b>Warning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee Control</li> <li>LCEM</li> <li>Sheriff's Office</li> <li>Florida Department of Health – Lee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> The whole-community concept emphasizes that emergency management is everyone’s responsibility, and all members of a community should be engaged in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters. This approach recognizes the diversity of skills, knowledge, and resources that different stakeholders bring to the table, and emphasizes the importance of partnerships and collaboration among stakeholders.

<sup>2</sup> The current *Joint Local Mitigation Strategy* expires on June 19, 2027

<sup>3</sup> c.f. *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment* (2022), Chapter 4 Natural Hazards, Flood, pp. 82-87

<sup>4</sup> c.f. *Joint Local Mitigation Strategy* (2022), Chapter 2 Hazard Mitigation, pp. 17-20

<sup>5</sup> c.f. *Mitigation Action Plan* (2022)

<sup>6</sup> Department of Homeland Security, Federal Emergency Management Agency, *National Response Framework* (October 2019), 4<sup>th</sup> ed., Introduction, p. 2.



# Chapter 4 Coordination Framework

Threats and hazards of various types affect the well-being of Lee County and its residents frequently. Authorities, operations, partnerships, and capabilities used daily by Lee County are typically sufficient to manage such incidents effectively. The scope of some incidents, however, exceeds the capabilities of the County’s daily operations to address their consequences. In such instances, additional authorities, resources, and personnel are needed from a multitude of organizations to ensure life safety and the preservation of the community and the environment.

As the size and complexity of incidents grow, additional coordination and communication structures are needed to integrate disparate cross-sector and cross-functional operations. Lee County and its partners use principles of unified operations and incident command to achieve this extra level of coordination and communication. The Coordination Framework incorporates these principles into the County’s overarching approach to managing disasters. Figure 11 below illustrates the concept for the scale at which the framework will be applied, based on the needs of the community and the priorities set forth by County leadership.

The Coordination Framework establishes the County’s processes for achieving cohesion and effectiveness between different organizations, sectors, and levels of government. The framework integrates the National Incident Management System (NIMS) into the County’s Emergency Management Program. In doing so, the framework sets forth principles and protocols for local, state, and federal coordination in Lee County. Finally, the framework describes the County’s Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and its role in coordination.

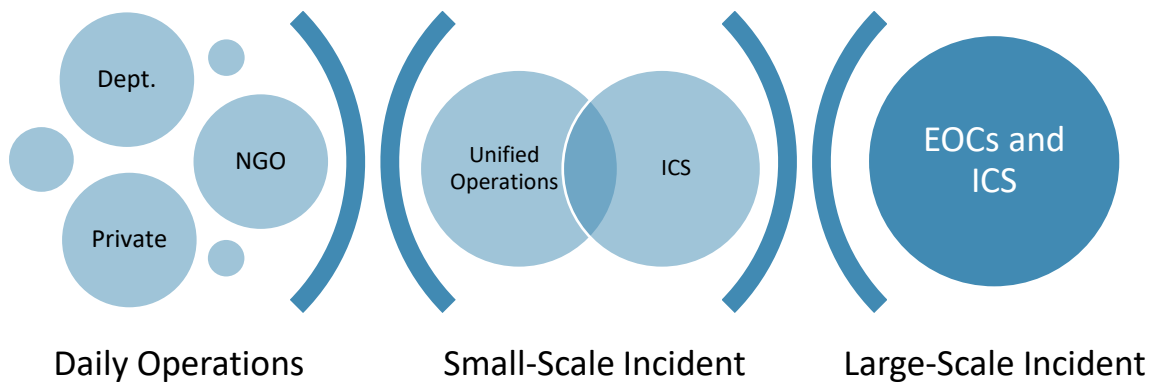


Figure 11 Operations Coordination by Incident Size and Complexity

# National Incident Management System

*NIMS consists of three major components:*

- *Resource Management*
- *Command & Coordination*
- *Communications & Information Management*

*NIMS sets the following principles:*

- *Flexibility*
- *Standardization*
- *Unity of Effort*

*NIMS standardizes concepts and language for the following:*

- *Operational Functions*
- *Resource Descriptions*
- *Incident Facilities*

*NIMS provides guidance for action, planning, and integrated communications.*

Lee County uses NIMS to organize and coordinate its incident operations<sup>1</sup>. NIMS standardizes concepts and language, which in turn facilitates easier communication and coordination between stakeholders and jurisdictions. NIMS also allows for and encourages scalability and flexibility in response and recovery. While Lee County adapts some terms and combines some concepts, the core elements and terminology of NIMS remain consistent for its Emergency Management Program. Lee County Emergency Management is responsible for implementing NIMS for the County, under guidance from the Emergency Management Division Chief.

NIMS encapsulates three core areas: resource management, command and coordination, and communications and information

management. This chapter concentrates on command and coordination. Specifically, this section describes the following:

- Management Characteristics
- Incident Command System
- Emergency Operations Center
- Joint Information System

## ***Management Characteristics***

NIMS provides Lee County with a comprehensive means for organizing and responding to disasters<sup>2</sup>. For example, the system provides common terminology that allows for multiple agencies and organizations to effectively arrange themselves and take unified action. Using NIMS allows for a modular organization that scales according to the needs of the situation and to achieve agreed-upon goals and objectives. The principles espoused by the system ensure an appropriate and manageable span of control over operations



(see the subsection below). NIMS provides instruction, guidance, and protocols for incident action planning that translates intelligence, capabilities, and decision-making into achievements that save lives and protect property. Finally, NIMS establishes methodologies for establishing and operating areas for command and control, such as Command Posts and EOCs. Figure 12 on the next page lists all the management characteristics associated with the National Incident Management System.



*Figure 12 NIMS Management Characteristics*

### ***Incident Command System***

The Incident Command System (ICS) serves as the strategic direction and coordination structure for tactical decision-making during incident operations. It allows for scalable operations, enabling personnel to organize and adapt based on situational needs, ensuring proper span of control. ICS facilitates multi-agency coordination through manageable chains of command and formal lines of communication, including liaisons connecting the County with neighboring jurisdictions, and the state, and federal government. The system aids direction, control, and coordination through management by objectives and incident action planning.

The Incident Commander takes charge of the Command Staff, which includes the Public Information Officers and Liaison Officers. Each section of the command system (Operations, Plans, Logistics, and Finance & Administration) is led by a chief responsible

for overseeing their respective function and activities. To ensure effective incident management, the Incident Commander, Section Chiefs, and other essential personnel in the County’s incident command structure receive consistent training on ICS and their roles and responsibilities. Throughout incident and post-incident operations, section chiefs, and their staff coordinate information and decision-making using frameworks established in this plan, industry practices, lessons learned from previous incidents, and direction from the Executive Policy Group.



*Figure 13 Focus for Each ICS Function*

Directing incident operations, the County’s Executive Policy Group provides guidance to the Incident Commander. The Incident Commander, in turn, leads operations with support from the Section Chiefs. Incident operations involve participation from municipal liaisons and representatives from other government entities (e.g., the State of Florida), ensuring comprehensive collaboration. Additionally, a Public Information Officer oversees the County’s Joint Information System and Joint Information Center, streamlining communication during incidents. If required, the Incident Commander may activate an Intelligence/Investigations Section to enhance intelligence gathering and investigative efforts.

Table 5 ICS Functions

Function	Description
<b>Command Staff</b>	Includes the Incident Commander, Public Information Officer, Liaison Officer, and others. Sets goals and objectives, integrates stakeholders, works with senior officials to develop policy direction, and ensures timely and accurate information to the public.
<b>Operations Section</b>	Executes the LeeCOP. Coordinates closely with incident personnel to identify and address unmet resource needs. Supports on-scene personnel and on-scene command. Organized functionally. Managed by the Operations Chief.
<b>Plans Section</b>	Manages situational awareness efforts and develops activation-related plans. Works closely with personnel to collect, analyze, and disseminate incident information and intelligence. Integrates technical specialists with the EOC. Managed by the Plans Chief.
<b>Logistics Section</b>	Provides advance support to incident operations. Works closely with the Operations Section to source and procure resources. Provide resources and services in support of the EOC. Managed by the Logistics Chief.
<b>Finance &amp; Administration Section</b>	Manages the operation's financial, administrative, and cost analysis perspectives. Track expenditures, monitor funding sources, and report costs. Managed by the Finance and Administration Chief.

Figure 13A provides a general summary of the County's ICS structure. Additional information related to each of the County's typical ICS sections and support functions is provided in the following documents:

- *Operations Section Standard Operating Guide*
- *Plans Section Standard Operating Guide*
- *Logistics Section Standard Operating Guide*
- *Finance and Administration Section Standard Operating Guide*
- *Joint Information System and Center Standard Operating Guide*





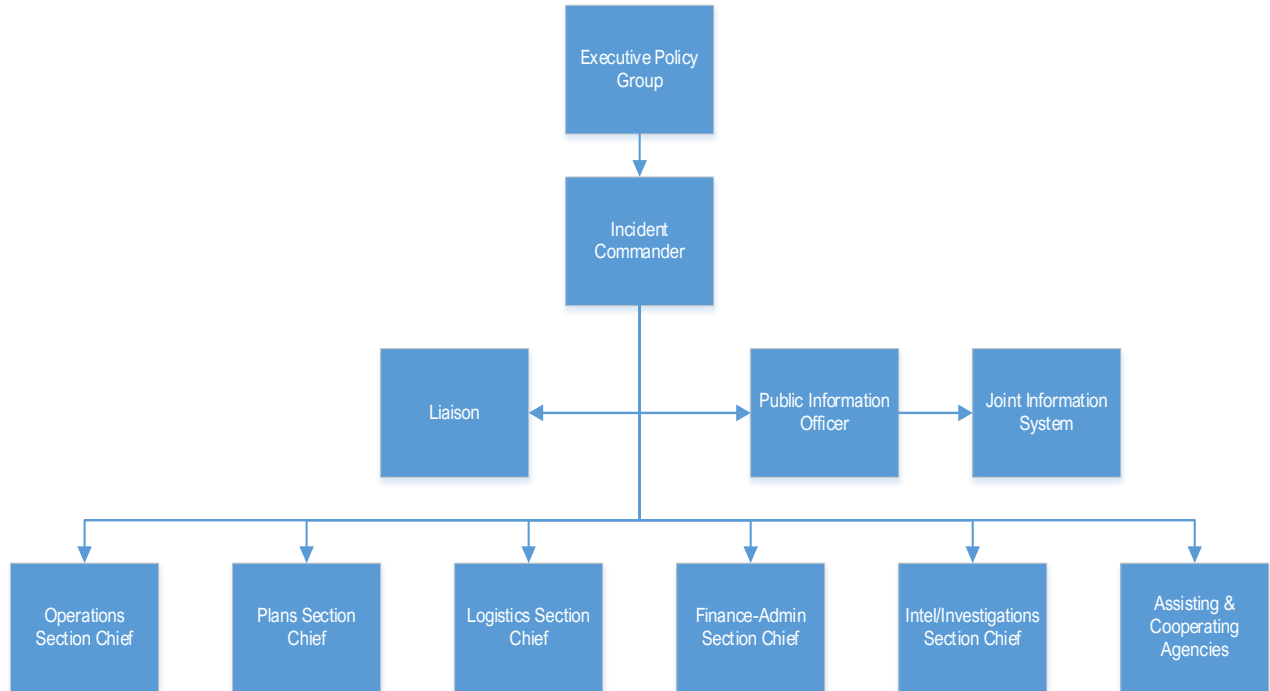


Figure 13A ICS Structure

Tactical control of people, resources, and information is kept at the lowest level of operations possible. Some situations, such as hurricanes, necessitate operational decision-making at a more centralized location, such as the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The EOC may also be used by the County to support and assist on-scene operations. The *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan* assumes most disaster response and short-term recovery operations will occur in the Lee County EOC.

## Emergency Operations Center

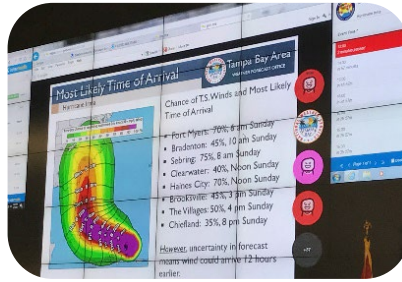
Lee County maintains an active EOC as its primary facility for coordinating incident response and short-term recovery operations. The EOC is the location “where staff from multiple agencies typically come together to address imminent threats and hazards and to provide coordinated support to incident command, on-scene personnel, and/or other EOC.”<sup>3</sup> The County uses its EOC to bring together representatives that make up the Emergency Management Program to optimize unity of effort. The primary functions of the EOC include the following<sup>4</sup>:

- Collecting, analyzing, and sharing information.
- Supporting resource needs and requests, including allocation and tracking.

- Coordinating plans and determining current and future needs; and
- In some cases, providing coordination and policy direction.



Supports resource needs and requests



Coordinates plans and determines current and future needs



Provides coordination and policy direction

Figure 14 Hallmarks of an Emergency Operations Center<sup>5</sup>

Key personnel for the EOC include the Executive Policy Group, the Incident Commander, section chiefs for each of the functional areas, and government liaisons. Other personnel include technical specialists, representatives from response and short-term recovery partners, and (at times) the media. EOC personnel organize according to their role and responsibility under ICS. Together, EOC personnel support resource needs and requests, coordinate plans and provide coordination and policy direction (see 14 above).

Communication within the EOC and between it and other partners and stakeholders occurs according to the Information and Intelligence Management Framework addressed in Chapter 5. Resources necessary for activating, operating, and deactivating the EOC are addressed in Chapter 1. The *Lee County Emergency Operations Center Standard Operating Procedures* provide additional information on EOC activation, operation, and deactivation procedures.

### **EOC Activation**

Lee County will coordinate response and recovery operations from the EOC based on the needs of the community; the anticipation of events; or in response to an incident. The County maintains the EOC at a Level 3 activation for day-to-day operations (see Table 6 for a description of EOC activation levels). Circumstances that might lead the EOC to heightened levels of activation include the following:

- Implementation of one or more frameworks of this plan in response to an incident.
- More than one jurisdiction becomes involved in an incident and/or the incident

involves multiple agencies.

- There is a reason to believe an occurring incident could expand rapidly, involve cascading effects, or require additional resources.
- A similar incident in the past led to EOC activation.
- The Incident Commander or an appointed or elected official directs that the EOC be activated.
- An incident is imminent (e.g., hurricane warnings, slow river flooding, predictions of hazardous weather, elevated threat levels).
- Threshold events described in the emergency operations plan occur; and/or
- Significant impacts on the population are anticipated.

*Table 6 EOC Activation Levels*

Activation Level		Description
3	Normal Operations / Steady State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities that are normal for the EOC when no incident or specific risk or hazard has been identified.</li> <li>• Routine watch and warning activities if the EOC normally houses this function</li> </ul>
2	Enhanced Steady-State / Partial Activation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certain EOC team members/organizations are activated to monitor a credible threat, risk, or hazard and/or to support the response to a new and potentially evolving incident</li> </ul>
1	Full Activation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EOC team is activated, including personnel from all assisting agencies, to support the response to a major incident or credible threat</li> </ul>

The level of activity within an EOC often grows as the size, scope, and complexity of the incident expands. If the incident management efforts require additional support and coordination, additional staff may be activated. This will be done to involve more disciplines, mobilize additional resources, inform the public, address media inquiries, involve senior elected and appointed officials, and request outside assistance. The Executive Policy Group and the Incident Commander, with input from the section chiefs and other relevant stakeholders, will determine staffing and operating levels based on circumstantial needs and priorities set forth by County leadership.

***EOC Deactivation***

The Incident Commander will deactivate EOC staff as circumstances allow. At the direction of County leadership, the Incident Commander will return the EOC to its normal operations/steady state condition. Deactivation will typically occur when the incident no



longer needs the support and coordination functions provided by the EOC staff or those functions can be managed by individual organizations or by steady-state coordination mechanisms. EOC leadership will phase deactivation depending on mission needs. At the conclusion of their roles and responsibilities at the facility, EOC staff will complete resource demobilization and transfer any ongoing incident support/recovery activities before deactivating.

### ***Alternate EOCs***

The County also maintains agreements with off-site locations for secondary facilities, in the event the primary facility is no longer operational. The *Lee County Emergency Management Continuity of Operations Plan* provides more detail and information on the County's alternate EOC facilities.

## **Joint Information System**

County and municipal departments, other levels of government (e.g., the State), and stakeholders develop and share public information throughout the life cycle of a disaster. The Joint Information System (JIS) connects these entities into a unified, cohesive group that enables the County and its partners to effectively integrate and coordinate public messaging. In turn, this allows the public to receive vital information that is accurate and timely. The JIS consists of “the processes, procedures, and tools to enable communications to the public, incident personnel, the media, and other stakeholders.”<sup>6</sup>

The County's JIS provides response and recovery efforts with a means for:<sup>7</sup>

- Developing and delivering coordinated interagency messages.
- Developing, recommending, and executing public information plans and strategies.
- Advising the Executive Policy Group and the Incident Commander concerning public affairs that could affect incident management; and
- Addressing and managing rumors and inaccurate information that could undermine public confidence.

Key elements of the JIS include interagency coordination; gathering, verifying, coordinating, and disseminating consistent messages; public affairs support for decision-makers; and flexibility, modularity, and adaptability. These elements are organized according to standard plans, protocols, procedures, and structures used by the County and its partners daily, as well as according to the details laid out in the *Lee County Joint Information System and Center Standard Operating Guide*.



The JIS operates from a Joint Information Center (JIC), which can be either remote or located in a fixed facility. Typically, the JIC is co-located with the EOC when that facility is activated to a Level 2 or a Level 1.

The Public Information Officer (PIO) for Lee County manages the JIS and the JIC. This position works closely with County leadership, the Executive Policy Group, and the Incident Commander. The PIO will act as the direct interface between the County and the media and direct staff engagement with media inquiries and the public. Under the PIO's direction, the JIS will create coordinated and consistent messaging by:

- Identifying key information to be communicated to the public.
- Crafting clear messages that can be understood by the public, including individuals with Limited English Proficiency, those with disabilities, and others with access and functional needs.
- Prioritizing messages to ensure timely delivery of information without overwhelming the audience.
- Verifying the accuracy of information; and
- Disseminating messages using the most effective means.

## **Coordination**

Lee County uses NIMS to organize personnel, arrange information management and communications, and manage resources. These principles enable the Emergency Management Program to coordinate activities within the County, between the County and its municipalities, and between the County and external entities. The following section describes how coordination will be achieved in each of these areas before, during, and after an incident occurs.

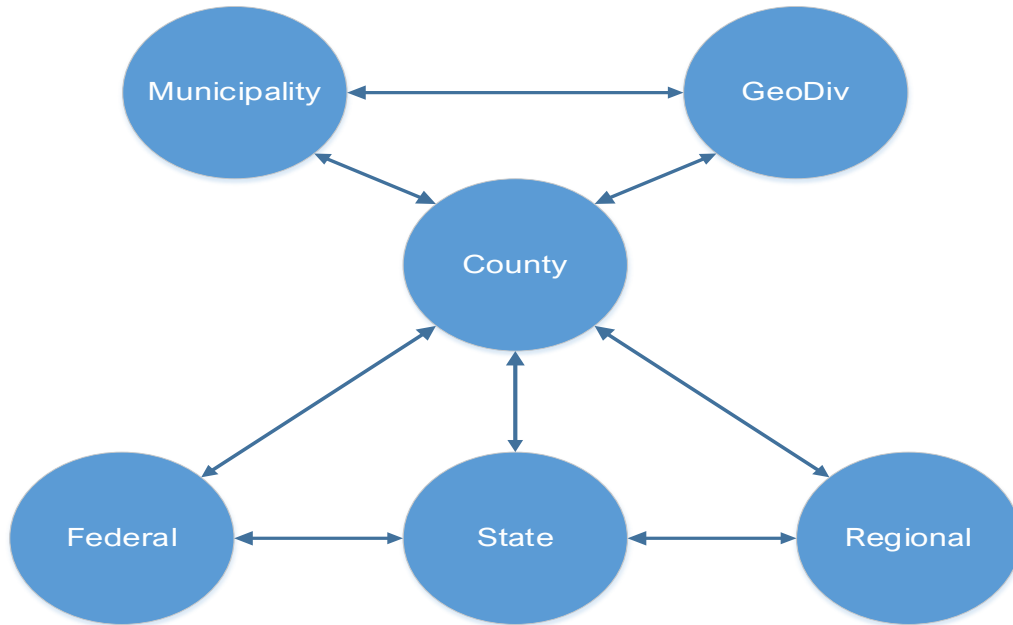
### ***County Coordination***

The Emergency Management Program coordinates pre-incident, incident, and post-incident operations in various ways. Pre-incident coordination includes maintaining advisory committees that address one or more areas or functions of the program; collaborative planning, training, and exercising; participation in state and national professional associations; and daily lines of communication and control.

Depending on the size and complexity of an incident, coordination of response and recovery operations between County departments and stakeholders may occur in different ways. Smaller or less complex incidents will likely be coordinated through



heightened means of communication between County departments and stakeholders, using a smaller-scaled version of ICS<sup>8</sup>. Further coordination of small-scale operations may include the Lee County Emergency Management – Emergency Support Assistance Team (ESAT). Large-scale and or complex operations will likely be coordinated through the County EOC. The EOC’s ICS structure integrates the County’s departments and stakeholders into a single unified command that allows for more effective and efficient coordination and greater visibility on accountability.



*Figure 15 Concept for Coordination*

Coordination between County departments and stakeholders also occurs through plan integration. Consistent and regular planning conducted in collaboration with all County departments and critical stakeholders helps to unify response and recovery plans, policies, and procedures. In this way, prescribed activity occurs in a fashion that has already been coordinated with other preceding, simultaneous, and succeeding activities. Incident action planning during incident response and recovery operations further coordinates operation efforts. Figure 15 above depicts the Emergency Management Program’s scheme for coordination and how the County fits into the concept.

### ***Municipal and Geographic Response Division Coordination***

Each independent municipality within Lee County establishes its management structure to use in its jurisdiction, based on its written plans and procedures. Coordination between municipalities and the County’s Emergency Management Program occurs through



communication networks that exist before the onset of a threat or hazard. For example, executive leaders for the County and municipalities engage and conference with one another immediately before, during, and after an incident. Emergency management leaders contact one another and discuss information, options, and strategies.

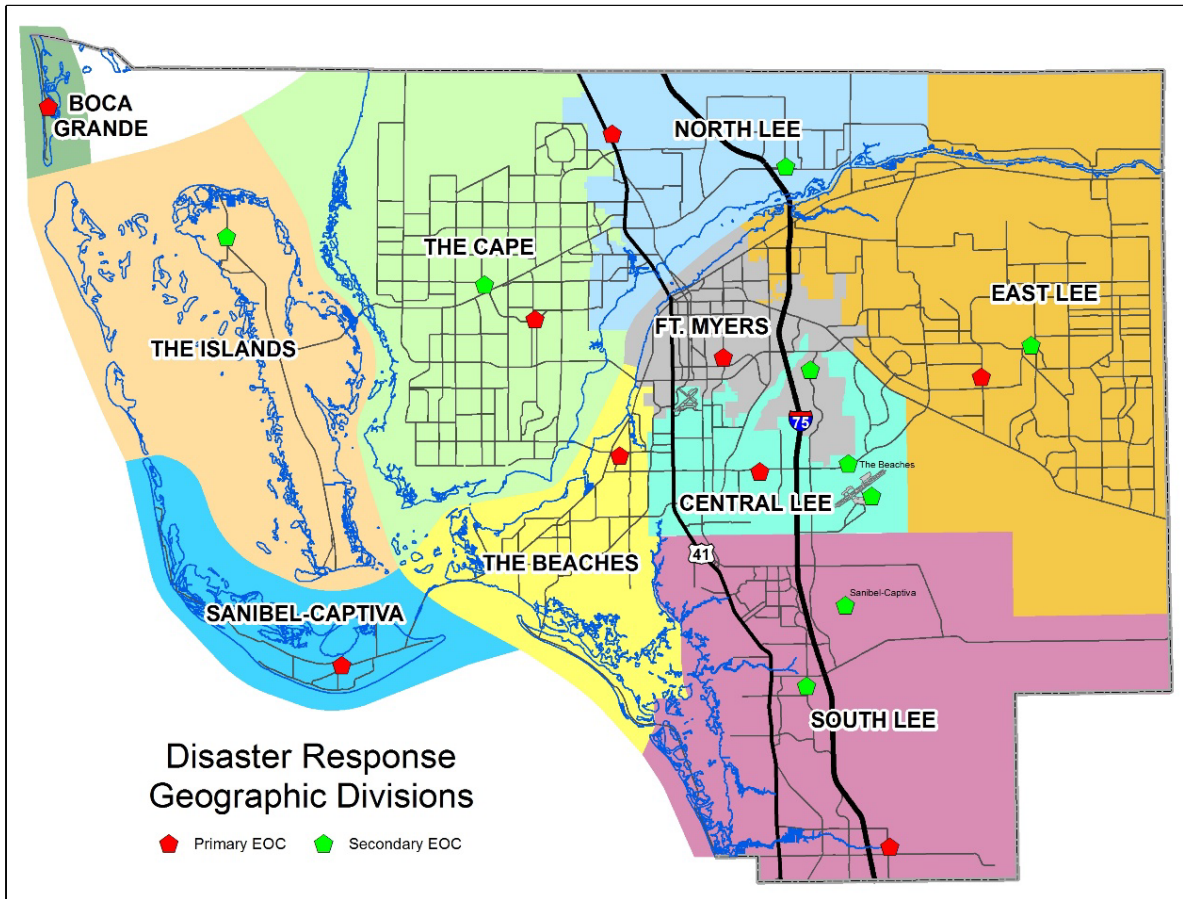


Figure 16 Lee County Geographic Divisions

During incident and post-incident operations, representatives from each municipality help staff the County EOC as liaisons, who facilitate additional coordination between the County and municipalities. These liaisons help to provide and clarify information and decision-making between the two groups. They also help coordinate municipal resource requests, which are directed to the State of Florida through the County EOC.

To better facilitate immediate control, and coordination during large-scale or complex operations, the County EOC may elect to set up one or more Geographic Response Divisions (GeoDivision see Figure 16 above). These divisions further localize the application of resources and decision-making at the tactical level for certain activities,

particularly those associated with Fire and Rescue operations. Each division activated during operations may coordinate with other agencies and use resources to complete tasks. Ten such divisions exist in the County, although not all may be activated during a given incident. Each independent municipality within Lee County is also designated as a Geographic Division or is part of a Geographic Division to coordinate response operations. The *Operations Section Standard Operating Guide* provides further information on this aspect of direction, control, and coordination for the County.

Lee County Emergency Management has established Community Coordination Teams (CCTs) that serve in the highly impacted areas of the county during the response and recovery phases. The CCT staff have geographic familiarity of the affected community being served, as well as familiarity with members of non-profit organizations, non-governmental organizations, and volunteers. They are stationed at pre-identified facilities to engage with community stakeholders and ensure the resource needs are communicated to the EOC and received on-site. They will coordinate with the Geographic Divisions to ensure Mission Requests are followed up on, and any additional County-specific support needs are communicated to the EOC. The goal of the CCTs is to assist these impacted communities in the transition to recovery and ensure there is consistent communication with the EOC.

### ***Regional Coordination***

The Emergency Management Program maintains extensive networks and relationships with regional partners daily. For example, Lee County is one of several counties that comprise Region 9 of the State of Florida's emergency management system<sup>9</sup>. As pre-incident activities, Region 9 counties meet at least quarterly to exchange professional practices and information and to establish and maintain formal and informal means of communication. Region 9 counties also collaborate on regional planning efforts and on building regional capabilities. These formal and informal means of communication are then leveraged during incident and post-incident operations to coordinate efforts.

Regional counties, state programs, and nonprofits coordinate incident and post-incident operations with one another through a variety of means. These include regularly scheduled and ad hoc teleconferences, emails, phone calls, working groups, and liaisons. Each County uses WebEOC with shared accounts through the State of Florida, which facilitates resource and situational awareness between regional partners. The Florida Division of Emergency Management also deploys Regional Coordinators to the region, who help facilitate coordination between regional partners and between them and the





State of Florida daily and during incident operations.

### ***State and Federal Coordination***

The State of Florida is responsible for assisting when an incident overwhelms local government resources. The State also participates in the exchange of data and information between jurisdictions and stakeholders. It supports local government communication with the federal government, state governments, and other local governments. It also provides personnel support and assistance. These efforts will most often be accomplished through the State Emergency Response Team (SERT) headquartered in Tallahassee, Florida, under the direction of the Governor and the State Coordinating Officer.

Coordination between Lee County and the State of Florida is achieved through various methods. Consistent and regular contact through conferences, meetings, email, in-person conversations, and so forth between state and County personnel establishes formal and informal means of communication and relationships. These in turn become channels for coordination during incidents, in addition to formal and regularly held conference calls between state and County personnel during response and recovery operations. Coordination between the two groups is further achieved through WebEOC, which provides a shared platform for resource management and situational awareness.

Lee County may request a SERT Liaison to assist with coordination between it and the state. The State of Florida may also dispatch forward command elements to Lee County to aid in communications and coordination. Regional Logistical Staging Areas operated by the state and located in the County help to coordinate resource distribution during operations. The state may also provide a State Management Team (SMT) to assess needs and coordinate response activities with Lee County. These teams may also help with managing donated goods and services, organizing, and providing logistical support for volunteer groups, or providing relief personnel for the County EOC.

Most coordination between Lee County and the federal government will occur through the State of Florida, including the process for applying for a disaster declaration. The County may request federal liaisons to be onsite to assist with coordination as well. Coordination with federal assets and resources during post-incident operations will be achieved through the Joint Field Office (JFO), Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs), Multi-Agency Resource Centers (MARC), and other satellite facilities and groups.



## Roles and Responsibilities

Table 7 below enumerates the roles and responsibilities for managing and implementing the Coordination Framework. While prudent coordination and collaboration are a shared responsibility in the Emergency Management Program, certain roles are specific to the execution of this framework. These are identified and summarized below for primary personnel; additional roles and responsibilities for staff supporting each function are enumerated in their respective section standard operating guides.

*Table 7 Coordination Roles and Responsibilities*

Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
<b>NIMS Coordinator</b>	Emergency Management – Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide training/exercises to build NIMS expertise.</li> <li>• Ensure NIMS compliance in plans, policies, and procedures.</li> <li>• Communicate with the State’s NIMS Coordinator</li> </ul>
<b>Executive Policy Group</b>	County Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sets incident mission, priorities, and policies.</li> <li>• Provides senior-level guidance and decision-making.</li> <li>• Provides an interface between elected officials and incident response and recovery operations.</li> <li>• Organize and implement States of Local Emergency</li> <li>• Perform intergovernmental communication and coordination</li> </ul>
<b>Incident Commander</b>	Emergency Management – Chief (or as assigned based on the needs of the incident)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct and oversee response and short-term recovery activities.</li> <li>• Ensure incident safety.</li> <li>• Set incident goals and objectives.</li> <li>• Establish the ICS organization.</li> <li>• Approve the LeeCOP</li> <li>• Coordinate Command and General Staff activities.</li> <li>• Approve resource requests and use of volunteers and auxiliary personnel.</li> <li>• Authorize information release to the media</li> </ul>
<b>Public Information Officer</b>	Communications Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop accurate, accessible, and timely information for use in multimedia outlets.</li> </ul>



Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor media information relevant to incident planning.</li> <li>• Understand and advise incident command on necessary limits on information release.</li> <li>• Obtain the Incident Commander’s approval of public materials.</li> <li>• Conduct and prepare officials for media briefings.</li> <li>• Arrange tours, community outreach events, interviews, and briefings.</li> <li>• Make information about the incident available to incident personnel.</li> <li>• Identify and implement rumor control methods.</li> </ul>
<b>Operations Section Chief</b>	Emergency Management – Deputy Chief, Readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage operations.</li> <li>• Develop the operations portion of the LeeCOP.</li> <li>• Supervise the execution of the operations portions of the LeeCOP.</li> <li>• Request additional resources to support operations.</li> <li>• Approve the release of resources from active operational assignments.</li> <li>• Make or approve expedient changes to the LeeCOP.</li> <li>• Maintain close contact with the Incident Commander, subordinate personnel, and other agencies</li> </ul>
<b>Plans Section Chief</b>	Emergency Management – Deputy Chief, Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct and facilitate operation briefings and planning meetings.</li> <li>• Collect and manage all incident-relevant operational data.</li> <li>• Supervise the preparation of the LeeCOP.</li> <li>• Provide input to the Incident Commander and Operations in preparing the LeeCOP.</li> <li>• Conduct and facilitate planning meetings.</li> <li>• Compile and display incident status information.</li> <li>• Determine the need for specialized resources.</li> </ul>



Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
<b>Logistics Section Chief</b>	Public Safety – Logistics Designee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish specialized data collection systems as necessary</li> <li>• Provide facilities, transportation, communications, supplies, equipment, maintenance, and food services for incident personnel.</li> <li>• Manage all incident logistics.</li> <li>• Provide logistical input to the LeeCOP.</li> <li>• Brief Logistics Staff as needed.</li> <li>• Identify anticipated and known incident service and support requirements.</li> <li>• Request additional resources as needed.</li> <li>• Identify, obtain, maintain, track, and demobilize operational resources.</li> </ul>
<b>Finance &amp; Administration Section Chief</b>	Director of Procurement Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage all financial aspects of an incident.</li> <li>• Provide financial and cost analysis information as requested.</li> <li>• Ensure compensation and claims functions are addressed relative to the incident.</li> <li>• Ensure that personnel time records are completed accurately.</li> <li>• Ensure that all obligation documents initiated at the incident are properly prepared and completed.</li> <li>• Briefing agency administrative personnel on all incident-related financial issues needing attention or follow up.</li> <li>• Provide input to the LeeCOP.</li> </ul>
<b>Liaison</b>	Municipal appointee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as point of contact for the agency represented.</li> <li>• Maintain a current contact list for agency represented.</li> <li>• Monitor incident operations to identify current and potential interorganizational problems.</li> <li>• Participate in planning meetings.</li> <li>• Provide current resource status.</li> <li>• Provide agency-specific information and requirements</li> </ul>



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<sup>1</sup> Lee County Resolution No. 05-12-29

<sup>2</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency (October 2017), *National Incident Management System*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Sect. III-A NIMS Management Characteristics, pp. 20-23

<sup>3</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency (2017), *National Incident Management System*, Section III-C Emergency Operations Center, p. 35

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency (August 2021), *National Incident Management System Emergency Operations Center How-To Quick Reference Guide*, p. 3

<sup>6</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency (October 2017), *National Incident Management System*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., Sect. III-E Joint Information System (JIS), p. 42

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> The 2019 infiltration of the County's computer network offers an excellent example of coordination during a relatively small-scale incident. In response to the intrusion, County leadership activated portions of the *Lee County CEMP* and instituted a scaled-down version of ICS. In part because regular means of communication were not available at the time, coordination occurred primarily through regular, periodic meetings between executive leadership and response and recovery personnel. Because of the relatively small-scale nature of the incident, the County EOC'S was not activated.

<sup>9</sup> Region 9 consists of Collier, DeSoto, Glades, Hendry, Highlands, Lee, Manatee, Okeechobee, and Sarasota Counties (<https://www.floridadisaster.org/dem/directors-office/regions/>)



# Chapter 5 Response & Short-Term Recovery Framework

This chapter delves into the intricate coordination and execution of activities vital for addressing immediate and evolving needs during and after an incident. It serves as a blueprint for the swift, efficient, and effective mobilization of resources and personnel to manage crises, aiming to swiftly transition from immediate life-saving actions to the initial steps of community recovery. The Response and Short-Term Recovery Framework recognizes the fluid nature of emergencies, where the lines between response and the onset of recovery are often intertwined. The chapter illustrates how the County navigates this complexity by detailing structured approaches and strategies that enable a rapid shift from response to recovery efforts.

The chapter defines and differentiates response and recovery operations. It then outlines the operational scope and procedures that govern the County's response to emergencies by discussing operations by function. The chapter addresses the roles and responsibilities of each function and how organizations and personnel work together to achieve success. The discussions keep details at a high level, emphasizing the importance of agility and adaptability in the face of evolving scenarios.

Lee County and its stakeholders implement response and short-term recovery operations in a fashion like that described in the Basic Plan's Concept of Operations (see Chapter 2). Capabilities, roles, responsibilities, coordination, and so forth that undergird operations come into being through the Emergency Management Program (see Chapter 3). The different functions, organizations, personnel, and priorities all come together into a unified mission through the County's Coordination Framework (see Chapter 4), facilitated through a shared understanding of the situation (see Chapter 6) and robust communication (see Chapter 7).

In essence, this Response and Short-Term Recovery Framework encapsulates the essence of Lee County's approach to managing emergencies—a comprehensive, coordinated, and proactive strategy that places the welfare and stability of the community at its core. It bridges the gap between the immediate urgency of response operations and the critical needs of early recovery, ensuring that the foundations laid during the response phase contribute to a robust and resilient recovery process.



## Authorities and Policies

The following authorities and policies empower and direct short-term recovery operations (see Chapter 14 for a full list of applicable authorities and policies during disasters).

- FS 252.36
- Lee County Administrative Code 7-6
- Lee County Administrative Code 7-8
- 83-25 “Restricting Access across the Sanibel Causeway under Emergency Conditions”

## Response Versus Short-Term Recovery

Response operations refer to those critical actions undertaken immediately before, during, and immediately after an incident occurs. These operations primarily address urgent threats to life, property, and the environment. In this phase, emergency response teams rapidly mobilize to provide essential services such as medical aid, firefighting, search and rescue, and the containment of hazards. The swift coordination and deployment of resources, including personnel, equipment, and communication tools, are pivotal in mitigating the impact of the incident. Response operations minimize casualties, prevent further damage, stabilize the incident, and establish a foundation for the subsequent recovery process.

Short-term recovery operations, conversely, refer to the phase of recovery that occurs after immediate response activities to an incident have ended. This phase focuses on meeting the immediate needs of affected individuals and restoring critical infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, and communication networks. Short-term recovery operations may also involve providing temporary housing, food, and other necessities to those who have been displaced by an incident. The primary goal of short-term recovery operations is to restore a sense of normalcy and stability to the affected community as quickly as possible.

While response operations typically last for a few hours to a few days, short-term recovery operations can last for several weeks or months. Often, the same agencies and staff undertake both operations simultaneously.

Short-term recovery also differs from long-term recovery by the duration of effort and focus of activities. While short-term recovery focuses on immediate needs and stabilization, long-term recovery focuses on long-term rebuilding and restoration of the



affected community. This chapter of the *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan* (CEMP) addresses short-term recovery, while the *Lee County Disaster Recovery Plan* addresses long-term recovery.

## **Disaster Recovery Centers**

Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) and Multi-Agency Resource Centers (MARC)s serve as centralized hubs offering support and recovery services to affected residents after incidents. DRCs mainly provide Federal and State agency services, while MARCs also offer localized resources from faith-based organizations and nonprofits. Ideally, DRCs and MARCs are co-located to minimize travel and enhance coordination. Lee County may also deploy Disaster Survivor Assistance Teams (DSATs) and Mobile Resource Intake Centers (MRICs) to assist survivors, providing registration for Federal assistance and field observations to enhance situational awareness. Throughout these operations, Lee County prioritizes engagement with individuals with access and functional needs.

### ***Locating DRCs and MARCs***

Lee County Division of Emergency Management maintains a list of pre-identified sites for DRCs and provides it to the Florida Division of Emergency Management on a regular basis. The actual selection of DRC/MARC sites depend on post-incident conditions, including the availability and usability of land and facilities. The Plans Section Chief is responsible for requesting and coordinating DRCs/MARCs on behalf of the County. In consultation with the Incident Commander, Operations Section Chief, County departments (e.g., Facilities Construction & Management), and affected municipalities, the Plan Section Chief determines if the situation has stabilized sufficiently to request a DRC. Once the determination is made, the Plans Section Chief submits a request to the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC). The Plans Section Chief coordinates with the SEOC throughout the process.

### ***Local Support for DRC/MARC Operations***

Lee County departments contribute to DRC/MARC operations, including staffing through the Emergency Role (E-Role) program if necessary. Municipal partners participate in the process of selecting and supporting DRCs in their jurisdictions. EMS, fire agencies, law enforcement, and the Lee County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) provide additional support, if needed. The Department of Human and Veteran Services (HVS) and United Way collaborate to engage the nonprofit sector in staffing and resourcing the MARC, ensuring a comprehensive approach to recovery. If needed, United Way may provide United Way





Houses to act as DRCs or MARCs and will work with access and functional needs and vulnerable populations to ensure they are aware of recovery services and are able to access them as needed.

Lee County departments contribute to DRC and MARC operations, as do many of the County's partners. Municipalities participate in the process of selecting and supporting DRCs or MARCs in their jurisdictions. The LCSO, local law enforcement, and fire agencies provide support services, along with Lee County EMS. HVS, in conjunction with United Way, coordinates and provides nonprofit services that support DRC/MARC operations, which includes providing recovery services to affected residents and disseminating recovery information through their respective community networks.

LeeTran provides transportation services for affected residents so they can access DRC and MARCs when needed. LeeTran also works with the Emergency Information Hotline (EIHL) to disseminate messaging to people calling the hotline for transportation services and uses notification modules at transportation hubs to disseminate messaging to people using their services on how to access recovery resources. For its part, the EIHL provides critical messaging to the public regarding DRCs, MARCs, and other recovery services. United Way 211, which leads and provide most staff for the EIHL, will leverage its existing networks with communities across the County to direct and guide them to DRCs, MARCs, and other recovery support programs.

The Lee County Department of Parks and Recreation provides facilities for use as DRCs or MARCs, if needed, and provides staff and logistical support. Parks and Recreation will also provide messaging to customers about how to access recovery services through DRCs and MARCs. Through E-Role nearly all County departments provide staffing support to DRCs and MARCs.

The Public Information Officer (PIO) and the Joint Information Center (JIC) will work with their partners in the County EOC to craft appropriate messaging for affected residents. This may include door-to-door canvassing, deploying teams with branded t-shirts to disseminate messaging, working with DSAT, or distributing flyers in affected communities. HVS and United way work closely with the PIO and the JIC during these communication efforts to identify specific recovery and communication needs for affected communities. Together, these partners engage with trusted members of communities for rumor control and to identify unmet needs and to craft appropriate messaging and services for traditionally underserved residents or those with access or functional needs.



## **Energy**

Response and short-term recovery operations rely on energy to operate systems and power equipment. The community relies upon energy to stabilize itself after an incident occurs and to return itself to a state of normalcy. In Lee County, the robustness, resilience, and rapid restoration of energy supplies—electricity, petroleum, and natural gas—are essential in maintaining continuity of essential services, safeguarding public health and safety, and accelerating recovery processes. This section outlines the pre-incident, incident, and post-incident activities used by Lee County and its stakeholders to address losses of or disruptions to energy networks during response and short-term recovery operations.

### ***Energy Critical Infrastructure***

The *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA)*<sup>21</sup> identifies and discusses Lee County's critical power infrastructure. Critical components for electric power infrastructure includes power plants, transmission lines, substations, feeders, and laterals, as well as fuel lines and logistical lines along transportation routes. Within Lee County, the two largest providers of energy are Florida Power & Light (FPL) and the Lee County Electric Cooperative (LCEC). TECO Peoples Gas is a significant provider of natural gas. There are numerous petroleum providers, chiefly distributed through commercial gas stations spread throughout the County.

### ***Monitoring Energy Critical Infrastructure and Assets***

County departments and the EOC Logistics Section monitor and address fuel needs for response vehicles, as well as generators used for continuity of operations and government and continuation of critical services. Some departments, such as Utilities, use SCADA or similar types of networks, which can alert them to energy loss among infrastructure or assets. TECO, FP&L, and LCEC employ a multitude of systems and methods to monitor and assess the integrity of their respective systems. All three companies assign staff to the County EOC to communicate and coordinate energy disruption and restoration operations. They also actively monitor their systems and infrastructure to detect bad actors to either prevent or mitigate their actions. As part of their responsibilities, these representatives report outages to the County EOC, including the Situation Unit.

### ***Strategy for Addressing Disruptions***

Lee County departments make use of portable and permanent generators to minimize the consequences of energy loss during response and short-term recovery operations.



Should the County have notice of an impending incident (i.e., a forecasted tropical cyclone), Fleet Management and Facilities Construction & Management work with County departments to ensure fuel tanks in generators and vehicles are filled prior to the incident occurring. Some County departments also maintain partnerships with external organizations to address energy needs during times of disruption.

Similarly, many of the County's stakeholders, such as Lee Health and the Gateway Services Community Development District, have portable or permanent generators to ensure their critical energy needs remain reliable and consistent, despite disruptions to the energy supply before, during, and after an incident occurs. The County's energy partners incorporate and coordinate outside support (i.e., contract services and State and Federal support) through the framework established in Chapter 4, including the Incident Command System (ICS) in the EOC.

FP&L, LCEC, and TECO engage in year-round preparedness for storm-related power loss by hardening their infrastructure, identifying, and training crews, and establishing command control mechanisms to achieve effective field operations. These companies forecast and model future development and potential impacts to develop strategies for procuring needed resources for response and short-term recovery operations before an incident occurs. They also build redundancies into their networks, delivery, and logistics systems to prevent or minimize disruptions and to expedite restoration efforts. FP&L also provides a hotline to first responders to coordinate shutting down portions of the grid to facilitate safe response operations in impacted areas.

### ***Removal of Debris for Immediate Response***

Have teams with arborists with tree-cutting capabilities. The EOC provides crews to assist with clearing and de-energizing intersections.

### ***Emergency Fuel Distribution***

The *Lee County Fuel Plan* addresses fuel management during times of significant energy disruption and aids in deconflicting demands for and distribution of fuel supplies between Lee County and its stakeholders during response and short-term recovery operations.

### ***Restoration Priorities***

FP&L meets with Lee County Emergency Management annually to verify critical infrastructure and to discuss restoration prioritization. Following an incident, the County EOC will work with energy providers to prioritize restoration efforts to:



1. Address life safety needs.
2. Stabilize the community, including restoration of power to government functions and essential services; and then,
3. To return to normalcy.

As energy services rely upon interconnected networks, prioritization will be contingent on restoring critical nodes and hubs that allow networks to operate. For example, to restore power to a given critical facility, electrical companies may need to restore power to other areas of the County first to enable power to reach the critical facility. LCEC, TECO, and FP&L engage in pre-incident assessment planning for restoration. The companies implement these plans following an incident that results in disruption of energy.

Energy providers will coordinate with the PIO and the Fire, Law Enforcement, and Medical Branches in the EOC as they restore services to ensure proper notice and education are provided to residents and first responders. Restoration efforts will account for those residents who have access or functional needs in accordance with the Access and Functional Needs Framework.

## **Firefighting and Emergency Services**

Before the onset of a detected incident, the fire agencies will work with their local constituencies in response preparation. For example, they may assist residents by distributing sandbags or help notify residents of life safety messaging produced by subject matter experts, such as the National Weather Service, or Lee County. Lee County EMS does the same and both entities provide field observations and intelligence to the EOC for rapid assessments, situational awareness, planning, and public messaging. Both EMS and the fire agencies pre-stage resources as the situation allows. They provide direct support in evacuations and other protective measures taken to keep the public safe.

Once an incident occurs, the fire agencies and EMS address immediate medical needs and fire-related emergencies during and after incidents. As they do so, they continue to provide data and observations from the field to give situational awareness to the rest of the Emergency Management Program. As discussed in Chapter 6 and the *Lee County Incident Assessment Standard Operating Guide*, this includes conducting initial size-ups, rapid assessments, and First Impression Damage Assessments. EMS and the fire agencies provide additional support services as necessary; for example, EMS may be asked by the EOC to provide medical support to Points of Distribution (POD) sites, DRCs, or other places where affected or vulnerable residents may be gathered to receive post-



disaster assistance.

## Law Enforcement

Law enforcement in response and short-term recovery consists of the LCSO and municipal police departments (PDs) and their relationships with State and Federal law enforcement entities. The LCSO maintains a preparedness and response plan, which they implement should an incident occur or if given notice of an impending incident. As part of their response, the LCSO engages in incident planning at the onset, where it determines the activation tiers for its resources and develops contingency plans tailored to the severity and extent of the incident.

During the preparation and response phases, the LCSO and PDs closely collaborate with State and local leadership to assess and address the security needs and requirements of affected areas. This coordination aligns law enforcement efforts with broader emergency management strategies and interlinks efforts across jurisdictions. The LCSO and their PD partners leverage their extensive inventory of staff and resources, including specialized units and equipment, to meet these security needs efficiently.

In preparation for no-notice incidents requiring immediate shelter or refuge, the LCSO maintains regular contact throughout the year with partners, such as libraries and hospitals. This ongoing engagement ensures that, if the need arises, the LCSO can rapidly integrate with these organizations and utilize their facilities for sheltering or other emergency operations, thus enhancing community resilience and preparedness.

During response and short-term recovery efforts, law enforcement assets provide additional means for gathering data and developing situational awareness. As described in the *Lee County Incident Assessment Standard Operating Guide*, law enforcement officials out in the field provide feedback to their respective controllers, who then disseminate that information throughout the operation. Law enforcement also deploys aerial assets to broaden and extend damage and impact assessments post-incident.

Key law enforcement activities during response and short-term recovery operations include:

- **Traffic Control:** Managing roadways to facilitate the movement of emergency vehicles and aid convoys and ensuring safe and orderly evacuation routes.
- **Security at Shelters and DRCs:** Providing a secure environment in shelters, DRCs, and MARCs to ensure the safety and well-being of evacuees and staff.



- **Wellness Checks:** Conducting checks to ensure the safety of residents, especially those in high-risk or heavily impacted areas.
- **Coordination with Medical Examiner’s Office:** Working in tandem with the Medical Examiner’s Office and search and rescue teams in cases of missing persons, which is critical in post-disaster scenarios where individuals may be unaccounted for.
- **Regular Patrols and Law Enforcement:** Maintaining law and order, preventing looting, and ensuring public safety in the disaster-impacted areas.

## Mass Care

The Mass Care function involves a broad spectrum of activities, including establishing shelters, ensuring the availability of food and water, and providing essential medical and mental health services. It caters to the diverse needs of the affected population, including those most vulnerable, such as the elderly, children, and people with disabilities. The objective is to offer life-sustaining resources and support, facilitating a smooth transition from the emergency response phase to the path of recovery.

A fundamental aspect of Mass Care is the equitable distribution of goods and services, which is crucial for the resilience and recovery of the entire community. This approach necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the community’s diverse needs and a commitment to addressing these needs without disparity. Collaborative efforts with local agencies, non-profit organizations, and community groups ensure that resources reach all segments of the population effectively.

## Emergency Shelter Operations

As part of the Preparedness Framework, Lee County identifies general population and special needs shelters<sup>22</sup>. The Lee County Division of Emergency Management works with the School District of Lee County to maintain these sites at a level of readiness for notice and no-notice incidents. Emergency Management works with the E-Role program to identify County personnel to staff and operate general population shelters and ensures that necessary resources for shelter activation are readily available. Should the County respond to an incident that doesn’t require the full services of a shelter, it may stand-up safe havens using its facilities outside the impact zone to provide residents a temporary place to stay for safety. The *Lee County Mass Care Plan* addresses shelter operations in greater detail.



The Lee County Division of Emergency Management manages the Special Medical Needs Registry for the County, which is discussed in greater detail in Chapters 5 and 12 of this plan. Emergency Management works with DOH, as well as EMS and Lee Health, to vet the registry and assign registrants to general population shelters, special medical needs shelters<sup>23</sup>, or hospitals as their circumstances deem necessary. While pre-registration is not necessary for residents to receive shelter at a special medical needs shelter or hospital, the registry aids in planning and preparation for response and short-term recovery.

DOH assumes primary responsibility for special needs sheltering, supported by Emergency Management, EMS, and Lee Health. DOH will follow its own sheltering plans, policies, and procedures for activating, operating, and deactivating special needs shelters. Lee County will follow the *Lee County Special Needs Shelter Standard Operating Guide* to support these operations, while the Logistics Section manages resource provision according to the Logistics and Resource Management Framework established in Chapter 10.

If there is notice of an impending disaster, HVS engages with the transient community to provide information about preparedness and protective measures. HVS staff work with people experiencing homelessness to get them into shelters or to make other arrangements for their safety. Department personnel also help to staff general population shelters. When the community stabilizes enough to demobilize shelters, HVS works with individuals and families in shelters to ensure they can return to their original locations, be with family or friends, or move to another shelter.

United Way provides additional support to shelters as requested, offering comfort items through donation initiatives. The EIHL (i.e., 211), relies on liaisons in the EOC and with communication teams to address unique information needs that arise outside the norm and help direct people to the correct shelter. Residents who have not pre-registered with the Special Needs Registry may call the EIHL to be placed on the registry and assigned a location for sheltering. Residents with transportation dependencies may also call the EIHL to arrange transportation to a shelter.

During response operations, the EOC coordinates the delivery and receipt of individuals from impacted areas, including those recovered by search and rescue. The Mass Care, Fire, Law Enforcement, Health and Medical, and Air Operations Branches work together to address sheltering needs following the onset of an incident.





The PIO and JIC disseminate vital information to the public regarding sheltering operations before, during, and after an incident occurs. They leverage civic associations, neighborhood groups, radio stations, and websites to ensure effective communication. They provide information to the public post-incident about situational conditions, such as the status of roads, power lines, protective measures for health and safety, and so forth. Means of communication include media (local, digital, traditional, social, etc.), billboards, flyers, door-to-door canvassing, and in-person communication within shelters. The PIO maintains pre-scripted messaging with graphics, all of which can be fitted quickly to the needs of a given situation.

## **Provision of Life-Sustaining Goods and Services**

As described in Chapter 10 and in the *Lee County EOC Logistics Section Standard Operating Guide*, Lee County will provide necessary life-sustaining goods through PODs. Based upon assessments of the post-incident situation, the County will locate PODs in or near affected areas and in a manner that maximizes access by all members of the County's communities. The Faith-Based Organization (FBO) and Volunteers and Donations Branches in the Logistics Section further support the provision of life-sustaining goods and services to affected areas of Lee County after an incident occurs<sup>24</sup>. For example, in addition to providing food and water, the Salvation Army provides health and hygiene kits to affected residents.

In the aftermath of an incident in Lee County, the provision of life-sustaining goods and services is a coordinated effort involving multiple agencies and organizations. United Way plays a pivotal role in identifying needs and distributing essential items like food, water, and hygiene products. This is achieved through a network of over 100 partners embedded within vulnerable communities. United Way, along with HVS, maintains daily to biweekly check-ins with partners to ensure equitable distribution of services. The EIHL, part of this network, coordinates with agencies to guide callers to these essential goods and services.

HVS helps to identify unmet needs, to communicate with access and functional needs communities, and to distribute life-sustaining goods and services. For example, HVS addresses the needs of seniors and individuals with special needs by engaging with agencies like Meals on Wheels and the Center of Independent Living. They also use a phone app to disseminate notifications on various topics to communities, especially those experiencing homelessness. LeeTran offers transportation assistance to those dependent on public transport. LeeTran transports goods as needed and makes some of its buses





available as cooling stations to the public during times of severe heat. Animal Services caters to the needs of pets and animals throughout the County, providing services like Return-To-Owner (RTO) if pets are impounded, vaccine clinics, and pet pantries. They partner with organizations to assist pets of individuals experiencing homelessness.

DOH manages special needs medical shelters, supports healthcare facilities, and provides essential medical services, such as vaccinations. DOH and ESF-8 monitor healthcare facilities and assisted living centers, especially during power outages, and work with the JIC to disseminate critical information in multiple languages to reach diverse communities. DOH monitors issues, such as boil water notices, to make sure those healthcare providers that rely upon water for life-sustaining services, such as dialysis centers, have the proper and clean resources they need.

Through the E-Role program, most County departments provide personnel to staff response and short-term recovery operations, such as those that provide life-sustaining goods and services. This involves staffing of shelters, safe havens, points of distribution, cooling and warming stations, community outreach efforts, and so forth.

The PIO and JIC disseminate information about the location, times, goods, and services provided by the County and its nonprofit and faith-based partners. Channels of communication include various channels, including traditional media, live streams, social media, flyer distribution, and collaboration with media partners. The JIC works closely with DOH, HVS, and United Way to tailor messages to specific audiences, including those with access or functional needs.

## **Feeding Services and Operations**

In addition to the PODs addressed in the previous section, Lee County coordinates the receipt and distribution of food services and operations from nonprofit and faith-based organizations. HVS works with its partner agencies to resolve community feeding needs by identifying and facilitating funding for such operations and promoting feeding locations where people can receive hot meals, bagged meals, or groceries. In addition to HVS' efforts, Animal Services provides food pantries for pets and may be supported by veterinary services from the University of Florida.

United Way works with the State and National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD), as well as ESF-6 and ESF-15 at the State Emergency Operations Center, to coordinate feeding services to those areas affected by one or more incidents post-event.



As partners come into Lee County post-incident, the FBO, Volunteers and Donations, and Mass Care Branches coordinate their operations to target their services to those areas most in need and to reduce duplication of effort. DOH coordinates the provision of feeding services through the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, particularly through DRCs and MARCs.

United Way, HVS, and others leverage their networks to direct people to feeding locations. Some nonprofit and faith-based organizations, such as the Salvation Army, pre-stage resources and staff to expedite delivery of services, and make use of equipment that allows them to transport and set up in hard-hit areas immediately after an incident occurs. Lee County's partners, including the Lee County School Board and DOH, coordinate feeding operations at shelters and/or safe havens. As the EIHL interacts with affected members of the County's communities, they help to identify individuals with specific needs and communicate that through the EOC. The *Lee County Mass Care Plan* addresses feeding operations further.

The EIHL, the PIO, and the JIC work together to message the public regarding feeding services and operations. In addition to those channels already mentioned in previous sections of this chapter, public messaging includes ensuring EOC personnel and stakeholders are aware of information related to the provision of life-sustaining goods, services, and feeding locations so that as they interact with the public, they can direct them to the proper locations at the correct times.

## **Missing Persons and Reunification**

After a disaster occurs, State and local law enforcement work in conjunction with search and rescue to locate and identify missing persons. Locally, the Lee County Sheriff's Office assumes primary responsibility for doing so, with support from municipal police departments and the Medical Examiner. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement oftentimes supports such efforts with systems for people to report missing persons. Concerned people often reach out to the EIHL, as well; when people do so, the EIHL communicates the information to the LCSO and provides a report to the Situation Unit to update the EOC's situational awareness. DOH assists families with obtaining death certificates or missing birth certificates.

Depending on the type of incident, its location, and its extent, a single entity may be responsible for the process of reunification. For example, an aircraft crash or an active shooter incident at a school will result in the port authority and the Lee County School



Board assuming reunification responsibilities respectively. RSW and the School Board have plans, policies, and procedures in place for reunification. As needed, the County supports such reunification efforts.

Should the need for reunification occur in a situation where there is not an already established lead for the operation, Lee County and its partners will stand up a pre-identified reunification team consisting of myriad cross-functional partners.

During reunification efforts, HVS works with the American Red Cross to help individuals in shelters reunite with family or friends. HVS works with other partners to address transitional housing needs or more challenging situations.

## **Private Sector**

Comprising both for-profit and nonprofit organizations, the private sector contributes significantly to the overall emergency management efforts through its resources, expertise, and operational capabilities. In the event of an incident, private sector entities are often on the front lines, providing essential services, maintaining critical infrastructure, and ensuring the continuation of key economic activities. Their involvement is vital in managing supply chains, providing logistical support, and facilitating the restoration of services and infrastructure. The private sector's unique position allows it to respond swiftly to community needs, complementing public sector efforts in mitigating the impacts of an emergency and accelerating the recovery process.

Collaboration between public and private entities is essential for effective response and short-term recovery operations. Such partnerships leverage the strengths and resources of both sectors, leading to a more coordinated and efficient response to emergencies. Public entities, with their mandate to protect public welfare and maintain order, can benefit from the specialized skills, resources, and agility of the private sector. Conversely, private entities can gain from the public sector's access to critical information, regulatory support, and emergency planning and coordination frameworks. This synergy is particularly important in areas such as resource allocation, infrastructure repair, and information sharing, where combined efforts can significantly reduce recovery time and enhance the resilience of communities against future disasters.

### **Engagement with For-Profit and Non-Profit Sectors**

Lee County's strategy for engaging with for-profit and nonprofit organizations in its response and short-term recovery operations uses a multifaceted approach. This strategy



leverages existing relationships, established networks, and specialized units to ensure a coordinated and efficient response during emergencies. In this manner, it relies heavily on activities undertaken as part of the County's Preparedness Framework, discussed in Chapter 3.

County Departments such as Economic Development, the Visitor and Convention Bureau, and Sports Development maintain ongoing interactions with the for-profit sector daily. These relationships, cultivated through regular engagement before incidents, are crucial for swiftly incorporating for-profit organizations into emergency response and recovery efforts. The pre-established rapport and understanding of the operational capabilities of these organizations enable the County to efficiently mobilize their resources and expertise when needed.

Elected officials and senior leadership in Lee County also play a key role in developing and sustaining public sector relationships throughout the year. This continuous effort ensures effective coordination and communication between government entities and private sector partners during emergencies. The existing familiarity and trust built over time facilitate smoother collaboration and quicker response during critical situations.

Within the Lee County EOC, Technical Specialists in the Plans Section act as coordinators between the private sector and the emergency management operations. These specialists provide essential linkages, ensuring that the private sector's resources and capabilities remain effectively integrated into the County's emergency response and recovery plans.

In addition to for-profit collaborations, Lee County engages with FBOs. The County's Division of Emergency Management develops and nurtures a comprehensive FBO network as part of the Preparedness Framework. During incidents, the EOC activates this network through the Logistics Section, which includes an FBO Unit specifically designated to leverage these relationships for effective response and recovery actions.

Moreover, the Department of Human and Veterans Services and the United Way focus on building and maintaining networks with various nonprofit organizations. These relationships are instrumental in incorporating the nonprofit sector into the County's emergency response and recovery operations. The networks provide access to a wide range of services and support, crucial for addressing the diverse needs of the community during and after emergencies. These faith-based and nonprofit networks enable the County to account for, address, and incorporate considerations for the access and



functional needs individuals per the framework established in Chapter 12.

In addition to forming partnerships with the private sector as a force multiplier in response and recovery efforts, Lee County also engages with the private sector to aid affected for-profit, nonprofit, and FBOs. Personnel work to connect these organizations with Federal and State programs, such as those provided through the Small Business Administration.

## **Resource Management and Supply Chain Disruptions**

As described in the Logistics and Resource Management Framework, the County will attempt to source goods and services locally as much as possible when acquiring resources. To this end, personnel engaged in response and short-term recovery efforts work with the private sector to identify, acquire, and distribute resources necessary to support operations and the community. They do so in the following ways:

- Use of existing relationships with the private sector, as established in the engagement strategy, for resource mobilization and assessment.
- Inclusion of private sector input in the Finance Framework (see Chapter 9) to identify financial resources and funding mechanisms essential during emergencies.
- Integration of private sector capabilities in the Logistics and Resource Management Framework (see Chapter 1) for efficient acquisition and distribution of resources.
- Coordination with business entities to understand their operational capabilities and resources that the County redirects for emergency response and recovery efforts.
- Establishment of communication channels within the EOC to facilitate real-time resource assessment with private sector partners.

Examples of this include businesses donating goods and services, providing vouchers or discounts, financial assistance, promotion of recovery resources and public messaging, and so forth.

Lee County also works with the private sector for situational awareness of impacts on the supply chain in the jurisdiction and disruption of goods and services to the public. This occurs before a detected incident occurs and is ongoing through the incident's onset and afterward. The County works with the private sector to minimize and stabilize disruptions so that resources can be easily accessed by the public and all sectors, thus hastening the time it takes to move into the resumption of normalcy and long-term recovery. This



process involves such things as:

- Collaborating with private sector entities to gain insights into current supply chain statuses and potential vulnerabilities.
- Using data analytics to identify signs of impending disruptions.
- Engaging with key industry and business partners to forecast potential disruptions based on predictive indicators.
- Work with private sector partners to devise and implement alternative strategies for disrupted supply routes and services.
- Collaborate with private sector partners to restore and stabilize supply chains.

## **Protective Actions**

Protective actions in response operations refer to a set of procedures and guidelines designed to save lives, protect property, and safeguard the environment. These actions include coordinating evacuations and implementing shelter-in-place orders, as well as other actions taken to keep people out of harm's way. Lee County and its stakeholders will rely upon traditional and social media, the AlertLee and LeePrepares applications, websites, the Emergency Information Hotline, and other means to communicate protective actions to the public. Internal briefings, LeeCOPs, safety plans, and other means of coordination within the response and short-term recovery operation will communicate protective actions to personnel.

### ***Evacuations and Shelter-in-Place***

Lee County sets up evacuations and orders to shelter in place to ensure the safety of all community segments, including vulnerable and historically underserved groups. The process involves assessing the situation, determining the most suitable protective action (evacuation or shelter-in-place), and executing these plans efficiently. The authority to initiate these actions lies with designated officials who base their decisions on predefined criteria and real-time assessments of the emergency.

The execution of protective actions encompasses a wide range of activities, from managing the evacuation of high-density areas and special-needs populations to ensuring the safe transport and tracking of unaccompanied minors. These actions also include specific measures for at-risk groups during heightened security threats, such as terrorism alerts. Furthermore, the coordination extends to accommodating evacuees from neighboring jurisdictions, including their pets and service animals. The process ensures that during an evacuation, individuals, especially those with disabilities or access and



functional needs, remain with their caregivers and necessary support equipment. Post-evacuation, the focus shifts to facilitating a safe and informed return of evacuees to their homes, in collaboration with relevant agencies.

The *Lee County All-Hazards Evacuation Plan* provides greater detail and instruction on how the County will determine and implement protective measures involving evacuation or sheltering-in-place. Lee County's evacuation zone and routes map for tropical cyclones is in the *All Hazards Guide*<sup>25</sup> and on the County's website<sup>26</sup>.

### ***Other Protective Actions***

Protective actions also encompass a range of measures beyond evacuation and shelter-in-place directives. These include issuing boil water notices, enforcing curfews, raising public awareness about environmental hazards, and providing updates on road conditions. Boil water notices are typically issued when there's a potential contamination of the water supply, requiring residents to boil water before use to ensure safety. The County, the Lee County Sheriff's Office, municipalities, or local law enforcement agencies sometimes impose curfew to maintain public order, especially in areas severely affected by disasters, limiting movement to facilitate recovery efforts and ensure safety during periods of reduced emergency services availability.

The PIO, along with the JIC, power providers, and the EIHL engage in public awareness campaigns about downed power lines, especially post-disaster, to prevent electrical hazards. These campaigns educate the public on the dangers of approaching or touching downed lines and the importance of immediately reporting such incidents to utility providers or emergency services. Similarly, the County and its stakeholders disseminate updates on road conditions to inform residents and responders about accessible routes, road closures, and detours, aiding in safe navigation around affected areas.

Similarly, protective actions may include the requirement and/or provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) to personnel or the public. This may include equipment such as masks, surgical gloves, testing kits, and so forth. All these actions are integral to minimizing secondary risks and ensuring public safety during the immediate aftermath of an emergency, aiding in the stabilization of affected communities, and paving the way for recovery efforts.

## **Public Health**

In response operations, public health focuses on immediate life-saving measures and





medical treatments. EMS and healthcare providers play a crucial role in delivering care for injuries, managing chronic conditions, and providing essential medications. Public health agencies intensify epidemiological surveillance to monitor and prevent outbreaks of communicable diseases, common in post-disaster scenarios due to factors like overcrowding and compromised sanitation. Environmental health issues, including water and food safety, waste management, and vector control, are addressed to prevent additional health hazards.

During short-term recovery, the emphasis shifts to restoring public health infrastructure and services. This phase involves rehabilitating healthcare facilities, ensuring access to primary health care, and repairing water and sanitation systems. Mental and behavioral health support becomes a priority to address the psychological impacts of the disaster. Coordination among local health departments, healthcare providers, and emergency management agencies is key to effective public health response and recovery, aiming not just to manage immediate crises but also to strengthen the long-term resilience of the health system.

### ***Public Health Issues and Needs***

During response and short-term recovery operations, various agencies have key roles in monitoring and addressing public health issues and concerns. DOH takes the lead in monitoring public health threats, using systems like Merlin and Stars to identify abnormalities such as waterborne illnesses, communicable diseases, and other health issues that may arise post-disaster. Post-incident, DOH educates the public on health concerns and risks, such as carbon monoxide poisoning, and flesh-eating bacteria. DOH also works with partners to identify and address the presence or outbreak of communicable diseases in shelters, such as the flu. DOH communicates with the healthcare community through channels such as the blast fax by its epidemiology division, as well as regular stakeholder meetings.

EMS personnel provide field observations of emerging healthcare issues and needs. They also support DOH and Lee Health as needed with staff and resources. For example, during mass vaccine operations, EMS personnel may assist with dispensing vaccines and providing emergency medical support at vaccine sites. Meanwhile, HVS focuses on under-resourced communities, ensuring that vulnerable populations receive necessary aid such as water during heat waves or blankets during cold weather. They work closely with nonprofits and client bases to address impacts that don't necessitate medical care.





Lee Health provides medical care to the community, including emergency medicine. Its Chief Quality and Safety Officer and Infectious Disease Specialist work closely with DOH and other partners to address medical surge issues and plan for future operations, including handling biomedical waste effectively.

Before, during, and after incidents occur, the Lee County Division of Emergency Management monitors situations like heat waves, collaborating with partners like the National Weather Service (NWS) to anticipate and prepare for health-related thresholds. They also play a role in notifying the Regional Emergency Response Advisor in instances of biohazardous material, ensuring a comprehensive response to public health emergencies.

Key public health issues and needs include:

- **Monitoring and Responding to Health Threats:** Constant vigilance for various health concerns, including waterborne illnesses and other communicable diseases.
- **Food and Water Safety:** Surveillance for boil water notices and coordinating with healthcare facilities, particularly dialysis centers during such notices.
- **Sanitation and Vector Control:** Addressing sanitation nuisance complaints and working closely with mosquito control for disease prevention.
- **Special Needs Populations:** Focusing on individuals with energy or oxygen dependence, ensuring their specific needs are met.

### ***Medical Surge Capacity***

The management of medical surge capacity in response and short-term recovery operations involves multiple agencies and healthcare providers. Lee Health, as the largest healthcare provider, has a dedicated medical surge capacity and capability team equipped with policies and protocols tailored to various facilities and services. They maintain Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) for support and continuously monitor and test their surge plan, especially during peak seasons. In instances of reaching surge thresholds, strategies range from triage tents to activating internal EOCs for efficient patient throughput.

EMS adapts to the scale of incidents, maintaining close coordination with the healthcare system. This includes the distribution of patients across facilities to prevent overwhelming any single location and regular communication with hospital partners for interoperable communications.



DOH fills supportive roles, especially in supplying necessary resources and personnel. It coordinates with the EOC Logistics Section and may involve deploying out-of-county or contract staff for special needs shelter support. The Incident Management Team (IMT) in the shelter handles transitions, while DOH uses its epidemiology contacts to identify and address unmet needs.

The County and its healthcare system stakeholders rely on the Logistics and Resource Management Framework and the Mutual Aid Framework to support medical surge through resource procurement and staffing. This includes the disposition of resources such as field hospitals, under the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement. Relationships with neighboring healthcare systems like Sarasota Memorial and Naples Community, and private companies, support this interconnected network.

Key aspects of medical surge capacity include:

- **Surge Plan Testing and Staffing Profiles:** Regular testing of the surge plan and maintaining staffing profiles based on historical data to efficiently manage the unexpected patient influx.
- **Facility Preparedness:** Each hospital is equipped for hazardous material incidents and has decontamination capabilities.
- **Coordination Protocols:** Formal coordination policies for credentialing, identification, and support, along with mutual aid agreements for external assistance.

### ***Access and Functional Needs and Vulnerable Populations***

Addressing public health concerns for access and functional needs and vulnerable populations involves a collaborative effort among various agencies and healthcare providers. As described in the Emergency Shelter Operations section above, DOH is the primary lead for providing support to those with energy and oxygen dependency. The State of Florida Agency for Persons with Disabilities, the Department of Children and Families, and others provide support to those with access and functional needs during response and short-term recovery operations. Private sector healthcare providers and non-profit organizations provide comprehensive health, medical, and daily activity support for individuals with disabilities.

HVS engages with the access and functional needs of individuals and vulnerable communities to help them get into shelters before an incident occurs. Department personnel, who are familiar with their client communities, tailor their approach to



effectively provide services. They work closely with a network of non-profits, some of which specifically cater to individuals facing challenges, and maintain constant communication with these organizations. Particularly in communities with limited trust in government, such as immigrant populations, HVS works in tandem with FBOs, non-profits, and government entities to address behavioral health issues.

### ***Post-Incident Mental and Behavioral Health***

Post-incident mental and behavioral health care involves a coordinated effort among various agencies to address the increased demand for these services following emergencies. HVS plays a pivotal role by operating a 24/7 phone line and partnering with a mobile crisis unit; although it focuses mainly on individuals experiencing homelessness, its scope is broad. HVS works continuously on enhancing the County's behavioral health system of care and deploying mental health services directly to general population shelters and Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs). This includes innovative approaches like therapy pets to provide comfort and support.

EMS has identified a lack of community resources for mental health emergencies and is working to improve responses to such emergencies beyond just ER visits. They are establishing a partnership with HVS to refer non-medical emergency cases to appropriate behavioral health resources.

Lee Health maintains the capability to quickly set up telehealth services, offering them free of charge for both medical and behavioral health emergencies during response and short-term recovery operations. In response to disasters, Lee Health engages in communications to raise awareness about the mental health impacts of disasters and provide information on seeking necessary services. Additionally, they serve as a receiving facility for immediate behavioral health services during emergencies. DCF provides additional mental and behavioral health services post-incident, including dedicated phone lines for mental health support. Emergency Management trains shelter teams to recognize indicators of mental and behavioral health needs among staff and clients.

Key aspects of post-incident mental and behavioral health care include:

- **24/7 Crisis Line and Mobile Crisis Unit:** Operated by HVS for immediate support and crisis intervention.
- **Behavioral Health System Improvement:** Developing proposals to build a more effective system for addressing behavioral health needs.
- **Direct Support in Shelters and DRCs:** Deployment of mental and behavioral



health services, including therapy pets, to provide comfort and alleviate stress.

## **Public Works**

Public Works plays a pivotal role in emergencies, acting as the backbone of a community's resilience and response capabilities. This includes ensuring the continuity of essential services such as water supply, sewage systems, and the maintenance of roads and bridges. The responsibilities of those involved with Public Works extend beyond physical infrastructure to include coordination with emergency services, supporting evacuation efforts, and providing technical expertise in disaster response planning.

In Lee County, the Department of Utilities is the primary organization responsible for overseeing Public Works during incident response and short-term recovery. This department plays a critical role in managing the County's water and wastewater infrastructure, ensuring the continuity of these essential services during emergencies. Their responsibilities include the rapid assessment and repair of any damage to water and sewage systems, maintaining water quality, and implementing emergency measures to provide sanitation facilities if standard systems are compromised.

### ***Monitoring and Assessing Public Works and Infrastructure***

As an incident occurs and immediately afterward, Utilities will inspect its systems. As personnel conduct inspections, they will repair what damage they can or report damage for follow-up repair. Utilities employ a customer service phone line so customers can contact them to report outages, damages, or issues. The department relies on the public to report sewer issues if the networks are down. In addition to the customer service line, Utilities will work with the Emergency Information Hotline to receive reports from customers and the public about damage and issues with the public works infrastructure.

Utilities also coordinate inspections with the County Department of Transportation (DOT) to identify potential washouts of roads or other deleterious, cascading effects from damage to the public works infrastructure. The Utilities' representative in the Infrastructure Branch in the EOC will communicate data from these inspections to the other branches and sections to ensure planning, life safety messaging, and protocols for reentry considered unsafe conditions in the built environment.

### ***Provision and Restoration of Essential Services***

Utilities maintain five interconnected water treatment facilities that back each other up, which adds to the system's redundancy and resiliency. Should impacts from one or more



incidents still cause the system to fail or nearly fail, Utilities maintains interlocal agreements with neighboring jurisdictions to aid and assist. Much of the infrastructure used by Utilities to deliver essential services has redundant systems built into them and are either connected to permanent generators or have ports to receive portable generators. If energy problems persist, Utilities will use pumper trucks to keep flows manageable.

If necessary, Utilities will coordinate the provision of water supplies and sanitation camps to affected areas that cannot receive water or wastewater treatment services. Should the water system become compromised, Utilities and its stakeholders will work with the PIO to disseminate boil water notices. As services come back online Utilities will work the PIO to educate people on proper waste disposal and what actions should and shouldn't be taken as water supplies become available.

Utilities will rely on DOT to do first pass clearing of the roads to remove debris blocking roadways to and from facilities and assets. As needed, Utilities and other partners, such as Gateway, will coordinate rights of way with private entities, such as homeowners' associations. If possible, the County and its partners will pre-stage response assets to expedite access to access public works facilities and assets.

If an incident results in sewage spills or leaks, Utilities will use standard protocols and procedures in response to them. It will also coordinate and notify regulatory agencies as needed.

### ***Restoration Priorities***

Following an incident, Lee County Utilities, and other public works services prioritize restoration efforts to:

1. Address life safety needs.
2. Stabilize the community, focusing on those disruptions that affect the largest number of customers first and so forth; and then,
3. To return to normalcy.

## **Debris Management**

Effective debris management involves the coordinated efforts of multiple agencies and departments, ensuring the prompt and efficient removal and disposal of various types of debris. This includes vegetative waste, construction materials, hazardous materials, and household waste. The process typically encompasses assessing the debris situation,



prioritizing removal tasks, deploying resources, and ensuring compliance with environmental regulations.

The Lee County Department of Solid Waste and the Department of Natural Resources manage debris for incident response and short-term recovery operations. Solid Waste is primarily responsible for overseeing the collection, segregation, and disposal of debris in urban and residential areas. Their tasks include coordinating with local and federal agencies, managing waste disposal sites, and ensuring that debris removal is conducted in an environmentally responsible manner. On the other hand, the Department of Natural Resources focuses on debris management in marine and natural bodies of water. Their responsibilities often include removing debris from water bodies to prevent navigational hazards, coordinating with environmental agencies to minimize ecological impact, and restoring natural habitats affected by debris.

The *Lee County Debris Management Plan* addresses debris collection and removal operations in greater detail.

### ***Coordination of Debris Collection and Removal***

In response to one or more hazards affecting Lee County, the Lee County Department of Solid Waste will initiate its *Lee County Debris Management Plan*. This includes coordinating initial debris collection and removal operations with department staff and vendors. These groups conduct safety inspections at County facilities before staff or the public returning, as part of larger County property inspections conducted by the County's Department of Facility Construction & Management. Solid Waste and its contractors also conduct inspections in the affected areas of the community to understand the extent of damage and to develop estimates of the type and quantity of debris that they will need to collect and dispose of.

Solid Waste coordinates its efforts within the Infrastructure Branch of the Operations Section in the County EOC. As participants in Lee County's Incident Command System, Solid Waste integrates and coordinates assistance from neighboring jurisdictions, the State of Florida, and the Federal government. As needed, Solid Waste engages with the Logistics Section and the Finance and Administration Section for resource and procurement needs. Solid Waste focuses on removing vegetative debris from the hardest hit areas, coordinating with search and rescue to ensure debris collection and removal does not interfere or conflict with the latter operations.

Similarly, the Lee County of Natural Resources initiates contracts and vendor services to



assess debris in marine and natural water bodies. Personnel identify where channels need to be cleared and the extent to which operations will need to occur to do so. Whereas the United States Army Corps of Engineers has responsibility for the main channel and area around Fort Myers Beach, Natural Resources focuses on the following three areas:

1. Punta Rassa Island
2. Pine Island Commercial Marina
3. Matlacha

As Natural Resources works to identify waterway obstructions to facilitate response and recovery operations, they will either move marine debris aside to clear the channel or mark it for safety awareness and later removal. Staff from Natural Resources participate in the Infrastructure Branch in the EOC and coordinate efforts in that manner with the County's overarching response and short-term recovery operations. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, the United States Coast Guard, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection work with Natural Resources to provide technical knowledge and assistance.

Debris collection and removal of waterway debris is highly contingent on the availability of funding, which may lengthen the time it takes to initiate and complete such operations. Dredging may occur if the resources to do so are available.

### ***Public Communication and Instructions***

Solid Waste works with the GIS Unit to create and update dashboards and to show routing and collection progress. The department also works with senior leadership, the PIO, and the JIC to engage in public education on debris collection and removal. This includes using press releases, educational videos, and so forth to instruct the public on proper debris sorting and segregation. Customer Service Representatives provide a means for the public to contact Solid Waste and to exchange information. Solid Waste maintains and implements a contingency plan that allows Customer Service Representatives to work remotely, if needed, to ensure the continuation of customer outreach and engagement.

### ***Health and Safety in Debris Removal***

After an incident, Solid Waste field inspectors conduct initial damage and debris assessments, identifying potential health hazards. Solid Waste engages in public education instructing the public on how to properly sort and separate their spoiled food from vegetative and commercial debris. Commercial organizations rely upon their existing franchise haulers to remove spoiled or contaminated food; these organizations and their





franchise haulers coordinate such operations with Solid Waste, providing the latter with situational awareness on that aspect of response and short-term recovery operations.

### ***Priority Clearance Sites***

As part of the Preparedness Framework, Solid Waste engages with other County departments before an incident to identify and prioritize County facilities for debris collection and removal. Solid Waste similarly identifies and prioritizes critical facilities, such as those associated with public health and law enforcement in conjunction with County stakeholders. During incident response and short-term recovery operations, Solid Waste works closely with vendors responsible for facility and landfill maintenance to identify debris needs. The County then uses these situation-specific data to plan and prioritize efforts to implement the *Lee County Debris Management Plan*.

### ***Removal of Private and Commercial Property Debris***

Before removing debris from private or commercial property, Solid Waste must procure right-of-entry agreements with the property's title holder. These agreements for Private Property Debris Removal (PPDR) take time to complete and often occur near the end of debris collection and removal operations. Senior leadership will determine if PPDR is an appropriate measure in the debris operation for response and short-term recovery efforts for an incident. The PIO, JIC, and the GIS Unit will support efforts to engage with residents and businesses on PPDR.

### ***Site Identification for Debris Management***

Preparation and planning are continuous processes. The department regularly meets with county stakeholders to identify potential debris sites, considering changes and new availability. The final disposal of debris, such as vegetative waste, often involves beneficial reuse, such as land application for local farmers.

### ***Contracting and Cost Tracking***

Solid Waste and Natural Resources work closely with their contractors for cost-tracking. They make great efforts to ensure compliance with financial requirements for reimbursement to preclude de-obligation from occurring in the future. Regular training and reviews conducted by both departments maintain high standards of operation. The *Lee County Debris Management Plan* further addresses contracting and cost tracking in debris collection and removal operations during response and short-term recovery efforts.





## Search and Rescue

Following the onset of a disaster that results in physical damage or a lack of knowledge on the well-being of those in the impacted area, Lee County and its stakeholders will initiate search and rescue operations. Specialized Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams undertake these operations at request by the County. Southwest Florida maintains USAR capability, but if additional resources and assistance are needed, additional USAR teams from Florida and the United States will be brought in to assist. In addition to USAR teams and resources, the County's GeoDivisions will assist and support search and rescue efforts.

USAR efforts may occur in instances of structural collapse (e.g., building failure, storm surge, bridge collapse, etc.), as well as environments in waterways, inland wilderness, or in impact areas of aircraft crashes. Teams will make use of various types of equipment, such as front-end loaders, fire engines, brush trucks, electric service vehicles, and so forth. Depending on the situation, USAR teams with additional specialization may be used, like those capable of traversing and navigating swift water. Some teams may also make use of concrete cutting tools, search cameras, or canines.

Coordination of USAR operations will include the Medical Examiner's Office and the LCSO. The Medical Examiner and the LCSO will direct protocols for the handling, recovery, and identification of human remains. The LCSO will also coordinate site security for ongoing search and rescue. The Medical Examiner and the LCSO will coordinate and oversee notification of victims' families and communication with the media and public regarding incident casualties.

To facilitate search and rescue efforts, Lee County will achieve the following during incident response and short-term recovery operations:

- Integrate search and rescue operations with the Incident Command System and other elements of the Coordination Framework discussed in Chapter 4;
- Use resources from public agencies such as fire agencies, EMS, and law enforcement.
- Engage private sector entities for additional support; and
- Effectively communicate search and rescue efforts to the public.

## Transportation

The County's transportation network consists of the local Department of Transportation



(DOT), the State of Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and the roadways they are responsible for maintaining, repairing, and clearing. These roadways facilitate the swift movement of emergency vehicles, aid convoys, and evacuation efforts. Their coordinated efforts are essential in ensuring that essential services and supplies reach affected communities promptly, and in enabling a smooth transition from immediate response to the recovery phase, ensuring that both the community and emergency personnel can navigate the impacted area safely and efficiently.

DOT conducts annual maintenance on every intersection in Lee County so that it has a profile of conditions, flows, and thruput for the County's roadway system. As an incident occurs and thereafter, DOT relies on its Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS), field observations, and citizen reports to monitor impacts on the network. Once an incident occurs that inflicts damage to the built environment, DOT engages in first push operations to clear roadways and begin assessing impacts. DOT staff conduct the first push and assessment but may include contractors depending on the incident's severity. First push operations clear roadways to facilitate energy and utility restoration, as well as the delivery of emergency and security services. As DOT crews assess roadways, intersections, bridgeways, and so forth, they conduct emergency repairs and report the need for more significant repairs as needed. DOT repurposes its project engineers and hires consultants to aid in the assessments and determining what repairs are needed to restore the roadway network.

As first push operations occur, DOT staff also assess the status of traffic signals. As much as possible, crews conduct emergency repairs on signals and provide field reports on damage and status to DOT and the County EOC. FDOT handles signals at intersections of roadways they manage, while DOT handles signals at the County and municipal level. DOT uses internal decision support systems to identify and prioritize restoration efforts in coordination with fire and law enforcement agencies, EMS, and FDOT. As necessary, DOT modifies traffic flows with the presence of law enforcement, cones, and so forth to account for impacts to the roadway system. If signals are operational but without power, DOT deploys generators to facilitate traffic flow.

DOT relies heavily on communications from the County and the EOC during the initial response to discourage the public from being on the roadways, thus reducing traffic flow to enable crews to work and to reduce the likelihood of injuries occurring in unsafe conditions.



During response and short-term recovery operations, DOT follows the process below for restoring roadways to their normal state of operations:

- Conduct an initial damage assessment and first push.
- Initiate Level 1 repairs (emergency repairs), completed by DOT crews and contractors as needed.
- Conduct Level 2 damage assessment (restoration repairs), coordinated with FDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).
- Receive a Detailed Damage Inspection Report (DDIR) from the FHWA; and then,
- Once DOT receives the DDIR, go out to bid on contract to conduct restorative repairs.

## **Transition to Long-Term Recovery**

The transition from response and short-term recovery operations to long-term recovery in the aftermath of a disaster is a critical phase that involves shifting focus from immediate, urgent needs to the sustained and strategic rebuilding and revitalization of affected communities. This transition is marked by several key stages and involves a range of stakeholders, including government agencies at all levels, non-governmental organizations, private sector entities, and the affected communities themselves.

### ***Assessment and Planning for Long-Term Recovery***

As the immediate threats subside and the County and its stakeholders restore basic services, personnel will turn their attention to assessing the full extent of the damage and the long-term needs of the community, as described in Chapter 6 of this plan and in the *Incident Assessment Standard Operating Guide*. This assessment involves a comprehensive evaluation of the physical, economic, social, and environmental impacts of the disaster.

### ***Transition to Long-Term Recovery***

The transition to long-term recovery begins when the County and its stakeholders shift focus from providing temporary relief to implementing sustainable rebuilding solutions. This phase involves reconstructing damaged infrastructure, homes, and businesses; revitalizing the economy; addressing environmental concerns; and implementing mitigation measures to reduce the risk of future disasters. The transition is gradual and requires sustained effort, resources, and coordination among various stakeholders. Areas of the County will likely recover at different rates, so that while some may quickly transition into long-term recovery, others will remain in ongoing response and short-term recovery



operations for longer. The County balances the demands of these communities through the incident assessment and planning process.

As the County achieves a relatively steady state for most of its residents and businesses, as indicated in part by a decreased tempo of response and recovery operations and normalization of services and other indicators, senior leadership will initiate the *Lee County Disaster Recovery Plan*.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Operational documents that supplement the *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan* provide more specific roles and responsibilities for response and short-term recovery than what this chapter delineates. This includes those roles and responsibilities outlined in department- or agency-specific plans, policies, or procedures. It also includes such documents as the *Operations Section Standard Operating Guide*, the *Incident Assessment Standard Operating Guide*, the *Mass Care Plan*, and so forth. All of this is in addition to the programmatic roles and responsibilities enumerated in

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<sup>21</sup> See the “Built Environment” section of Chapter 2 of the *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (2023)*

<sup>22</sup> The list of shelters may be found in the *All Hazards Guide*, the LeePrepares app, or at the following website <https://www.leegov.com/publicsafety/emergencymanagement/shelters/publicshelters>

<sup>23</sup> Special needs sheltering is provided to those who have energy or oxygen dependent medical needs in expectation of and for the duration of extended power loss in the County following an incident.

<sup>24</sup> See the *Lee County Volunteer and Donations Standard Operating Guide*

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.leegov.com/publicsafety/emergencymanagement/plan/ahg>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.leegov.com/publicsafety/emergencymanagement/knowyourzone>

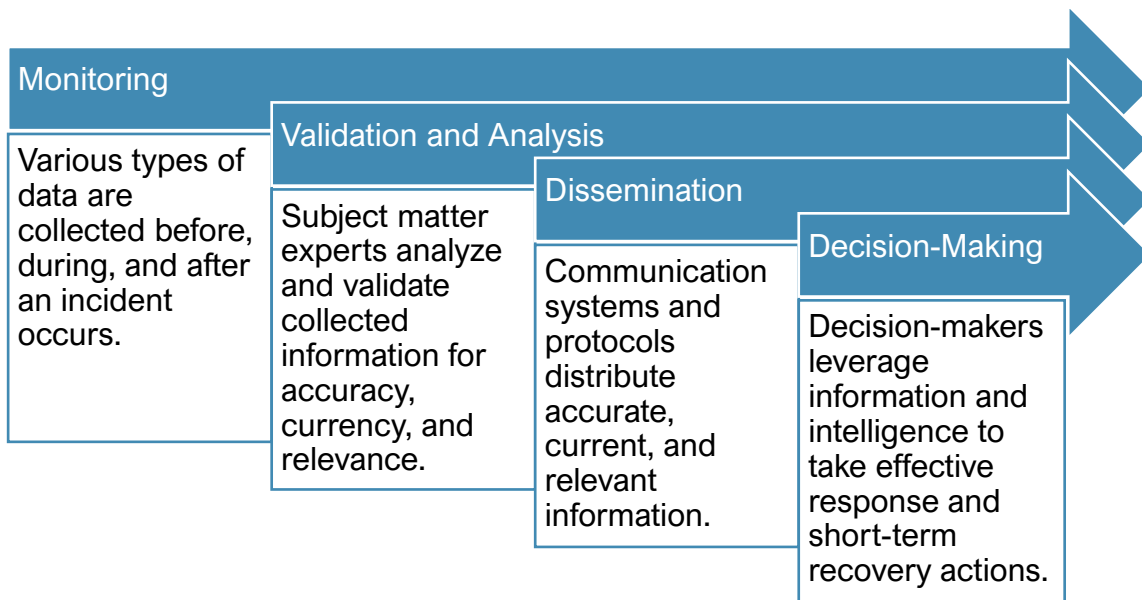


# Chapter 6 Information & Intelligence Management Framework

The Information & Intelligence Management Framework serves as a linchpin in the *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)*. Its purpose is to ensure that accurate, timely, and actionable data grounds all aspects of incident response and short-term recovery to operational realities. This framework focuses on gathering, analyzing, and disseminating critical information before, during, and after emergencies, to optimize decision-making across multiple stakeholders and operational tiers. Developed in alignment with Federal and State guidance, industry best practices and lessons learned from past operational experiences form the foundation for this framework.

This chapter provides a detailed examination of the Information & Intelligence Management Framework, delineating the scope and mechanics of how information flows and how personnel manage it in various phases of an emergency. First, the chapter elaborates on the process used to manage data collection, analysis, and dissemination. Next, it outlines the framework’s interface with Incident Command Systems and inter-agency coordination through establishing a common operating picture. The chapter closes by identifying how this framework interfaces with other emergency management functions and frameworks detailed in the CEMP.

Figure 17 Information & Intelligence Management Process



## Authorities and Policies

The following authorities and policies empower and direct incident assessments before, during, and after disasters occur. (See Chapter 14 for a full list of applicable authorities and policies during disasters.)

- F.S. 252.38

## Information and Intelligence Management Process

The Information & Intelligence Management Framework is a multi-faceted concept designed to synchronize various elements crucial for effective emergency management. These elements collectively contribute to operational efficacy and situational awareness by identifying, gathering, and disseminating essential information for decision-making before, during, and after an incident occurs. Personnel achieve efficacy by using correct information to:<sup>27</sup>

- Aid in planning.
- Communicate with the public, including emergency protective measures.
- Determine incident cost.
- Determine the need for additional involvement of NGO or private sector resources.
- Identify safety issues; and
- Resolve information requests.

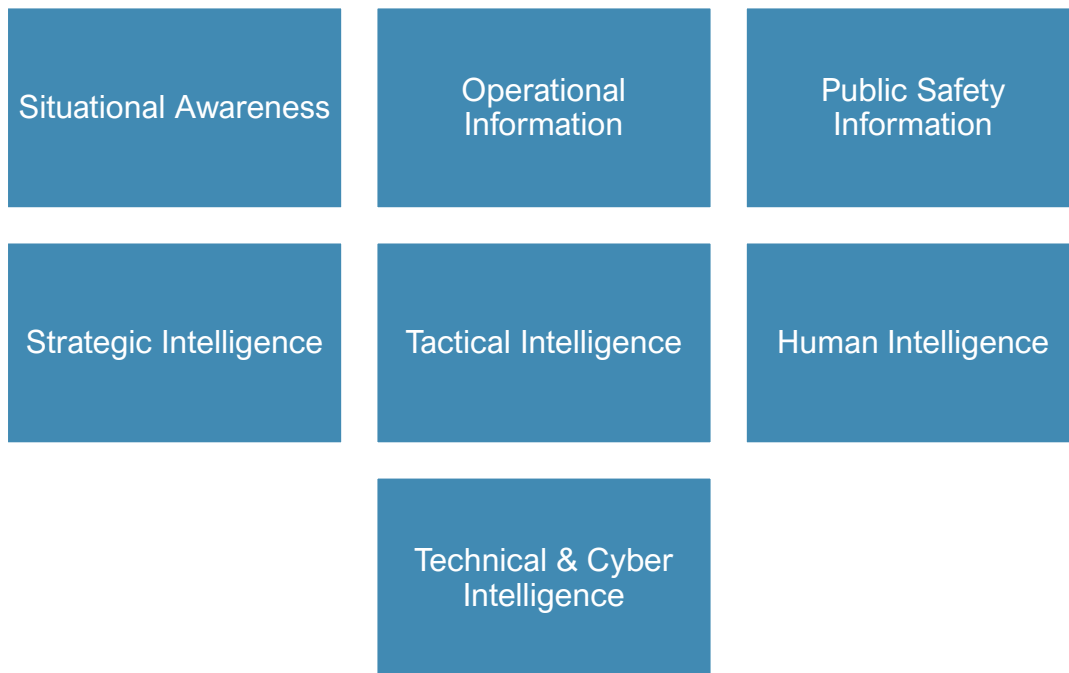
The process encompasses the types of information and intelligence relevant to monitoring during the preparatory stage of emergency management and to response and short-term recovery operations. Data, collection, validation, analysis, and dissemination constitute the process (see Figure on the previous page). Integrated information management systems, protocols, and procedures connect the process across functions and multiple levels of government. The framework leverages existing systems of communication and information management used in daily operations, capitalizing on their economies of scale and staff familiarity. Each part of the process is described in greater detail below.

## Types of Incident Information & Intelligence

Information refers to data organized and processed by Lee County and its partners to provide value in decision-making and actions related to incident management. This could range from raw field reports and surveillance data to more synthesized forms like risk assessments and situational reports. Intelligence, on the other hand, is a subset of



information analyzed to inform strategic, tactical, or operational decisions. Intelligence may include insights into potential threats, actor motivations, or future conditions and scenarios. Both elements are critical for robust incident response and short-term recovery operations, fulfilling distinct but interconnected roles within the Information & Intelligence Management Framework.



*Figure 18 Types of Incident Information & Intelligence*

Understanding the types and roles of information and intelligence during response and short-term recovery operations is fundamental for effective emergency management. While information provides the raw material, intelligence adds context, thereby enabling well-informed, strategic decision-making. Both are critical for optimizing the effectiveness of Lee County’s emergency response and short-term recovery operations. There are several types of information and intelligence that are necessary for effective response and short-term recovery operations (Figure above). These are described below and addressed throughout the body of this chapter.

### ***Situational Awareness***

A cornerstone for any response activity, situational awareness information involves real-time data on the incident’s scale, scope, and impact. This type of information enables decision-makers to comprehend the current state of the emergency, thereby guiding immediate actions.

### **Essential Elements of Information (EEI)**

*are specific types of information required by the County and its stakeholders to make informed decisions during an emergency. These elements are predefined and tailored to the specific contingency or incident type, providing a focused approach to data collection, and ensuring that all relevant parties know exactly what information is necessary, why it is needed, and how it will be used.*

*To maintain operational relevance, personnel regularly review and adjust the EEI. This process is responsive to changes in the threat landscape, lessons learned from past incidents, and advancement in technology and information management practices.*

*The incorporation of EEI into the Information & Intelligence Framework allows personnel to filter through the vast amount of available information and focus on what is truly essential. The structured approach to defining, collecting, and utilizing the EEI results in enhanced situational awareness and more effective response and short-term recovery operations.*

### **Operational Planning**

This type encompasses resource status, personnel deployment, and logistical details. Operational information ensures that personnel allocate assets effectively and coordinate actions appropriately, thereby facilitating efficient response and recovery efforts.

### **Public Safety Information**

Communication with the public is an indispensable part of response activities. Public safety information includes alerts, evacuation orders, and public health guidelines. These communications are pivotal for reducing risks and safeguarding communities.

### **Strategic Intelligence**

Strategic intelligence provides an analysis of the long-term implications of the incident, including societal, economic, and environmental impacts. This intelligence guides decision-making related to resource allocation for long-term recovery.

### **Tactical Intelligence**

Focused on immediate operational priorities, tactical intelligence includes information like the location of hazards, affected populations, and critical infrastructure. This informs immediate actions such as evacuation procedures and emergency service deployment.

### **Human Intelligence**

Collected from interpersonal interactions, such as interviews with survivors, human intelligence can offer unique insights that are often overlooked by technological means. Such intelligence often proves critical in gauging public sentiment and identifying specific community needs during short-term recovery.





### ***Technical and Cyber Intelligence***

Understanding cyber vulnerabilities and technological limitations is crucial. Technical and cyber intelligence could provide insights into potential cybersecurity threats or infrastructural weaknesses that adversarial actors could exploit during a crisis or that are vulnerable to cascading effects during one or more incidents.

## **Data Collection**

The Information & Intelligence Management Framework integrates rigorous data collection protocols as a cornerstone of emergency management operations. This section delineates the systematic process by which personnel gather data, ensuring comprehensiveness and reliability, beginning with defining and describing Essential Elements of Information (EEI). The framework adheres to the structured methodologies prescribed by the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

### ***Essential Elements of Information***

EEI forms the core of data collection and by extension the Information & Intelligence Management Framework. The EEI facilitates the categorization and prioritization of data, serving as critical indicators that drive the intelligence needs of personnel and decision-makers. The determination of the EEI is an iterative process informed by Federal guidance, industry practices, and previous experience. It involves an assessment of potential risks, threats, and consequences relevant to Lee County<sup>28</sup> and the development of a structured list of information requirements that align with identified operational objectives.

During the preparatory phase of emergency management, planners work with senior leadership and personnel associated with each of the frameworks addressed in this plan to pre-identify information requirements for decision-making. Planners record these requirements using a matrix that describes and lists sources, methods, units of measure, and schedules for collecting information. These matrices facilitate the development, maintenance, and revision of response and short-term recovery plans, policies, and procedures. Under the direction of the Incident Commander, the EOC Plans Section Chief may establish an incident-specific data collection plan. Throughout incident response and short-term recovery operations, the EOC Plans Section coordinates the EEI with each of the EOC sections and functions associated with the frameworks established in this plan.

### ***Data Sources***

The Information & Intelligence Management Framework classifies data sources into



detection and monitoring and primary and secondary categories.

- **Detection and Monitoring:** These sources provide early warning indicators and are instrumental in shaping pre-incident awareness. They encompass surveillance systems, automated sensors, and intelligence from collaborative networks focused on specific threats and hazards.
- **Primary Sources:** These sources offer direct information from the incident scene, such as observations from first responders, surveillance systems, and situational reports from emergency management teams.
- **Secondary Sources:** These sources include databases, previous after-action reports, and statistical data, which provide contextual background and can assist in validating the information received from primary sources.

Table 8 below designates the lead and supporting agencies responsible for monitoring hazards and threats that could affect Lee County. Pre-incident monitoring enables the County and its stakeholders (in some cases) to detect incidents before their occurrence. For example, the National Weather Service and other agencies continually monitor atmospheric and ocean conditions that identify developing tropical cyclones in advance of their arrival. Intelligence gathering and analysis by law enforcement and other agencies may detect adversarial activity before its occurrence, allowing the County and its partners to take appropriate proactive measures for life safety. Paired with pre-identified EEI, data collected from monitoring and detection allows Lee County to activate and scale response operations expeditiously to save lives, protect property, and safeguard the environment.

*Table 8 Threat and Hazard Detection and Monitoring*

Hazard	Detection & Monitoring Lead	Detection & Monitoring Support
<b>Sustained Wind (Tropical Cyclones)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NOAA</li> <li>• National Weather Service</li> <li>• Emergency Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National and local meteorologists</li> </ul>
<b>Severe Weather</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NOAA</li> <li>• National Weather Service</li> <li>• Emergency Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National and local meteorologists</li> </ul>
<b>Tornado</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NOAA</li> <li>• National Weather Service</li> <li>• Emergency Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National and local meteorologists</li> </ul>
<b>Epidemic / Pandemic Diseases</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• World Health Organization</li> <li>• Center for Disease Control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional and local medical care system</li> </ul>



Hazard	Detection & Monitoring Lead	Detection & Monitoring Support
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Florida Department of Health – Lee County</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federal, state, and local epidemiologists</li> </ul>
<b>Wildfire</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Florida Forest Service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Natural Resources</li> </ul>
<b>Aircraft Crash</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional airport operations</li> <li>Lee Control</li> </ul>	
<b>Cyberattack</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Information Technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County departments</li> </ul>
<b>Animal / Plant Disease Outbreaks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services</li> <li>Lee County Animal Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agricultural associations</li> </ul>
<b>Coastal Erosion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Natural Resources</li> <li>Florida Department of Environmental Protection</li> </ul>	
<b>Drought</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Weather Service</li> <li>Lee County Natural Resources</li> </ul>	
<b>Excessive Heat</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Weather Service</li> <li>Lee County Human and Veteran Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Emergency Management</li> </ul>
<b>Freeze</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Weather Service</li> <li>Lee County Human and Veteran Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Emergency Management</li> </ul>
<b>Extreme Cold</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Weather Service</li> <li>Lee County Human and Veteran Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Emergency Management</li> </ul>
<b>Hazardous Materials Release</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fort Myers Fire Department HazMat team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Emergency Management</li> </ul>
<b>Mass Casualty / Mass Fatality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Sheriff's Office</li> <li>Lee Control</li> <li>Lee Emergency Medical Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local law enforcement, local fire districts</li> </ul>
<b>Flood</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lee County Natural Resources</li> <li>South Florida Water Management District</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Weather Service</li> <li>United States Geological Survey</li> </ul>



### ***Information Networks and Partners***

Leveraging relationships with stakeholders, both within and without Lee County, facilitates robust situational awareness. This includes law enforcement, fire services, the local health department, and neighboring jurisdictions, as well as State and Federal agencies. Lee County continuously builds, maintains, and expands these relationships in preparation for incident response and short-term recovery operations. For example, County personnel conduct frequent and regular gatherings and discussions between departments and stakeholders to build and develop relationships of trust and determine protocols for information and intelligence sharing. When needed, these relationships facilitate access to specialized data, such as meteorological information from the National Weather Service or hazard-specific data from government and non-government agencies.

### ***Technology***

Modern technology plays a pivotal role in identifying and tapping into data sources. Geographic Information Systems (GIS), remote sensing technologies, and data aggregation software are instrumental in collecting, organizing, and analyzing data from varied sources, enhancing the County's ability to make informed decisions swiftly. For example, GIS empowers planners to account for and analyze land development and demographic patterns<sup>29</sup> before, during, and after an incident occurs. Radar stations and water gauges allow for remote monitoring of weather and flood-related risks. The Information & Intelligence Management Framework identifies and integrates these technologies to better equip decision-makers and personnel with essential information.

### ***Adaptation of Sources and Methods for Collection***

The process of identifying data sources is not static. The Framework is responsive to the advent of new data collection technologies and platforms. Awareness and integration of changes to existing sources or the arrival of new sources or technologies occurs through regular and frequent interaction between the County and its stakeholders in discussions, planning, training, and exercises, in addition to attendance at professional conferences and reviews of lessons learned and trends in model industry practices.

### ***Data Validation and Analysis***

Once collected, personnel pass data through a rigorous review process involving subject matter experts and analytical systems. Personnel meticulously examine the gathered data to ascertain its completeness and accuracy. This involves identifying any data that may be incomplete, inaccurate, embellished, outdated, or potentially misleading. To mitigate



the impact of compromised data, personnel use multiple sources to validate each piece of information, reinforcing the reliability of the processed intelligence.

Lee County and its stakeholders will coordinate validation amongst themselves to facilitate a comprehensive view with diverse perspectives, insight, expertise, and capability. Among other methods, Lee County will use the incident assessment process (discussed in more detail later in this chapter) to facilitate the collection and analysis of incident information and intelligence, including the use of Flash Reports, LeeCOPs, and WebEOC. When activated, the Lee County EOC will coordinate the exchange, analysis, and validation of raw data.



*Figure 19 Raw Data to Information*

Validated data then undergoes a comprehensive analysis to discern its implications for incident management. Analysts employ a range of analytical techniques to transform raw data into actionable information, enabling informed decision-making. The Framework relies on structured analyses to address the incident’s specific information requirements. Personnel break down complex information needs into smaller, more manageable elements, ensuring that personnel give due consideration to each aspect.

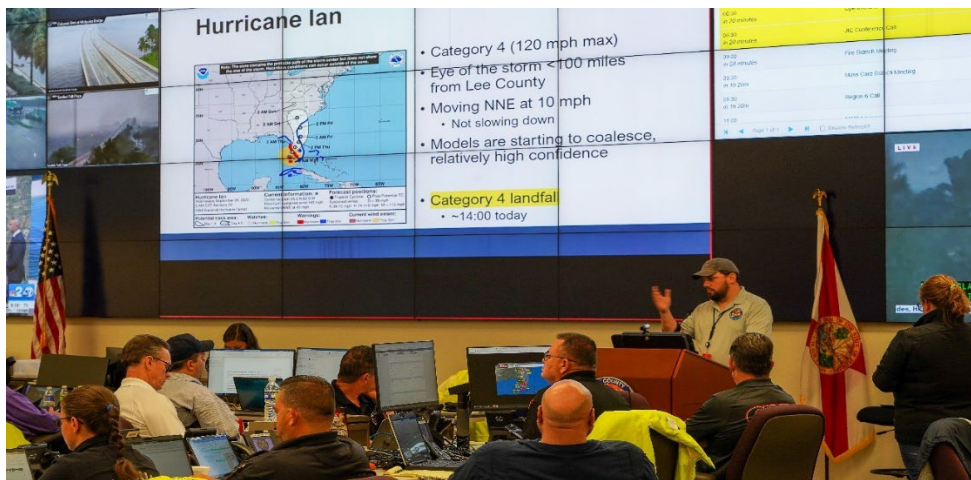
Critical to this process is the staff’s thorough understanding of the incident context and the associated problems. The analysis does not occur in isolation; the framework seeks to ground it with an intimate knowledge of the situation at hand by response and recovery personnel. In this manner, the County and its stakeholders will factor in the dynamic interplay of incident-specific variables with the broader operational environment.

Lee County and its partners will endeavor to use objective timely analytical insights in decision-making before, during, and after incidents occur. Recognizing the fluid nature of emergencies, personnel will work diligently to maintain a pace of analysis that aligns with the urgency of the situation, ensuring that decision-makers receive timely intelligence.

Throughout the validation and analysis process, Lee County will maintain an acute awareness of the limitations posed by missing or unknown data. Personnel will remain vigilant for information gaps and will factor their potential implications into the analysis of gathered data. This cognizance ensures that strategic decisions remain consistent with a comprehensive understanding of both the known factors and the uncertainties that may affect incident outcomes.

## Information Dissemination

Once personnel have collected and validated the incident data, they disseminate actionable information. Dissemination is the process by which personnel distribute incident-related information to relevant parties. This step involves more than the mere transmission of data; it encompasses the tailored delivery of intelligence, ensuring it reaches the right audience, at the right time, and in the most usable format. The dissemination of actionable information, therefore, advances situational awareness for effective decision-making.



*Figure 20 Disseminating Information Through an EOC Briefing*

The timely and accurate relay of information is imperative to enhance situational awareness and support the coordination efforts among those engaged in response and short-term recovery. By doing so, personnel contribute to a shared operational picture that is essential for synchronized incident management. Indeed, one of the essential roles and functions of incident management is the proper acquisition and dissemination of information.

Lee County uses a multifaceted approach to the dissemination of information. Official channels such as WebEOC, and LeeCOPs coincide with Flash Reports, emails, and

telecommunication methods for dissemination. Briefings, meetings, and the deployment of digital platforms like dashboards and databases ensure comprehensive coverage (e.g., see Figure above). Additionally, interaction with the media through press releases and conferences will play a crucial role in disseminating information to the public.

Furthermore, Lee County shares information with the public via many types of media and social media. These include:

- Dedicated space at the Lee County EOC for television reporters to stage at the facility and regularly update the public on their broadcasts.
- Monitoring and updating of social media sites by members of the Joint Information Center.
- Press Releases from the Public Information Officer, which are also added to the Breaking News section of the County website.
- The free LeePrepares smartphone app, to which personnel will send push alerts and other information, such as a list of open shelters, evacuation zones, and updates on current weather and hazardous weather outlooks.
- County websites, including incident (e.g., hurricane) or department (e.g., Utilities) or function-specific sites (e.g., recovery) also provide and will convey vetted information to the public regarding things such as evacuation zones, prescriptions of protective measures, outages, and so forth.

## **Incident Assessments**

Incident Assessment constitutes an essential function within Lee County's Information & Intelligence Management Framework. This process serves to evaluate the scale, scope, and impact of an incident, providing a foundation for strategic decision-making and resource allocation throughout the response and recovery phases. The principal role of incident assessment is to furnish timely and accurate information regarding an incident's immediate and potential consequences. This assessment informs the operational priorities and strategies of emergency management personnel and supports the overall coordination of the incident response.

The Framework categorizes incident assessment according to Figure and the bullets below:







Initial Size-Up and  
Rapid Assessment



Damage  
Assessment



Impact  
Assessment

*Figure 21 Types of Incident Assessment*

- **Initial Size-Up and Rapid Assessment:** A swift evaluation is conducted to gain a preliminary understanding of the incident and determine immediate actions.
- **Damage Assessment:** A systematic process to quantify and qualify the extent of destruction inflicted upon infrastructure, property, and the environment.
- **Impact Assessment:** An appraisal of the broader effects of the incident on the community, economy, and public health, which is increasingly pivotal within the Information & Intelligence Framework. This assessment shapes both immediate response and longer-term recovery efforts.

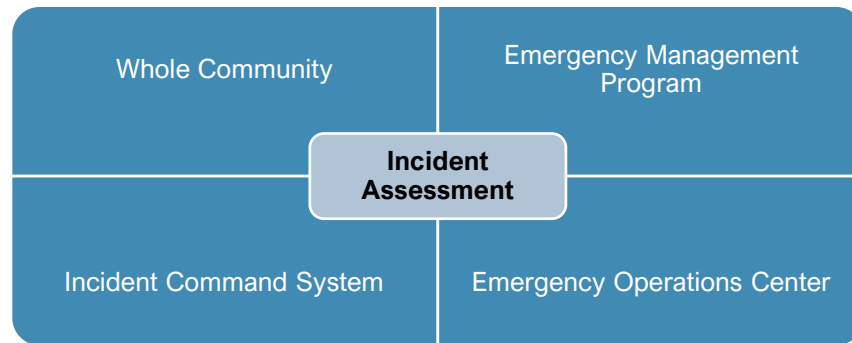
The Information and Intelligence Management Process (described above), comprising data collection, validation, analysis, and dissemination, is intricately linked with the practice of Incident Assessments. This relationship is synergistic and cyclical, with each phase of the information management process informing and enhancing the assessment of the incident.

Throughout an incident, the Information and Intelligence Management Process supports ongoing assessments. Initial size-up and rapid assessments benefit from immediate and continuous data flow, enabling responders to quickly understand the incident's nature and begin formulating response strategies. As the situation progresses, damage assessments rely on the sustained input of detailed information to quantify the extent of the impact on infrastructure, property, and individuals.

Impact assessments, which focus on the consequences of the incident on the community and the environment, draw from the comprehensive picture painted by the accumulated and analyzed data. This aspect of the assessment is forward-looking, determining the short-term and long-term recovery needs and priorities.

Incident assessment is a collaborative, whole-community endeavor engaging all levels of government, the private sector, and nonprofit organizations. This inclusive approach

ensures a comprehensive understanding of the incident and its ramifications. The Emergency Management Program described in Chapter 3 forms the foundation for this concerted approach. The Incident Command System and Emergency Operation Center described in Chapter 4 coordinate and manage this collaboration during response and short-term recovery operations. This coordination ensures that assessments are systematic, consistent, and integrated across all participating agencies and functions. Figure 22 below illustrates these elements forming a foundation for incident assessment.



*Figure 22 Foundation for Incident Assessment*

Lee County’s Information & Intelligence Management Framework underscores the importance of impact assessment, in addition to the traditional focus on damage assessment. This forward-thinking approach goes beyond the physical damages to consider the broader social and economic effects on the community. Impact assessment is critical not only for immediate response but also for the efficient use of resources during the recovery stages, be they short-term or extended.

The *Incident Assessment Standard Operating Guide* provides further detail and direction on procedures, roles, responsibilities, and methodologies of incident assessment. This guide serves as a comprehensive reference point and complements the guidelines provided within this plan.

**Lee County Common Operating Picture (LeeCOP)**

A LeeCOP is an accurate, real-time overview that provides incident-related information to all participants in the emergency management process. It is a comprehensive, shared display of critical information that may include the status of resources, the progression of incident management efforts, and the situation on the ground. The LeeCOP ensures that all parties have access to the same information, thereby promoting situational awareness and facilitating a coordinated response.



All the previous elements of the Information & Intelligence Management Framework combine to form an incident's LeeCOP. The LeeCOP draws upon the ongoing data collection, validation, and analysis to maintain an accurate and up-to-date representation of the incident. The LeeCOP is both an outcome and a tool within the Framework, encapsulating the understanding garnered and aiding in the dissemination and comprehension of that information.

Incident assessment is a continual input to the LeeCOP. As personnel conduct assessments—ranging from initial size up to impact assessments—the LeeCOP absorbs and reflects these insights. This ensures the most current and comprehensive snapshot of the community available during and after incidents occur and informs incident management.

Lee County will use a variety of technologies to communicate and sustain an incident's LeeCOP. These include WebEOC, dashboards, and communication networks, such as the Joint Information Center.

### ***Incident Reports***

Incident reports enhance situational awareness and help ensure that personnel have easier access to essential information. Types of reports that provide essential information regarding the incident include:

- **Status Reports:** Reports, such as spot reports, which include vital and/or time-sensitive information outside regularly scheduled situation reports. Status reports are typically function-specific and less formal than SITREP's.
- **Situation Briefings:** During response and short-term recovery operations, the Plans Section will conduct regular briefings for the Lee County EOC and its partners. The Incident Commander, Public Information Officer, liaisons, and section chiefs all participate in the briefing to disseminate information, provide direction and guidance, and ensure all participants understand the situation, what priorities will be followed, and what actions are to be taken.

### ***WebEOC***

WebEOC is an incident management system that provides a centralized platform for emergency management operations. It is designed to facilitate real-time information sharing and coordination among various stakeholders during an emergency. WebEOC allows for the documentation, collection, and dissemination of critical incident data, resource requests and deployments, and situation reports, all of which contribute to the



formation and maintenance of a LeeCOP. Its capabilities include customizable input boards, real-time incident tracking, and integrated communication tools, which together support a seamless flow of information.

In the creation and sustainability of a LeeCOP, WebEOC plays a pivotal role by offering an interactive, user-friendly interface that allows various agencies and emergency management personnel to input and access up-to-date information pertinent to an incident. It ensures that all stakeholders have access to the same data, virtually eliminating informational silos and discrepancies that can impede effective response measures. Through its comprehensive reporting features and dashboard views, WebEOC helps to maintain situational awareness, support decision-making processes, and underpin the overall strategic and tactical response to an incident.

Personnel in the Lee County EOC receive annual WebEOC training. Emergency Management staff manage WebEOC and its implementation during response and short-term recovery operations. The *WebEOC User Guide* and the *EOC Activation Guidebook* provide further information on WebEOC.

### ***Dashboards***

Dashboards are interactive data visualization tools used in emergency management to monitor, analyze, and display key information. They aggregate real-time data inputs from various sources into a single interface, presenting a dynamic and user-friendly view of an incident's status, trends, and key performance indicators, such as the County's Essential Elements of Information dashboard on WebEOC. ArcGIS dashboards can integrate geospatial data, allowing for the geographic tracking of incidents and resources, while Survey123 facilitates the collection of field data through surveys that populate the dashboard. This capacity to present complex data in an accessible and visually coherent format is crucial for maintaining situational awareness and aids decision-makers in rapidly assessing conditions and allocating resources effectively during an emergency.

### ***Communication Networks***

Communication networks form the backbone of establishing and maintaining a LeeCOP by ensuring a consistent flow of information between all parties involved in incident management. Formal chains of command and lines of communication, as dictated by ICS, are critical in this process, as they define clear pathways for sharing information, reporting incidents, and requesting resources. These structured networks ensure that all levels of the incident management team, from front-line responders to top-level coordinators, are



working from the same set of data, thereby reducing confusion and redundancy.

In addition to formal communication structures, the LeeCOP is also sustained through a variety of informal networks and innovative technologies. Social media platforms play an increasingly prominent role, providing real-time updates and augmenting traditional information sources with user-generated content that can offer ground-level insights into an evolving incident. Similarly, the Joint Information Center (JIC) serves as a nexus for communication coordination among different organizations, ensuring that public information officers disseminate accurate and synchronized messages to the public and stakeholders. These networks, both formal and informal, coalesce to create a comprehensive and dynamic picture of the incident, facilitating informed decision-making and strategic resource deployment across the emergency management spectrum.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Table 9 below enumerates the roles and responsibilities for managing and implementing the Information & Intelligence Management Framework. While prudent information management is a shared responsibility in the Emergency Management Program, certain roles are specific to the execution of this framework. Additional roles and responsibilities for staff supporting each function are enumerated in their respective section standard operating guides. The *Incident Assessment Standard Operating Guide* delineates more fully the roles and responsibilities for assessments as part of this Framework.

*Table 9 Information & Intelligence Management Roles and Responsibilities*

Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
<b>Policy Makers</b>	Elected Officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make overarching policy decisions based on information and intelligence provided by Senior Leadership and the EOC</li> <li>• Ensure legal and ethical standards governing information gathering and dissemination are upheld.</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Leadership</b>	Lee County Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translate policy directives into operational goals and guidance, which drives an incident’s essential elements of information.</li> <li>• Oversee the application of information and intelligence to strategic planning and resource allocation.</li> </ul>



Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support and direction to Incident Command and other key figures in the management team.</li> </ul>
<b>Incident Commander</b>	Emergency Management – Chief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish overarching policies and priorities for information management.</li> <li>• Integrate information and intelligence into goals, objectives, and decision-making.</li> <li>• Coordinate with Policy Makers and Senior Leadership to ensure that information needs are met.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Information Officer</b>	Lee County Communications Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve as the conduit for information to the public and media outlets.</li> <li>• Ensure that information disseminated to the public is accurate, consistent, and timely.</li> <li>• Work in conjunction with the Joint Information Center to facilitate broader information dissemination through the Joint Information System.</li> <li>• Monitor and update social media.</li> <li>• Manage the rumor control process.</li> </ul>
<b>Liaisons</b>	Variable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act as the point of contact for assisting and coordinating with agencies and organizations.</li> <li>• Share relevant information and intelligence with partner entities to aid in collaborative efforts.</li> <li>• Ensure that situational awareness is maintained among stakeholders.</li> <li>• Assist in validating information for accuracy and currency.</li> </ul>
<b>Operations Section Chief</b>	Emergency Management – Operations Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use information and intelligence to develop and implement tactical actions to achieve incident objectives.</li> <li>• Manage the application of resources in the field and provide updates and feedback on operational status.</li> <li>• Inform the planning process with the latest on-ground information and intelligence.</li> </ul>



Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
<b>Plans Section Chief</b>	Emergency Management – Deputy Chief, Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversee the collection, evaluation, dissemination, and use of information and intelligence for incident planning.</li> <li>• Lead the development of the LeeCOP, integrating all available information.</li> <li>• Maintain the status of resources and ensure the incident documentation is complete and accurate.</li> </ul>
<b>Logistics Section Chief</b>	Emergency Management – Coordinator or Public Safety – Logistics designee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use information and intelligence to anticipate and fulfill logistical needs.</li> <li>• Ensure that resource allocation is based on the current forecasted situation as developed through the planning process.</li> <li>• Coordinate with external suppliers and partners to secure necessary services and materials.</li> </ul>
<b>Finance and Administration Section Chief</b>	Lee County Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and analyze financial considerations and constraints based on incident information.</li> <li>• Ensure that cost analysis is included in the planning and decision-making processes.</li> <li>• Oversee the tracking of costs related to incident resources and ensure proper financial documentation and reimbursement procedures.</li> </ul>
<b>Technical Specialists</b>	Variable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide specialized knowledge and expertise.</li> <li>• Analyze and interpret technical data related to their field of expertise.</li> <li>• Work with the Plans Section to ensure that the LeeCOP addresses specific technical aspects of the incident.</li> <li>• Offer technical recommendations to the Incident Command and other decision-makers.</li> <li>• Ensure that the technical aspects of data collection, analysis, and dissemination align with current best practices and standards within their field.</li> <li>• Collaborate with other specialists and operational staff to integrate technical information.</li> <li>• Participate in the verification and validation of technical information and intelligence.</li> </ul>





Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
<b>Geographic Information System</b>	Lee County GIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the development of training programs and exercises.</li> <li>• Create detailed maps to visualize and analyze the spatial aspect of data related to incidents.</li> <li>• Combine various data sources into GIS to provide a comprehensive spatial analysis.</li> <li>• Utilize GIS for real-time tracking and situational awareness to inform decision-making.</li> <li>• Assist the Plans Section by providing maps and spatial data analyses that inform the LeeCOP.</li> <li>• Develop public-facing maps and applications to communicate incident information to the community, when appropriate.</li> <li>• Ensure GIS data and systems can effectively interface with other information and intelligence systems, maintaining data consistency and accuracy across platforms.</li> </ul>
<b>General Personnel</b>	County Departments and Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect data in accordance with role, ensuring it is accurate and timely.</li> <li>• Provide clear and concise reports of observations and activities as part of the larger data collection effort.</li> <li>• Cross-check information received with known data sources to validate accuracy.</li> <li>• Properly document all information and intelligence in line with established protocols to ensure traceability and accountability.</li> <li>• Share relevant information with the appropriate personnel or sections, such as reporting observations to the Operations Section.</li> <li>• Protect the integrity and confidentiality of incident information, adhering to legal and ethical standards.</li> <li>• Work collaboratively across sections, departments, and stakeholders to ensure a unified and coherent approach to information and intelligence management.</li> </ul>



Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain situational awareness by consuming intelligence reports, briefings, and other forms of disseminated information.</li> </ul>

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<sup>27</sup> FEMA (2017). *National Incident Management System*, p. 54

<sup>28</sup> See the "Situation" section in Chapter 1 of this plan for a summary of the County's hazards and risks, which are summarized in Table 3 on p. 8. See also the *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment* for a comprehensive review of the County's hazards and risks.

<sup>29</sup> See Chapter 2 Community Profile in the *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment*.



## Chapter 7 Communications Framework

Communications as a broad term encapsulates the physical and digital technology, protocols, procedures, and mediums by which personnel and stakeholders exchange information. In turn, such information feeds into situational awareness and decision-making, rendering communications as a critical component of managing disasters. Human behavior defines the manner and efficacy of communication and ultimately forms the basis by which information moves from one point to another. Continuous developments and evolution in communication create a dynamic operational environment for response and short-term recovery operations that heightens weaknesses and vulnerabilities in technology and human behavior. For these reasons, Lee County develops and maintains a comprehensive, flexible, and adaptable Communications Framework, which this chapter defines and describes.

The Communications Framework integrates with and relies upon other frameworks defined in the *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)*, such as those that make up the Emergency Management Program discussed in Chapter 3, the Coordination Framework discussed in Chapter 4, and the Information & Intelligence Framework discussed in Chapter 6. Whereas Chapter 7 defines and describes the Communications Framework in the fashion summarized below, the *National Incident Management System, Third Edition (2017)* provides greater detail and direction for how Lee County and its stakeholders will communicate during response and short-term recovery operations.

This chapter outlines the sophisticated array of technologies, protocols, and procedures that facilitate the exchange of information critical to managing disasters effectively. It articulates a detailed composition of the framework, categorizing the diverse types of communication, as well as the varied formats and systems in use. The chapter explains the underlying networks and applications that ensure durable and resilient communication channels. It delineates the orchestrated processes that regulate the flow of communication, including the activation of alerts, warnings, and notifications, and defines the management of public communication to preserve transparency and trust. Furthermore, the chapter sets forth the specific roles and responsibilities that govern communication efforts, underpinning accountability and promoting efficiency across all stages of emergency management.



## **Authorities and Policies**

The following authorities and policies empower and direct incident communications before, during, and after disasters occur. (See Chapter 14 for a full list of applicable authorities and policies during disasters.)

- F.S. 252.38
- State Watch Office Guide for Florida County Warning Points and PSAPs
- IPAWS authorities/policies

## **Communication Protocols**

Lee County's Communications Framework operates through established processes that dictate the flow and exchange of information during emergencies. Most processes consist of formal arrangements between senders and recipients, such as those used for AlertLee, LeePrepares, or the Joint Information System (JIS). Others, however, are informal arrangements developed through organizational norms, experience, and expediency. For example, stakeholders who interact and communicate with one another regularly before an incident occurs will rely upon those pre-established relationships to guide the initiation, flow, and maintenance of some types and levels of communication. Rather than ignore or curtail informal processes of communication, the framework accounts for them and incorporates them into the County's Emergency Management Program. In this manner, personnel and stakeholders can leverage both formal and informal communications to achieve success in response and short-term recovery operations. In doing so, the Communications Framework is better positioned to ensure that both formal and informal communications comply with the documentation requirements of the Administration Framework established in Chapter 8.

## **Incident Command System**

At the core of these processes is the (ICS) addressed in Chapter 4 of the CEMP, which provides a standardized hierarchical structure for managing the entirety of an incident, including communication. ICS serves as the backbone for the implementation of the Communications Framework, as it streamlines the command, control, and coordination of response and short-term recovery operations. Within ICS, specific roles, such as Section Chiefs and Branch Directors, manage information and maintain clear lines of communication with all involved entities. Other roles, such as Public Information Officers and Liaison Officers, oversee communication strategies that link response and short-term recovery operations with the public and across jurisdictional boundaries.



The ICS ensures personnel follow a standardized set of operational protocols and procedures, thereby allowing for the effective dissemination of information. This includes the strategic placement of hardware and software, the execution of formal and informal communication protocols, and the flexible adaptation of ad hoc processes as situations evolve. Within Lee County's operational context, the ICS's integrated approach enables the various components of the Communications Framework to function within a unified system. It is this orchestrated methodology that ensures efficiency and efficacy in conveying critical information to the right people at the right time, ultimately aiding in the safety and well-being of the community and the effectiveness of the Emergency Management Program.

The *National Incident Management System, Third Edition (2017)* provides greater details on many of the processes used by the Communications Framework.

## **Formal and Informal Processes**

In Lee County's approach to emergency management, the communication strategy strikes a delicate balance between formal and informal processes, ensuring both the observance of established protocols and the flexibility to adapt to the unique demands of each situation. Formal processes consist of those codified in law, policies, plans, procedures, and so forth. Informal processes consist of those arising from ad hoc, emergent, or socialized agreements. They also consist of small-group dynamics, such as those developed between two individuals while performing roles and responsibilities together. Both formal and informal processes are essential to effective response and recovery operations, insomuch as they work in tandem and not against one another (see Figure 23 below).

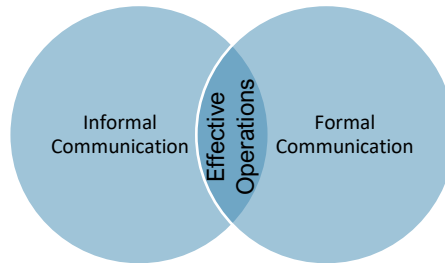
The formal aspect of this communication framework is deeply rooted in the observance of chains of command and authority. This structure is crucial in maintaining order and clarity, particularly in high-stress scenarios where clear directives and unambiguous lines of communication are vital. Personnel are trained to respect and adhere to these established channels, ensuring that information flows through the appropriate pathways, thereby reducing the risk of miscommunication or information gaps.

However, emergencies often present unpredictable and rapidly evolving situations that require quick thinking and innovative solutions. In these instances, Lee County's emergency personnel are empowered to think beyond the confines of traditional communication methods. While they continue to respect the formal chain of command,



they are also encouraged to seek and implement creative communication solutions as the situation demands. This flexibility is critical in adapting to the dynamic nature of emergencies, where a rigid adherence to protocol may not always be the most effective approach.

*Figure 23 Formal and Informal Communication in Operations*



Coordination with the ICS structure established by the County is key in integrating these innovative communication methods. By aligning new solutions with the ICS, personnel ensure that even the most unconventional communication strategies remain within the overarching framework of the County’s emergency response plan. This integration is essential to maintain a cohesive communication strategy that is both adaptable and controlled.

The combination of formal and informal processes in Lee County’s communication protocols thus allows for a dynamic response to emergencies. Personnel maintain a common operating picture and accountability by the structured chain of command but are also equipped to handle the unpredictable nature of emergency scenarios. This dual approach ensures that communication remains fluid and effective, even in the face of highly chaotic and rapidly changing circumstances, preventing the breakdown of communication which can be crucial in emergency response and recovery operations.

## **Social Norms and Values**

Personnel naturally adhere to social norms and values established within their respective organizations, professions, and industries. Especially during times of disruption and stress, they rely on these norms and values to gather, interpret, and communicate their understanding of the operational environment. The degree to which personnel connect and coordinate the breadth and potentially disparate norms and values of the Emergency Management Program during response and recovery operations directly affects the ability and efficacy of the County to save lives, protect property, safeguard the environment, and stabilize communities. For this reason, the Communications Framework incorporates

social norms and values as part of its fabric.

Through the development, maintenance, and implementation of the Emergency Management Program outlined in Chapter 3, departments, agencies, organizations, and their partners necessarily establish means to communicate across boundaries and professions. Pre-incident activities consisting of regular meetings and discussions, planning, training, and exercising develop this interoperable communication capability. As emergencies arise, the County leverages this capability to translate strategic vision into operational success. This occurs through a shared understanding of the nomenclature, agreed-upon roles and responsibilities, established protocols, and so forth. The *National Incident Management System, Third Edition (2017)* describes and develops this further.

## **Alerts, Warnings, and Notifications**

Lee County's Communications Framework utilizes an extensive set of alerts, warnings, and notifications systems to inform personnel, stakeholders, and residents about various stages of incident development and response. As illustrated in Figure 24 below, alerts, warnings, and notifications address different communication needs. If the onset of one or more hazards is detected, responsible parties distribute notifications to County departments and other relevant stakeholders. As the situation develops, and updates or additional information becomes available, responsible personnel will continue to distribute notifications. Personnel continuously monitor developing hazards and threats and should the need for protective actions become necessary, Lee County distributes warnings to staff, stakeholders, and the public. Should the onset of one or more hazards become pending or should they have already occurred (e.g., no-notice incidents), the County will disseminate alerts to include what protective actions should be taken.

Lee County and others responsible for detection and monitoring use myriad means for distributing notifications to stakeholders. For example, the Division of Emergency Management engages in regular correspondence with the National Weather Service, including through email, phone calls, and regular weather briefings. Lee Control continuously monitors caller activity and provides regular reports and updates through email and other reports and platforms. In the event of a forecasted tropical cyclone, County staff notify stakeholders through various pathways, including text messages, phone calls, and in-person conversations. Lee County also uses Everbridge and Email blasts for mass notifications.

The County uses AlertLee and LeePrepares, both of which are tailored for community-





specific outreach, to alert and warn residents, visitors, and businesses of impending or occurring incidents. Traditional media, social media platforms, and websites serve as additional channels to broadcast essential information rapidly and widely. Nonprofits and faith-based organizations extend this communication reach, particularly within their respective networks, to enhance community-specific messaging and support. County personnel work with community leaders to engage with vulnerable and less-served populations to ensure alerts and warnings are disseminated across the whole community.

The *Communication, Notification, and Alert and Warning Systems Standard Operating Guide* provides greater detail and direction for communicating situational awareness and life safety information to personnel and the public.

## **Public Communication**

Lee County's Communications Framework provides an integrated and comprehensive approach to deliver essential information to the public regarding emergencies, their aftereffects, and recovery efforts. This framework engages an array of tools and channels to ensure the public remains informed and prepared.

The system employs a variety of methods for disseminating emergency information. These include pre-incident efforts such as seminars, media interviews, and social media campaigns designed to educate the public on hazards and preparedness strategies. For example, Lee County provides the public access to their evacuation zones through maps located in the *All-Hazards Guide*, as well as online through the Know Your Zone program<sup>30</sup> and the LeePrepares app (Figure 25 shown below). The use of the *All-Hazards Guide*<sup>31</sup>, alongside promotional materials and targeted outreach activities, forms a critical part of the educational outreach. The County and its stakeholders made directed efforts towards diverse community groups, including those with visual impairments or limited English proficiency, to ensure inclusivity.

In an emergency, the Public Information Officer (PIO), who leads a trained team of spokespersons, coordinates the dissemination of information. This team deploys AlertLee and LeePrepares, along with traditional and social media, to issue timely alerts, warnings, and notifications. The PIO and the communications team ensure that information is consistent, accurate, and easily understandable, explaining safety measures and what the public can expect from local, state, and federal agencies.

The Communications Framework also details processes for confirming the authenticity of



information from all sources and strategies for countering misinformation efficiently. Procedures are in place to manage rumors and to provide accessible communication to individuals with disabilities, limited English proficiency, and other access and functional needs.

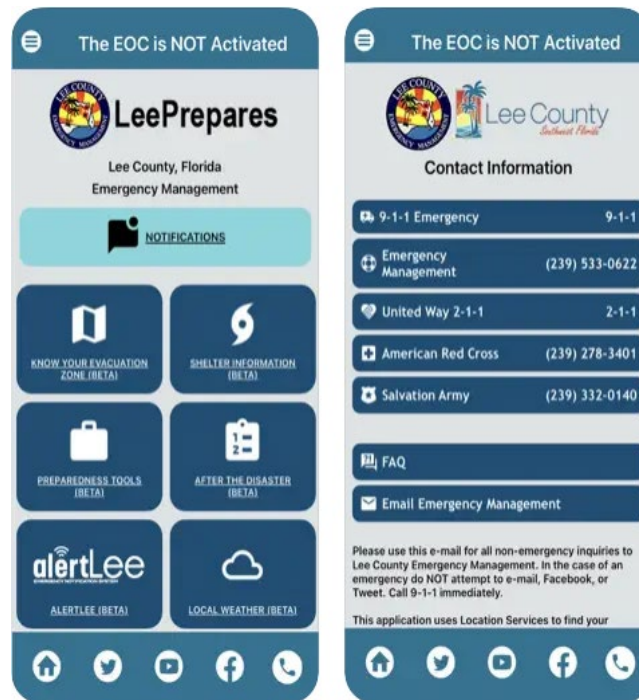


Figure 25 LeePrepares App

During emergencies, the framework guides how responders and local officials use and interact with the media, including scheduling press briefings and establishing media centers at the scene. The media is a vital partner in conveying public safety information, and the framework outlines the roles of various PIO’s in leading these efforts. Furthermore, Lee County incorporates the use of the Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS) for broader messaging and includes the provision of information through the Emergency Information Hotline (EIHL). This hotline serves as a direct line for public inquiries, offering an additional layer of communication support.

The *Public Information Standard Operating Guide* and the *Joint Information System and Center Operating Guide* provide additional information and details about public communication.

## Communication with Vulnerable Populations

Addressing the communication needs of vulnerable populations is a key component of

Lee County's communication strategy. In this endeavor, the PIO, and Joint Information Center (JIC) collaborate extensively with various organizations, including nonprofit, faith-based entities, and community representatives. This collaboration is crucial in identifying the unique communication needs of different communities and determining the most effective ways to engage with them. By working with trusted community members, the county also effectively manages rumor control and ensures that accurate information reaches these vulnerable groups.

## **Addressing Various Operating Environments**

Finally, Lee County's Communications Framework is distinguished by its versatility and resilience, capable of operating across a spectrum of scenarios. Grounded in the all-hazards approach of *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment* (HIRA), the County designs the framework to be effective in any operational environment. Continuous training, regular testing, and the development of interconnected systems further enhance its resilience. This multi-system approach ensures continuity of communication, even amid significant disruptions. The County's experience in handling a variety of incidents, including cyber intrusion events, stands testament to the robustness and adaptability of this framework.

## **Communication Management**

During incident response and short-term recovery operations, first responders use their existing command structures and systems for on-scene coordination and communication. Lee County onboards personnel brought in for field operations through mutual aid, providing them with communication equipment and instruction in local protocols. Communication support systems in the field remain mostly mobile (i.e., radios, tablets, smartphones, mobile command units, and so forth) to enable such operations to move and adjust as necessary. On-scene commanders maintain communication with other members of response and short-term recovery efforts through regular contact with their respective units and branches in the County Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

The EOC manages communication across the larger spectrum of response and short-term recovery operations. It does so through the communication protocols discussed above, including ICS, as well as supporting plans, policies, and procedures to the *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan* (CEMP). The Lee County EOC also manages communication between local and regional stakeholders, as well as between them and the State EOC. The PIO and the JIC manage communication between



Lee County and the public.

## Communication Support and Integration

Comprehensive networks of interconnected and redundant means of communication characterized Lee County's approach to communication during disasters. Collections of technologies, interlinked local and regional networks, protocols, cultural norms, and processes comprise the Communications Framework. All these components work together at all levels of government and across sectors through the outcomes achieved by implementing the Emergency Management Program and the Coordination and Information & Intelligence Management Frameworks.

At the local level, Lee County employs a diverse array of communication methods to ensure effective and continuous information flow. This range includes:

- **Traditional Communication Channels:** These encompass landline, cellular, and VOIP telephones, serving as the primary means for direct and immediate communication.
- **Digital Correspondence:** Email and other digital platforms form the backbone of business correspondence, facilitating official and formal communication.
- **Personal Interactions:** In-person conversations, meetings, and briefings play a critical role in ensuring clear and direct communication, especially in rapidly evolving scenarios.
- **Remote Communication Tools:** Remote conferencing systems have become increasingly important, offering a flexible and efficient means of communication.
- **Emergency Communication Systems:** The 911 system and 800 VHF UHF radios are crucial for emergency responses, while amateur radio systems provide a reliable backup.
- **Media and Public Information Tools:** Traditional, social, and digital media, along with physical media like billboards and flyers, are utilized for public outreach and information dissemination.
- **AlertLee:** This alert and notification system is a cornerstone for public alerts, offering a versatile and widespread reach.

Regionally, Lee County extends its communication network through communities of practice, EMNet, and the State Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS). These platforms enable a broader reach and coordination, linking local efforts with regional partners and resources.



On a national scale, Lee County ensures its communication strategies are in harmony with Federal guidelines and systems. Personnel achieve this through strategic liaisons with the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) and other State and national emergency response teams. The alignment of the CEMP with the *State of Florida Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan* and Federal networks incorporates systems like the National Warning System (NAWAS)<sup>32</sup>, Emergency Alert System (EAS)<sup>33</sup>, and Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)<sup>34</sup> for comprehensive alerts and notifications.

The *Communication, Notification, and Alert and Warning Systems Standard Operating Guide* provides greater detail on the County's communication networks, systems, and applications.

## Communication Shortfalls

Through the process of planning, training, exercises, and after-action reviews of real-world incidents, Lee County continuously matches its communications capability with the likely consequences of disasters. In this manner, the County and its stakeholders regularly conduct gap and shortfall analyses. As staff identify them, the Emergency Management Program develops and implements solutions to the shortfalls and incorporates those solutions into the Communications Framework.

To minimize capability shortfalls, Lee County maintains a variety of communications capabilities, so that losing one or more of them will not eliminate the ability to communicate or to coordinate response and short-term recovery operations. Redundant communication systems include, but are not limited, to the following:

- Satellite phones
- Mobile Command Units
- Starlinks
- Form hard copies.
- Interdepartmental mail
- Professional and amateur radio
- Physical media, including bus wraps, flyers, posters, leaflets, door hangers, etc.
- Runners

For example, Lee County co-locates amateur radio operators and their equipment with shelters to ensure that communication remains unhindered between those locations and the EOC throughout response and short-term recovery operations. If physical damage



eliminates power and other utilities for an extended period, the County uses the E-Role program and field personnel to act as runners between locations. Starlinks and other mobile platforms hasten the restoration of communication during times of significant disruption to the County’s built environment.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Table 10 below enumerates the roles and responsibilities for managing and implementing the Communications Framework. While prudent communication is a shared responsibility in the Emergency Management Program, certain roles are specific to the execution of this framework. These are identified and summarized below for primary personnel; additional roles and responsibilities for staff supporting each function are enumerated in their respective section standard operating guides. This information is subject to change as determined by incident necessity.

*Table 10 Communications Roles & Responsibilities*

Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
<b>County Public Information Officer (PIO)</b>	Director, Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oversees the communications department during emergencies.</li> <li>Develop emergency communication strategies and protocols.</li> <li>Coordinates with other departments and agencies to ensure effective communication during crises.</li> <li>Provides guidance and leadership to the communications team.</li> <li>Acts as a liaison between the organization and external stakeholders during emergencies.</li> </ul>
<b>Communications Coordinator</b>	Digital Communications Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manages digital communication channels during emergencies, including websites, social media platforms, and email.</li> <li>Creates and disseminates emergency-related content online.</li> <li>Monitors online conversations and trends related to the emergency.</li> </ul>



Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborates with other team members to ensure consistent messaging across digital platforms.</li> <li>• Utilizes analytics tools to measure the effectiveness of digital communication efforts.</li> </ul>
<b>Social Media Coordinator</b>	Communication, Marketing, and Social Media Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops communication and marketing strategies for emergencies.</li> <li>• Manages social media accounts to provide real-time updates and information during crises.</li> <li>• Creates promotional materials and campaigns to raise awareness about emergency preparedness and response.</li> <li>• Collaborates with other departments to integrate emergency messaging into marketing materials.</li> <li>• Monitors and responds to inquiries and concerns on social media platforms during emergencies.</li> </ul>
<b>County PIO Assistant</b>	Emergency Communications Specialist, Sr.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides expert guidance on communication strategies during emergencies.</li> <li>• Acts as a subject matter expert on emergency communication technologies and best practices.</li> <li>• Coordinates with external agencies and partners to ensure interoperable communication systems.</li> <li>• Assists in training and mentoring other communication specialists.</li> <li>• Takes a lead role in developing and implementing crisis communication plans.</li> </ul>
<b>Deputy PIO</b>	Manager, Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oversees the day-to-day operations of the communications department.</li> </ul>





Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops and implements communication policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Manages budgets and resources for communication activities.</li> <li>• Provides support and guidance to communication staff during emergencies.</li> <li>• Represents the communications department in meetings and discussions related to emergency preparedness and response.</li> </ul>

<sup>30</sup> Lee County's evacuation zones can be accessed online at

<https://www.leegov.com/publicsafety/emergencymanagement/knowyourzone>

<sup>31</sup> The *All Hazards Guide* is available in print and online at <https://www.leegov.com/publicsafety/emergencymanagement/plan/ahg>

<sup>32</sup> For more information about NAWAS visit <https://mil.wa.gov/national-warning-system>

<sup>33</sup> For more information about EAS visit <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/integrated-public-alert-warning-system/public/emergency-alert-system>

<sup>34</sup> For more information about WEA visit <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/integrated-public-alert-warning-system/public/wireless-emergency-alerts>



# Chapter 8 Administration Framework

The Administration Framework sets forth the authorities, plans, policies, processes, and procedures for sufficiently staffing and documenting disaster response and short-term recovery operations. The majority of the framework's elements exist in Lee County's daily operations and require little alteration to be used in hazardous instances. Other elements, such as emergency staffing and some types of documentation, are used as necessary to meet operational needs. The Administration Framework works in conjunction with the Finance Framework (see Chapter 8) and Logistics Framework (see Chapter 10) to ensure resources, staffing, and cost recovery concerns are addressed sufficiently. By applying the appropriate staffing at the right time to the response and short-term recovery operations, Lee County will be able to ensure life safety and the protection of the economy and environment. Moreover, by sufficiently documenting operational activities, Lee County and its communities will be more resilient and able to recover more quickly from disasters.

## **Emergency Role Program**

*Per Administrative Code 7-6, all Lee County employees have assigned roles and responsibilities to perform during disaster response and short-term recovery. The **E-Role Program**:*

- *Pre-assigns emergency roles.*
- *Trains employees on emergency roles*
- *Guides employee preparedness.*
- *Addresses pay for emergency operations by staff.*

## **Authorities and Policies**

The following authorities and policies empower and direct administrative functions during disaster response and short-term recovery operations (see Chapter 14 for a full list of applicable authorities and policies during disasters).

- 504 Pay for Work During Emergencies or Disasters
- Lee County Administrative Code (AC) 7-6
- F.S. 119
- F.A.C. Ch 1B-24 & Ch. 1B-26.003

## **Human Resource Management and the E-Role Program**

Lee County will rely initially on the availability and expertise of its staff and relevant stakeholders to meet operational needs when addressing the onset or potential onset of a hazard or threat. In most instances, staff will assume roles with similar responsibilities



and authority to those they perform daily; however, their decision-making and efforts will be integrated and coordinated through the incident's command structure. Gaps or deficits in human resources before or during an incident will be addressed primarily through the County's Emergency Role (E-Role) Program. Beyond that, unmet human resource needs or individuals or groups with specialized skillsets will be addressed through resource requests to the State of Florida and/or mutual aid agreements.

Lee County Administrative Code (AC) 7-6 establishes County policy for closing County operations and for governing the working activities of employees during times of emergencies. AC-7-6 sets responsibility on County employees to aid in protecting public health and safety. It directs departments and divisions to identify essential employees, provides provisions for employees to take time to prepare themselves and their families before the onset of a hazard or threat, and addresses pay during times of incident operations. Similarly, Lee County Policy 504 addresses pay for County employees during emergencies or disasters.

Lee County Emergency Management administers the E-Role Program in partnership with Lee County Human Resources. The program pre-assigns County staff to emergency roles and trains them on their respective functions and responsibilities. Whereas E-Role will primarily be used in severe weather events, such as hurricanes, the program is capable of meeting human resource needs for any of the County's identified hazards and threats. The *E-Role Program Standard Operating Procedure* provides additional information on this program and its implementation.



Figure 26 E-Role in Action at COVID Vaccination Site (2021)

Typically, issues and decision-making related to human resources will be managed through the Finance and Administration Section and the Logistics Section of the County's Incident Command System<sup>35</sup>. See the *Finance and Administration Section Standard Operating Guide* and the *Logistics Section Standard Operating Guide* for an example of

how that will be achieved. Nevertheless, depending on the operational needs of an incident and the staff available, they may be assigned to other sections or entities for coordination.

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*The County and all its employees have a responsibility to residents and visitors for public safety.*

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## **Volunteers**

It is expected that in large or otherwise significant incidents, members of the local community and others will want to volunteer their efforts and/or resources. The County may use volunteers to close human resource gaps or to increase and extend its response and recovery capabilities. Lee County maintains a volunteer coordination program to facilitate the integration of volunteers with incident operations. The *Volunteer and Donations Standard Operating Guide* addresses this program in more detail, as does the *Logistics Section Standard Operating Guide*.

## **Incident Documentation**

In every instance of responding to and recovering from an incident, Lee County is responsible for documenting assessments, decisions, resource requests, and other activities. This is particularly true for financial information. Documentation is crucial for the following reasons:

- Maintaining consistent situational awareness throughout incident operations.
- Providing historical information during the after-action review process and post-incident mitigation efforts.
- Seeking financial reimbursement, financial assistance, and grants for incident operations and recovery.

Persons directing or supervising incident-related work must document personnel, equipment, and supplies expended daily. Copies of these reports are to be sent to the Public Safety Fiscal Officer weekly during the period of the State of Local Emergency (SOLE). Within ten days following the termination of the SOLE, a total sheet for each agency must be submitted to the Public Safety Fiscal Officer.

The specific process for creating and maintaining documentation may vary based on the type and scale of the incident for which the County is acting. Regardless, general



concepts and protocols will be adhered to during incident operations. All personnel undertaking operations will document critical information obtained during the incident, financial transactions, hours worked by County and non-county staff and volunteers, and resource acquisition and deployment. Lee County Emergency Management maintains an extensive WebEOC platform that facilitates documentation management, while the County maintains clearly defined procurement processes that manage and document financial transactions.

Care will be taken to ensure documentation is archived according to County policies. Additionally, in instances where the County receives post-incident reimbursement and/or grant funds (such as those received through Presidential Declarations), record retention will be done according to the requirements and needs of federal programs and guidance (see the *Lee County Cost Recovery Plan*).

Documentation is a shared responsibility across all areas of incident operations. Specifically, though, documentation management is typically the primary responsibility of the Plans Section, Finance and Administration Section, and Logistics Section of the County's Incident Command System.<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, depending on the operational needs of an incident and the staff available, overall documentation responsibilities may be held elsewhere; in such circumstances, the individual overseeing operations will need to assign where and by whom the responsibility will be attended.

### ***Documentation Related to Funding***

Local governments or applicants (sub-grantees) applying for and receiving Federal Disaster Recovery Assistance must document all labor and materials/supplies and contractual costs by damage category and by site. Without specific guidance, otherwise approved County fiscal procedures should be followed. The *Lee County Cost Recovery Plan* addresses further documentation related to funding.

### ***Post-Incident Administration***

Once the County moves from primary response and short-term recovery operations to primarily long-term recovery operations, emergency management personnel initiate an after-action review process. After-action reviews enable the County to assess its performance against its operational priorities, goals, and objectives. Doing so permits emergency management planners and County staff to identify performance or capability gaps and to develop plans and strategies to fix them. They also allow personnel to identify successes that can be capitalized on for future development or best practices. Figure on



the following page illustrates this plan-execute-learn process.

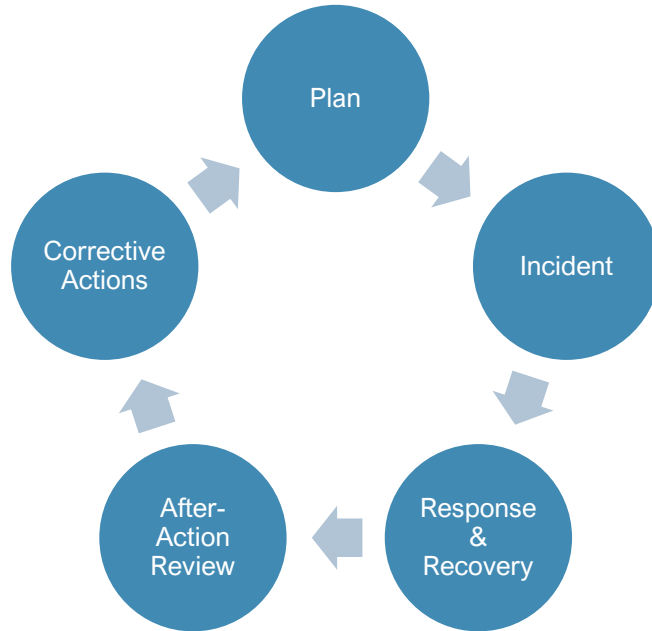


Figure 27 Plan-Execute-Learn Cycle

Accurate and comprehensive incident documentation is essential to improving the County’s response to disasters. The Documentation Unit Leader and the Training & Exercise Coordinator work closely with one another during this process.

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*Documentation is a responsibility shared by every participant in response and recovery.*

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The *Integrated Preparedness Plan* (IPP) describes in greater detail the after-action review process, after-action reports, improvement plans, and their inclusion in training and exercises. Chapter 13 further addresses how after-action reviews and improvement plans are incorporated into the comprehensive plan and its supporting documents.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Table 11 shown on the following pages enumerates the roles and responsibilities for managing and implementing the Administration Framework. While documentation is a shared responsibility in the Emergency Management Program, certain roles are specific to the execution of this framework. These are identified and explained below. Additional

roles and responsibilities are addressed in supporting documents referenced in this chapter.

*Table 11 Administration Roles and Responsibilities*

<b>Role</b>	<b>Agency/Position</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
<b>Training &amp; Exercise Coordinator</b>	Emergency Management Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize and facilitate an after-action review of an incident after response and short-term recovery operations cease.</li> <li>Develop and distribute an After-Action Report and a Corrective Action Plan based on the outcomes of the after-action review.</li> <li>Incorporate the Corrective Action Plan into the Integrated Preparedness Plan.</li> </ul>
<b>Documentation Unit Leader</b>	Emergency Management Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage the Documentation Unit in the Plans Section.</li> <li>Maintain incident files and data.</li> <li>Maintain a complete record of the major steps taken to resolve the incident.</li> <li>Compile, reproduce, and distribute the LeeCOP.</li> <li>Maintain files and records that were developed as part of the LeeCOP and planning function.</li> </ul>
<b>E-Role Coordinator</b>	Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect requests for potential E-Role assignments.</li> <li>Communicate and coordinate E-Role staff and responsibilities with E-Role liaisons and County staff.</li> <li>Roster employees for E-Role positions.</li> <li>Coordinating activities of E-Role Supervisors.</li> <li>Demobilizing E-Role staff.</li> </ul>
<b>E-Role Program Support</b>	Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage the E-Role Hotline.</li> <li>Manage human resource considerations and concerns.</li> </ul>





Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
<b>Financial Documentation</b>	Emergency Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing and maintaining records of financial transactions related to the Emergency Management Program.</li> <li>• Ensuring compliance with financial regulations and guidelines.</li> <li>• Tracking expenses and budgets allocated for emergency management activities.</li> <li>• Preparing financial reports and statements for program stakeholders.</li> <li>• Coordinating with relevant departments or agencies to procure necessary resources and services.</li> <li>• Collaborating with auditors or financial oversight bodies to facilitate audits or reviews of financial documentation.</li> <li>• Providing financial guidance and support to other roles within the Administration Framework as needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Human Resource Documentation</b>	Human Resource Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing personnel records for individuals involved in emergency management activities.</li> <li>• Ensuring compliance with human resource policies and regulations.</li> <li>• Tracking personnel assignments, training records, and certifications related to emergency management roles.</li> <li>• Facilitating recruitment and onboarding processes for new staff or volunteers involved in emergency response and recovery efforts.</li> <li>• Coordinating training and professional development opportunities for emergency management personnel.</li> </ul>



Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Providing support and guidance to staff or volunteers regarding human resource policies and procedures.</li></ul>



## Chapter 9 Finance Framework

The Finance Framework sets forth the authorities, plans, policies, processes, and procedures for sufficiently managing the financial aspects of disaster response and short-term recovery operations. The majority of the framework's elements exist in Lee County's daily operations and require little alteration to be used in hazardous instances. Adjustments to these elements are made as necessary to meet operational needs. The framework is capable of scaling, as needed, to meet the unique requirements of any given incident. The Finance Framework works in conjunction with the Administration Framework (see Chapter 8) and Logistics Framework (see Chapter 10) to ensure resources are available for operational use and to address cost recovery concerns. Continual coordination between County departments during normal and incident situations sustains the framework and its execution and places it in a constant state of readiness.

By applying the appropriate financial management practices at the right time to respond and short-term recovery operations, Lee County will be able to ensure life safety and the protection of the economy and environment. Moreover, by maintaining correct financial procedures throughout operational activities, Lee County and its communities will be more resilient and able to recover more quickly from disasters.

This chapter references the authorities and policies that form the framework's foundation, outlines financial management during disaster operations, outlines cost recovery, and describes the procurement process.

### Authorities and Policies

The following authorities and policies empower and direct financial functions during disaster response and short-term recovery operations (see Chapter 14 for a full list of applicable authorities and policies during disasters).

- 2 CFR Part 200.318 – 200.327
- Lee County Ordinance 23-21

### Financial Management

Financial management before, during, and after an incident entails accounting practices, policies, and procedures that ensure good and ethical use of public funds. This function includes documentation and protocols for recovering costs associated with incident



response and general record keeping of financial records, reports, and so forth. The Lee County Department of Procurement Management assumes primary responsibility for financial management during disasters. Procurement Management’s responsibility includes establishing and training procedures for processing and maintaining records of expenditures and obligations for manpower, equipment, and materials. If the County sets up a Finance and Administration Section, per the Incident Command System, the section will coordinate the implementation of the Finance Framework with Procurement Management.

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*The Board of County Commissioners grants the Chair or designee authority to execute funding agreements.*

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Municipalities in Lee County operate their own separate financial and procurement systems and policies. Any financial arrangements between the County and its municipal partners are made through interlocal agreements, which are approved by the Board of County Commissioners and the relevant municipal governing body.

## **Financial Records and Cost Documentation**

Proper documentation is required to qualify for state and federal disaster assistance and to qualify for and receive cost reimbursements. In major or catastrophic disasters, a separate project code (budget item) may be established to manage disaster-related costs. Procurement Management works with Lee County Budget Administration to create this new account string.

Financial Management and other participants in disaster response and recovery operations will track resource costs, including labor, materials, equipment, supplies, and contracts. Fund numbers, departments, and/or division numbers, and object codes normally used for related costs remain the same. During such a time, the County will continue to follow Ordinance 23-21 County Procurement, the *Lee County Cost Recovery Plan*, and all relevant policies and regulations and accepted accounting practices.

Procurement Management uses the E1 Financial System to keep financial records for every Purchase Order that has been issued. County staff will use WebEOC to track resources from acquisition to consumption or demobilization (see Chapter 1). The County will continue to use Kronos, as well as WebEOC and ICS 214 forms, to account for time



worked by personnel. Other forms of documentation will be created, managed, and maintained according to the *Lee County Cost Recovery Plan (CRP)* and Chapter 8 of this plan.

## **Cost Recovery**

The *Lee County Cost Recovery Plan (CRP)* outlines authorities, policies, protocols, and practices necessary for recovering costs from response and recovery operations to a disaster event. In conjunction with the *Lee County Disaster Recovery Plan*, the CRP identifies and describes how Lee County will assist the public to recover their costs and begin rebuilding. The CRP also addresses how the County will capture eligible costs for reimbursement by the Public Assistance Program.

## **Procurement Overview**

During incidents, County departments and partners seeking to procure resources will coordinate with those overseeing finance and administrative support, as well as those overseeing logistics and resource management. Lee County Procurement Management will facilitate and guide any emergency purchases under a declared State of Local Emergency, in conjunction with the Logistics Section and its Resource Request Process (see Chapter 10 of this plan).

During normal operations, when County departments identify an unmet need, they submit a Request to Initiate Procurement to Procurement Management to acquire a good or service to resolve the need. Procurement then initiates a solicitation process; though if the cost is low enough, may obtain the needed goods and/or services through the issuance of a Purchase Order. Once a solicitation is made, vendors can make proposals or bids on the items being requested. Once the window for solicitation ends, Procurement Management identifies the vendor who best meets the needs and acquisition conditions of the County and a contract is started. Before execution, the Board of County Commissioners approves the contract. This process is facilitated using Smartsheet and the Clerk of Court's financial system (e.g., for receipt and processing invoices and payment).

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*Lee County will prioritize local sources to meet resource needs during response and short-term recovery operations.*

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Before, during, and after a hazardous incident occurs, Procurement Management works with elements of the Logistics and Resource Management Framework and County departments to identify needed resources. If the County's internal resources do not meet identified needs sufficiently, Procurement Management will enact contracts, according to rules and policies established at the federal, state, and local levels to reduce gaps. The County will first and foremost use its internal resources to meet operational demands. When those resources are not available or sufficient, the County will to the extent possible, use existing contracts to fulfill requests from its departments for goods or services.

Procurement Management keeps a catalog of active contracts on its website, which it will use to quickly resolve unmet resource and service needs. Should the timing of the incident preclude the ability of the County to adhere to its normal solicitation process and a contract does not already exist, a Purchase Order may be made if the requested good or service is less than a certain threshold specified by County Ordinance 22-06. If the potential vendor isn't already registered in the financial system, Procurement Management will work with the vendor to resolve that issue.

When a State of Local Emergency is declared, requirements for solicitation and bidding that exist during normal operations are removed to allow for expeditious acquisition. At this point, the County will reach out to any vendor available and in good standing to fulfill requests for goods and services. If time permits, Procurement Management will obtain quotes; even so, the County is empowered at such a point to issue a Purchase Order directly to meet immediate resource needs.

Before, during, and after an incident occurs, Procurement Management will also increase spending limits on certain County-issued purchase cards. In addition to Purchase Orders, these cards enable the County to meet its resource requirements expeditiously and sufficiently to sustain disaster response and recovery efforts. Authorization is required for the use of these cards by staff.

Throughout the implementation of the Finance Framework, the County and its partners will document purchases through WebEOC, Purchase Orders, Smartsheet, receipts, and the E1 Financial System. Any deviation from normal procurement policy must be documented for reimbursement. Any purchases above a threshold in County Ordinance 23-21 must be ratified by the Board of County Commissioners after the purchase in a timely fashion, as allowed by the circumstances of the disaster event. If during response operations the County requires the use of private property to facilitate activities,



Procurement will follow necessary state statutes<sup>37</sup> and FEMA guidelines for reimbursement. Once the State of Local Emergency expires, the County reverts to its normal procurement process.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Table 12 below enumerates the roles and responsibilities for managing and implementing the Finance Framework. While prudent financial management is a shared responsibility in the Emergency Management Program, certain roles are specific to the execution of this framework. These are identified and explained below in Table 12.

*Table 12 Finance Roles and Responsibilities*

Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
<b>Finance &amp; Admin Section Chief</b>	Lee County Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure accurate cost information is utilized during a disaster.</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate County purchasing, financial, and accounting procedures are utilized.</li> <li>• Manage contracts and procurement issues beyond the scope of Logistics</li> </ul>
<b>Finance &amp; Admin Deputy</b>	Lee County Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the capabilities to complete all the responsibilities of the Finance &amp; Admin Section Chief</li> </ul>
<b>Requisition Specialist</b>	Lee County Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifies where resources can be allocated through current vendors and contracts.</li> <li>• Searches for new vendors in the event current contracts do not meet the needs of the incident.</li> <li>• Enters requisition information into the system</li> </ul>
<b>Cost Recovery Consultant</b>	Consultant Agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receives activity and purchasing documentation from Finance &amp; Admin Section Chief for cost recovery</li> </ul>

<sup>35</sup> See Direction, Control, and Coordination on pages 15-20 of this plan for further detail on the Incident Command System.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> See F.S. 125.031





# Chapter 10 Logistics & Resource Management Framework

Response and recovery from one or more hazards will require the acquisition, disposition, and repossession of resources. Human and physical resources will come from a variety of County departments and partner agencies. The Logistics and Resource Management Framework encompasses the policies and processes Lee County will use to coordinate resources effectively to provide sufficient logistical support to achieve operational priorities and objectives. This framework works in conjunction with the logistics and resource management system established by the State Emergency Response and Recovery Team, as outlined in the *State of Florida Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan*, as well as the procurement process outlined in Chapter 9 of this plan.

The Logistics and Resource Management Framework consists of a capability analysis and a resource management process. The capability analysis anchors the framework for the *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment* and enables the County to develop plans, policies, and procedures to overcome or compensate for capability and resource gaps. Relying on the capability assessment as a foundation, the County uses a unified resource management system to acquire and apply resources to solutions before, during, and after an incident occurs to save lives, protect property, and safeguard the environment. This management system addresses the acquisition, mobilization, and demobilization of resources during and after operations. This chapter outlines the capability assessment and resource management process and integrates them with other response and recovery frameworks.

## Authorities and Policies

The following authorities and policies empower and direct resource management functions during disaster response and short-term recovery operations (see Chapter 14 for a full list of applicable authorities and policies during disasters).

- Lee County Ordinance 87-01
- Lee County Ordinance 23-21
- Lee County/United Way of Lee, Hendry, and Glades Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) “Management of Disaster Volunteers”
- Executed Use of Premise Agreements



## Resource Management Process

Lee County Emergency Management works with County departments and their stakeholders to continually identify, locate, acquire, store, maintain, test, distribute, and account for resources to be used in response and short-term recovery operations.

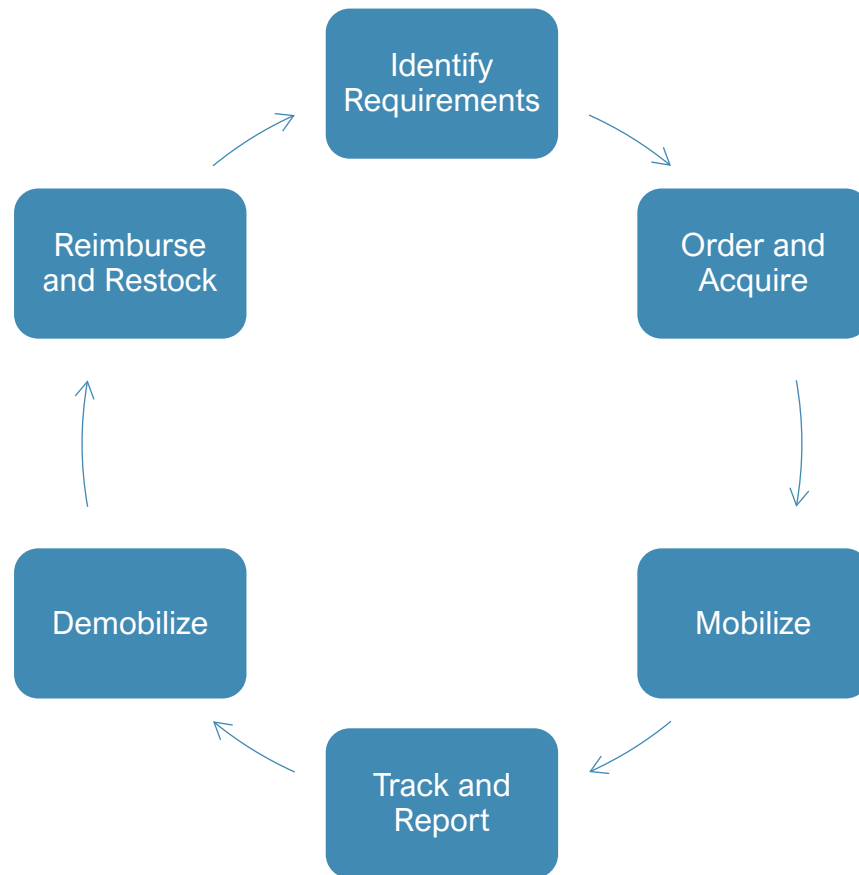


Figure 28 Resource Management Process<sup>38</sup>

The resource management process matches operational priorities and objectives with the resources necessary to achieve success. County departments and their stakeholders identify required resources prior to, during, and after an incident occurs through an evaluation of real-world operational needs. Once identified, the County draws from its available stockpile or acquires additional resources through procurement, memorandums of understanding and mutual aid agreements, or assistance from the State of Florida. During response and recovery operations, the County uses the coordination structures

established in Chapter 4 of this plan to mobilize resources according to incident objectives, strategies, and tactics. Once mobilized, County staff and stakeholders track and report resource disposition and usage primarily through WebEOC and according to the Information and Intelligence Management Framework established in Chapter 5. Once staff and stakeholders no longer need resources for operations or recovery, they demobilize the resources. County departments and stakeholders restock the resources necessary and, if possible, seek reimbursement according to the framework established in Chapter 8 and Chapter 9 of this plan. The *Logistics Section Standard Operating Guide* defines and describes the Resource Management Process more extensively, to include more detailed information regarding Staging Areas and Points of Distribution as part of the mobilization of resources.

**Figure 28 above illustrates the process, which is managed by the Lee County Department of Public Safety and the Logistics Section. Resource Identification and Acquisition**

Resource identification and acquisition are critical components of the Lee County emergency management system. The purpose of resource identification and acquisition is to ensure that the County can acquire and allocate the necessary resources to effectively respond to and recover from disasters.

Resource identification is a proactive process that involves stakeholders working together before incidents occur to identify resources and plan for their acquisition. Planning includes identifying resource requirements for response and short-term recovery operations based on the HIRA. Planning also includes developing alternative strategies to obtain needed resources. The County and its stakeholders develop and maintain resource inventories to be prepared in case of disasters.

Incident and post-incident operations require constant monitoring and assessment (see Chapter 5) of resource needs, which change constantly during and after incidents occur. Personnel continually identify, validate, and refine resource needs, considering the type and quantity of resources needed, the location where resources are needed, who will receive the resource, and the purpose of the resource. The specific needs of staff and the community will drive resource identification during incident and post-incident operations.



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*Each jurisdiction, agency, or department involved in response and recovery will first use its existing resources for operations.*

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Resource acquisition prior to incidents involves strategies that address resource needs identified during planning, which include stockpiling resources, establishing mutual aid agreements to obtain resources from neighboring jurisdictions, determining how and when to reassign existing resources from non-essential tasks, and developing contracts to acquire resources from vendors rapidly when needed. During incident and post-incident operations, personnel make initial and ongoing assessments of resource requirements, acquire resources by executing contracts, implement mutual aid agreements, or request assistance from another level of government using the Resource Request Process (see below).

Jurisdictions and agencies will acquire resources through their existing inventories first, before requesting assistance from another level of government. Resource acquisition must further incident priorities and objectives.

#### *Resource Request Process*

Requests to acquire resources beyond what jurisdictions and agencies have in their inventories must follow the Resource Request Process, which is a critical component of the county's Logistics and Resource Management Framework.

Figure 30 on the next page visualizes the process, which is designed to ensure resources are acquired quickly and efficiently during incident and post-incident operations.



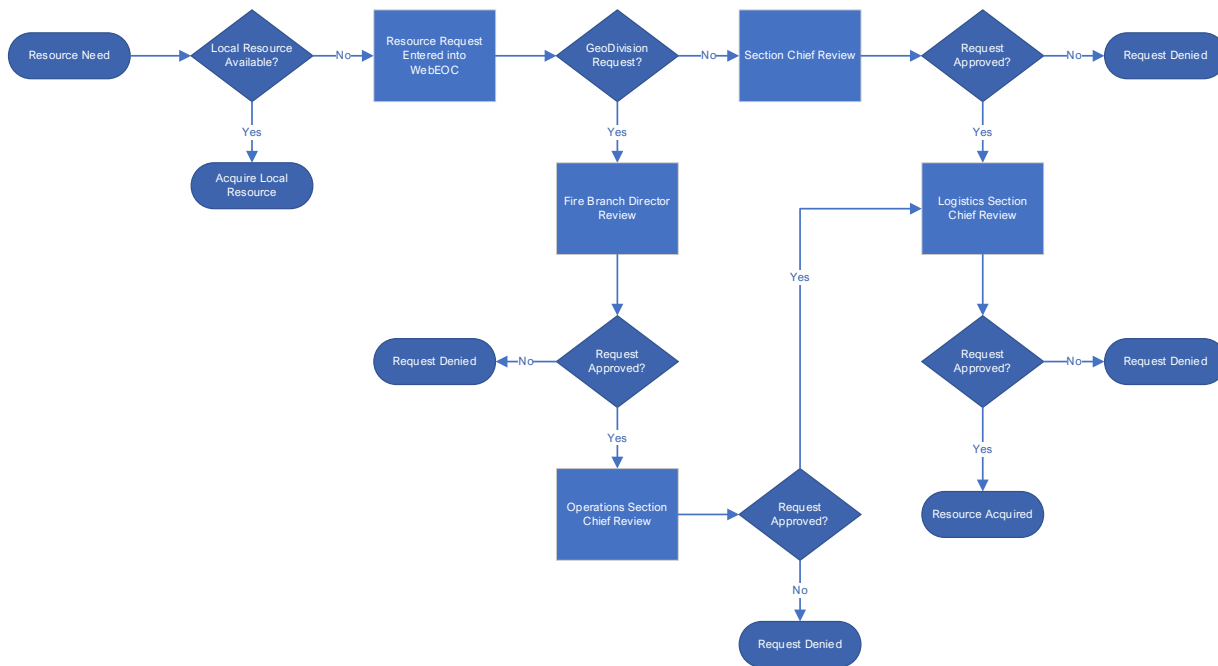


Figure 30 Overview of the Resource Request Process

**WebEOC**

Lee County and its stakeholders will use WebEOC to facilitate the resource management process, including requisition, mobilization, and demobilization.

The EOC Activation Guidebook provides further information on WebEOC. Copies of the guidebook are kept in the EOC for reference by responders.

EOC responders and County stakeholders and partners receive training annually on the use of WebEOC for resource requests and management.

To initiate the process, personnel must submit a request for resources through WebEOC using the Resource Request Board. If the request originates from a section of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), the Chief of that section must review and authorize the request. If the request originates from a Geographic Division, the Fire Branch Director and the Operations Section Chief will review and authorize it. Once approved, the Logistics Section Chief reviews the resource request, with assistance from the Finance and Administration Section, if needed.

Jurisdictions, agencies, and personnel must base their request for resources on the specific needs of the incident and the community, which will drive resource identification during response and short-term operations. The Logistics Section is responsible for determining the best source to



acquire the requested resources. The Logistics Section works closely with the Finance and Administration Section throughout the Resource Request Process to ensure adherence with proper procedures.

The Logistics Section will evaluate requests for resources for their alignment with incident priorities and objectives. The process keeps the responsibility for resource acquisition at the lowest level possible, which allows for flexibility and adaptability to achieve life safety activities in the most expeditious manner. The Logistics Section will first source requested resources with existing local inventories. If these inventories are unable to meet the request, Logistics will source the request with contracted vendors or through mutual aid agreements.

If none of the above methods are successful, the Logistics Section will source the request with any available vendor per the process established in Chapter 9 of this plan. If needed, the Logistics Section will elevate the request to the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC). All actions taken will be consistent with sound purchasing and cost-accounting practices, with consideration for the need to expedite resource acquisition during response operations.

Throughout the process, staff will maintain accurate documentation consistent with Chapter 8 of this plan and local, state, and federal requirements for disaster-related reimbursement.

## **Resource Mobilization and Disposition**

Mobilization and disposition are crucial components of emergency management. Mobilization refers to the process of activating and deploying resources to support response and short-term recovery operations. These resources can include personnel, equipment, and supplies. Mobilization also involves the coordination of different agencies, organizations, and jurisdictions to achieve incident priorities, goals, and objectives.

Disposition, on the other hand, refers to the process of managing and accounting for resources used in response and short-term recovery operations. This includes returning resources to their original location or owner, disposing of damaged or expired resources, and transferring resources to other jurisdictions or organizations that need them. Mobilization involves the activation and deployment of resources for incident and post-incident operations, while disposition involves the management and accounting of those



resources after the incident has ended.

It's important to note that fixed resources, such as the EOC, hospitals, and staging areas, are incapable of being mobilized. Rather, personnel activate these assets. Furthermore, personnel plan and prepare for the demobilization of resources at the same time they begin mobilizing them.

The Lee County Emergency Management Program will mobilize resources in two ways: directly to the requesting entity or to a staging area first. If a requesting entity, such as a local government agency, needs a resource immediately, the County will mobilize it to the requesting entity directly. The resource will be transported to the incident scene or location where it is needed, and the requesting entity will assume responsibility for its management and use.

On the other hand, Lee County and other entities mobilize resources to a staging area for assembly and to hold them in a central location until needed at the incident scene.



*Figure 31 Staging Resources for Hurricane Ian Operations (2022)*

Staging areas are usually located near the incident site or strategically placed across the jurisdiction to facilitate the timely delivery of resources. The resources are inspected, inventoried, and prepared for deployment, which may include equipping personnel with necessary supplies and briefing them on their assignments.

### **Staging**

Staging is the process of preparing and positioning resources and personnel to deploy to



the incident scene or other locations where personnel or the community need them. The process involves selecting appropriate sites for the storage and assembly of resources, ensuring adequate resource support, and coordinating the deployment of personnel and equipment to the incident location or other destination.

Throughout the staging process, personnel inspect and inventory resources to ensure that they are operational, in good condition and have the necessary supplies and equipment. Personnel also receive training, briefings, and assignments to prepare adequately to carry out their roles and responsibilities during the emergency response.

If notice of an incident is available before its occurrence, the County may choose to pre-stage resources. Leadership will decide on whether to pre-stage resources based on the hazard and its expected consequences. For instance, some hazards, such as severe weather and tropical cyclones, reduce the usefulness and likelihood of pre-staging resources, with some exceptions. In the case of tropical cyclones, the Time-Delineated Schedule provides timing and guidance for mobilizing resources before the County experiences impacts. Other hazards, such as epidemics, have limited to no effect on the built and natural environment, which would allow for resources to be staged based on assumed operational needs and plans.

The County and its municipal partners may pre-stage resources before the activation of the Lee County EOC. The Lee County Department of Public Safety – Division of Emergency Management will coordinate such pre-staging activities to ensure a smooth transition of resource management once the EOC is activated and the Logistics Section is assembled. The County will use WebEOC and its supporting applications to track the mobilization and disposition of pre-staged resources. Additionally, the County will use the Information & Intelligence Management Framework established in Chapter 5 of this plan for the disposition of pre-stage resources.

During incident and post-incident operations, Lee County will establish two types of Staging Areas, as needed: a Responder Staging Area (RSA) or a County Staging Area (CSA). Figure 32 below illustrates the differentiation between RSAs and CSAs. RSAs will receive mutual aid resources with assigned mission numbers to organize, integrate, and task those resources before mobilization out into the field. CSAs receive commodities before dissemination through the operational area to requesting personnel or to affected communities. Staging areas will only receive requested staff and resources. The County





will stage donated goods, solicited or unsolicited, at designated reception points addressed below in the Volunteers and Donations section of this chapter. The SEOC may establish a Logistical Staging Area (LSA) in Lee County to facilitate the receipt and mobilization of State resources in support of Region 9 during response and short-term recovery operations.

The Logistics Section holds responsibility for staging resources in Lee County. This includes identifying and establishing staging area types and locations and ensuring requested resources are mobilized correctly through the staging process. The *County Staging Area Standard Operating Guide* details the activation, operation, and deactivation of staging areas, including describing management processes, roles, and responsibilities.

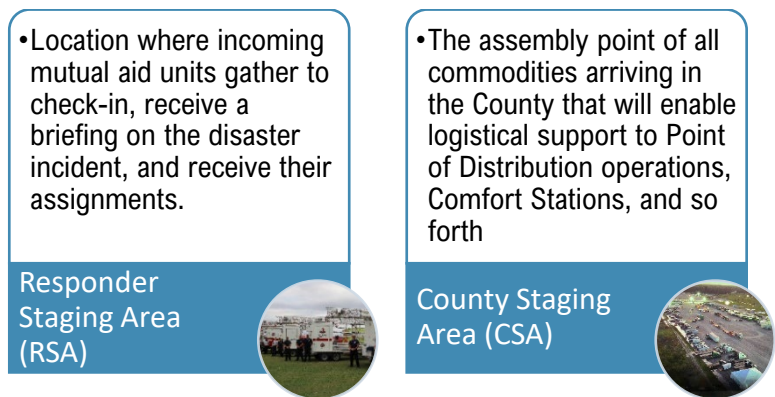


Figure 32 Staging Area Types

### **Points of Distribution**

Points of Distribution (PODs) are pre-designated locations where members of the public receive life-sustaining commodities, such as food and water, following an incident that disrupts or destabilizes the public’s access to these commodities. Lee County shares responsibility for operating PODs with the State of Florida; even so, the County retains primary oversight and coordination authority.

The Lee County Department of Public Safety – Division of Emergency Management maintains a list of potential locations for PODs. Emergency Management reviews and updates the list regularly and submits it to the State of Florida annually.

Following an incident’s occurrence, if needed, the County will establish one or more PODs. Personnel will determine specific locations for PODs based on the following

considerations of the area affected by the incident:

- Needs analysis.
- Population density.
- Current methods of commodity distribution.
- Ingress and egress concerns for staff, resources, and the public.
- Traffic flow.
- Delivery options.
- Equitable distribution of resources.
- Site geography.
- Site hazards.
- Additional supplies required.
- Proximity to local businesses and grocery stores
- Other forms of public commodity distribution.
- Lee County and its municipalities and stakeholders will coordinate the selection of locations for PODs with the State Emergency Operations Center.

According to the National Incident Management System, there are three types of PODs (see Figure below). Depending on community needs, Lee County will determine each POD type while planning for its mobilization. Rather than selecting one of the three types established by NIMS, Lee County may choose to establish “DROP” sites instead. Lee County leaves resources at these sites for residents to visit and pick up. Typically, the County locates DROP sites in rural and less populated areas.

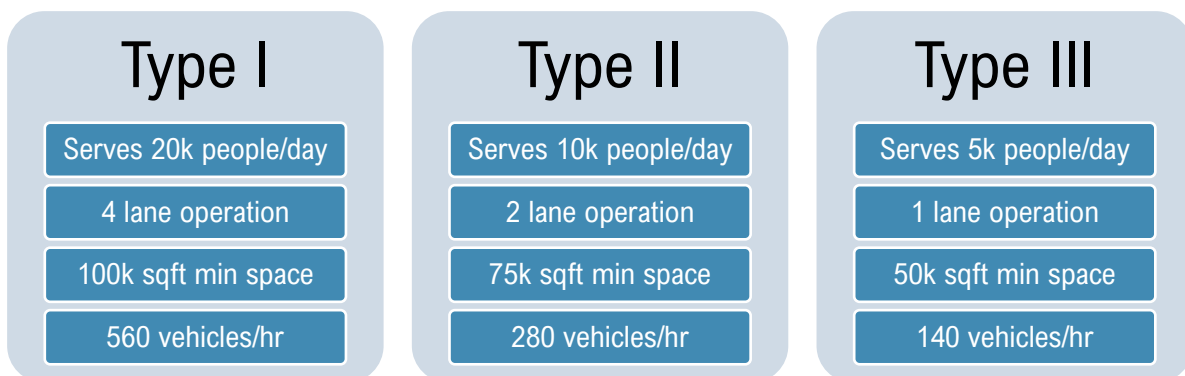


Figure 33 Points of Distribution by Type (NIMS)

To ensure that PODs are located equitably and that commodities are equitably distributed,

Lee County takes several steps. The County conducts outreach to vulnerable and underserved populations, and it uses data analysis to identify areas with high poverty rates, language barriers, and mobility issues. Additionally, Lee County works closely with community-based organizations and advocacy groups to develop a comprehensive approach to equitable distribution of resources.

The *Points of Distribution Standard Operating Guide* provides greater details on mobilizing, operating, and demobilizing Points of Distribution.

### ***Tracking and Reporting***

Resource tracking involves the continuous monitoring of resources, such as personnel, equipment, and supplies, from their initial deployment to their final disposition. The purpose of resource tracking is to ensure that Lee County and its partners use resources effectively and efficiently. Additionally, it enables personnel to make informed decisions about resource allocation and deployment.

Resource reporting involves regular communication of resource status and availability to personnel, stakeholders, and other relevant parties. It includes status updates on deployed resources, availability of additional resources, and issues and concerns related to resource management. By communicating this information, resource reporting ensures that personnel can prepare to receive and use resources when needed.

Before incidents occur, County departments and Emergency Management Program stakeholders rely on their existing asset management processes to track and report resources.

Lee County will make use of the following processes and tools to track and report resources during incident and post-incident operations:

- **WebEOC:** An emergency management software platform that enables real-time tracking and reporting of resource status and availability.
- **Situation Reports:** Regular reports that provide an overview of the current situation, including resource status and availability.
- **Incident Action Plans:** Detailed plans that outline resource allocation and deployment strategies for specific incidents.



- **Geographical Information Systems:** Mapping tools that enable visual tracking of resource location and movement.
- **Asset management platforms:** Tools that enable real-time tracking of asset status and availability.
- **In-person ground-truthing:** Direct observation and verification of resource status and availability in the field.

The Plans Section manages resource tracking and reporting during incident operations. In doing so, the Plans Section works closely with the Logistics Section to coordinate resource tracking and reporting. The *Lee County Plans Section Standard Operating Guide* further describes the process for tracking and reporting resources during incident and post-incident operations.

### ***Resource Demobilization***

Resource demobilization involves the process of releasing, reassigning, or returning resources, such as personnel, equipment, and supplies after they have fulfilled their assigned roles and responsibilities. The demobilization process involves the systematic and orderly return of resources to their home organizations, the release of personnel from their duties, and the recovery of equipment and supplies.

Demobilization is a critical aspect of emergency management resource management as it ensures that resources are effectively managed throughout the incident and are not overcommitted. It is essential to initiate the demobilization process as soon as possible to minimize costs and reduce the burden on resources, particularly for long-duration incidents. Proper acquisition, mobilization, and disposition of resources facilitate accurate and timely demobilization efforts.

The demobilization process involves several steps, including:

1. **Planning:** Demobilization planning starts at the beginning of the incident and includes identifying the demobilization needs and requirements, establishing demobilization procedures, and determining the appropriate resources to release.
2. **Coordination:** The demobilization process requires close coordination between the Incident Command System (ICS) and the Logistics Section. The Logistics Section is responsible for identifying and coordinating resources for



demobilization, while the ICS ensures that the demobilization process is integrated into the overall incident management.

3. **Resource Recovery:** During the demobilization process, agencies release resources from their assigned duties and responsibilities and debrief personnel to ensure that they have completed their tasks and responsibilities.
4. **Documentation:** The demobilization process requires accurate and detailed documentation of resources that are being released, reassigned, or returned. This documentation includes the status and condition of equipment and supplies, as well as the skills and expertise of personnel.

The Logistics Section coordinates resource demobilization with the Operations Section and the Plans Section. Demobilization is an ongoing process throughout the response and short-term recovery operations and may extend into the long-term recovery phase.

### ***Reimbursement and Restocking***

Resources used during response and short-term recovery operations may qualify for reimbursement, depending on the type of incident and whether there is a Presidential disaster declaration for the incident. Reimbursement is a function of impact assessments (see Chapter 5), administrative processes (see Chapter 8), financial policies and procedures (see Chapter 9), and the resource management process discussed in this chapter. The *Lee County Disaster Recovery Plan* and the *Lee County Cost Recovery Plan* address in greater detail the policies, processes, and procedures Lee County will follow to receive reimbursement for expenditures and used or depleted resources.

Restocking refers to the process of replenishing resources the Emergency Management Program uses or depletes during response and short-term recovery operations. Such efforts may include the purchase of new supplies, equipment, and materials, as well as the acquisition of additional personnel to fill resource gaps. During short-term recovery operations and long-term recovery operations, the Emergency Management Program stakeholders assess their resource inventories and staff availability. Combined with after-action reports and updates to the *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment*, this process of post-incident assessment results in a better evaluation of real-world operational resource needs and a continuation of the resource management cycle.



### ***Volunteers and Donations***

During response and short-term recovery operations, Lee County will receive offers of volunteers and donations (solicited and unsolicited) to assist those affected by one or more hazards. The County will work with its nonprofit stakeholders to establish a Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) and a Donations Center to receive, store, and mobilize volunteers and donated goods. The Public Information Officer for Lee County will provide messaging to the public regarding these centers and will provide instructions for the County to receive volunteers and donations. The *Volunteer and Donations Standard Operating Guide* addresses this function in greater detail.

### ***Mutual Aid***

Mutual aid consists of the sharing of resources, personnel, equipment, and services among different organizations in response to a disaster or emergency. The use of mutual aid before, during, and after incidents occur ensures that Lee County and its stakeholders have access to needed resources that are in existing inventories or otherwise readily available. The Emergency Management Program uses the *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment* and its Preparedness Framework to enter into mutual aid agreements well in advance of incidents occurring. The Program may also enter into new mutual aid agreements during and after incidents occur to procure resources as needed, as provided for in the Resource Management Process discussed above. Chapter 11 provides greater details and description of the role and process for using mutual aid in response to and recovery from disasters or emergencies.

### ***Regional Incidents***

Lee County may be asked to provide resources to assist in response to regional incidents. Requests for such assistance are likely to be facilitated through the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement or some other previously existing agreement or understanding. Lee County will adhere to its resource management processes when providing support to regional incidents.

The *Southwest Florida Regional Evacuation Coordination Guide* lists the resources available in Region 9 and who has ownership of those resources.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Table 13 on the next page, enumerates the roles and responsibilities for managing and



implementing the Logistics and Resource Management Framework.

*Table 13 Logistics and Resource Management Roles and Responsibilities*

Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
<b>Point of Distribution</b>	Lee County Emergency Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select POD locations.</li> <li>• Request support from other County departments to assist with POD staffing.</li> <li>• Initiate private contracts to support the POD staffing mission (i.e. Use of Premise Agreements).</li> <li>• Register POD workers.</li> <li>• Determine the need and availability of PODs for activation.</li> <li>• Provide on-site, full-time security and traffic control from the time of opening through closure at each POD site.</li> <li>• Provide traffic management assets (cones, barricades, etc.) to the extent possible.</li> <li>• Provide local communications to the extent possible.</li> <li>• Determine POD supply needs.</li> <li>• Provide appropriate allocations of commodities for distribution based on population densities and expected public need.</li> <li>• Provide material handling equipment and staff support resources.</li> <li>• Assume staffing and management after an initial 72 hours.</li> <li>• Demobilize PODs</li> <li>• Coordinate the receipt of excess resources.</li> <li>• Coordinate the removal of material handling equipment and staff support resources.</li> <li>• Restore sites to original specifications.</li> <li>• Collect and process all paperwork associated with the POD.</li> <li>• Conduct POD Resets</li> </ul>



Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
<b>POD Manager</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate the replenishment of POD Kits</li> <li>• Maintain and submit operational documentation (e.g., sign-in sheets, burn rates, etc.) to Lee County Emergency Management</li> <li>• Provide operational documentation to relevant Geographic Divisions and upload them to WebEOC</li> </ul>
<b>Points of Distribution</b>	Florida Division of Emergency Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirm anticipated POD site locations.</li> <li>• Push water to pre-identified POD locations within 24 hours post-event.</li> <li>• Provide food and additional commodities 48 to 72 hours post-event depending on assessed needs.</li> <li>• Provide initial minimum staffing support (10 to 20 personnel) for up to the first 72 hours, typically through the Florida Department of Military Affairs (Florida National Guard), to open the site.</li> <li>• Provide at least one forklift and two pallet jacks to each site, followed within 48 to 72 hours by porta-potties and dumpsters.</li> <li>• Establish initial management and begin distribution at the request of Lee County Emergency Management.</li> <li>• Establish one or more State Logistics Staging Areas within 24 to 36 hours to support County operations.</li> </ul>

<sup>38</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency (October 2017). *National Incident Management System*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., “Resource Management During an Incident,” p. 12





# Chapter 11 Mutual Aid Framework

While the County maintains significant capabilities to address many situations that could occur, there may be instances where response and recovery efforts require more resources than are available to the County internally. The County and many of its local partners have entered and maintained agreements with other entities to help close this potential gap. Coordination of these mutual aid agreements and other memoranda during preparedness, response, and recovery operations occurs across multiple County departments and between the County and local and state partners. This function is a shared responsibility between the frameworks for finance and administration and logistics and resource management<sup>39</sup>.

## Authorities and Policies

The following authorities and policies empower and direct mutual aid during disaster response and short-term recovery operations (see Chapter 14 for a full list of applicable authorities and policies during disasters).

- Florida Statute 252.40
- Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement
- Emergency Management Assistance Compact

## Mutual Aid Agreements

Mutual Aid agreements with partner agencies are the County's primary method for acquiring outside resources during disasters. This includes participation in the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement (SMAA), the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC), or other agreements with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) or local agencies and jurisdictions. When appropriate, fire and law enforcement entities can request aid through the Florida Fire Chiefs Association and the Florida Sheriffs Association, respectively.

Florida Statute 252.40 authorizes the governing body of each political subdivision of the state to enter into mutual aid agreements within the state for reciprocal emergency aid and assistance in emergencies too extensive to be dealt with unassisted. However, the final decision to provide or receive mutual aid resides with the local jurisdiction. Once an agreement is reached, all parties will be provided with a Mission Number. This will usually



come through the State's incident management system but may be provided through other mechanisms depending on the nature of the agencies involved. Regardless of other assurances, a mutual aid mission is not official until the Mission Number is received from FDEM.

If the mutual aid request is made outside of the SMAA or EMAC system, such as an NGO or local jurisdiction agreement, the request must be in accordance with a pre-existing, current mutual aid agreement that has been approved by the appropriate authorities. The request and acceptance of the mutual aid must be made by both parties in writing, and by authorized designees per the standing agreement.

Once a mutual aid mission is accepted, the resources providing the aid are subject to the operational control of the local agency managing the incident. Accurate records must be maintained for reimbursement of expenses. Allowable expenses and required documentation should be discussed before accepting a mission and/or deploying resources.

Though every situation is unique, the following are some examples where Mutual Aid could be used to provide relief to staff and to provide resources where there are none, or that may complement what is on hand:

- Additional staff during an extended activation of the EOC.
- Additional medical resources during a pandemic or epidemic.
- Hurricane shelter staffing.
- Evacuation transportation for flooding or hurricanes.
- Fire resources during a structure or brush fire; and
- Additional medical and law enforcement during a civil unrest situation.

### ***Executing Mutual Aid***

When a State of Local Emergency (SOLE) is declared for Lee County and the *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)* is activated, the County becomes the Requesting Party for all mutual aid requests. Accordingly, requests for mutual aid must receive approval from operational command staff.

Before requesting approval for mutual aid resources, the requestor determines the overall priority of the mission for which aid is being requested, and the types of equipment and personnel required. The requestor also identifies the location(s) and duration of the mission. The requestor must include transportation coordination details in the request.



Most mutual aid responders will arrive by highway, which may require the use of an escort to access the impacted area. If multiple vehicles are responding, the County is likely to stage them at a location outside of the impacted area and then form a convoy. If a convoy is used, units must be advised of the staging location and have a means of common communication between units. This may include common radio frequencies and/or cell phone numbers.

Arriving units must be provided with arrival instructions. These include a reporting location and check-in instructions, as well as a point of contact within the response organization. The reporting location may be a local hotel or motel if available, base or camp, staging area, or other location. While mutual aid resources should be self-sufficient, that is not always the case. Procedures for obtaining food, fuel, and other support issues must be established by the requestor before submitting the request.

The requesting party routes the request, with all the above information included, through their Section Chief or Deputy to the Logistics Section via the WebEOC Resource Request board to document that sufficient resources are not available locally and mutual aid is required to complete the mission. The Logistics Section Chief or Deputy will then assign the request to the Resource Branch. If the request needs to be submitted to the State, the Resource Branch will enter the request into the State's incident management software, which will create a Mission Number and allow tracking of the status of the request.

The Logistics Section coordinates with the Finance Section to determine the costs associated with filling the mutual aid request. These costs may vary by the source of the assisting party.

### ***Providing Mutual Aid***

Lee County Emergency Management coordinates requests for mutual aid under SMAA and EMAC. When local resources are deployed for mutual aid, Lee County Emergency Management will designate a Mutual Aid Coordinator. The coordinator is the County's point of contact for the deployed assets.

Since sending resources out of the County to provide mutual aid could compromise local capabilities, all requests for mutual aid must be approved locally before deployment. Requests must be approved by the agency/agencies with jurisdiction over the resources and Command Staff (if EOC is activated).

When deployed under EMAC or SMAA to an impacted area, mutual aid resources should



be self-sufficient for at least three to five days, depending on the specific mission. Before departure, individuals will be provided with travel instructions, a point-of-contact at the requesting location, and a check-in location.

Upon arrival, the team will register with the official in charge. The team leader will receive a briefing and will then brief the mutual aid team. Specific topics will vary by disaster but, at a minimum, will include work location, duties, safety information, personnel accountability, timekeeping, and logistical support. Depending on their assignment (i.e., incident management teams), the incoming mutual aid team may require a written delegation of authority from the local jurisdiction.

Regardless of the local jurisdiction's requirements, mutual aid team members will maintain records of time worked (payroll time sheets), any accidents or injuries, and any unexpected expenditures. This information will be provided to the team leader at the conclusion of their assignment, or as directed.

Mutual Aid assets will be demobilized according to the plan of the assisting jurisdiction and/or the requesting jurisdiction. At a minimum, the demobilization plan includes check-out and relief-of-duty instructions and ensures adequate rest time between the last work assignment and return travel. Prior to demobilization, the Team Leader will coordinate with the Lee County Mutual Aid Coordinator to confirm travel instructions and timing.

Upon arrival in Lee County, the Team will check in with the Mutual Aid Coordinator to transfer any records and documentation and/or to schedule a debriefing for the Team.

Further guidance on Mutual Aid to include the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement (SMAA) and Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) process is available from the Florida Division of Emergency Management.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Table 14 below enumerates the roles and responsibilities for managing and implementing the Mutual Aid Framework during disaster response and short-term recovery operations in Lee County.



Table 14 Mutual Aid Roles and Responsibilities

Agency Role/Position	Responsibilities
<b>Fire Department</b>	Fire departments often play a significant role in disaster response, including providing emergency medical services, search and rescue operations, and firefighting assistance during disasters.
<b>Law Enforcement Agency</b>	Police departments or sheriff's offices are crucial for maintaining public safety and order during disasters. They may also provide support for traffic control, evacuation efforts, and security.
<b>Public Works Department</b>	Public works departments are responsible for infrastructure maintenance and may be involved in disaster response activities such as debris removal, road clearance, and utility restoration.
<b>Health Department</b>	Health departments play a vital role in public health emergency response, including coordinating medical services, disease surveillance, and providing guidance on health-related issues during disasters.
<b>Emergency Medical Services (EMS)</b>	EMS agencies provide medical care and transportation for injured individuals during emergencies and disasters. They may also assist with mass casualty incidents and medical evacuations.
<b>Transportation Department</b>	Transportation departments manage roadways, bridges, and transportation infrastructure. During disasters, they may assist with traffic management, road closures, and evacuation routes.
<b>Communications Department</b>	Effective communication is critical during disaster response. The communications department may be responsible for coordinating communication systems, disseminating public alerts and warnings, and maintaining communication channels with response agencies and the public.
<b>Utilities Department</b>	Utilities departments manage essential services such as water, electricity, and gas. They play a crucial role in restoring and maintaining these services during and after disasters.



# Chapter 12 Access & Functional Needs Framework

The Access and Functional Needs Framework accounts for individuals and families in Lee County who traditionally make up communities that have increased vulnerabilities to threats and hazards. Either due to medical, mental, developmental, or behavioral health reasons or due to limitations or obstacles in accessing response and recovery services, these individuals and families may have additional needs or hardships the Emergency Management Program must identify and address. The framework consists of groups and communities that cut across geographical, economic, political, and social areas of the County, such as those identified in Figure 34 below.

This chapter establishes the Access and Functional Needs Framework by first addressing the equitable distribution of response and recovery services. In doing so, the chapter provides a further definition of what constitutes access and functional needs within the scope of the *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan*. Thereafter, the chapter addresses the needs of institutionalized individuals and discusses health-related needs, including mental and behavioral health. The chapter briefly discusses evacuations, transportation, and sheltering, before concluding with how the County will manage unaccompanied minors during disasters.

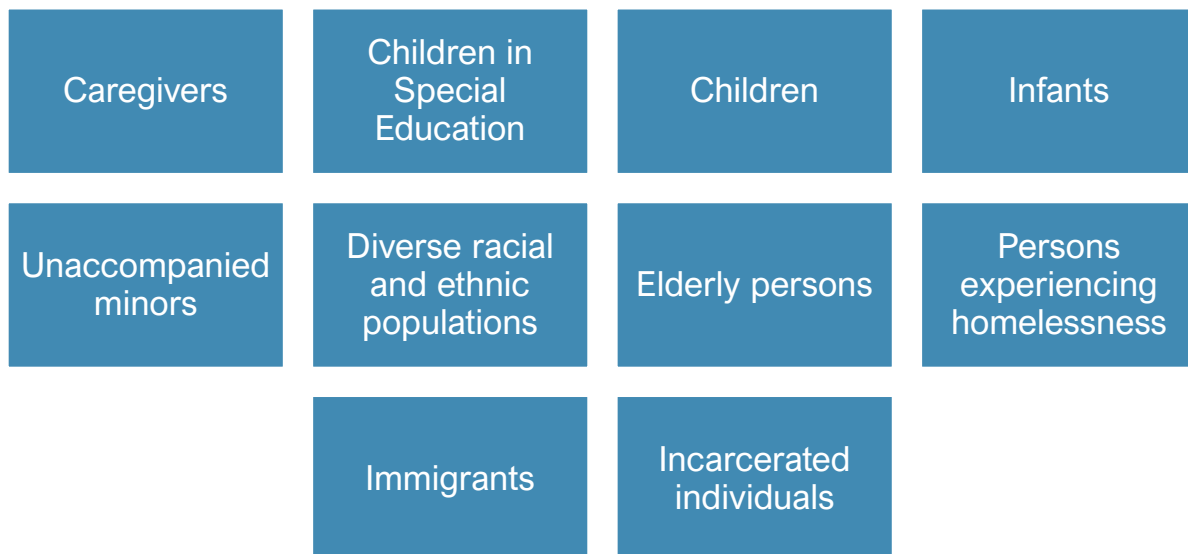


Figure 34 Examples of Access and Functional Needs

## Authorities and Policies

The following authorities and policies empower and direct access and functional needs during disaster response and short-term recovery operations (see Chapter 14 for a full list of applicable authorities and policies during disasters).

- Americans with Disabilities Act

## Equitable Emergency Management

Lee County's Emergency Management Program uses a whole community approach to identifying and addressing hazards and vulnerabilities. The Emergency Management Program adheres to Federal and State laws and requirements, such as those established in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), when implementing its various frameworks. Networking and connecting individuals, families, and organizations across the County's geographical, social, and economic landscape allows the Emergency Management Program to identify and address community needs.

Per the *Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101* (CPG-101), Lee County's Emergency Management Program defines those with access and functional needs to include the following:

- Mental health needs.
- Limited cultural and English proficiency.
- Household pets.
- Emotional support or therapy animals.
- Limited or no transportation resources or who need public transportation to access essential services, commodities, and resources.
- Little or no trust in government.
- Special dietary concerns (e.g., life-threatening food allergies, fed by tube, etc.).
- As well as those requiring durable medical and backup power suppliers or requiring power for ventilators or other life-sustaining/assistive technology.

The Access and Functional Needs Framework ensures those with access and functional needs are accounted for throughout the lifecycle of disasters, from preparedness to mitigation to response to recovery. To achieve this, the framework includes a multitude of groups tied into the County's constituent communities to provide multiple methods for communication and understanding. Included among these are the Disability Working Group, the networks and partnerships established by the Department of Human and



Veteran Services and United Way, and channels of communication established and maintained by such agencies as the Florida Department of Health–Lee (DOH).

The Public Information Officer (PIO) and the rest of the Joint Information System (JIS) account for and address the needs of those with access and functional needs when developing messaging before, during, and after an incident occurs. For example, the County maintains an active contract for sign-language interpretation services, contracts for translation services (i.e., Spanish, French Creole, etc.), braille, and so forth. The County tries to ensure electronic communication is ADA-compliant. The JIS incorporates people representing communities of those with access and functional needs to tailor and amplify messaging to those groups, such as partnering with trusted community members to share information and help with rumor control.

All these aspects of the Access and Functional Needs Framework appear in the preceding chapters of the *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan*, reflecting the County’s efforts to ensure equitable distribution and access to mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery services.

## **Institutionalized Individuals**

Lee County’s Emergency Management Program Leverages State requirements and local partnerships to build capability and resiliency amongst providers to institutionalized individuals. For example, the Florida Statute requires assisted living facilities to develop and maintain comprehensive emergency management plans that include provisions for ensuring continued access to power (i.e., generators) after disasters. The Disability Working Group, consisting of representatives from multiple agencies and interests, helps coordinate preparedness efforts amongst the access and functional needs community. The Florida Department of Health–Lee (DOH), Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA), and Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DEA) develop partnerships and networks with healthcare providers, including long-term care and assisted living facilities, group homes, and so forth.

LeeTran and its community partners provide transportation services for individuals with access and functional needs during normal operations and continue doing so before, during, and after incidents occur. LeeTran uses paratransit and fixed buses to transport individuals to and from shelters, goods and services distribution centers, Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs), Multi-Agency Resource Centers (MARC)s, and so forth. Lee County EMS provides ambulatory transport if necessary. United Way’s 211, which





operates the County's Emergency Information Hotline (EIHL) during response and short-term recovery operations, supports these efforts by providing information to the public about services and connecting individuals and families with them.

## **Health-Related Needs**

As described in the Response and Short-Term Recovery Framework, Lee County will engage in myriad operations to procure and distribute life-sustaining goods and services, as well as support services for the stabilization of the community. This includes partnering with faith-based organizations (FBOs), nonprofits, and others to identify unmet community needs and to connect them with available resources. Through networks and partnerships established and maintained by HVS and United Way, supported by the FBO Branch in the EOC Logistics Section, Lee County positions itself to meet the needs of individuals and families, including those with specific health-related needs. The *Mass Care Plan* and the *Volunteer and Donations Standard Operating Guide* address these operations in greater detail.

Other programs, such as the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) program managed by DOH and other programs offered through the Department of Children and Families (DCF), provide additional support to those with access and functional needs. Volunteer agencies and local nonprofits connect with vulnerable and traditionally underserved communities through such locations as DRCs and MARCs. HVS and United Way deploy teams in door-to-door operations for outreach, to provide services, and to gain situational awareness that guides and directs operational decision-making.

DOH, EMS, Lee Health, HVS, United Way, and others coordinate the acquisition and disposition of mental and behavioral health post-incident. These organizations work to identify mental and behavioral health needs and to match them with service providers. State and local organizations that provide such services oftentimes co-locate with DRCs and MARCs or coordinate with those locations to notify and educate the public on where they can be accessed.

## **Evacuation and Transportation**

As part of the Emergency Management Program's Preparedness Framework, the Lee County Division of Emergency Management maintains a Special Needs Registry. This registry provides a means for individuals or their caretakers to self-report their special needs considerations, such as dependence on energy or oxygen machines for



continuation of life safety. The registry also accounts for those without medical needs who are nonetheless dependent on an external source for transportation. Before an incident occurs, the public uses a portal maintained by Emergency Management to opt into the registry. DOH (Lee) and Lee Health vet registrants and assign them to general population shelters, special needs shelters, or hospitals based on their identified needs. In this manner, Lee County and its partners plan for evacuation and sheltering operations for special needs persons and their caretakers, should the need arise.

In instances where Lee County orders evacuations, the EIHL initiates a callout to special needs registrants to notify them and, if necessary, help arrange transportation to their assigned shelters. The EIHL also takes calls from residents or caregivers not already registered and adds them to the list for shelter assignment and transportation assistance, if needed. LeeTran and Lee Control support the callout, while DOH and EMS review calls received by EIHL and assign them to the appropriate shelter. LeeTran and EMS provide transportation to those who need assistance getting to their assigned shelter. The entire process is supported by a dashboard. Annually, before the start of the hurricane season, Emergency Management trains EOC personnel, LeeTran, EMS, Animal Services, United Way 211, Lee Health, and DOH (Lee) on the dashboard and conducts drills to ensure staff and system readiness.

The *Lee County All-Hazards Evacuation Plan* addresses evacuation and transportation more thoroughly.

## **Special Medical Needs Shelter**

Lee County Emergency Management, DOH (Lee), and the School Board partner to pre-identify special needs shelters for residents who have energy or oxygen-dependent needs. By statute, DOH maintains primary responsibility for the special needs shelter, supported by the Emergency Management Program. Lee County relies upon its various frameworks (e.g., Response and Short-Term Recovery, Administration, Logistics and Resource Management, etc.) to support DOH. For its part, DOH coordinates operations with the Mass Care Branch in the Lee County EOC, as well as with EMS and Lee Health for the transportation and disposition of those seeking shelter. DOH also works with EMS, local fire agencies, and power companies to ensure safe conditions are present before discharging individuals and caretakers from the Special Medical Needs Shelters.

Although not classified as special needs shelters, general population shelters still make reasonable accommodations for individuals with medical needs. Shelters and safe havens



in Lee County adhere to ADA requirements. All shelters and safe havens within Lee County are pet-friendly.

## **Unaccompanied Minors**

Lee County EMS, as well as the County's fire agencies and law enforcement, observe established protocols when caring for and reunifying unaccompanied minors with their families. Shelter staff similarly adhere to protocols for unaccompanied minors, which includes working with law enforcement on-site for the minor's protection and reunification. The Lee County Sheriff's Office accepts unaccompanied minors encountered during operations who do not need medical attention and works to reunify them with their families or to receive care as needed. Lee Health's system of care accepts children in need of medical services and observes its established protocols and procedures for reunification or transferring the minor to the proper authorities for stewardship and care.



## Chapter 13 Plan Maintenance

This chapter delineates the structured and rigorous approach adopted for the ongoing maintenance of the CEMP. Recognizing the dynamic nature of emergency management, this chapter outlines a systematic process for review, training, evaluation, and enhancement of the plan, anchored in the standards and practices recommended by the *Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101* (CPG-101). Central to this process is the formation of a multi-disciplinary planning team by the Lee County Division of Emergency Management, encompassing a diverse array of stakeholders ranging from county departments and municipal partners to non-profit and faith-based organizations, alongside regional, state, and federal entities. This inclusive group operates under the direction of Emergency Management, undertaking the critical task of periodically reviewing and updating the CEMP to reflect lessons learned, evolving best practices, and regulatory changes.

The chapter further elucidates the division of responsibilities within the Lee County Department of Public Safety—Division of Emergency Management, particularly highlighting the role of the Deputy Chief, Preparedness, in steering the CEMP's maintenance cycle. The rigorous training and update cycle, essential for maintaining operational readiness, is also discussed, detailing the annual and quadrennial review processes that involve a broad spectrum of stakeholders within the Emergency Management Program.

Additionally, this chapter emphasizes the importance of inter-jurisdictional and organizational coordination in the review and update process, ensuring that the CEMP is not only a document of Lee County but also aligns with regional and state-level emergency management strategies. Lastly, the chapter underscores the responsibility of each involved organization and agency to periodically review and suggest revisions to their respective sections of the CEMP, highlighting the commitment to providing equitable and comprehensive strategies for the safety and resilience of all members of Lee County's community.

### Plan Maintenance Process

The *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan* (CEMP) is a dynamic document, subject to systematic and continuous review, training, evaluation, and enhancement. This maintenance process adheres strictly to the structure and guidelines provided by the *Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101* (CPG 101). It commences with



the assembly of a planning team by the Division of Emergency Management, drawing on a wide array of stakeholders. These participants include County Departments, municipal partners, non-profit and faith-based organizations, community interest groups, and regional, state, and federal partners. This collaborative group, under the guidance of the Division of Emergency Management, performs the crucial task of reviewing and updating the CEMP. Lessons learned from real-world events, simulation exercises, evolving industry standards, and regulatory updates from state and federal oversight bodies inform such updates.

The annual *CEMP Project Management Plan* describes the maintenance process in greater detail.

## **Responsibility for Plan Coordination**

The overall responsibility for the maintenance of the CEMP rests with the Lee County Department of Public Safety - Division of Emergency Management. Within this division, the Deputy Chief of Preparedness, holds the primary responsibility for overseeing the development, maintenance, and revision process of the CEMP, ensuring that the plan remains current and effective.

## **Training and Update Cycle**

To maintain a high state of readiness, Lee County implements a robust cycle of training, exercising, reviewing, and updating the CEMP. Stakeholders engage in these activities according to the schedule delineated in the *Integrated Preparedness Plan*. Annually, the Lee County Division of Emergency Management spearheads the effort to review the CEMP with input from stakeholders within the Emergency Management Program. Every four years, the CEMP undergoes a comprehensive review and is submitted to both the State of Florida Division of Emergency Management for review and approval and the Lee County Board of County Commissioners for formal adoption, establishing its legitimacy and authority. The Emergency Management Training & Exercise Coordinator holds responsibility for coordinating the Emergency Management Program's training.

## **Interjurisdictional and Organizational Coordination**

The CEMP review and update process is a coordinated effort that extends beyond Lee County. Planners engage with municipal counterparts and allied organizations, ensuring their participation in the revision process. The County's Emergency Management staff facilitates reviews and discussions with neighboring jurisdictions and with the State of



Florida to ensure regional consistency and alignment with state-level planning. This coordination guarantees that updates reflect a cohesive strategy for emergency management across multiple levels of government and community sectors.

## Organizational Review Responsibilities

Each organization and agency engaged in the CEMP’s framework bears the responsibility to periodically scrutinize and propose amendments to their respective sections of the plan. This process is pivotal for ensuring the plan’s utility across the full spectrum of potential emergencies and for fostering equitable treatment of all community members. The Division of Emergency Management facilitates this process, ensuring each agency’s contributions are accurately integrated and that the plan provides equitable and inclusive strategies for the safety and resilience of Lee County’s diverse population.

## Process to Distribute Changes

The Deputy Chief of Preparedness annotates changes to the CEMP on the Record of Changes table. Following approved updates to the CEMP, the Deputy Chief, of Preparedness, disseminates copies of the revised version to County department directors, municipal partners, and those agencies or organizations identified on the EOC Responder List. Concurrently, the County’s Communication Team updates any links associated with the CEMP on the County’s website or social media.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Table 15 below enumerates the roles and responsibilities for maintaining the CEMP. While continual improvement of the Emergency Management Program and the CEMP is a shared responsibility, certain roles are specific to maintaining this plan. These are identified and summarized below.

*Table 15 Plan Maintenance Roles and Responsibilities*

Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
<b>Board Member</b>	Lee County Board of County Commissioners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review plan for compliance with policy priorities and frameworks.</li> <li>Participate in a vote to adopt revised versions of the CEMP.</li> </ul>
<b>Senior Leadership</b>	Lee County Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide strategic directives and priorities to CEMP planners.</li> <li>Facilitate CEMP maintenance across the County Departments</li> <li>Review and guide CEMP maintenance to ensure compliance with directives and priorities.</li> </ul>



Role	Agency/Position	Responsibilities
<b>Incident Commander</b>	Emergency Management – Chief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide operational directives and priorities to CEMP planners.</li> <li>• Oversee the implementation of the maintenance process.</li> <li>• Review and guide CEMP maintenance to ensure compliance with directives and priorities.</li> </ul>
<b>Deputy Chief, Preparedness</b>	Emergency Management – Deputy Chief, Preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manage the implementation of the maintenance process.</li> <li>• Coordinate review and maintenance with Emergency Management Program stakeholders.</li> <li>• Coordinate review and approval process with the Florida Division of Emergency Management.</li> <li>• Ensure CEMP compliance with policy, strategic, and operational directives, and priorities.</li> <li>• Ensure CEMP compliance with State requirements, Federal guidance, lessons learned, and industry best practices.</li> </ul>
<b>Planning Team</b>	Variable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the maintenance process under direction from the Deputy Chief, Preparedness.</li> <li>• Coordinate review and maintenance responsibilities with Emergency Management Program stakeholders.</li> <li>• Maintain and update assigned portions of the CEMP and its supporting plans, policies, and procedures.</li> <li>• Assure synchronicity of the CEMP and its supporting documents with all elements of the Emergency Management Program.</li> </ul>
<b>Emergency Management Program Stakeholders</b>	Variable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continually review the CEMP and its supporting documents to ensure currency and accuracy.</li> <li>• Participate in meetings and discussions related to the CEMP's maintenance.</li> <li>• Participate in hot washes, after-action reports, corrective action plans, and improvement action plans for the CEMP following training and exercises.</li> <li>• Ensure synchronicity of the CEMP and its supporting documents with County Departments, municipal, or external processes.</li> <li>• Provide subject matter expertise in the planning process.</li> </ul>



# Chapter 14 Authorities

This chapter lays the groundwork for sustained governance and operational continuity in times of emergencies. This chapter systematically presents the protocols and policies that maintain the integrity of government functions and services, ensuring that essential operations are preserved without interruption during a crisis. It serves as a keystone for emergency management personnel, delineating the hierarchy of command and control that will be pivotal in emergency scenarios.

Within its scope, Chapter 14 also outlines the legal framework that underpins emergency operations, listing pertinent laws, statutes, ordinances, executive orders, regulations, and formal agreements. This legal architecture provides the authoritative basis for actions taken before, during, and after incidents, thereby assuring that all measures are within the bounds of established law. Moreover, it consolidates the County's commitment to upholding the rule of law, even in the face of disruptions, by adhering to these documented guidelines.

## Continuity of Government

Continuity of Government (COG) ensures the preservation, maintenance, and reconstitution of governmental power and functions under all conditions, encompassing both peacetime emergencies and national security emergencies. This section delineates the structured policies and procedures designed to sustain and uphold the operability of essential functions of government entities.

COG is predicated on the principle that governmental entities shall continue to operate in the face of any disruption, ensuring the rule of law, performance of essential services, and the conduct of lawful succession to offices. COG is responsive to a spectrum of emergencies, including natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other calamitous events that may incapacitate traditional seats of government.

## Scenarios for Continuity of Government

As described in Chapter 1, there are numerous hazards and threats that may adversely affect Lee County and its residents should they occur. The *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment* (HIRA) provides an extensive description of these hazards and threats and their consequences. The HIRA makes use of a multitude of sources, as well as input from subject matter experts and from lessons learned. The Division of Emergency Management maintains the HIRA, with support from the Disaster Advisory Council.





Table 3, on page six of this plan, summarizes the hazards or threats Lee County is likely to experience. While some hazards are unlikely to trigger a COG event (e.g., plant disease), others carry the potential for negatively affecting the ability of the County to sustain governance without disruption (e.g., severe tropical cyclones or targeted adversarial actions). In the event one or more incidents disrupt Lee County's ability to govern, the County will rely upon constitutional and legal frameworks and authorities to preserve, maintain, and reconstitute governing authority. The County will activate the *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP)* to support COG efforts, as directed by constitutional authorities, such as local elected officials or the Governor of Florida.

### ***Preserved***

The preservation of governing authority amidst disasters is inherently structured within the fabric of Florida's legal framework. Article VIII, Section 1 of the Florida Constitution provides the foundational authority for local self-government, which inherently includes the ability to preserve governance during emergencies. FS 125.01 complements this by delegating broad powers to county governments, enabling them to perform essential functions unimpeded, especially in crisis scenarios. FS 252.38 reinforces this by establishing a comprehensive emergency management system, which includes the development of emergency plans that pre-emptively preserve the integrity and continuity of local government operations. Collectively, these statutes mandate the establishment of robust mechanisms and procedures to ensure governance can withstand the immediate impacts of a disaster.

Florida Constitution, Article IV §7 empowers the Governor to ensure the preservation of governmental operations during a state of emergency. This includes arranging available resources and forces of the State and directing them towards maintaining governmental functions. The Governor can issue executive orders and take necessary actions to mobilize the State's administrative machinery, helping to sustain and protect local governance from total disruption.

### ***Maintained***

A series of operational statutes and emergency powers assure the maintenance of governing authority during a disaster. Under FS 252.38, county governments have the authority to maintain order and provide critical services, ensuring that governmental operations continue through an emergency. FS 125.01, which grants counties the power to enact ordinances for the health, safety, and welfare of the public, is pivotal during a



disaster's progression. The incorporation of emergency management powers within these statutes ensures that county governments have the necessary operational latitude to adapt rapidly and maintain governance functionality amid the evolving circumstances of a disaster.

FS 252.36 endows the Governor with broad powers to manage emergencies, including the maintenance of local governing authority. The Governor is authorized to take pragmatic measures which may include the suspension of any regulatory statute prescribing the procedures for the conduct of state business, or the orders, rules, or regulations of any state agency if strict compliance would prevent, hinder, or delay necessary action in coping with the emergency. These statutory provisions enable the Governor to adapt swiftly to the needs of a locality under duress, thus maintaining governance through a crisis. If necessary, the Governor may take direct operational control of local operations.

### ***Reconstituted***

Once response and short-term recovery operations mitigate a disaster's immediate effects, the focus shifts to the reconstitution of full governing authority. The framework established by FS 252.38 outlines a clear structure for disaster recovery, providing the statutory guidance necessary for restoring governance to its full capacity. This statute is pivotal in guiding the systematic re-establishment of normal governmental operations and services. Both Florida Const., Article VIII §1 and FS 125.01 are essential in this phase as well, ensuring that the constitutional and statutory provisions for local governance are upheld and serve as a bedrock for the reconstitution process, thereby facilitating a return to the pre-disaster governance structure and function.

Florida Constitution, Article IV §7 and FS 100.111 authorizes the Governor of Florida to fill vacancies at the local level until filled by special election or other means proscribed in law. Florida Statute empowers the Governor, in consultation with the Secretary of State, to set the time, date, and location of such special elections.

## **Delegation of Emergency Authority**

Lee County Ordinance §10-50-10-55 establishes a robust system for delegating emergency authority, a critical component for maintaining governance during crises. This system operates even when a quorum of the Board of County Commissioners cannot physically convene.



Initially, the responsibility to declare a SOLE falls to the Chairperson of the Board. If the Chairperson is unavailable, this duty transfers to the Vice-Chairperson. The succession continues down to other Board members, and, if none can act, authority shifts to the County Administrator or their appointee. This sequential delegation preserves decision-making authority without interruption.

To formalize a SOLE, the acting authority must issue a written proclamation. This emergency status automatically expires 7-days after issuance but may be extended by a majority vote of the governing body of the political subdivision, as necessary, in 7-day increments for a total duration of not more than 42 days (FS 252.38(4)c) or when the Board, upon achieving a quorum, enacts a resolution to terminate the emergency state.

This ordinance does not supersede the Board’s statutory authority. The Commissioners retain full capacity to declare, extend, or terminate a state of local emergency during duly called meetings. Moreover, the ordinance underscores the County’s adherence to FS 252 by incorporating its provisions into local law, ensuring compliance and alignment with state mandates.

*Table 16 Lines of Succession for Continuity of Government*

Authority Line of Succession
Board of County Commissioners
Chairperson of the Board of County Commissioners
Vice Chairperson of the Board of County Commissioners
Any Member of the Board of County Commissioners
County Manager
County Manager Designee

## Command and Control

Upon the onset of a disruption necessitating COG operations, Lee County will promptly activate the CEMP. The CEMP serves as a foundation for sustaining essential functions and provides a structured approach for maintaining command and control during COG operations. This activation directly aligns with the operational concepts delineated in Chapter 2 of this plan, ensuring that the established procedures guide the response efforts effectively.

Per the Coordination Framework outlined in Chapter 4, Lee County will uphold the principles and practices of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), incorporating the Incident Command System (ICS) for strategic response management.



The ICS structure will enable Lee County to maintain a hierarchical framework that ensures clear lines of authority, information flow, and resource allocation.

The Lee County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will coordinate the multifaceted operations required during COG events if needed. The activation of the EOC is a strategic decision made by Senior Leadership, contingent on the complexity, pace, and dynamic nature of the emergency at hand. The centralized command established at the EOC streamlines decision-making lowers communication ambiguity and ensures that COG efforts are timely.

## **Continuity of Operations**

Continuity of Operations refers to the internal effort within organizations to ensure the continuation of their essential functions across a wide range of potential emergencies, including localized acts of nature, accidents, and technological or attack-related emergencies. A Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is a comprehensive, documented guideline developed by an organization to facilitate the performance of its essential functions in response to a significant disruption, typically focused on short-term recovery and response operations.

Lee County, in its dedication to resilience and operational integrity, develops and refines COOPs for each of its County Departments. This process begins with the identification of essential functions that are critical to the department's mission. Departments then outline strategies to sustain these functions, detailing resource requirements such as personnel, equipment, records, and facilities. The County incorporates risk assessments to tailor COOPs to specific vulnerabilities, ensuring robust and responsive plans.

Each department is responsible for maintaining its COOP, conducting regular reviews, and updating the plans to reflect changes in operations, personnel, or the external environment. Training and exercises are integral, allowing staff to understand their roles during disruptions and refine the plans through simulated practice.

Furthermore, Lee County champions a collaborative approach, offering technical assistance to its partners and stakeholders, and guiding them in the development of their COOPs. By promoting a culture of preparedness, the County strengthens community-wide resilience.

The COOP for the Lee County Emergency Management receives heightened attention, given its pivotal role in centralized coordination during emergencies. The Emergency



Management COOP ensures that command, control, and communication functions remain uninterrupted, securing the EOC's capability to support field operations and manage information flow effectively.

## **Local Authorities**

Local authorities underpinning emergency management in Lee County consist of ordinances, resolutions, administrative codes, and policies and procedures. These are listed below.

### ***Lee County, Florida Land Development Code***

[https://library.municode.com/fl/lee\\_county/codes/land\\_development\\_code](https://library.municode.com/fl/lee_county/codes/land_development_code)

- Chapter 2, Article XI
- Chapter 6, Articles III and IV

### ***Lee County Ordinances***

<http://www.leegov.com/bocc/ordinances>

[https://library.municode.com/fl/lee\\_county/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances](https://library.municode.com/fl/lee_county/codes/code_of_ordinances)

- [Chapter 10 – Emergency Management and Emergency Services](#)
- 00-14 Amending LDC, Chapters 2, 6, 10, 30 & 34
- 03-16 Amending Chapter 6, Impact Mitigation & Special Flood Hazard
- 06-08 Housing of Sexual Predators
- 06-17 Amending LDC, Chapter 6
- 08-12 Amending the Lee County Land Development Code FEMA Maps
- 22-06 County Procurement Ordinance
- 83-25 “Restricting Access across the Sanibel Causeway under Emergency Conditions”
- 87-01 Declaring a State of Local Emergency
- 90-52 Cost Recovery for Response and Recovery Efforts Related to Hazardous Materials Incidents
- 95-14 Post-Disaster Recovery & Redevelopment (repealed June 20, 2007)
- Lee County Price Gouging Ordinance



## **Lee County Resolutions**

<http://minutes.leeclerk.org/>

- 52-99 Adoption of the All-Hazards Protection District and All-Hazards Protection District Fund for the City of Cape Coral
- 75-10-15 Creating a Local Disaster Preparedness Organization
- 77-10-09 Creating the Disaster Preparedness Manuals for the Island Water Association
- 79-07-25 Creating Guidelines for Shutdown of Services for the Island Water Association
- 90-12-19 Creating All-Hazards Protection District & All-Hazards Protection District Fund
- 91-03-42 Amend Lee County Resolution No. 90-12-19.
- 98-02-15 Approval of Administrative Code 7-7
- 98-06-21 Approval of Administrative Code 7-8
- 05-12-29 Adoption of the 2005 Lee County CEMP & NIMS 12/20/2005
- 22-05-21 Adopting the updated *Joint Local Mitigation Strategy* May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

## **Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual**

- 504

## **County Administrative Code**

- 7-6
- 7-7
- 7-8
- 13-4

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## **State Authorities**

- FS Chapter 125.031
- FS Chapter 252
- FS Chapter 381.0303
- FS Chapter 394.879(1)(d)
- FS Chapter 395.1055
- FS Chapter 400.23(2)(g)
- FS Chapter 429.41(1)
- FS Chapter 429.929(1)(g)
- FS Chapter 400.967
- FS Chapter 400.998(3)(g)
- FS Chapter 400.9982(2)(e)
- FAC 27P-6
- FAC 27P-19
- FAC 27P-20



- FAC 27P-22
- FAC 59A-16.107(10)
- FAC 59A-26.020
- FAC 59A-3.078
- FAC 59A-36.019(1)
- FAC 59A-36.025
- FAC 59A-4.126
- FAC 59A-4.1265
- FAC 59A-5.018
- FAC 65E-9.005(10)

### ***Federal Authorities***

- Stafford Act, Rule 44 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR)
- Homeland Security Presidential Directives 5 (HSPD-5), Management of Domestic Incidents
- Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 (PKEMRA)
- Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013 (SRIA)
- Super Circular, 2 C.F.R. Part 20

## **Legislative and Regulatory Changes**

The Lee County Emergency Management Program utilizes several methods to identify and address proposed legislative and regulatory changes. The Florida Division of Emergency Management (DEM) provides an opportunity for local programs to address specific concerns with DEM program staff. The DEM Director conducts a monthly conference call, which allows for the dissemination of any updated information.

Additionally, the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association (FEPA) monitors policy issues affecting emergency management and provides analyses for emergency management issues in the State of Florida. FEPA serves as an advisory body to the DEM, providing resources for emergency management issues in the legislative process. FEPA has several committees with subject matter experts to assist members, and weekly updates on emergency management-related legislative proposals are provided on the FEPA website and emailed to members by the appointed Area Governors or their alternates.

Lee County Administration provides Department Heads/Directors with applicable updates for local governmental legislative affairs, and the emergency management staff monitors information avenues for their subject matter responsibilities, ensuring compliance with the most current legislation and regulations.

The emergency management division is the primary conduit to ensure that proposed legislative and regulatory changes are disseminated to all stakeholders. The Disaster



Advisory Council (DAC) meetings are the primary means of accomplishing this. The emergency management staff reviews all informational methods indicated above and collaborates on the necessary information to be included as an agenda item and detailed in the DAC meeting minutes. For subject matter-specific information, the responsible emergency management staff member will share directly with applicable stakeholders and assist in the implementation, if necessary.





## Chapter 15 References

The following plans, policies, procedures, agreements, and so forth are incorporated into the *Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan* by reference here, as well as throughout the document itself.

- *CEMP Project Management Plan*
- *E-Role Program Standard Operating Procedure*
- *Joint Local Mitigation Strategy*
- *Lee County All-Hazards Evacuation Plan*
- *Lee County Florida Amateur Radio Emergency Services Standard Operating Guidelines*
- *Lee County Cost Recovery Plan*
- *Lee County Debris Management Plan*
- *Lee County Disaster Recovery Plan*
- *Emergency Support Assistance Team Standard Operating Procedure*
- *Finance and Administration Section Standard Operating Guide*
- *Florida Department of Health in Lee County Emergency Operations Plan Annex I Special Needs Shelter*
- *Incident Assessment Standard Operating Guide*
- *Integrated Preparedness Plan*
- *Joint Information System and Center Standard Operating Guide*
- *Logistics Section Standard Operating Guide*
- *Mass Care Plan*
- *Operations Section Standard Operating Guide*
- *Lee County Plans Section Standard Operating Guide*
- *County Staging Area Standard Operating Guide*
- *Time-Delineated Schedule*
- *WebEOC User Guide*
- *Regional Hurricane Evacuation Study (2010)*
- *State of Florida Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan*
- *Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement*
- *The Lee Plan*
- *National Incident Management System, Third Edition (2017)*
- *Public Information Standard Operating Guide*
- *Southwest Florida Regional Evacuation Coordination Guide*



- *Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101*
- *Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA)*
- *Emergency Operations Center Standard Operating Procedure*
- *Communication, Notification, and Alert and Warning Systems Standard Operating Guide*
- *Public Outreach Standard Operating Procedure*
- *Lee County Procurement Management Policies and Procedures*
- *EOC Activation Guidebook*
- *Lee County Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan*





STATE OF FLORIDA

## DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Ron DeSantis  
Governor

Kevin Guthrie  
Director

April 18, 2024

John Schultz, Director  
Lee County Emergency Management  
2675 Ortiz Ave,  
Fort Myers, FL 33905

Dear Director Schultz:

In accordance with the provisions of Rule Chapter 27P-6 Florida Administrative Code (FAC), the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) has completed its review of the Lee County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP). The review team has determined that your plan meets the CEMP compliance criteria. We hope that the comments and discussions the review team had with you and your staff during the review will assist you in future planning efforts and enhance the update of your CEMP.

**The approved plan must now be adopted by resolution by the governing body of the jurisdiction within 90 days in accordance with Rule 27P-6.006(11) FAC. You must forward a copy of the adoption resolution and an electronic copy of the adopted plan to FDEM to complete compliance. Failure to adopt the plan by resolution within 90 days will result in a letter of non-compliance unless an adoption extension is requested in accordance with Rule 27P-6.006(11) FAC.**

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DIVISION HEADQUARTERS Tel: 850-413-9969 • Fax: 850-488-1016  
2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard [www.FloridaDisaster.org](http://www.FloridaDisaster.org)  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-2100

STATE LOGISTICS RESPONSE CENTER  
2702 Directors Row  
Orlando, FL 32809-5631



Dir. Schultz  
April 18, 2024  
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If you have any questions or need additional information regarding the plan's approval, please contact your review team leader, Austin Delgado, at (850) 524-8189 or by email: Local.CEMP@em.myflorida.com.

Sincerely,

**Andrew  
Sussman** Digitally signed by  
Andrew Sussman  
Date: 2024.04.18  
09:32:34 -04'00'  
Andrew Sussman,  
All-Hazards Unit Manager

LM/AS/ad/

**RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS:**

Mike Greenwell, Chair, Lee County BOCC  
Theresa Hendry, DEM Regional Coordinator  
Margaret Weurstle, RPC Representative  
Melissa Shirah, DEM - Recovery  
Laura Dhuwe, DEM - Mitigation  
Austin Delgado, DEM – CEMP Planner

