

IMPERIAL COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN DRAFT



2025

Acknowledgments

The Imperial County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), hereafter referred to as “EOP” or “Plan”, is a result of a collaborative partnership and an ongoing commitment to effective emergency management. The update to this Plan was initiated and led by the Imperial County Office of Emergency Services (OES) and supported by various County departments along with input and participation from numerous agencies and organizations.

A core Planning Team played an important role in this update, providing strategic guidance throughout the Plan development and its implementation. Their expertise and collaboration was instrumental to further enhance the County’s emergency preparedness, response and recovery efforts.

The County of Imperial extends its gratitude to the following Planning Team members for their valuable contributions to the update and content of this Plan:

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Approval and Implementation

Plan Approval and Implementation

The Board of Supervisors serves as the overarching Legislative Body of Imperial County for the planning and supervision of services related to the public needs and requirements of state and federal laws, as well as approving this Imperial County EOP. California Government Code Section 25000 requires each county to have a Board of Supervisors consisting of five members. A board member must be a registered voter of, and reside in, the district from which the member is elected. Imperial County's Board of Supervisors comprises of five members elected by voters for four years in each of the five County districts. The City of El Centro serves as the County Seat.

Upon concurrence of the Imperial County Board of Supervisors, the EOP will be officially adopted and promulgated. The approval date will be included on the title page, and the Plan will be distributed to those County departments, supporting allied agencies, and community organizations assigned primary functions or responsibilities within the EOP.

Plan Modification

The Imperial County OES is responsible for preparing and maintaining the EOP.

The EOP Base Plan sets the county's objectives and policy, and any modification to it requires the Board of Supervisors' approval.

The Functional Annex provides high-level guidance and reference documents containing information that may change frequently. OES will be directly responsible for updating and revising the Functional Annex without needing the Board of Supervisors' approval.

County Board of Supervisors Resolution

PLACEHOLDER FOR THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS RESOLUTION

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Plan Concurrence

The undersigned representatives of principal organizations concur with the mission, goals, and objectives of the Imperial County EOP. As needed, revisions will be submitted for review by the undersigned or their designees.

Agency/Department	Title	Contact Name

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Letter of Promulgation

The preservation of life and property is an inherent responsibility of all levels of government. As disasters occur in devastating form at any time, Imperial County must provide safeguards that will save lives and minimize property damage through planning, preparedness measures, and training. Emergency plans carried out by knowledgeable and well-trained personnel can and will minimize losses.

The Imperial County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) establishes an Emergency Management Organization and outlines assigned functions and tasks in alignment with California's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS). This framework ensures coordination among multiple jurisdictions within Imperial County.

Developed for all County departments, local special districts with emergency service responsibilities, and cities within the county, the EOP follows guidance from the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). It provides clear directives on responding to emergencies from initial onset through extended operations and into recovery.

Once adopted, the EOP serves as an extension of the California State Emergency Plan. To maintain its effectiveness, it will be regularly reviewed, tested, and updated as needed to adapt to evolving conditions. The Imperial County Board of Supervisors and the County Executive fully support this plan and encourage all public employees and residents to prepare for emergencies before they occur.

Miguel Figueroa
County Executive

Record of Changes

Each revision or correction to the Imperial County EOP must be recorded. The table below contains the date, location, and brief description of the revision or change to the Plan, as well as who requested or performed such revision/change.

#	Date	Change By	Summary of Change
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			



Record of Distribution

Imperial County OES is responsible for developing, maintaining, and distributing the EOP. OES will make the Plan available to all County departments, Operational Area (OA) jurisdictions, Cal OES, and other partner organizations as necessary and upon request. An electronic version is available through the County OES website. Additionally, hard copies are available at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and OES staff have remote access to all plans and annexes.

The following table shows the Record of Distribution of the Plan, which indicates who received the Plan either electronically or via hard copy, the date of delivery, and the number of copies received.

Name	Title	Agency	Date of Delivery	# of Copies

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Section 1: Introduction

Foreword

State agencies, local governments, tribal governments, and partner agencies must be prepared to respond to emergencies that might occur within their areas of responsibility and must be able to assess whether their capabilities are sufficient to respond effectively.

Imperial County's EOP addresses the County's response to small to large-scale emergency situations associated with natural disasters and/or human-caused emergencies. This Plan is consistent and compatible with the State of California Emergency Plan.

This Plan describes:

- Methods for carrying out emergency operations
- Processes for rendering mutual aid
- Roles and responsibilities of governmental departments and agencies in emergency services
- Procedures for resource mobilization
- Strategies for public communication and information dissemination
- Measures for ensuring continuity of government during emergencies

The concepts presented in this Plan emphasize response operations. Response embodies the actions taken in the immediate aftermath of an incident to save and sustain lives, meet basic human needs, and reduce the loss of property and the impact on critical infrastructure and the environment. Following an incident, response operations reduce the physical, psychological, social, and economic impacts of an incident.

This Plan is a management document intended to be read and understood before an emergency occurs. It is designed to outline the activities of all Imperial County departments and partner agencies within a county-wide emergency management system, and it embraces the capabilities and resources in the broader emergency management community that includes individuals, businesses, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), tribal governments, other cities, counties, and the federal government.

Purpose

The Imperial County EOP provides a comprehensive, single source of guidance and procedures for the County to prepare for and respond to significant or catastrophic natural, environmental, or conflict-related risks that produce situations requiring coordinated response. It further provides guidance regarding management concepts relating to response and mitigation of various emergency situations, identifies organizational structures and relationships, and describes responsibilities and functions necessary to protect life and property. The Plan is consistent with the requirements of California's SEMS as defined in Government Code Section 8607(a) and NIMS, as defined by Presidential Executive Orders for managing response to multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional emergencies. As such, the plan is flexible enough to be used in all emergencies and will facilitate response and short-term recovery activities. SEMS/NIMS incorporates the use of Incident Command System (ICS), mutual aid, the OA concept, and multi/interagency coordination.

Imperial County OA Resolution No. 1010, forming the OA and Disaster Council, was originally adopted by the County Board of Supervisors on 02/27/1990 and is reviewed and revised as appropriate. Imperial County Operational Area Resolution No. 2006-013 recognized that the Imperial County OA will continue to use SEMS to meet the objective of NIMS, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on 02/21/2006.

All response personnel should be familiar with the Plan as a whole and with parts of it specific to their needs, roles, and responsibilities. The EOP provides the basis for developing jurisdiction—and/or department-specific, detailed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and checklists.

The Plan also addresses the following issues:

- Identifies the organizations and individuals responsible for specific actions during an emergency.
- Explains the pertinent lines of authority and organizational relationships.
- Describes how activities are coordinated to unify response and recovery efforts.
- Identifies personnel, equipment, facilities, supplies, and other resources available within the jurisdiction or by agreement with other jurisdictions.
- Describes how resource requirements are coordinated with neighboring jurisdictions, private sector entities, and nonprofit organizations.
- Compliments and integrates with plans that address other mission areas.

Scope

This plan provides an overview of emergency management in Imperial County but does not serve as a detailed response or tactical guidance. It does not supersede the well-established operational policies and procedures for managing routine emergencies involving law enforcement, fire service, medical aid, transportation services, flood control, or other discipline-specific emergency response systems. It is intended as a supplement or complement to such systems. This EOP, however, does emphasize those unusual and unique emergency conditions that will require response beyond the ability of anyone or set of organizations to respond. It is intended as an overview of emergency management in Imperial County and is not a detailed tactical document.

The intended audience for this EOP consists of Imperial County departments, elected officials, OA jurisdictions, community-based organizations (CBOs), and the private sector. This Plan is also a reference for managers from other jurisdictions, state and federal agencies, as well as interested public members.

The scope of this Plan includes functions and activities necessary to implement the five phases of emergency management: prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. This Plan incorporates and complies with the principles and requirements found in federal and state laws, regulations, and guidelines. As such the Plan is flexible enough to use in all emergencies and will facilitate response and short-term recovery activities.

Each organization identified in this EOP is responsible for and expected to develop, implement, and test policies, procedures, instructions, and standard operating guides (SOGs) or checklists that reflect cognizance of the emergency management concepts contained herein. Coordinated response and support roles must be defined by these organizations to facilitate the ability to respond to any given incident. The city governments within the County maintain their own EOPs. The Cities' Plans should be consistent with the policies and procedures established by this Plan. During multi-jurisdictional emergencies, each jurisdiction retains responsibility for managing operations within its boundaries and for coordinating with any jurisdiction that has overlapping boundaries.

Whole Community Approach

Imperial County integrates a Whole Community Approach into its EOP to foster an inclusive response that engages all segments of the community. This approach also encourages jurisdictions within the OA to adopt similar practices. The Whole Community concept unites community members, organizational representatives, emergency management professionals, and government officials in a collaborative effort to understand and assess community needs. This approach helps identify effective ways to organize and strengthen community assets, capacities, and interests. Imperial County is committed to involving all community sectors in identifying and developing actionable strategies to address community emergency planning and preparedness needs, ensuring the emergency management process is comprehensive, equitable, and reflective of the diverse community.

The County is committed to maximizing compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and legislative requirements of the State of California to provide the community

with the best emergency planning service and ensure the integration and consideration of access and functional needs and vulnerable populations throughout the planning process. As such, Imperial County adheres to and encourages the following policy principles:

- Disability will not prevent accessibility to services or facilities provided.
- There will not be an exclusion or denial of benefits based on disability or access and functional need.
- Efforts to accommodate individuals with access and functional needs will be made in the most integrated setting possible.
- During all phases of disaster response, reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures, if necessary, will be made to ensure programmatic and architectural access to all.
- Individuals with access and functional needs will be sheltered with their families and/or personal support aid in the most integrated setting possible.

Planning Assumptions

This Plan is based on the following assumptions and considerations:

- All incidents, disasters, and emergencies are local.
- The California Emergency Services Act (ESA) requires the County Board of Supervisors to establish an OA that includes all political subdivisions (cities, special districts (SDs), school districts, etc.) in the geographic area of the County. The OA is the intermediate level of the state emergency organization and provides coordination and communication between and with its political subdivisions and the state. The ESA also assigns the County responsibility as the OA lead agency.
- Emergencies may occur at any time with little or no warning and may exceed the capabilities of local, state, federal, and tribal governments and the private sector in the affected areas.
- Emergencies may result in casualties and fatalities and displace people from their homes.
- Essential County services will be maintained as long as conditions permit.
- An emergency will require prompt and effective response and recovery operations by County emergency services, disaster relief, volunteer organizations, and the private sector.
- The greater an emergency's complexity, impact, and geographic scope, the more multi-agency coordination will be required.
- All emergency response staff are trained and experienced in operating under the NIMS/SEMS protocols.
- Imperial County OES will coordinate and facilitate emergency operations within the County.
- Environmental, technological, and civil emergencies may be of a magnitude and severity that State and Federal assistance is required.
- County support of jurisdictional emergency operations will be based on the principle of self-help. The cities/towns will be responsible for utilizing all available local resources and initiating mutual aid and cooperative assistance agreements before requesting assistance from the County.



- Vulnerable populations and those with access and functional needs will require additional planning considerations for communications, alert and warning, transportation, evacuation, and care and sheltering needs.
- Considering time, space, equipment, supplies, and personnel shortages during a catastrophic disaster, self-sufficiency will be necessary for the first hours or days following the event.
- Parts of or the entire County may be affected by environmental and technological emergencies.
- Individuals, CBOs, and businesses will offer services and support in times of disaster.
- The United States Department of Homeland Security provides threat conditions over the United States and identifies possible targets.
- Control over County resources will remain at the County level even though the Governor has the legal authority to assume control in a State Declaration of Emergency.
- Mutual aid and other forms of assistance will be rendered when impacted jurisdictions exhaust or anticipate exhausting their resources.
- Requests for mutual aid will follow established mutual aid channels. The County will commit its resources to a reasonable degree before requesting mutual aid assistance.
- County communication and work centers may be destroyed or rendered inoperable during a disaster.
- Normal operations can be disrupted during a general emergency; however, the County can still operate effectively if public officials, first responders, employees, volunteers, and residents are:
 - Familiar with established policies and procedures
 - Assigned pre-designated tasks
 - Provided with assembly instructions
 - Trained formally on their duties, roles, and responsibilities required during emergency operations.
- The County's planning strategies will make every effort to consider the needs of the general population, children of all ages, individuals with access and functional needs, immigrants, individuals with limited English proficiency, and diverse racial and ethnic populations.

Section 2: Situation Overview

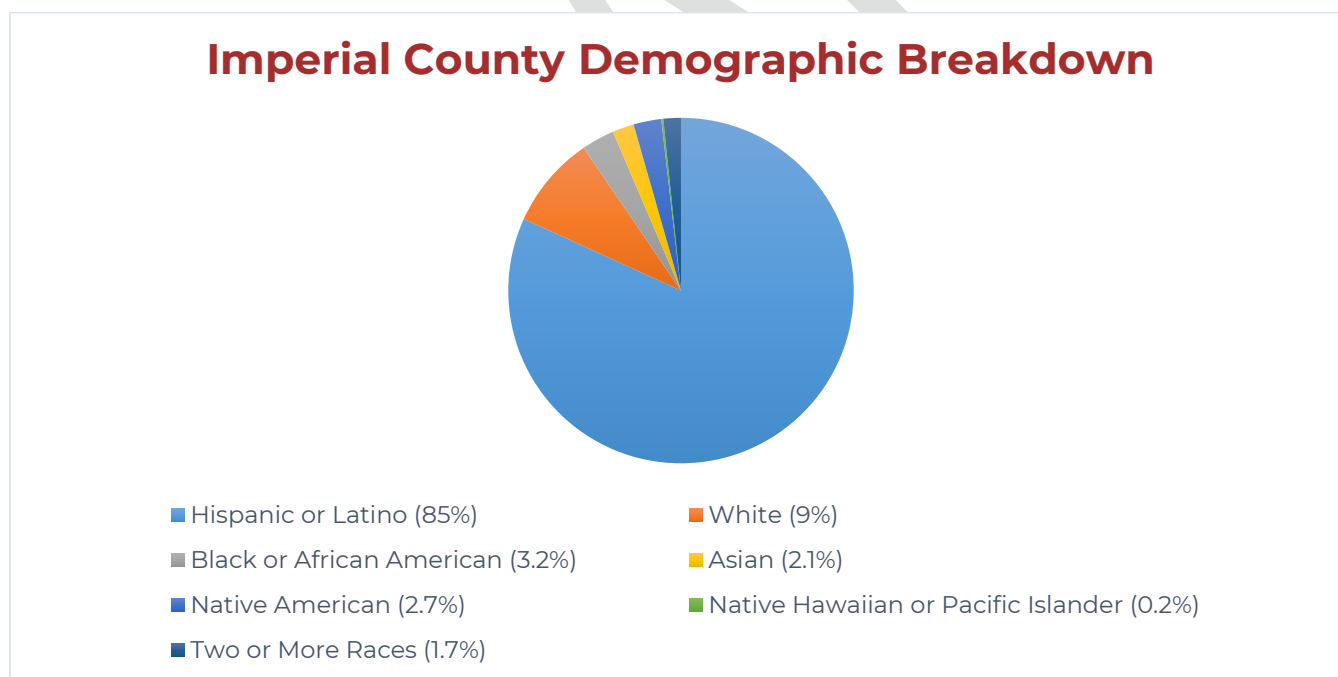
Demographic Overview

General Population

Imperial County is home to a diverse population of 179,057 (Census Bureau 2023) and consists of various ethnicities and age groups, contributing to its cultural diversity. The following table lists various population demographics for the County.

Imperial County's population, as of the 2020 Census, stands at 179,702, making it the least populous county in Southern California. The region is predominantly Hispanic or Latino, comprising approximately 85% of the population, a reflection of its close cultural and geographic ties to Mexico. In contrast, White (non-Hispanic) residents make up about 9% of the population, while smaller groups include Black or African American at 3.2%, Asian at 2.1%, and Native American at 2.7%. A small percentage of residents identify as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (0.2%), or Two or More Races (1.7%).¹ Figure 1 illustrates this demographic breakdown, visually representing the racial composition of Imperial County through a pie chart.

Figure 1: Imperial County Racial Demographic Breakdown by Percentage



The County has a relatively young population, with 31.4% of residents under the age of 18. Adults aged 25 to 44 make up the largest working-age group at 30.4%, while 18.2% fall

¹ U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). *Quick Facts Imperial County, California*. Retrieved <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/imperialcountycalifornia/POP010220>

between 45 and 64 years old. Seniors, aged 65 and older, represent 14.1% of the total population.²

Households in Imperial County reflect a family-centered dynamic. Of the 45,768 households, nearly 40.1% have children under 18, and 48.6% are married couples living together. Female householders with no husband present account for 29.9% of households, while non-family households make up 46.7%. Notably, 22.1% of all households are individuals living alone, including 9.3% who are 65 years or older. The average household size is 3.73, while the average family size is slightly larger at 4.46.³

Language use in Imperial County reflects its cultural diversity and strong connection to the Hispanic population. Approximately 70% of residents speak a language other than English at home, with Spanish being the most prevalent. For many households, Spanish serves as the primary language of communication, though a significant portion of the population is bilingual. Conversely, around 25% of residents speak only English at home. These linguistic dynamics influences education, community engagement, and access to services, underscoring the importance of bilingual resources and programs in the region.⁴

Gender distribution is slightly skewed, with 51.2% males and 48.8% females and an even higher ratio among adults.⁵ These demographic characteristics underscore Imperial County's unique population makeup, economic drivers, linguistic diversity, and challenges as it continues to grow and evolve.

Access and Functional Needs Populations

Imperial County is committed to including access and functional needs considerations in its planning efforts and will make every reasonable effort to communicate and coordinate with people with such needs. This includes communicating and coordinating with individuals who may have additional needs before, during, or after an incident in areas such as health, independence, communication, transportation, support services, and medical care.

The term access and functional needs replaces outdated terms such as “special needs” and “high-risk” to promote inclusivity and respect.

² U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). Imperial County, California. Retrieved https://data.census.gov/profile/Imperial_County,_California?g=050XX00US06025

³ U.S. Census Bureau. (2020). American Community Survey DP02Selected Social Characteristics in the United States. Retrieved , <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2020.DP02?g=050XX00US06025>

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau. (2020). American Community Survey S1601Language Spoken at Home Retrieved, <https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2020.S1601?g=050XX00US06025>

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). Quick Facts Imperial County, California. Retrieved <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/imperialcountycalifornia/POP010220>

Individuals with Access and Functional Needs include:

- Physical, developmental, or intellectual disabilities
- Chronic conditions or injuries
- Limited English proficiency
- Older adults
- Children
- Low-income, homeless and/or transportation disadvantaged (i.e., dependent on public transit)
- Pregnant women

California Government Code Section 8593.3

Access and functional needs populations are disproportionately impacted by emergencies due to factors such as disabilities, geographic isolation, inadequate living or working conditions, low income, systemic marginalization, and limited access to essential resources. These challenges, often rooted in historic inequities and exclusionary planning practices, underscore the importance of demographic considerations in emergency preparedness.

Lessons learned from recent national emergencies concerning people with disabilities and older adults have shown that the existing paradigm of emergency planning, implementation, and response must change to meet the needs of these groups during an emergency.

The Annual Disability Statistics Compendium published the 2023 State Report for County-level Data, which includes vital disability statistics for each state. The Compendium is spearheaded by the Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Disability Statistics and Demographics, funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Community Living National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research.

Tables 1-3 summarize key access and functional needs demographics and statistics for Imperial County, sourced from the [U.S. Census Bureau](https://www.census.gov).

Table 1: Access and Functional Needs and Diverse Population Demographics

Access and Functional Needs and Diverse Population Demographics	
Population	Percentage/Number
Persons under 5 years, %	6.8%
Persons under 18 years, %	28.1%
Persons 65 years and over, %	14.1%
Veterans, 2018-2022	5,045
Foreign born persons, %, 2018-2022	30.5%
With a disability, under age 65 years, %	9.0%
Persons in poverty, %	21.2%

Table 2: Disability Prevalence Demographics

Disability Prevalence Demographics					
Description	Total Population	Disability		No Disability	
		Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Prevalence of people with and without disabilities	171,685	24,352	14.2	147,333	85.8

Table 3: Disability Poverty Demographics

Disability Poverty Demographics					
Description	Total Population	Disability		No Disability	
		Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Civilians with and without disabilities in poverty ages 18 to 64 years old	148,213	13,412	9.0	134,801	91.0

By integrating these demographic insights into emergency planning efforts, Imperial County can develop targeted strategies that promote inclusive preparedness, equitable resource distribution, and effective communication. Ensuring that emergency response plans account for the needs of populations with access and functional considerations will enhance community resilience and reduce the disproportionate impact of disasters on communities.

Social Vulnerability

Social vulnerability refers to a community's capacity to prepare for and respond to the stress of hazardous events ranging from natural disasters to human-caused threats. Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) is a tool for assessing a community's capacity to prepare for and recover from natural or human disasters.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) SVI 2022 map on the following pages depicts the social vulnerability of communities at the census tract level within Imperial County. The 2022 map index evaluates **16 census-derived factors** that are categorized into **four key themes**:

- Socioeconomic Status
- Household Characteristics
- Racial and Ethnic Minority Status
- Housing Type/Transportation

The maps provide a visual representation of these themes, identifying areas where populations may face increased challenges in disaster response and recovery.

Overall Social Vulnerability

Figure 2 illustrates overall social vulnerability, with darker shades indicating higher levels of vulnerability. This comprehensive assessment combines all four themes to provide a holistic view of the County's disaster resilience. Key observations include:

- El Centro and Calexico exhibit higher vulnerability, suggesting that residents in these areas may face greater challenges in disaster preparedness and response.
- Lighter-shaded regions indicate relatively lower social vulnerability, signifying stronger community resources and infrastructure.

Breakdown of Key Vulnerability Themes

The four smaller maps in Figure 3 provide a detailed analysis of individual components contributing to social vulnerability:

- Socioeconomic Status (Green Map)
 - This theme considers factors such as poverty levels, unemployment rates, and low household income.
 - Higher vulnerability (darker green) is observed in northern parts of the County, suggesting financial constraints that may impact disaster resilience.
- Household Characteristics (Orange Map)
 - This category includes at-risk populations, such as elderly individuals, children, single-parent households, and persons with disabilities.
 - Central and northern areas demonstrate heightened vulnerability (darker orange), indicating potential challenges in evacuation and access to emergency services.
- Racial and Ethnic Minority Status (Purple Map)
 - This factor accounts for minority populations and individuals with limited English proficiency who may experience barriers in accessing disaster resources.
 - Southern Imperial County shows elevated vulnerability (darker purple), highlighting the need for cultural and linguistically inclusive disaster communication strategies.
- Housing Type and Transportation (Blue Map)
 - This theme evaluates housing stability and access to transportation, crucial for effective evacuation and sheltering.
 - Areas in central and southern Imperial County display higher vulnerability (darker blue), suggesting potential constraints in mobility and housing security.

Figure 2. CDC/ASTDR Social Vulnerability Index 2022, Imperial County, CA

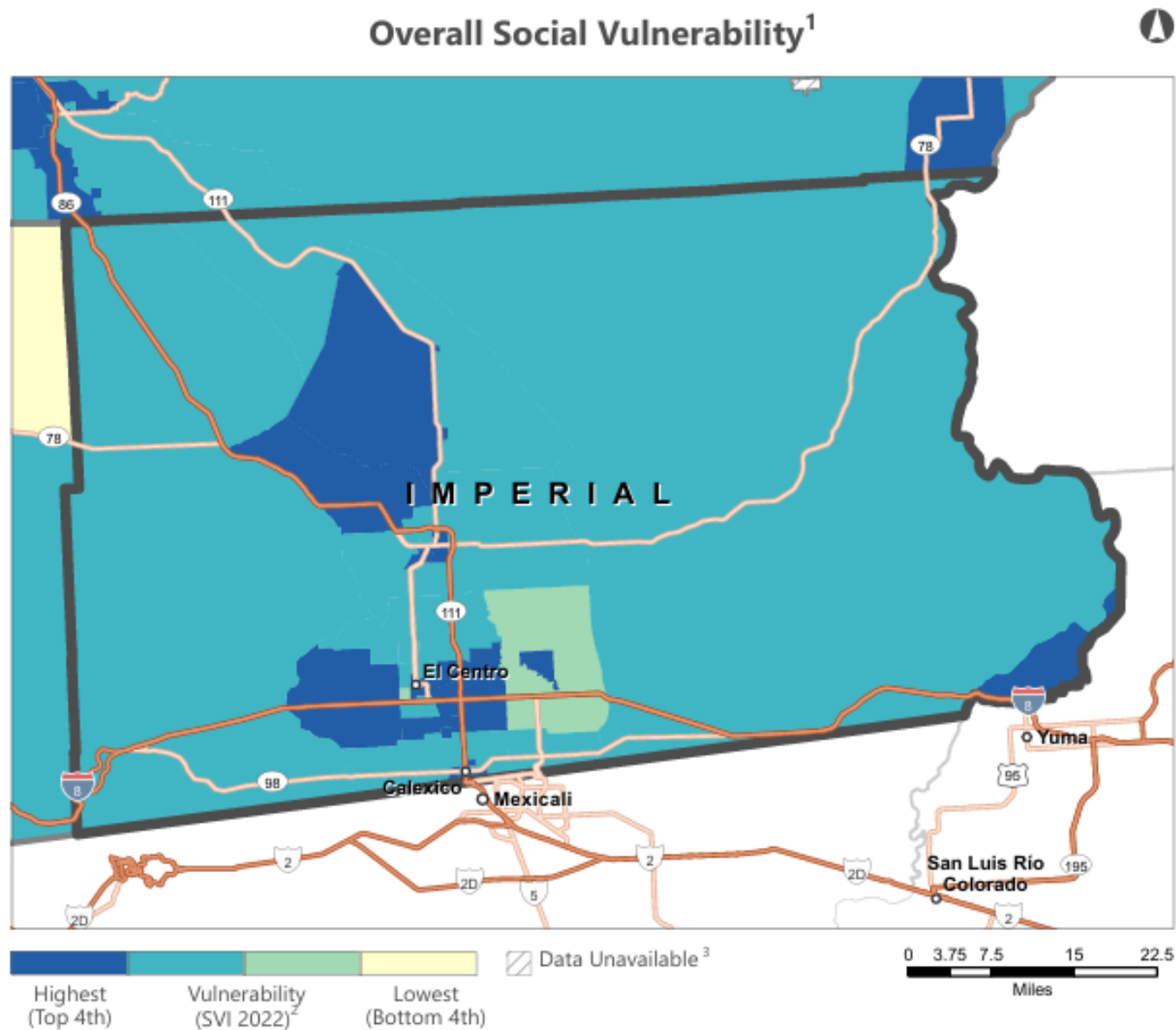
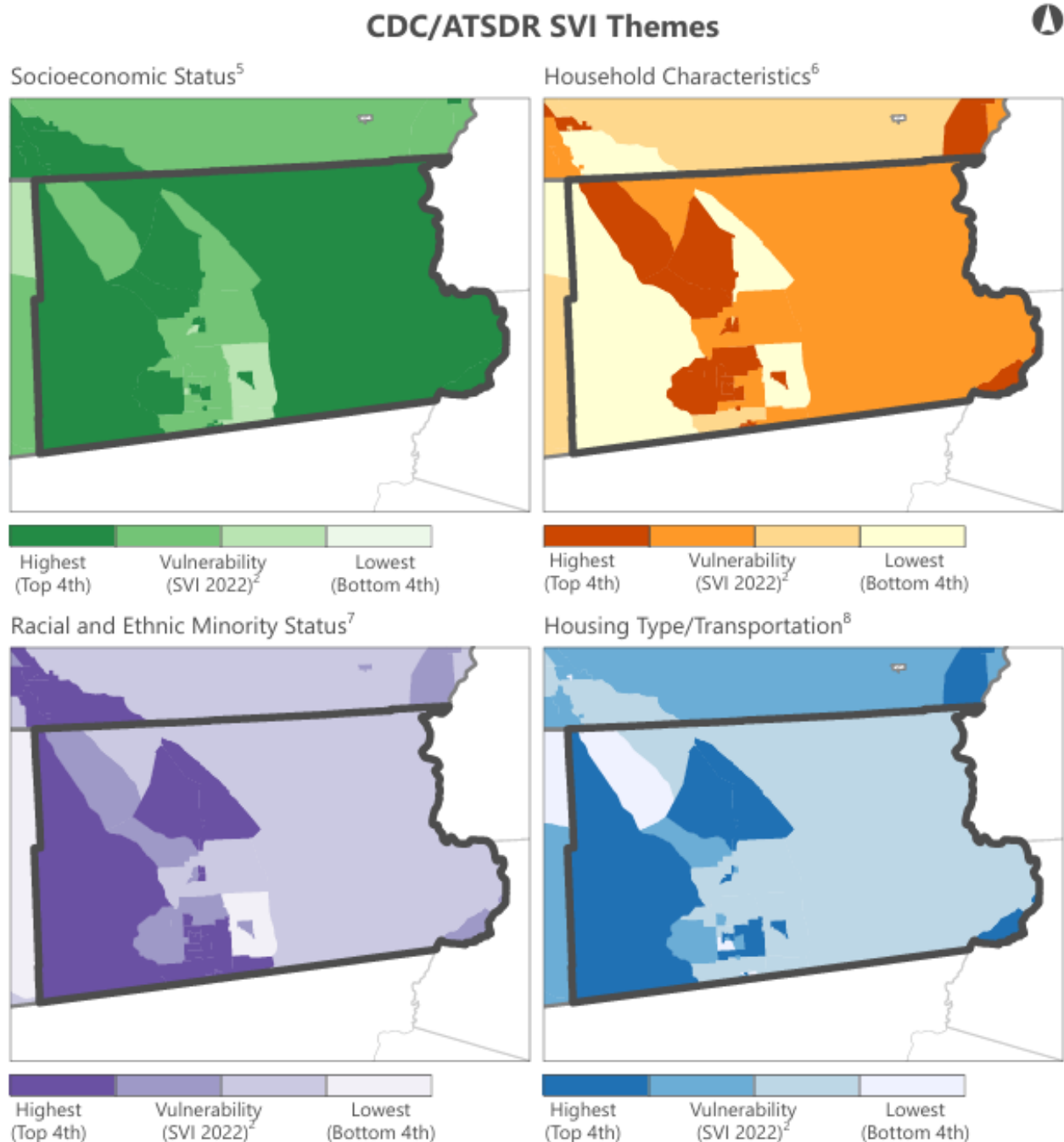


Figure 3. CDC/ASTDR SVI Themes



Data Sources: ²CDC/ATSDR/GRASP, U.S. Census Bureau, ArcGIS StreetMap Premium.

Notes: ¹Overall Social Vulnerability: All 16 variables. ³One or more variables unavailable at census tract level. ⁴The CDC/ATSDR SVI combines percentile rankings of U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) 2018-2022 variables, for the state, at the census tract level. ⁵Socioeconomic Status: Below 150% Poverty, Unemployed, Housing Costs Burden, No High School Diploma, No Health Insurance. ⁶Household Characteristics: Aged 65 and Older, Aged 17 and Younger, Civilian with a Disability, Single-Parent Household, English Language Proficiency. ⁷Race/Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino (of any race); Black and African American, Not Hispanic or Latino; American Indian and Alaska Native, Not Hispanic or Latino; Asian, Not Hispanic or Latino; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, Not Hispanic or Latino; Two or More Races, Not Hispanic or Latino; Other Races, Not Hispanic or Latino. ⁸Housing Type/Transportation: Multi-Unit Structures, Mobile Homes, Crowding, No Vehicle, Group Quarters.

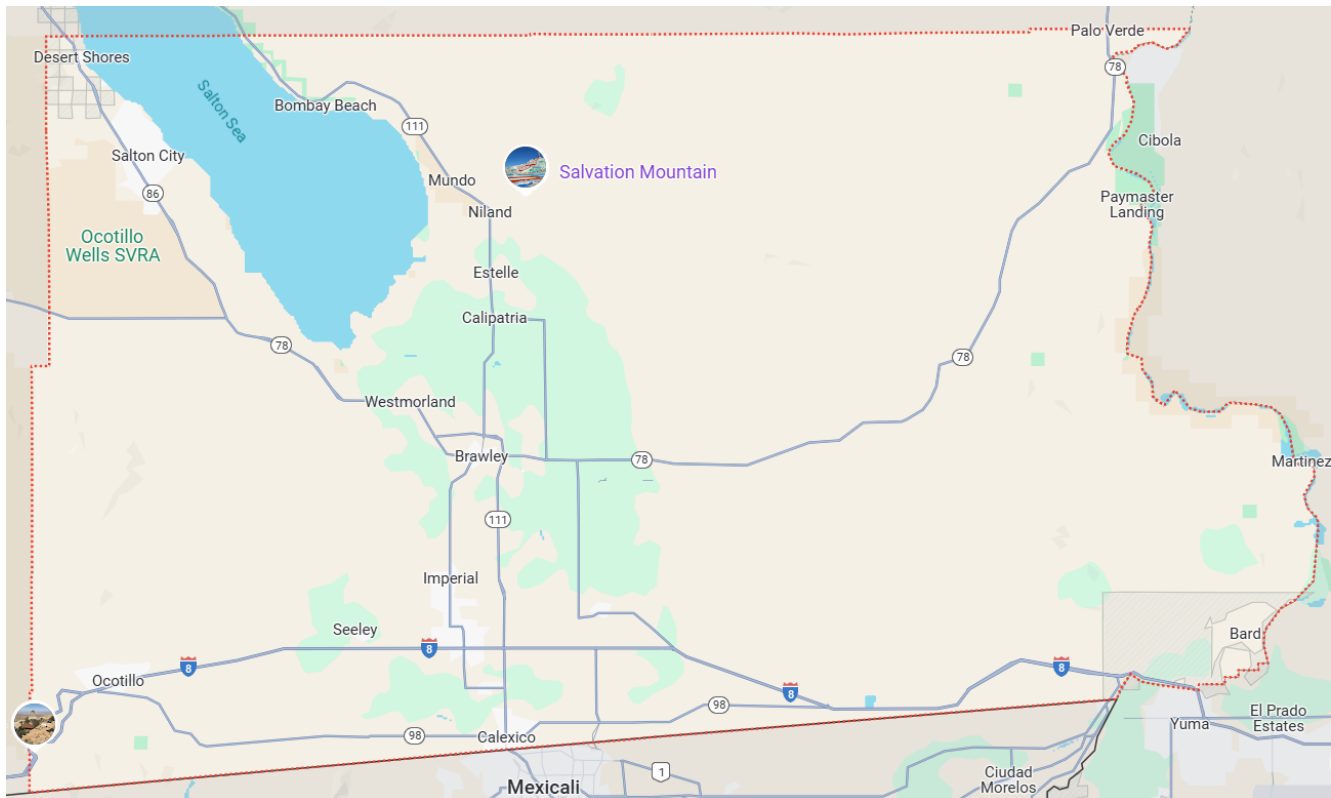
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References: Flanagan, B.E., et al., A Social Vulnerability Index for Disaster Management. *Journal of Homeland Security and Emergency Management*, 2011. 8(1).
 CDC/ATSDR SVI web page: <https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/index.html>.

Geographic Overview

Imperial County is located in the far southeastern portion of California. With an area of 4,597 square miles, bordering the Country of Mexico to the south, Riverside County to the north, San Diego County to the west, and the State of Arizona to the east. The terrain varies from 235 feet below sea level at the Salton Sea to 4,548 feet at Blue Angel Peak.

Figure 4: Map of Imperial County



Source: Google Maps

Although this region is a desert, with high temperatures and low rainfall of three inches per year, the economy is heavily based on agriculture due to the availability of irrigation water, which is supplied wholly from the Colorado River via the All-American Canal. A vast system of canals, check dams, and pipelines carry the water throughout the County, forming the Imperial Irrigation District.

IID serves water through approximately 5,600 delivery gates for irrigation purposes. It operates and maintains more than 1,400 miles of lateral canals, 150 miles of main canals, and the 80-mile-long All-American Canal. IID also maintains over 1,450 miles of drainage ditches used to collect surface runoff and subsurface drainage from over 32,000 miles of tile drains underlying nearly 500,000 acres of farmland. Most of these drainage ditches ultimately discharge water into either the Alamo River or New River.⁶ Imported water and a long

⁶ Imperial Irrigation District. "Water Transportation System." <https://www.iid.com/water/water-transportation-system>.

growing season allow two crop cycles each year. Imperial Valley supplies over 2/3 of vegetables consumed in the United States during winter months.⁷

Economic Overview

The economy of the Imperial Valley is driven by a diverse range of industries including agriculture, energy production and cross border trade. Tourism also has an important role in the region's economy, with visitors drawn to the area to visit the Salton Sea, located 235 feet below sea level, and the Glamis Sand Dunes, one of the largest dune fields in the United States. Another unique feature of the Imperial Valley is the New River, which flows from south to north, from the nearby border city of Mexicali, Mexico, to the Salton Sea.

Other significant contributors to the local economy are government, renewable energy industries such as solar, wind, and geothermal electric power plants, as well as state prisons, retail trade, and service based business. The County's future employment conditions will depend on several potential and ongoing projects, which include the County's Lithium Valley project, as well as new industrial and commercial developments in the Gateway of America international border crossing.

Mexico runs along its southern boundary, with three international ports of entry, which include Calexico West, Calexico East, and the Andrade Port of Entry. The Calexico East Port of Entry also serves as a cargo facility. According to the County's 2021 Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP), over 35 million people and 300,000 cargo trucks travel through these three ports yearly.

⁷ Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation. Imperial Valley Resources Booklet. February 7, 2020. <https://www.ivedc.com/assets/reports/Imperial-Valley-Resources-Booklet-2.7.20.pdf>.

Cities and Communities Overview

Imperial County encompasses a combination of both cities and communities, including seven incorporated cities: El Centro (which serves as the County Seat), Brawley, Calexico, Calipatria, Holtville, Imperial, and Westmorland, plus several small unincorporated rural communities. The following table provides a list of Imperial County cities and communities.

Table 4: Imperial County Cities and Communities

Incorporated City and County Seat

- El Centro

Incorporated Cities

- Brawley
- Calexico
- Calipatria
- Holtville
- Imperial
- Westmorland

Census Designated Places (CDPs)

- Bombay Beach
- Desert Shores
- El Centro Naval Air Facility
- Heber
- Niland
- Ocotillo
- Palo Verde
- Salton City
- Salton Sea Beach
- Seeley
- Winterhaven

Special Districts in Imperial County⁸

- Bard Resource Conservation District
- Bard Water District
- Bombay Beach Community Service District (CSD)
- Cady Poe Colonia
- Central Valley Cemetery District
- Coachella Valley Water District
- Gateway of The America's
- Heber Public Utility District
- Imperial Irrigation District
- Imperial Valley Healthcare District (IVHD)
- Niland County Sanitation District
- Niland County Service Area #1
- Palo Verde County Water
- Palo Verde Irrigation District
- Palo Verde Resource Conservation
- Riverview Cemetery District
- Salton CSD
- Seeley County Water District
- Winterhaven County Water District

⁸ Imperial County Local Agency Formation Commission. n.d. "Special Districts." <https://www.iclafco.com/cities-districts/special-districts>.

Hazard Analysis Summary

In 2021, Imperial County completed and adopted the Imperial County MJHMP, which was approved by FEMA. The MJHMP's development included a hazard assessment, which is a critical component of the Imperial County and OA emergency planning process. The following section highlights key findings from the plan by summarizing the County Hazard Analysis and providing a description of potential hazards.

For more information on the hazards in this section, please refer to the [Imperial County MJHMP](#).

The hazard analysis, conducted by County OEM in collaboration with local jurisdictions, outlines the area's characteristics, risk factors, and the types of situations that could pose a threat or arise in the County. It is important to note that these hazards are not mutually exclusive. One or more of these events may occur simultaneously. If future annexes or updates to the Imperial County MJHMP provide more accurate or up-to-date hazard or threat assessments, the EOP will be revised accordingly to integrate the updated information into this section.

Natural Hazards

During the 2021 update of the Imperial County MJHMP, the Planning Team identified the following natural hazards:

Table 5. Imperial County Natural Hazards Probabilities and Severities

Hazard	Probability	Severity
Dam Failure	Medium	Very High
Earthquake	Very High	High
Extreme Weather	Very High	High
Flooding	High	High
Pest Infestation/Non-Vectors of Human Disease Probabilities	Very High	High
Volcanos and Mud Pots	Low	High
Wildfire	Medium	Medium

Dam Failure

A dam failure is the partial or complete collapse of an impoundment, with the associated downstream flooding. Flooding of the area below the dam may occur due to structural failure of the dam, overtopping, or a seiche. Natural and manmade conditions cause dam failures. The causes include earthquakes, erosion of the face or foundation, improper sitting, structural/design flaws, prolonged rainfall, and flooding. The primary danger associated with a dam failure is the swift, unpredictable flooding of those areas immediately downstream of the dam.

According to the County's MJHMP, Dam failure incidents have not been a problem in Imperial County; however, due to the seepage problems of the Senator Wash Reservoir, the dam could experience an incident. Seasonal flooding with run-off storage reservoirs and canal failure could seriously compound the risks of dam failure and additional flooding. Although the probability of dam failure has been identified as medium, the severity of a dam incident would be very high if one were to occur within the County.

Earthquake

Earthquakes are the principal geologic activity affecting public safety in Imperial County. They are a triggering event that permits the force of gravity to operate and create many secondary hazards from ground shaking, including:

- Differential ground settlement, soil liquefaction, rockslides and mudslides, ground lurching, and avalanches
- Ground displacement along the fault
- Floods from dams and levee failure and seiches
- Fires
- Various adverse results of disruption of essential facilities and systems – water, sewer, gas, electricity, transportation, and communication- notably, in Imperial Valley, irrigation and drainage systems

The Imperial Valley is a broad, flat, alleviated area that lies partially below sea level, cut off from the Gulf of California to the south by the Colorado River Delta. The valley, also known as the Salton Trough, is one of the most tectonically active regions in the United States. Branches of the San Andreas fault form the eastern boundary, and the western boundary is formed by the San Jacinto – Coyote Creek and the Elsinore-Laguna Salada Faults. Consequently, the Valley is subject to potentially destructive and devastating earthquakes. The Trough's deep, sediment-filled geologic structure makes the area particularly susceptible to severe earthquake damage. Over the last 100 years, the areas have experienced 11 earthquakes of magnitude 6.0 or greater on the Richter scale, the strongest being a magnitude of 7.2 in 2010.⁹

The Imperial Valley has experienced more minor to moderate earthquakes than any other section of the San Andreas Fault system.¹⁰ The 2021 MJHMP assessed the probability of an earthquake to be very high and the severity to be high if encountered within the County.

Extreme Weather

The 2021 Imperial County MJHMP identifies five extreme weather categories:

- Temperature Extremes
- Windstorms
- Tornadoes

⁹ Imperial County MJHMP 2021. https://firedept.imperialcounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Imperial-County-MHMP-2021-Plan-Update-2021_01_11.pdf

¹⁰ Imperial County Planning & Development Services. n.d. Seismic and Public Safety Element. <https://www.icpds.com/assets/information/seismic-and-public-safety-element.pdf>

- Hailstorms/Heavy Rain
- Drought

These events pose significant risks to public health, infrastructure, agriculture, and the economy, with a very high probability of occurrence and high severity of impact.

Temperature Extremes

Imperial County experiences significant temperature extremes due to its desert environment, with heat waves and freezes being the primary concerns identified in the Imperial County MJHMP.

A heat wave is a prolonged period of unusually high temperatures, typically 10°F or more above the regional average, lasting from days to weeks. In Imperial County, prolonged exposure to extreme heat poses serious health risks, particularly to vulnerable populations such as outdoor workers, the elderly, and individuals with pre-existing health conditions. Additionally, extreme heat increases wildfire risk.

Climate projections using the Coupled Global Climate Model indicate that by 2085, under a low-carbon emission scenario, the expected burned area in the County would be 0.98 acres, compared to 0.89 acres in 2020.¹¹

Beyond wildfires, extreme heat exacerbates public health challenges by worsening air quality, increasing the demand for electricity, and straining infrastructure. Rising temperatures are also expected to influence agricultural production, water availability, and overall economic stability in the region.

In contrast, freeze events pose a different set of challenges. Prolonged exposure to extreme cold can lead to frostbite and hypothermia, particularly affecting infants, the elderly, and individuals with limited access to heating. Freezing temperatures can damage infrastructure, including water pipes, and disrupt communication networks. Additionally, early or late freeze events can have severe economic consequences, particularly for the region's agricultural sector.

Windstorms

Imperial County is especially vulnerable to windstorms and thunderstorms in the spring (primarily in March) and late summer. Power lines are susceptible to collapse during these storms, putting the electrical delivery infrastructure at high risk. As critical assets, fire stations have backup generators to help ensure continuous power at those facilities.

Brawley, Calexico, Westmorland; and the special districts of ICOE, and IID, rate their vulnerabilities high relative to windstorms/thunderstorms. Electrical and other infrastructure are primary concerns. The City of Calexico additionally notes the vulnerability

¹¹ California Energy Commission. (2019). Cal-Adapt: Exploring California's Climate Change Research. Retrieved from: <http://cal-adapt.org/>.

of its public works facilities, including Callexico International Airport, the water treatment plant, and the wastewater treatment plant.¹²

Tornadoes

According to the 2021 MJHMP, Tornadoes have been relatively rare in Imperial County. However, when they occur, they can be quite destructive. Vulnerabilities to physical assets include power lines, smaller structures, and roofs in general.

Hailstorms/Heavy Rain

Almost all of the historical flood events in Imperial County identified in the MJHMP are due to heavy rain, at times combined with hail. The County's highway infrastructure is particularly vulnerable. A number of roads in the County are replaced every year due to heavy rain and its cascading effects of flooding and soil erosion. Hail damages crops and structures, while heavy rain causes flooding and infrastructure disruptions.

Heavy rain and hailstorms are a particular concern for Callexico, Calipatria, Imperial, Westmorland; and special districts of the ICOE and IID, in addition to the County. The City of Callexico notes the vulnerability to heavy rains in its public works facilities, which include Callexico International Airport, the water treatment plant, and the wastewater treatment plant. Calipatria's vulnerable assets include city facilities and schools. The City of Imperial's vulnerable assets include the city hall, the public library, and the high school. Westmorland has an elementary school that is vulnerable to flooding from heavy rain. ICOE has several schools that are vulnerable to flooding from heavy rain. IID is concerned with "monsoonal" rains that put the power systems at-risk. In El Centro, the Gillett/Cannon Roads area receives the heaviest flooding. It is at a low elevation east of El Centro and south of East Evan Hewes Highway.¹³

Drought

As with extreme heat, the entire County of Imperial is vulnerable to drought due to its desert environment and high dependence on the Colorado River for water, which is used primarily for agriculture. Imperial County has experienced drought conditions with increasing frequency in recent decades, significantly impacting its agriculture, one of the County primary economic drivers, during dry periods and threatening municipal water supplies." Historical data from the U.S. Drought Monitor shows moderate to extreme drought conditions experienced within the County, particularly during statewide drought emergencies such as those proclaimed in 2014 and 2021.

As of 2025, the US Drought Monitor, indicates parts of Southern California, including Imperial County, are experiencing the driest water year in 44 years. This suggests that localized

¹² Imperial County MJHMP 2021. https://firedept.imperialcounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Imperial-County-MHMP-2021-Plan-Update-2021_01_11.pdf

¹³ Imperial County Planning & Development Services. Seismic and Public Safety Element. n.d. Imperial County, <https://www.icpds.com/assets/information/seismic-and-public-safety-element.pdf>

drought conditions are once again emerging within Southern CA and Imperial County.¹⁴ As of January 2025, with the severe drought conditions, 100% of the County's population is affected. December 2024 was noted as the driest December in over 130 years within Imperial County, with 0.55 inches below normal precipitation.

As well, the year-to-year rainfall for 2024 was .98 below average. Due to these drought conditions, water restrictions reduced agricultural yields, and increased groundwater dependence can lead to economic challenges and environmental stress. Thus, ongoing water conservation efforts and regional planning initiatives remain critical to mitigating the long-term impacts of drought on Imperial County's communities and economy.

Flooding

Flooding is a natural disaster characterized by the overflow of water onto land that is typically dry. These events often occur because of weather-related factors, particularly during periods of heavy rainfall or following a wet spring season. Human-made factors, such as the failure of dams or levees can also trigger floods. In these cases, flooding may be more catastrophic, particularly if a dam experiences a breach, leading to significant water discharge into surrounding areas. Dam break floods typically coincide with periods of intense rainfall or prolonged flood conditions, amplifying the impact on the affected regions.

Imperial County, located in southeastern California, has a history of significant flooding despite its arid desert environment. Flooding often results from heavy rainfall, flash floods, or human-made factors like dam and canal failures.

According to the 2021 MJHMP, an extensive flood risk assessment was conducted for the region, identifying areas particularly vulnerable to flooding and outlining the potential impacts and losses should these events occur. The Imperial County Flood Management Plan Working Group highlighted key locations within the County that are at high risk for flooding, including specific flood-prone areas and their associated causes. These areas have been evaluated for their susceptibility to localized flooding, evacuation needs, and more severe consequences like wide area flooding in the event of levee or dam failure.

The overall probability of flooding occurring within the County is classified as high, with their potential impact also rated as high in severity. By identifying these flood-prone areas and understanding their causes and potential impacts, the community can better prepare for future flood events, implement mitigation strategies, and prioritize resources for emergency management and response.

Major historical events include:

- **1905–1907:** Flooding from Colorado River water-control projects created the Salton Sea, now the largest inland body of water in California.
- **1976:** Tropical Storm Kathleen caused severe flooding, damaging roads, rail lines, and agricultural land. Over \$20 million in damages were caused, and multiple fatalities occurred.

¹⁴ National Integrated Drought Information System. (2025, January 16). Drought status update for California-Nevada. Drought.gov. <https://www.drought.gov/drought-status-updates/drought-status-update-california-nevada-2025-01-16>

- **1977:** Tropical Storm Doreen brought heavy rains, flooding homes, utilities, and crops, causing \$15 million in damage.
- **1995:** Heavy rainfall caused flooding around the Salton Sea, impacting infrastructure, utilities, and homes.
- **2012:** Flash floods caused significant damage to roads, canals, and agricultural areas from Ocotillo to Holtville.

Flood-prone areas include floodplains near rivers, such as the New River, Alamo River, and Salton Sea. Flash floods in desert washes and floodway hazards, like Myer Creek and the All-American Canal, exacerbate risks. Residential areas near these water bodies, including Brawley, El Centro, and Holtville, remain particularly vulnerable.

Pest Infestation/Non-Vectors of Human Diseases

Pest infestation occurs when an undesirable type of insect or other identified pest inhabits an area that causes serious harm to agricultural crops, livestock, or poultry; wildland trees, plants, waterways, animals; or humans. Countless insects live on, in, and around plants, animals, and humans in all environments. Many are harmless, while others can cause fatal damage. Under some conditions, insects that have been present and relatively harmless can become hazardous. For example, severe drought conditions can weaken trees and make them more susceptible to destruction from insect attacks. The major forms of insects are: Chewing insects, boring or tunneling insects, and sucking insects. The identified pests within Imperial County include Hydrilla, Quagga mussels, and Fungi.

The number one industry in Imperial County is agriculture, which provides a very significant base for the County's economy. Imperial ranks as one of the top 10 agricultural counties in California. Pest infestation would have the most impact on agriculture within the County, with a very high probability of occurring and a high severity impact.¹⁵

Volcanos and Mud Pots

Lava domes, or volcanic domes, are steep-sided mounds formed when highly viscous lava accumulates near a volcanic vent instead of flowing away. They can develop through repeated short lava flows or by extremely viscous lava being pushed upward, resembling toothpaste squeezed from a tube.

Mud pots are acidic hot springs with limited water, characterized by pools of bubbling mud resulting from geothermal activity.

In Imperial County, the Salton Buttes—a group of five lava domes (Mullet Island, North Red Hill, Obsidian Butte, Rock Hill, and South Red Hill)—are the only active volcanoes in Southern California. Located in the Salton Sea Geothermal Field about 90 miles southeast of Palm Springs, these domes span 4.3 miles and are near communities such as Westmorland, Calipatria, Niland, and Brawley.

¹⁵ Imperial County Planning & Development Services. 2015. Agricultural Element.
<https://www.icpds.com/assets/planning/agricultural-element-2015.pdf>.

While the likelihood of volcanic or mud pot events in the region is low, their potential impact could be severe due to their proximity to the populated areas noted above. The Salton Buttes and other geothermal features underscore the area's geological activity, emphasizing the importance of continuous monitoring. This ensures timely detection of changes and allows for effective risk mitigation strategies to protect residents and infrastructure.

Wildfire

A wildfire is an uncontrolled fire that spreads through vegetation, posing significant threats to property and natural resources. These fires can start in undeveloped areas and move into urban zones, where dense structures and human development create additional fuel for the fire, a scenario known as a wildland-urban interface (WUI) fire. In these areas, wildfires not only threaten natural resources but also endanger lives and property. Wildfires can result from both natural causes, such as lightning strikes, and human activities. Common human-caused fires include those from debris burning, arson, or negligence. Wildfires are particularly destructive, threatening timber, wildlife, and property and causing injuries or fatalities to people living in or near the affected areas.

The overall risk of wildfires in Imperial County's unincorporated areas is relatively low; however, certain fire hazards are present, particularly at two key locations: fuel storage farms situated south of the City of Imperial and east of Niland. Additionally, wildfires in the county's river bottom areas can pose significant environmental and public health risks. Past fires in regions such as the river bottoms near El Centro and the Salton Sea highlight their vulnerability. Research indicates that river bottoms are essential to riparian ecosystems, contributing to the health of the surrounding environment and the broader watershed. Wildfires in these areas can lead to substantial damage to vegetation, soil, and water quality.¹⁶

Based on the 2021 County MJHMP the likelihood of wildfires occurring in Imperial County is moderate and the potential for damage is also considered moderate. The primary concerns are the destruction of natural resources, property, and public safety, particularly in high-risk areas such as fuel storage farms.

¹⁶ Bendix, June. Environmental Research Letters 12 (2017): 075008. Syracuse University Maxwell School. Accessed February 13, 2025. [chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclcfndmkaj/https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/docs/default-source/research/bendix_2017_envIRON-res-lett-12_075008.pdf?sfvrsn=dfb01857_0](https://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclcfndmkaj/https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/docs/default-source/research/bendix_2017_envIRON-res-lett-12_075008.pdf?sfvrsn=dfb01857_0).

Other Hazards of Interest

In addition to natural hazards, the County may face the following industrial, technological, or human-caused hazards, summarized in more detail in the 2021 MJHMP. These include the following:

Table 6. Imperial County Other Hazard of Interest

Hazard
Airplane Crash
Civil Disturbance
Domestic and International Terrorism
Communications Failure
Hazardous Material Incidents
Public Health Hazards
Utility Failure/Power Disruption
National Security Threats (Nuclear Attack, Chemical Welfares, Biological Welfare)

Airplane Crash

Aircraft crashes pose a significant threat to the communities of Imperial County, particularly in areas near populated neighborhoods and airports such as Calipatria, Brawley, Imperial, El Centro, and Calexico. The risk is heightened in Imperial and El Centro due to their proximity to commercial, general, and military airfields, as well as the presence of an aircraft fuel tank farm at the Imperial County Airport's main runway. These factors increase the potential for catastrophic incidents involving injuries, fatalities, and extensive property damage.

The impact of an aircraft crash on vital public services can be profound. While the physical area affected may be smaller than natural disasters, the demand on emergency services such as fire, law enforcement, medical agencies, and transportation systems can reach capacity rapidly. Hospitals, emergency medical services (EMS), and communication networks must be prepared to address large-scale casualties and resource shortages.

Aircraft fire operations vary depending on the location of the crash. Incidents at airports can often be addressed using specialized fire equipment designed for rapid deployment of foam and water. Crashes outside airport boundaries are typically of higher impact, requiring large-scale resources to manage fires involving open fuel or structures, especially in areas with limited water availability.

Law enforcement plays a critical role in responding to aircraft crashes by securing the scene, establishing perimeters, managing traffic to ensure access for fire and EMS responders, and preserving evidence. For on-airport incidents, the Airport Manager assumes responsibility for scene security after the initial response, while local law enforcement takes charge in off-airport emergencies. Coordination with federal agencies like the FAA and NTSB is essential for investigation, and in cases of suspected criminal activity, local law enforcement leads the investigation in conjunction with federal authorities.

Mass casualty operations are a major concern during aircraft crashes, as the demand for EMS resources and hospital capacity can quickly exceed local capabilities. In such cases, patient

transfers to distant trauma centers may be required. Additionally, the County Coroner's Office is tasked with fatality management, including the identification and recovery of remains, coordination with next of kin, and processing death certificates.

Aircraft crash sites often present unique hazards, including biohazards from human remains, toxic smoke, jagged fuselage debris, and potential contamination from fuel or radioactive materials. Emergency responders must follow universal precautions to ensure their safety while managing these risks.

Civil Disturbances

Civil disturbances include any incident, the intent of which is to disrupt a community to the degree that police intervention is required to maintain public safety. Riots, strikes resulting in violence, and demonstrations resulting in police intervention and arrests are included in this category.

Civil disturbances may occur at any time. Public issues for which there are extreme views and a willingness to take action if one view appears to strongly outweigh another may trigger civil disturbances.

The effects of this threat can be varied based upon the type of event and its severity and range. Loss of life and property as well as disruptions in services such as electricity, water supply, public transportation, communications, etc., could result from civil disorder.

Certain types of facilities may be more vulnerable than others during civil disorders. These include federal, state, and local government buildings, shops, stores, or other locations, which represent a particular racial, religious, or ethnic activity.

The County Sheriff's Department, on a "need to know" basis, will provide specific information on these subjects.

Domestic and International Terrorism

The threat of terrorism has grown significantly during the past several years due in part to perceptions by anti-government groups regarding actions at Ruby Ridge and Waco, the terrorist bombings in New York City and Oklahoma City and the War on Terrorism. The international terrorist events of September 11, 2001, have heightened the possibilities of these types of acts occurring in the County.

Historically, terrorist acts have been a part of America history as various groups chose violence as the primary means for furthering their political agendas. These groups were depicted as terrorists or freedom fighters depending on whose side they were on. In reality, terrorists are lawbreakers and subject to being prosecuted as common criminals.

In the United States there are groups referred to as special interest terrorist groups. These remain a potential threat to U.S. interests. Special interest terrorist groups are characterized by their focus on a specific cause or issue. Examples include groups who espouse the use of terrorism in order to advocate environmental issues or animal rights. In recent years, many criminal acts have been perpetrated against providers of abortion services, immigrants, gays

and lesbians, and racial and religious groups. These include arson, extortion, bombing, stalking, and harassment.

In addition to domestic terrorists, several international groups continue to maintain or increase their presence in the United States. These groups continue to infiltrate their members into this country, both legal and illegal. Despite their pronounced hatred for the United States and its policies, they perceive it as being a rich environment for fundraising, recruitment, and proselytizing. Terrorist groups are aware of the open, innocent-until-proven-guilty nature of this country, where civil rights are enforced for the criminal, as well as the victim.

Loosely affiliated groups of radical terrorists like the ones comprised of individuals who conspired in the bombing and airplane strikes of the World Trade Center and Pentagon, remain a primary concern of law enforcement officials. Such groups are difficult to identify and do not easily conform to rigid categorizations used by western law enforcement agencies.

In recent years, a variety of circumstances have substantially raised concern about the use of "weapons of mass destruction," including Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosives (CBRNE) agents as well as the use of large conventional explosive devices. America has little experience with response to a CBRNE attack. Important issues include the development of a local ability to rapidly decontaminate large numbers of people, isolate those infected by a biological agent, and public health officials will coordinate efforts with law enforcement to take advantage of the full range of expertise and authorities.

The County Sheriff's Office participates in a counter-terrorism task force and is the lead agency in the San Diego Terrorism Early Warning Group and will provide additional information on a "need to know" basis.

Communications Failure

The County's public safety communications system is comprised of all dispatch centers and the 911 system. This includes command/control, resource deployment, acquisition and utilization.

The dispatch centers addressed in this assessment include communications centers operated by local police and fire departments, County Sheriff, County Fire, California Highway Patrol, feral and state agencies, and Yuma County, Arizona.

The countywide enhanced 9-1-1 system is dependent on the Telco interconnect into an Orange County database for proper routing of all 9-1-1 calls. Some centers are dependent on microwave and/or landline connections to support computer- aided-dispatch systems and/or conventional and trunked radio systems.

Without the Telco interconnect, the public loses its ability to call 9-1-1 and will need access to 7- digit backup emergency telephone numbers that may or may not be available.

Hazardous Materials Incidents (HazMat)

Hazardous materials incidents can occur at fixed facilities or during transportation, posing a significant risk throughout Imperial County. Areas involved in hazardous materials fabrication, processing, storage, treatment, or disposal are particularly vulnerable. For detailed protocols and risk mitigation strategies, the Imperial County Hazardous Materials Area Plan (May 2011) serves as a key resource.

These incidents encompass a variety of hazardous chemicals, many of which may have minimal effects on humans in small doses but can cause severe harm under certain conditions. Common types of hazardous materials incidents include the release of gases or particles into the air, wastewater discharges into water bodies, solid waste disposal in landfills, underground injection of wastes, transfers to public sewer systems, and off-site waste transportation for treatment or storage.

In addition to incidents at fixed sites, hazardous materials events frequently occur during transportation. High-risk areas include highways, rail lines, pipelines, and rivers, as these are common transit routes for hazardous substances. Given the network of major highways that pass through virtually every community in the County, all areas of Imperial County are considered at risk from hazardous materials incidents.

Public Health Hazards

An epidemic is characterized by an unusual or unexpectedly large occurrence of a disease, often of infectious or parasitic origin. Epidemics can escalate rapidly into emergencies, necessitating prompt and coordinated responses. While epidemics may occur independently, they can also compound the hardships caused by other disasters.

The term "epidemic" refers to any significant rise in disease incidence, ranging from sudden outbreaks to slower, long-term developments, such as the spread of leprosy. Emerging epidemics, such as the AIDS crisis first detected in 1981, highlight the potential for new diseases to arise unpredictably. When an epidemic spreads across multiple countries or continents, it is classified as a pandemic, presenting even greater public health challenges.

In recent years, the number of reported outbreaks has grown, driven by factors such as increased international travel, urban development with poor sanitary conditions, behavioral changes leading to increased sexually transmitted diseases, and improved disease surveillance and reporting.

Pandemics

Imperial County faced significant public health challenges related to infectious disease outbreaks, including the COVID-19 pandemic, which underscored the region's vulnerability to large-scale public health emergencies. With its unique geographic and socioeconomic factors, including a high volume of cross-border travel, agricultural labor conditions, and disparities in healthcare access, Imperial County experienced one of the highest per capita

COVID-19 infection and mortality rates in California.¹⁷ The pandemic overwhelmed local healthcare infrastructure, strained emergency response resources, and underscored the need for coordinated public health planning.

Future pandemics pose an ongoing risk, particularly due to factors such as:

- High mobility between Imperial County and neighboring regions, including Mexico.
- Agricultural labor conditions that increase exposure risks among workers.
- Limited healthcare facilities compared to metropolitan areas, which can lead to resource shortages.
- Environmental and climatic factors that may facilitate the spread of vector-borne diseases.

Natural Epidemics

Certain endemic diseases (constantly present within a specific area) can become epidemics under favorable environmental or host conditions. Potential triggers include:

- **Exposure of non-immune individuals**, such as tourists or refugees arriving from non-endemic areas.
- **Ecological changes** that facilitate the breeding of disease vectors, such as mosquitoes, during the rainy season.
- **Increased human movement** to marketplaces or seasonal gatherings, raising points of contact.
- **Contamination of food or water sources** leading to mass exposure.
- **Declines in nutritional status**, which lowers immunity and increases susceptibility.

Epidemics may also be predicted by increases in the presence of disease organisms in carriers or animals, such as an "epizootic" (animal epidemic) of plague among rodents preceding human outbreaks.

Epidemics may present different types of risks, including:

- Threatened Epidemics
 - A "threatened" epidemic may arise when the following conditions are present:
 - A susceptible population.
 - The presence or potential introduction of a disease agent.
 - Mechanisms for large-scale transmission, such as contaminated water supplies or active vector populations.

¹⁷ Imperial County Public Health Department. 2025. "State COVID-19 Metrics." *Imperial County Public Health Department*. Accessed February 25, 2025. <https://www.icphd.org/state-covid-19-metrics>.

- Epidemic Emergencies
 - An epidemic emergency occurs within a larger context and may include the following:
 - Significant risk of introduction and spread of disease within a population.
 - Expectation of high case numbers.
 - Severe disease outcomes, such as disability or death.
 - Risk of social and economic disruption.
 - Insufficient governmental capacity to respond, due to a lack of technical expertise, organizational resources, or necessary supplies (e.g., vaccines, laboratory diagnostics, vector control materials).
 - Potential for international disease transmission.

Epidemics may be harder to predict in transitional or newly formed communities, where:

- Medical histories and immunities to local vectors are unknown.
- Environmental conditions, such as water sources, are unplanned or unstable.
- Health care systems lack the capacity for disease prevention, due to shortages in supplies or trained personnel.
- These conditions are often residual impacts of catastrophic disasters like earthquakes or widespread displacement events.

Intentional Epidemics

Epidemics may also result from criminal acts. For instance, in 1984, a cult in Oregon deliberately contaminated salad bars with salmonella to sicken the local population, resulting in hundreds of illnesses. Current bioterrorism concerns include pathogens such as anthrax, botulism, and smallpox.

For further guidance and mitigation strategies, refer to the **Imperial County Public Health Department's Emergency Operations Plan**.

Utility Failure/Power Disruption

Power failure is the interruption or loss of electrical service for a prolonged period, requiring emergency management response to address essential needs such as food, water, and heating.

There are two classes of power failures: failures internal to the power distribution system such as the West Coast "brownout" in 1996, and failure as the result of external causes such as severe storms.

A summary of potential effects includes loss of power to hospital and medical facilities which could cause life-threatening situations for patients; inability to use necessary medical care equipment (in the absence of working backup generators); massive traffic stoppages due to failure of traffic lights; spoilage of food; lack of heating/air conditioning for many residents/business; work interruptions since equipment cannot be used; and loss of major databases for business, educational and other institutions.

National Security Threats

National security threats stem from external, hostile forces targeting the United States. These threats range from localized terrorist attacks to catastrophic events like nuclear, chemical, or biological attacks. They may be predictable (following rising tensions) or sudden (preemptive strikes). Key threats include nuclear attacks, chemical/biological warfare, civil disorder, and low-intensity conflict (e.g., terrorism, insurgency, and subversion).

Nuclear Attack

Definition: Hostile use of nuclear weapons resulting in destruction of military and/or civilian targets.

- **Frequency:** No recorded U.S. occurrence.
- **Areas at Risk:** Entire U.S., with Southern California at higher risk per historical targeting data.
- **Seasonality:** Possible any time of year.
- **Effects:**
 - Immediate: Blast, fire, and radioactive fallout leading to mass casualties and infrastructure destruction.
 - Long-term: Widespread radioactive contamination and economic devastation.

Proliferation of missile technology and potential nuclear capabilities by terrorists heighten the threat.

Chemical and Biological Warfare

Definition: Use of toxic or infective agents to harm populations, animals, or crops.

- **Effects:**
 - **Chemical Weapons:** Toxic effects on humans and animals; contamination of areas until decontamination occurs.
 - **Biological Weapons:** Infections causing widespread illness; challenging to detect and inexpensive to deploy.
- **Advantages for attackers:**
 - Low cost per casualty (biological: \$1/casualty; nerve gas: \$600/casualty).
 - Fear-inducing effects and difficulty in detection.
- **Disadvantages for attackers:**
 - Likely retaliation and military response.
 - Negative public perception leading to loss of support.
 - High risk during manufacturing, often leading to accidents.

Capability Assessment

Capabilities-based planning emphasizes a jurisdiction's ability to respond effectively during an emergency or disaster. The capability assessment of Imperial County helps establish the foundation for understanding the existing emergency management, preparedness, and mitigation strategies in place to reduce hazard risks within the community. This process, which was conducted during the 2021 MJHMP process, also identified any gaps or vulnerabilities that may need to be addressed through practical preparedness planning

goals and actions based on Imperial County’s ability to implement them. Lastly, the capability assessment highlights ongoing or established positive measures that support and strengthen the jurisdiction’s preparedness and response efforts.

Current Capabilities and Resources	
Planning and Regulatory	<p>Hazard Reduction Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stormwater Management Programs <p>Hazard Plans and Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Management Plan • Ground Water Management Plan • Controlled Burns Permitting Program
Administrative and Technical	<p>Staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Manager • Civil Engineers • Dedicated public outreach • Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Specialists and Capability • Grants Manager <p>Warning Systems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reverse 911
Financial Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local transportation tax • “Senate Bill (SB)1” funds for roads and bridges (e.g., improvements that reduce the impacts of flood hazard events) • Capital improvement project funding
Education/Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website with area dedicated to hazards • Dedicated social media • Hazard information available at County OES • Fire Prevention Week

The full Capability Assessment outlines these resources and response capabilities and can be found in the 2021 MJHMP.

Section 3: Organization and Responsibilities

The Imperial County Code, Chapter 2 of Division 1 of Title 2: Administration, establishes the Imperial County Emergency Services Organization, OES, and the Imperial County Disaster Council. These entities are responsible for developing and implementing preparedness and response plans to protect life and property within the County during emergencies.

In alignment with these efforts, this EOP is activated when an incident occurs or poses a threat that exceeds the County's capacity to respond and mitigate effectively. Initially, the highest-ranking on-duty first responder typically serves as the Incident Commander (IC), managing the situation in the field. For larger or more complex emergencies, multiple ICs may be required to operate in a Unified Command (UC) structure.

When the EOC is activated, leadership transitions to the EOC Director, who organizes the EOC structure and determines the necessary staffing. Six key functional groups or sections support the EOC:

- Policy Group
- Command Staff
- Operations Section
- Planning and Intelligence Section
- Logistics Section
- Finance and Administration Section

The Command Staff includes the EOC Director and supporting personnel such as the Liaison, Public Information Officer (PIO), Safety Officer, County Counsel, and Security Officer. The EOC Director sets goals and objectives, prioritizes resource allocation, and coordinates with ICs. The Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance sections are each led by a Section Chief and staffed with General Staff. Section 3 of this plan provides further details on the organization of Imperial County's EOC.

In emergencies affecting Imperial County, each County department and allied agency is tasked with maintaining response plans, notification rosters, SOPs, NIMS-typed resources, and credentialed personnel. These elements support the implementation of the EOP and fulfillment of assigned functions.

Organization

National Incident Management System

NIMS provides a comprehensive, whole community, whole government approach to incident management for all hazards. NIMS integrates existing best practices into a consistent nationwide approach to domestic incident management that is applicable to all jurisdictional levels and across functional disciplines. NIMS is based on a balance of flexibility

and standardization that allows government and private entities at all levels to work together to manage incidents, regardless of their cause, size, location, or complexity.

NIMS outlines standardized incident command structures, which include the following key organizational components:

- **ICS:** ICS is a standardized, all-hazard incident management system used on-site to manage single or multiple incidents. Its flexible structure allows it to adapt to the complexities and demands of an incident, regardless of jurisdictional boundaries.
- **EOCs:** EOCs are facilities where representatives from multiple agencies collaborate to address imminent threats and hazards. They provide coordinated support to incident command, on-scene personnel, and/or other EOCs. EOCs can be fixed locations, temporary sites, or virtual structures with remote participation.
- **Multiagency Coordination Groups (MAC Groups):** Often referred to as policy groups, MAC Groups are part of NIMS' off-site management structure. These groups consist of representatives from various agencies or organizations and are formed to facilitate cooperative decision-making. They support resource prioritization and allocation and assist with policy-level decisions during incidents, often in coordination with elected officials and the IC. In some cases, EOC staff may also take on these responsibilities.
- **Joint Information System (JIS):** JIS includes the processes, procedures, and tools necessary for effective communication with the public, incident personnel, media, and other stakeholders.

The State of California and its political subdivisions are responsible for compliance with the requirements of the NIMS as defined in the Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) – 5: Management of Domestic Incidents and Presidential Policy Directive – 8: National Preparedness. Local, state, territorial, and tribal nation jurisdictions are required to adopt NIMS in order to receive federal preparedness grants. As such, this EOP conforms to all NIMS requirements.

Standardized Emergency Management System

SEMS is the cornerstone of California's emergency response system and the fundamental structure for the response phase of emergency management. The system unifies all elements of California's emergency management community into a single integrated system and standardizes key elements.

Required by the ESA, SEMS ensures effective management of multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional emergency responses in California. Compliance with SEMS is also necessary for local governments to qualify for reimbursement under the state's disaster assistance programs.

The system integrates ICS, the Master Mutual Aid Agreement (MMAA), multi-agency coordination, and all of California's emergency management community components into a unified framework, standardizing critical elements.

SEMS has been established to manage multi-agency and multijurisdictional emergencies in California effectively. By standardizing key elements of the emergency management system, SEMS is intended to:

- Facilitate the flow of information within and between levels of the system and
- Facilitate coordination among all responding agencies.

Implementing SEMS enhances the efficiency of mobilizing, deploying, utilizing, tracking, and demobilizing mutual aid resources. It minimizes coordination and communication challenges while preventing duplication in resource ordering during multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional responses. SEMS is designed to be both flexible and adaptable, meeting the diverse needs of emergency responders and accommodating the wide range of disasters that occur in California.¹⁸

SEMS integrates the concepts and principles of NIMS and incorporates the use of the ICS, the California MMAA, the OA Concept, and multi-agency coordination.

Incident Command System

The IC is a critical component for compliance with both NIMS and SEMS, serving as the foundation for SEMS and utilizing a common organizational structure to manage incidents effectively. It is a nationally recognized, standardized system designed to allow users to adopt an integrated organizational structure that meets the complexity and demands of both single and multiple incidents, regardless of jurisdictional boundaries.

ICS principles focus on organization and process, providing a framework to manage facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications using standardized practices. Employed by all field emergency response personnel within the Imperial County OA, ICS also serves as the primary organizational structure for the County/OA EOC, in alignment with NIMS and SEMS guidelines.

SEMS regulations describe five organizational response levels. The following is a brief description of each level:

SEMS Level	Description
Field Response	This level is where emergency response personnel and resources, under the command of responsible officials, carry out tactical decisions and activities in direct response to an incident or threat.
Local Government	This level includes Cities/Towns, Counties, and Special Districts. Local governments manage and coordinate their jurisdiction's overall emergency response and recovery activities. They are required to use SEMS when their EOC is activated, or a local emergency is declared or proclaimed to be eligible for state reimbursement of response-related costs.
Operational Area	This level is the intermediate level of the state's emergency management organization, which encompasses a County's

¹⁸ California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. (n.d.). Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), Part I. Retrieved, from https://www.caloes.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/Preparedness/Documents/Standardized-Emergency-Management-System_Part1.pdf

SEMS Level	Description
	<p>boundaries, and all political subdivisions located within that County, including Special Districts. The OA facilitates and/or coordinates information, resources, and decisions regarding priorities among local governments within the OA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For coordination of emergency activities within the geographic area of the County. • As the communication link between the Local Government and Regional Level. State, federal, and tribal jurisdictions in the OA may have statutory authorities for response similar to local ones. <p>All local governments within the geographic area of the County are part of the same OA. The OA may establish zones or other subdivisions to improve coordination and communications within the OA.</p> <p>SEMS Regulations specify that all local governments within a county geographic area be organized into a single OA and that the County board of supervisors is responsible for its establishment.</p> <p>The County government serves as the lead agency of the OA unless another member agency assumes that responsibility by written agreement with the County government. All local governments should cooperate in organizing an effective OA, but the OA authority and responsibility are not affected by the non-participation of any local government.</p>
Regional	<p>This level manages and coordinates information and resources among OAs within the mutual aid region and between the OA and the state level. The Regional Level also coordinates overall state agency support for emergency response activities within the region. California is divided into three California Governor's CalOES Administrative Regions – Inland, Coastal, and Southern – which are further divided into six mutual aid regions. The Regional Level operates out of the Regional Emergency Operations Center (REOC). Imperial County coordinates with the Southern REOC of Cal OES.</p>
State	<p>This level prioritizes tasks, coordinates state resources in response to the requests from the regional level and coordinates mutual aid among the mutual aid regions and between the Regional Level and the State Level. The state level also serves as the coordination and communication link between the state and the federal emergency response system. State Level requests</p>



SEMS Level	Description
	assistance from other state governments through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) and similar interstate compacts/agreements and coordinates with the FEMA when federal assistance is requested. The State Level operates out of the State Operations Center (SOC).

Emergency Operations Center Organization

The primary purpose of an EOC is to coordinate support for field-level emergency responders and maintain situational awareness to aid decision-makers during emergencies. The Imperial County EOC serves as a centralized location for managing OA emergency activities during a major disaster. It facilitates decision-making for the OA's emergency response actions, tracks and coordinates resource allocations, and communicates with field responders, Cities/Towns, and the State.

The County's Emergency Services Coordinator oversees the operational readiness of the EOC. When an emergency or disaster occurs—or is anticipated—the County activates the EOC.

When activated, the EOC, in accordance with SEMS, may be organized into five major functional areas based on the principles of the ICS: management, operations, planning/intelligence, logistics, and finance/administration. Each of these five sections are to be activated as necessary based upon the level of EOC activation and the requirements of each particular emergency response.

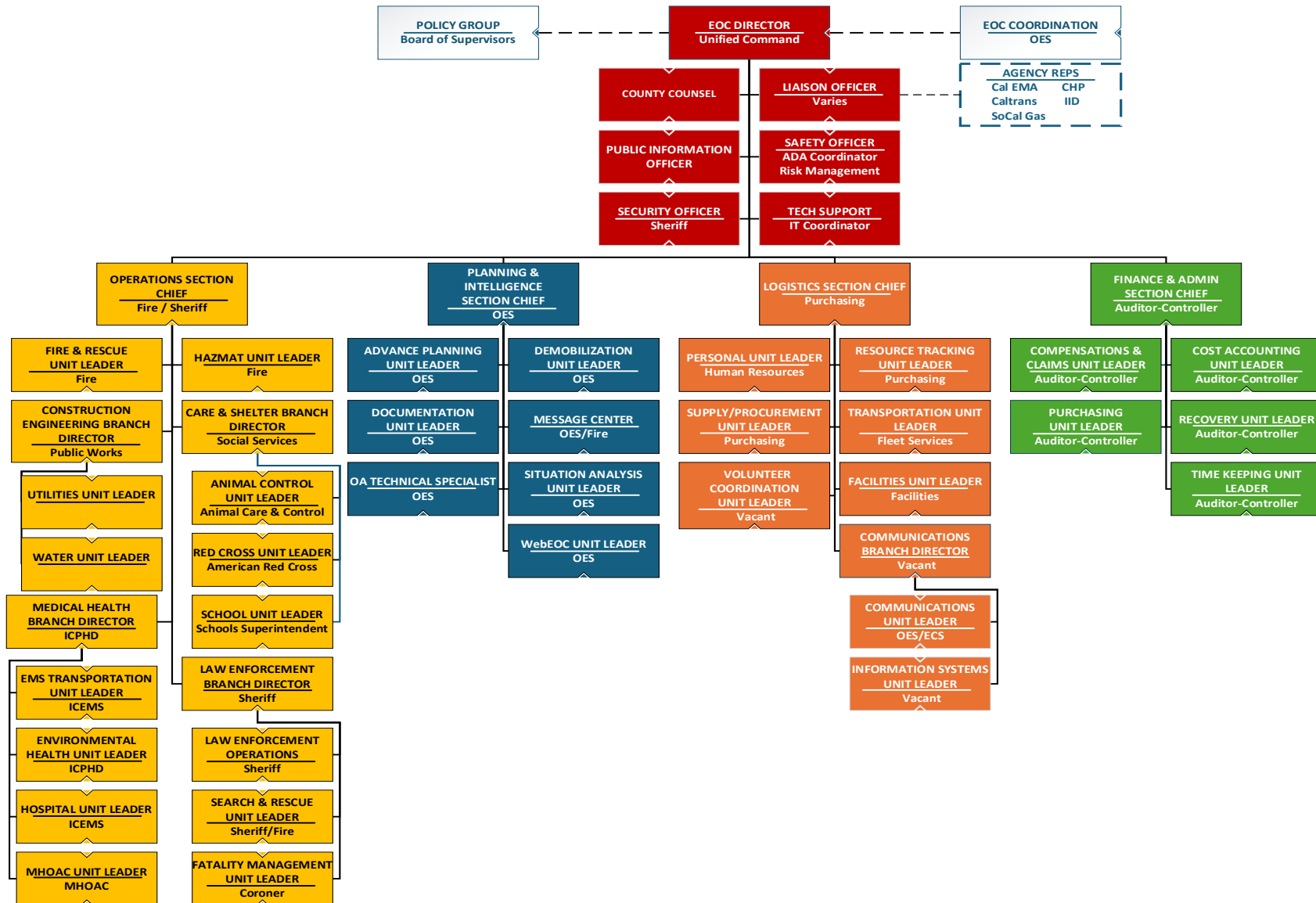
The five (5) SEMS EOC functions and their respective activities and responsibilities are shown below:

- **Management Section:** The Management Section is responsible for the overall management of the County/OA EOC, facilitation of the Multiagency Coordination System (MACS) and MAC Groups and ensuring public Information Coordination and Joint Information Center (JIC) Management.
- **Operation Section:** The Operations Section is responsible for coordinating all incident-related operations as directed by the EOC Action Plan and EOC Management. The Operations Section coordinates priority missions with the Emergency Support Function (ESF) Coordinators and deploys resources in a manner that is consistent with the County and OA objectives.
- **Planning/Intelligence Section:** The Planning and Intelligence Section is responsible for collecting, evaluating, displaying, and disseminating information and maintaining documents.
- **Logistics Section:** The Logistics Section coordinates the procurement and provision of emergency resources and support and advises the EOC Director on resource allocations, distribution, priorities, expenditures, and related matters. If the County/OA EOC obtains supplies or services at the request of an agency/jurisdiction, the costs will be billed to the requesting entity unless otherwise coordinated through appropriate mechanisms



- **Finance Section:** The Finance/Administration Section is responsible for ensuring all financial records are maintained and tracking all costs associated with the incident. Finance/Administration provides guidance on State and Federal guidelines and requirements for disaster operations to maximize cost recovery when applicable.

Figure 5. Imperial County EOC Organizational Chart



Operational Period Planning Cycle

Effective incident management helps ensure that the efforts of all players are coordinated and synchronized to achieve the best results. The EOC Action Plan (or EAP) is the vehicle by which the leaders of the EOC communicate their expectations and provide clear guidance to those managing an incident and/or providing support. The EAP is a printed document which outlines the priorities and planned response of the organization for a defined Operational Period (time period). The Planning “P” cycle represents one complete Op Period.

In an EOC, the action planning process provides a tool to synchronize operations at the EOC and incident level and ensures that EOC operations are conducted in support of the EOC’s and the incident’s objectives. A disciplined system of planning phases and meetings fosters collaboration and partnerships and focuses EOC operations.

The Planning “P” provides a framework for the EOC action planning process. While there are many versions of the Planning P available and in use, they all have common elements. The Planning “P” shown in Figure 6 depicts the phases and activities in the action planning process:

1. Understand the situation
2. Establish EOC objectives (in support of the incident)
3. Develop the plan
4. Prepare and disseminate the plan
5. Execute, evaluate, and revise the plan

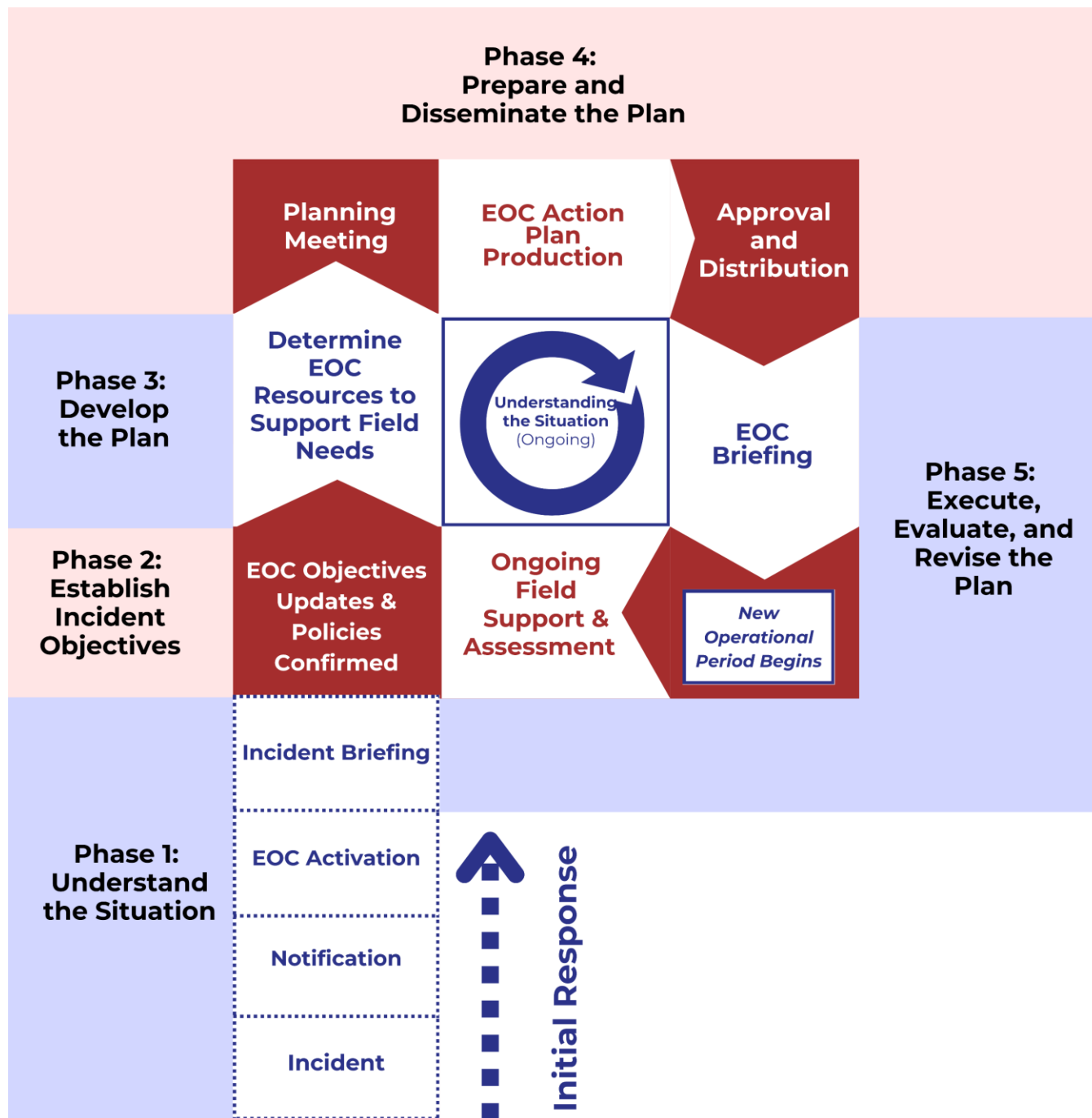
Action planning happens at all SEMS/NIMS levels (field, City, County, Region, State, and Federal). As a result, there are **subtle but important differences** in the Field Planning “P” vs. EOC Planning “P” due to the differences in the roles that each entity plays during an incident.

For example:

- City Field Command – Responsible for directing Tactical Operations (a Field-level Planning P reflects a tactical focus and role)
- City EOC – Responsible for coordinating Support to the Field and DOCs (an EOC-level Planning P reflects more of a strategic focus and a support/coordination role)

The EOC’s Management and Operations Sections have the primary responsibility for EOC action planning and execution of the EAP, while the EOC’s Planning Section is responsible for producing the EAP. When incidents are complex, applying the Action Planning Process accurately, consistently, and completely is essential to the success of EOC and incident operations.

Figure 6: The EOC Action Planning Process (Source: Cal OES/CSTI Emergency Management Concepts: All Hazards Course, 2021)



Emergency Support Functions

Imperial County has adopted the California Emergency Support Functions (CA-ESFs) as outlined in the California State Emergency Plan. The CA-ESFs, consist of 18 disciplines deemed essential to addressing the emergency management needs of communities in all phases of emergency management. The CA-ESFs were designed to bring together discipline-specific stakeholders at all levels of government to collaborate and function within the four phases of emergency management. The ESFs consist of an alliance of agencies, departments, and other stakeholders with similar functional responsibilities. This grouping allows each ESF to collaboratively mitigate, prepare for, cohesively respond to, and effectively recover from an emergency.

Table 7 provides a detailed breakdown of the California Emergency Support Functions, outlining the key areas of focus within the state framework [Table 8](#) further specifies how Imperial County departments are assigned responsibilities for each ESF, indicating which agencies serve as Primary (P) or Supporting (S) entities in local emergency response efforts.

Table 7. California Emergency Support Functions

CA-ESF Title	Definition	County Department
1 Transportation	Assists in managing transportation systems and infrastructure during domestic threats or in response to incidents, including flood control.	County Public Works Department: Transportation
2 Communications	Provides resources, support, and restoration of government emergency telecommunications, including voice data and public safety radio.	County Executive Office Information/Technical Services Department
3 Construction & Engineering	Organizes the capabilities and resources of the state government to facilitate the delivery of services, technical assistance, engineering expertise, construction management, and other support to local jurisdictions.	County Public Works Department: Construction & Engineering / Facilities Mgmt.
4 Fire & Rescue	Monitors the status of fire mutual aid activities. Coordinates support activities related to the detection and suppression of urban, rural, and wildland fires and emergency incident rescue activities and provides personnel, equipment, and supplies to support local jurisdictions.	County Fire Department: Suppression

CA-ESF Title		Definition	County Department
5	Management	Coordinates and resolves issues among the CA-ESFs in the four phases of emergency management to ensure consistency in developing and maintaining the EOP annexes. During emergencies, serves in an advisory capacity to the EOC Director.	County Fire Department: OES
6	Mass Care & Shelter	Coordinates actions to assist responsible jurisdictions to meet the needs of victims displaced during an incident, including flood assistance, clothing, non-medical care and sheltering, family reunification, and victim recovery.	County Social Services Department / OES
7	Resources	Coordinates plans and activities to locate, procure, and pre-position resources to support emergency operations.	County Procurement Services Dept.
8	Public Health & Medical	Coordinates statewide public health, environmental health, mental/behavioral health, and EMS activities to support local jurisdictional resource needs.	County Public Health Department / Behavioral Health Department
9	Search and Rescue	CA-ESF 9 merged into CA-ESF 4 Fire and Rescue for urban search and rescue requests and CA-ESF 13 Law Enforcement for wilderness search and rescue.	County Sheriff / Coroner Department
10	Hazardous Materials	Provides for a coordinated response from agencies and governmental entities with jurisdictional and regulatory authority to conduct all phases of emergency management in the response to and recovery from an actual or potential release of oil or hazardous materials to save lives, protect health and safety, protect property, and preserve the environment.	County Fire Department: HazMat

CA-ESF Title		Definition	County Department
11	Food and Agriculture	Coordinates activities and supports the responsible jurisdiction when a disaster impacts the agriculture and food industry. Support the recovery of impacted industries and resources post-disaster.	County Agriculture Weights and Measures
12	Utilities	Provides resources and support to responsible jurisdictions in partnership with the private sector to restore gas, electric, fuel pipelines, water, wastewater, and telecommunications.	County Public Works Department / County Special Districts
13	Law Enforcement	Coordinates state law enforcement personnel and equipment to support responsible jurisdictions' law enforcement and coroner officers, wilderness search and rescue, and public safety activities in accordance with law enforcement and coroner's mutual aid plans.	County Sheriff / Coroner Department
14	Long Term Recovery	Supports and enables state and local jurisdictions' recovery of communities and businesses from the long-term consequences of emergencies and disasters.	County Auditor - Controller
15	Public Information	Supports accurate, coordinated, timely, and accessible information to disaster-impacted audiences, including governments, media, private sector, and all members of the community.	Imperial County PIO
16	Evacuation	CA-ESF 16 merged into CA-ESF 13 Law Enforcement.	County Sheriff / Coroner Department (including Transit Agencies and Animal Control)



CA-ESF Title		Definition	County Department
17	Volunteer and Donations Management	Supports responsible jurisdictions in their use of volunteers (affiliated and non-affiliated).	County Fire Department: OES
18	Cybersecurity	Coordinate cyber critical response including the detection, mitigation, and information sharing for statewide cyber-related events.	County Technology Department

Table 8. Imperial County Emergency Support Function (ESF) Responsibilities by Department

California Emergency Support Functions		County Executive Office	County Public Information	County Agriculture Commissioner	County Auditor - Controller	County Fire Department: HAZMAT	County Fire Department: OES	County Fire Department: Public Information Officer	County Fire Department: Suppression	County Social Services Department/OES	County Information/Technical Services Department	County Public Health Department	County Public Works Department: Construction & Engineering/Facilities Mgmt.	County Public Works Department	County Public Works Department: Transportation	County Procurement Services Department	County Sheriff/Coroner Department	County Sheriff/Coroner Department: Public Information Officer	County Special Districts
1	Transportation														P				
2	Communications		S								P	S							
3	Construction and Engineering												P						
4	Fire & Rescue								P										
5	Management	S					P												
6	Care & Shelter	S					S			P		S							
7	Resources	S				S	S		S		S	S		S	S	P	S		S
8	Public Health & Medical											P							
9	Search & Rescue								S									P	
10	Hazardous Materials					P			S			S							
11	Food & Agriculture			P															
12	Utilities													P					P
13	Law Enforcement																P		
14	Long Term Recovery	S			P		S						S						
15	Public Information		P				S	P				S		S			S	P	

16	Evacuation								S			S					P		
17	Volunteers & Donations Management						P												
18	Cyber Security						S				P								

P= Primary **S**= Support

DRAFT

Roles and Responsibilities

All participating agencies and response organizations will have various roles and responsibilities throughout an emergency. Therefore, the local command structure must be established to support response and recovery efforts and maintain significant flexibility to expand/contract as the situation evolves. Typical duties may also change depending on the severity and size of the incident(s) and the availability of local resources. Because of this, developing and maintaining depth within the command structure and response organizations is also important.

Imperial County conducts all emergency management functions in accordance with SEMS and NIMS. The County is responsible for managing and coordinating the overall emergency response and recovery activities during an emergency. OES, along with each County department, is responsible for ensuring critical staff are identified and trained to enable the effective execution of existing response policies, plans, and procedures.

Most County departments have emergency functions in addition to their normal daily duties. In conjunction with each County department's representatives, OES is responsible for developing and maintaining SOGs.

The OA Emergency Management system comprises all County departments, cities and towns, unincorporated areas, special districts, and the private and volunteer sectors. (see Figure 7 for an overview of the emergency organization structure). This system represents all the resources available within the County that may be applied to disaster response and recovery. The goal is to support emergency activities to protect life, property, and the environment.

In 2006, the OA Resolution was amended to include the NIMS as an integral component of the OA disaster management system.

The OA Emergency Management Organization operates from established:

- County EOC
- City/Town EOC
- Incident Command Posts (ICPs)
- Department/District Operations Center (DOC) for County departments and special districts
- Fire/Emergency Management/Staging
- Specialized centers representing businesses, industries, and the volunteer sector.

During a state of war, a state of emergency, or a local emergency, the County's Director of Emergency Services will coordinate the activities of all OA constituents. In addition, several mutual aid systems can be activated to support the emergency organization.

Emergency mutual aid response and recovery activities are conducted at the request and under the direction of the affected local governments. For this Plan, such actions will initially be coordinated via the ICPs representing geographical areas of the County and OA. Resource requests for response and recovery will originate at the lowest level of government and move progressively forward to the next level until filled.

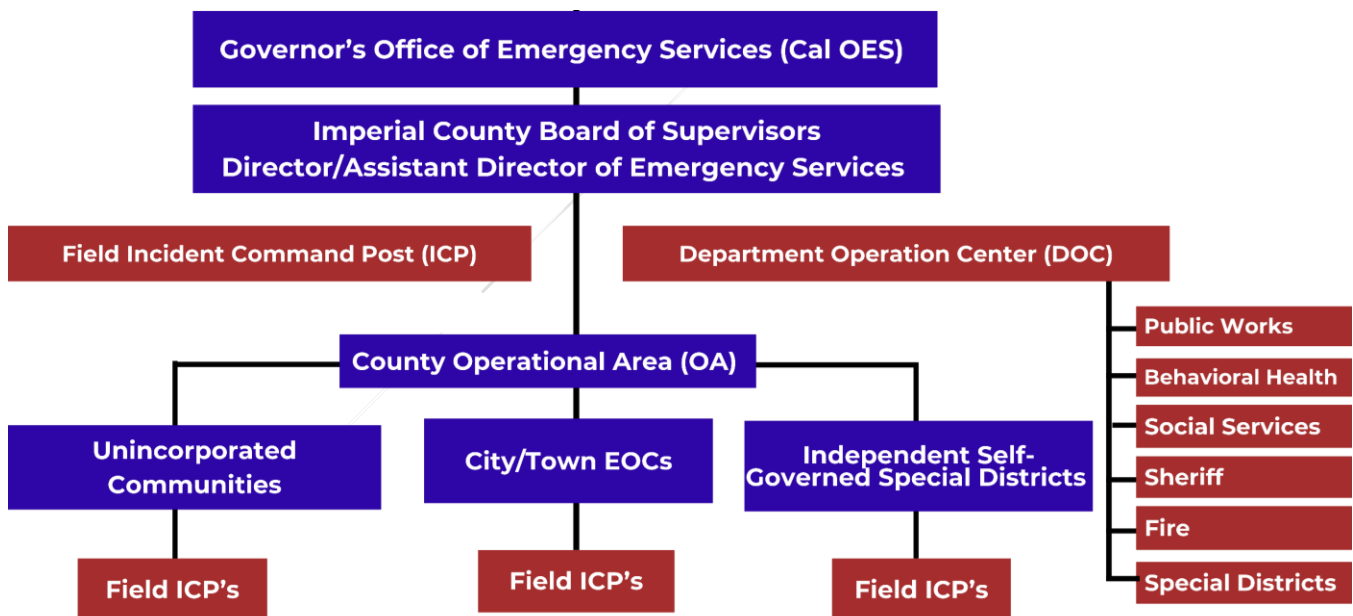
County departments, special districts, and cities/towns with mandated responsibilities for emergency response will follow their established plans and procedures. During complex emergencies involving multiple jurisdictions and agencies, liaison officers, and agency representatives, a UC can coordinate resources.

When county or local government resources are inadequate to meet support needs, the County, on behalf of the OA, will seek assistance from state agencies with statutory authority through Cal OES. Should the situation exceed the state's capacity to provide assistance, the state may request a Presidential Declaration of an Emergency or Major Disaster under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Public Law 93-288, as amended.

The County has established essential communications support requirements for the OA's mutual aid partners via dispatch centers, mobile communications vehicles, proprietary information systems, and other resources. This communications structure provides the telecommunications infrastructure for linking elements of the County OA emergency organization.

Roles and responsibilities of the Board of Supervisors, Disaster Council, individual county departments, other levels of government, private sector, non-governmental organizations, individuals, and households are described below to further clarify the County's emergency management structure.

Figure 7 Imperial County Emergency Organization Chart



County Government/Operational Area

The California ESA designates each County as an OA to coordinate the emergency activities and resources of its political subdivisions. The OA's responsibilities involve coordinating with jurisdictions and organizations to deploy field-level emergency response personnel, activate EOCs, and issue orders to protect the public.

The governing bodies of political subdivisions within each county coordinate to establish the lead agency for the OA. The OA lead agency serves as a coordinating link between the local and regional levels of state government.

Local governments include cities/towns, counties, and special districts. Local governments manage and coordinate the overall emergency response and recovery activities between emergency agencies and operation centers within their jurisdictions such as EOCs and DOCs. This is the first coordination level above the field response level.

Board of Supervisors

The Board of Supervisors, the governing body for the County of Imperial in a disaster situation, is responsible for developing and/or reviewing policy actions and decisions for emergency response and recovery activities.

Included in these efforts is proclaiming a local state of emergency, if warranted, as the first step to receive state and federal assistance for the County. The role of the Board of Supervisors is to provide policy guidance, advice, and support to the County and OA emergency organizations and the Director of Emergency Services. The Chairman of the Board may be called upon to meet the California ESA requirements if a Local Emergency Proclamation is required. The Imperial County Fire Chief and OES will provide the lead staff support in providing recommendations for fulfilling these duties.

Responsibility

Per Imperial County Code section 2.104.050, the Board has the following duties:

- The Chairperson of the Board of Supervisors shall be the Director of Emergency Services. The County Fire Chief is designated as the Assistant Director of Emergency Services.
- The members of the Board of Supervisors shall provide the emergency organization with overall policy direction for emergency response and recovery activities for the four readiness levels.
- The Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson of the Board of Supervisors has the authority under California Government Code Section 8630 to proclaim a local state of emergency. In their absence, the remaining board members will step in to fulfill the duties in succession by the longest office held. The other members of the Board of Supervisors must ratify the action(s) of the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson within seven (7) days or renew every 30 days to continue, or the emergency proclamation will expire.

Functions

- Proclaim a local emergency or ratify a proclamation made by City Manager in accordance with the provisions of the California ESA.
- Govern the County and maintain necessary operations levels. Remain visible and available to calm and assist constituents.
- Provide liaison and escort to visiting state and federal officials.
- Remain available to provide media with information on the government's role in disaster mitigation, planning, and recovery.
- Initiate immediate and long-term procedures to restore the community, mitigate hazards, and assist in sheltering and other related decisions.
- Take steps to ensure immediate action on emergency measures, such as acting pursuant to an emergency ordinance to waive permit fees, acquire goods and services, issue curfew orders, or other emergency regulations that may require the action of the governing body.
- Develop legislation to mitigate future emergencies.

Disaster Council

The Imperial County Disaster Council is a local body that coordinates and oversees emergency management and disaster preparedness efforts within Imperial County. It comprises representatives from various local government agencies, departments, public safety organizations, and possibly private sector partners. The council's primary mission is to promote disaster preparedness through communication and education, empowering the community members to make families, homes, and the community safer from natural and man-made disasters or emergencies.

Per Imperial County Code sections 2.104.030 – 2.104.040, the Disaster Council's role is to develop and recommend for adoption by the Board of Supervisors' emergency and mutual aid plans and agreements and such ordinances, resolutions, rules, and regulations as are necessary to implement such plans and agreements.

Disaster Council Powers and Duties

The powers and duties of the Disaster Council are as follows:

1. Develop and recommend for adoption by the Board of Supervisors emergency and mutual aid plans and agreements, and such ordinances, resolutions, rules, and regulations as are necessary to implement such plans and agreements;
2. Evaluate the potential needs within the OA and facilitate planning, preparedness, response, and recovery from identified hazards;
3. Coordinate and facilitate emergency management and disaster-related training and exercises with the OA;
4. Foster communication among the OA;
5. Facilitate the utilization of emergency management grants;



6. Create standing subcommittees, task forces, and ad hoc committees as are necessary to assist in carrying out the powers and duties stated in this section; and
7. Provide periodic reports to the board of supervisors of the disaster council and its standing subcommittees, task forces, and ad hoc committees.

The Disaster Council shall meet quarterly on dates/times that the chairperson of the disaster council determines. Meetings shall commence upon the call of the Chairperson or, in his or her absence from the County or inability to call such a meeting, upon call of the Vice-Chairperson.

Disaster Council Membership

The Imperial County Disaster Council consists of the following:

- The Council Chair is the Fire Chief/OES Coordinator
- The Council Vice Chair is the Emergency Services Coordinator
- Additional representatives from County departments/agencies may include:
 - Fire Chief
 - Sheriff
 - Director of Social Services
 - Director of Behavioral Health
 - Director of Planning and Development Services
 - Director of Public Works
 - Agricultural Commissioner
 - Director of Public Health
- Deputy Director of the Public Health Department's Environmental Health Division
- Manager of the Public Health Department's EMS/Disaster Preparedness Section
- Representatives of tribal governments, civic, business, labor, veteran, professional, or other organizations having an official emergency responsibility, as appointed by the Board of Supervisors.

Citizen Corps Council

The County's Disaster Council shall also serve as the Citizen Corps Council. The Citizens Corps Council consists of representatives within the local community that the community's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies. It is part of a broader nationwide initiative, Citizens Corps, which was established to promote community-based emergency preparedness and involve citizens in various activities to help protect and support their communities in times of crisis.

The Citizens Core Council within the County focuses on various programs related to community education and outreach, volunteer training, and coordination with first responders. Overall, the council plays a key role in empowering community members, fostering a culture of preparedness, and helping to build resilience throughout Imperial County in collaboration with local governments and agencies.



Imperial County Citizen Corps Council Programs include the following:

- Holtville CERT
- Imperial County CERT
- Palo Verde Valley CERT
- Holtville Fire Department Fire Corps
- Imperial County Medical Reserve Corps

County Department Roles

County agencies and departments are essential throughout every stage of the emergency management cycle. Their duties encompass mitigation, planning, training, and exercises prior to incidents; deploying emergency response personnel in the field; activating department operations centers; issuing public safety orders during emergencies; and coordinating recovery efforts while maintaining documentation after an incident. These agencies must execute their responsibilities in compliance with relevant authorities, adhering to SEMS and NIMS standards, and ensuring the use of the ICS and multi-agency coordination. County departments, commissions, agencies, boards, districts, officers, and employees are assigned emergency duties, responsibilities, and tasks as outlined in this plan and as specified in Chapter 2.104 of the Imperial County Code of Ordinances.

Table 9. County Department Roles

Department	Emergency Function	EOC Section-Specific Role
Aging and Adult Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information and assistance to targeted populations • Provide staff at Local Assistance Centers (LACs) • Provide staff at the shelter as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations Section – Care and Shelter Branch
Agriculture Commissioners Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor pest and insect infestation • Provide information regarding damage or threats of damage to the County's agricultural industry • Provide staff at LACs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning/Intelligence Section
Airport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor pest and insect infestation • Provide information regarding damage or threats of damage to the County's agricultural industry. • Provide staff at LACs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistics Section
Assessor's Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in development of damage assessment information and Support Damage Assessment Unit • Determine the dollar value of disaster-caused damage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning / Intelligence Section - Advanced Planning and Demobilization Units
Auditor / Controller	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record and maintain a permanent record of all receipts and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Administration Section

Department	Emergency Function	EOC Section-Specific Role
	expenditures during disaster response and recovery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a disaster accounting system Assist in the development of damage assessment data in the Recovery phase Ensure liquidity of treasury pool to meet cash 	
Behavioral Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disaster crisis counseling services Linkage to other resource agencies Provide relief for disaster workers Provide staff/counselors at LACs Provide staff/counselors at the shelter as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operation Section -Care and Shelter Branch
Clerk of the Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a record of all meetings and actions the Board of Supervisors took when acting as the “policy group” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Section – Documentation Unit
Community and Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update the department’s long-term recovery plans starting as soon as the emergency occurs Advise policy group on the availability of economic development financial aid Support Policy Group- Recovery phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance Administration Section
County Counsel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serve as legal advisor to the Management Section before, during, and after each proclaimed local emergency Prepare and review proclamations and other actions taken or contemplated for legal impact and liability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Section- Legal Advisor
County Executive Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proclaim “local emergency” when the Board is not in session Control and direct the County’s emergency organization Represent the County in all dealings pertaining to emergencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Section- Director of Emergency Services
District Attorney	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue essential criminal prosecutions and, if necessary, initiate a “Motion to Extend Time” through an appropriate magistrate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Section – Legal Advisor

Department	Emergency Function	EOC Section-Specific Role
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide protection for DA staff members through DA investigators and at DA facilities by building security. • Be available to respond and assist other law enforcement agencies for mutual aid as required • Prosecute offenders who initiated disaster or who prey on those victimized by the disaster • Offer advice on criminal matters to EOC staff and others as necessary 	
Facilities Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-establish power (i.e., utility service) to County buildings • Assist in determining the status and condition of County buildings • Remove debris from County buildings and grounds • Support LACs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistic Section-Facilities Branch
Fire Department: Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage emergency organization, conduct fire suppression and rescue, provide fire mutual aid, emergency services, hazardous materials, and maintain communications • Support field operations • Support Management and Operations Section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Planning and Intelligence Section
Fire Department: Fire Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct fire/arson investigation operations • Conduct damage assessment operations • Inspect/investigate potential threats to public safety • Engage in suppression support activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations – Fire Branch • Support Planning and Intelligence Section
Fire Department: Hazardous Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to all hazardous materials emergencies to protect life, property, and the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations – Haz Mat Branch • Support Planning and Intelligence Section
Fire Department: OES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead agency for the OA • Provide timely and accurate situation status and resource status reports to appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall EOC management • Support Planning and Intelligence Section and

Department	Emergency Function	EOC Section-Specific Role
	<p>polymakers, elected officials, and Cal OES Southern REOC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide accurate and timely information to the general public related to OA and state emergency response • Monitor situation status and resource status in each local jurisdiction within the OA • Coordinate with each local jurisdiction to facilitate the rapid and efficient procurement of resources needed in response to an emergency • Provide any appropriate services needed to support the area-wide response • Assist in the coordination between County departments to efficiently utilize resources to produce the most effective response to an emergency • Assist in the facilitation of the rapid restoration of business, government, and other institutions 	<p>support all other EOC Sections as required</p>
Fire Department: Suppression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to all fire incidents to protect life, property, and the environment • Conduct search and rescue operations • Manage/Activate Incident Command posts (ICP's) • Coordinate OA Fire/Rescue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations Section – Fire Branch
Fleet Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide emergency transportation and service needs of the County's fleet • Provide fuel and vehicle/equipment support to all County departments • Provide emergency generators and support to existing generators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Transportation/Logistics Section
Human Resources: Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and implement a system of registering disaster workers and citizen volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistics and Finance Sections

Department	Emergency Function	EOC Section-Specific Role
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review employment actions taken by the County during a local proclamation 	
Human Resources: Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide safety and risk management services to emergency organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Section – ADA Coordinator/ EOC Safety Officer Support Finance Section – Compensation Unit
Information/Tech Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide communications, computer, and data services during an emergency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logistics Section – Information Systems, Communications and Computer Systems Branch
Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide archive and records management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning/Intelligence Section – Documentation Unit
Planning and Development Services: Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate critical building damage assessment Support the Recovery phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Section
Planning and Development Services: Building and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct damage assessments of privately owned structures Support damage assessment activities countywide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Section
Planning and Development Services: Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide, public information and warning when a potential earthquake presents a hazard to citizens Provide general information on ways to mitigate the potential effects of disasters Support DOC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning/Intelligence Section – Advanced Planning Unit and Demobilization Unit
Planning and Development Services: Parks/Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish human shelters, animal shelters, staging areas, fire camps, ICPs Field Treatment Sites (FTS), and temporary morgues Coordinate with solid waste management for disposal of waste Account for cultural resources Support DOC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations/ Logistics Section
Probation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide for the safety and security of the community by maintaining juvenile institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Section – Law Enforcement Branch

Department	Emergency Function	EOC Section-Specific Role
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act as a law enforcement resource as needed, where directed by the Chief or their designee 	
Public Defender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide essential defense services to criminal prosecutions as mandated under the state and federal constitutions and state statutory laws Offer legal advice on criminal matters to EOC staff and others as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management Section – Legal Advisor (Support Role)
Public Health: Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct hospital capacity assessment and resource reallocation Represent as Local disaster medical health coordinator Coordinate with the Medical Health Operational Area Coordinator (MHOAC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct laboratory and epidemiological evaluation Organize mass immunization or mass prophylaxis responses Support care and shelter operations as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Section – Medical and Health Branch
Public Health: Animal Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate control and boarding services for animals displaced by a disaster situation Manage evacuation and care of animals Assess causes of illness and death among animals Coordinate with the State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Section- Animal Care Unit
Public Health: EMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate provisions of out-of-hospital acute and pre-hospital medical care, transportation to patients with illnesses and injuries Provide subject matter technical support to LACs Provide support via the MHOAC as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Section- Medical Health Branch

Department	Emergency Function	EOC Section-Specific Role
Public Health: Environmental Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protect public health, promote safety, and prevent environmental hazards during disasters Conduct environmental health assessments and mitigation Coordinate prevention of illness and injury activities during disasters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Section-Medical Health Branch
Public Works: Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine surface routes to be reopened following major disasters, and establish priorities for opening those routes in coordination with cities/towns and the California Department of Transportation (CALTRANS) Deploy barricades and roadblocks to restrict access to disaster-affected areas Survey roads, flood control facilities, and critical infrastructure for damage Perform traffic signal maintenance Maintain traffic signs and pavement striping Facilitate repairs and clean up from disaster-related damage Manage maintenance of bridges and metal pipe and concrete box culverts Manage maintenance of drainage facilities such as inlets, ditches, dikes, and gutters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Section-Public Works Branch Logistics Section-Transportation Branch
Public Works: Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey roads, flood control, and solid waste facilities Assist purchasing to procure heavy equipment Assist with public works mutual aid Coordinate/activate DOCs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Section-Public Works Branch
Public Works: Solid Waste Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct damage assessment of infrastructure and facilities Determine waste disposal methods to support the Recovery phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Section
Procurement Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee the procurement and purchase of equipment and materials needed by the emergency organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logistics Section and Finance/Admin Section



Department	Emergency Function	EOC Section-Specific Role
Real Estate Services (County Executive Office)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in assessing the condition of property/facilities owned or leased by the County and right-of-way issues associated with roads and flood control channels • Determine facilities needs of County departments and procure alternative facilities as needed to continue operations and services • Work with damage/safety assessment team(s) to determine the condition of owned and leased facilities and the need for replacement facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Planning/Intelligence Section
Sheriff-Coroner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate law enforcement response to proclaimed disasters • Control and allocate all law enforcement resources sent in or from outside the County • Serve as an action agency that implements evacuation of disaster victims • Direct movement of people, vehicles, and equipment in and around disaster areas • Coordinate law enforcement mutual aid within OES Region VI • Provide security of EOC and County buildings Coordinate/activate DOC when necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations Section – Law Branch/Area Law Coordinator • Planning/Intelligence Section • Management Section – when an emergency is criminal in nature (e.g., terrorism)
Social Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the American Red Cross (ARC) with care and shelter operation • Support LAC locations • Provide staff at shelters, as needed • Support damage assessment of social services facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations Section – Care and Shelter Branch
Special Districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information regarding the condition of Board Governed and Self-Governed Special Districts, including water, sanitation, road, park, dam, and TV translator districts throughout the County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operations Section

Department	Emergency Function	EOC Section-Specific Role
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct damage assessment of all infrastructure and assist in getting services online 	
Superintendent of Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information regarding the condition of all schools in the County Coordinate mutual aid between school districts Monitor school district evacuations Provide updated information to the County PIO and media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Section – School Branch Support: DOC, Safety Coordinator to coordinate with County Risk Management
Treasurer-Tax Collector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure liquidity of treasury pool to meet cash demands of the County during the length of emergency Support the Recovery phase 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning/Intelligence Section – Advance Planning/Resources Branch
Veterans Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support LACs Provide staff at shelters as needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Section – Care and Shelter Branch (Social Services)

Local Government

Cities and special districts within Imperial County are responsible for developing an emergency plan that outlines the responsibilities for emergency management operations and identifies the officials authorized to declare a local emergency. Local governments with a certified disaster council must create an EOP for their jurisdiction that complies with state and federal requirements, as well as Cal OES Local Planning Guidance. In the event of an immediate threat or actual emergency, local governments implement their emergency plans and take actions to mitigate or reduce the emergency. These actions may involve deploying emergency response personnel, activating emergency operations centers, and issuing orders to safeguard the public. All incidents will be managed at the lowest possible level. Local governments oversee and coordinate the overall emergency response and recovery efforts within their jurisdiction.

Non-Governmental Organizations

Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) play important roles before, during, and after an emergency. NGOs encompass a diverse range of entities, including voluntary groups, racial and ethnic organizations, faith-based and veteran-focused groups, as well as nonprofit organizations. These NGOs play a critical role in providing shelter, emergency food, and other essential support services.

Communities, on the other hand, are groups united by shared goals, values, or institutions, and they are not necessarily defined by geographic or political boundaries. Examples include FBOs, neighborhood partnerships, advocacy groups, academic institutions, social groups, and community associations. These entities connect people for various purposes, creating opportunities to share information and encourage collective action. By fostering



development and building organizational capacity, communities often emerge as the most effective agents for managing and mitigating specific risks.

For the County, NGOs such as the ARC provide sheltering, emergency food supplies, counseling services, and other vital services to support response and promote the recovery of disaster victims. NGOs collaborate with responders, governments at all levels, and other agencies and organizations. While formal agreements with accessible resource providers are not in place, the Red Cross Disability Integration Team actively coordinates with local agencies to secure additional resources before, during, and after disasters. The Department of Social Services is the primary point of contact with the ARC during a large-scale emergency. The ARC may provide a representative to the County/OA EOC as requested based on the needs of an incident.

Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) include non-profits and FBOs that offer their services, with no legal mandate. VOADs mobilize and provide valuable assistance for survivors before, during, and after incidents. These organizations train and plan to effectively integrate volunteers into the Imperial County incident response and recovery organization.

Private Sector

The private sector plays a key role in emergency and disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts. Its resilience directly impacts community recovery by supplying essential products, services, and employment opportunities, while also supporting the re-establishment of a functioning economy. Private sector organizations are responsible for maintaining critical infrastructure, ensuring the smooth operation of supply chains, and providing support to stabilize incidents, the economy, and overall recovery. Owners and operators of private sector entities have the primary responsibility for preparing for emergencies and maintaining or repairing their systems during and after an impact.

Collaboration between the public and private sectors is essential before, during, and after an emergency. Government entities and private sector organizations must engage in mutual aid and support agreements ahead of time to ensure effective partnership during response operations. Acting within regulatory frameworks, both sectors can provide incident-specific support that benefits the community. Businesses must also ensure the welfare and protection of their employees while working seamlessly with the County to provide essential services such as water, power, communication, transportation, medical care, and security. When government, private sector, and non-governmental organization resources align and support one another, the chances of meeting community and economic recovery needs are greatly enhanced. This comprehensive approach expedites the availability of resources, capabilities, and solutions for incident response.

Individuals and Households

Although not formally a part of the County's emergency operations, individuals and households play an important role in the overall emergency management strategy. Community members can contribute by:

- Reducing hazards in their homes
- Preparing emergency supply kits and household emergency plans



- Preparing emergency plans with family members with access and functional needs to address evacuation, sheltering, medical needs, and service animal considerations
- Monitoring emergency communications carefully
- Volunteering with established organizations
- Enrolling in emergency response training courses

Individuals and households may also get involved in emergency preparedness before an incident occurs by participating in volunteer organizations, local Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), and other emergency training opportunities. These efforts help individuals support their families, neighbors, and communities during an emergency, while also easing the strain on first responders. Additionally, there are various mitigation actions that can be taken at the household level, such as seismically retrofitting buildings, clearing brush in fire-prone areas, and securing large items and furniture, to reduce the impact of an incident. These mitigation measures not only lower the chances of requiring emergency assistance but also help speed up recovery.

Safe, secure, and well-prepared individuals and households are typically less reliant on response services, reducing the need for responders to operate in dangerous situations. Prepared individuals experience less personal stress, can help others in need, and are better equipped to actively support response and recovery efforts after a disaster.

State Government

During a state of war emergency, a state of emergency, or a local emergency, the Cal OES Director coordinates the emergency activities of all state agencies in connection with such emergencies and has the authority to use any state government resource to fulfill mutual aid requests or to support emergency operations. Cal OES operates the California State Warning Center (CSWC) 24 hours a day to receive and disseminate emergency alerts and warnings. When needed the SOC and REOCs are activated to coordinate emergency management information and resources.

State government departments are responsible for providing various services such as specialized skills, technical assistance and training, equipment, and resources in support of state and local government emergency operations. The state will also work with other states, Regional FEMA Offices, and other federal agencies for interstate mutual aid, federal resources, and public and private assistance upon the Presidential Declaration of a Disaster.

Federal Government

The federal government supports emergency management throughout the nation and in California by providing tools, resources, and guidance to support California's emergency management system. When an emergency occurs that exceeds or is anticipated to exceed resources located within the state, or when federal departments or agencies acting under their own authorities are partners in the UC for an emergency, the federal government will implement the National Response Framework (NRF) to access federal department and agency capabilities, organize the federal response and ensure coordination with all response partners.



Although FEMA is the most common lead response agency, some federal agencies will provide leadership in specific types of emergencies such as terrorism (Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), epidemics (CDC), and environmental disasters (Environmental Protection Agency).

Mexican Bi-National Government

Imperial County and the City of Mexicali, Baja, California, coordinate to effectively reduce the risk of threats to their communities' public health, safety, and welfare caused by explosions, fires, spills, or releases of hazardous substances into the environment. An MOU is in place to reinforce the cooperation among the jurisdictions, assist them in preventing and responding more efficiently to these emergencies, and adequately notifying counterpart agencies in the event of an incident on either side of the international border.¹⁹

¹⁹ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. 2014. Imperial Valley-Mexicali Sister City Plan. September. <https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2014-09/documents/imperial-valley-mexicali-sister-city-plan.pdf>.

Section 4: Direction, Control, and Coordination

Responsibility for emergency response is based on statutory authority. An emergency response is coordinated under SEMS/ICS, which provides a flexible, adaptable, and expandable response organization to address all hazards of varying magnitude and complexity.

An EOC is activated to support field operations when an emergency requires additional resources, or when requested resources exceed those which are available from within the jurisdiction. Field ICs and EOCs will establish communications when the EOC is activated. Local government EOCs will establish communications with the OA EOC typically represented by the County EOC. The OA EOC/County EOC will communicate with the REOC and the REOC will communicate with the SOC.

During response to minor or moderate events, jurisdictions may manage the emergency with existing resources and may or may not activate their local EOC. Personnel that are part of a field-level emergency response will utilize ICS to manage and direct on-scene operations.

During multiple-incident situations within the County, an Area Command may be established to provide for the ICs at separate locations. Generally, an Area Commander will be assigned and receive policy direction from the EOC.

Another scenario for the EOC/Area Command interaction would be the occurrence of several similar incidents located in close proximity but in different jurisdictions. A Unified Area Command may be established to oversee Incident Commands operating in general proximity to each other. The Unified Area Command would coordinate with the activated local government EOCs.

Field Incident Command

The field response level is where the emergency response begins and where personnel and resources, under the command of the appropriate authority, carry out tactical operational decisions and activities in direct response to any incident or threat. SEMS regulations require the use of the ICS at this level of an incident. The IC, or UC in a jointly managed incident, has overall authority and responsibility for conducting incident operations. During response to minor or moderate events, jurisdictions may manage the emergency with existing resources, including automatic aid and mutual aid resources as applicable. DOCs and/or the EOC for that jurisdiction may not need to be activated under this scenario.

Field Coordination with DOCs and EOCs

Communication and coordination among SEMS levels are necessary for effective emergency response. In a major emergency, the County's EOC may be activated to coordinate the overall response. IC in the field may communicate with the DOCs which in turn will



communicate and coordinate with the EOC. Depending on the incident, the IC may communicate directly with the EOC, usually to their counterpart in the Operations section. When the EOC is directly overseeing the incident command teams, the EOC is operating in a centralized coordination and direction mode.

Emergency Operations Center

The County EOC serves a dual role as the OA EOC as well. The EOC is the central coordination point that provides for multi-agency emergency coordination and support to agencies/jurisdictions during an emergency or disaster. The County Executive Office, executed through the OEM, is responsible for maintaining, managing, activating, and operating the County/OA EOC at all times, including during an emergency.

Members of the County's emergency organization (i.e., County departments) are required to support the County/OA EOC and/or the EOC Director. The need for support will be based on the incident's needs and the level of EOC activation.

Agency representatives, liaisons, and the like from OA organizations are also incorporated into the County/OA EOC organization based on the needs of the incident. Core functions of the County/OA EOC include coordination, communications, resource allocation and tracking, and information collection, analysis, and dissemination. To accomplish this, the County/OA EOC will be activated and staffed to the appropriate level necessary for the response.

Primary and Alternate Emergency Operations Centers

As a place, the OA EOC differs greatly from one organization to another, but the functions are much less variable. The OA EOC is responsible not only for assembling and directing local government responses but also for communicating with all other levels of government, the private sector, and the public (both the public at large and the public at risk).

According to SEMS, the OA EOC is structured to fulfill an organization standard, which includes the functions of management, finance and administration, logistics, operations, and planning/intelligence. Although each of the SEMS functions is necessary, coordination, communications, and intelligence are critical.

Communications issues are important to the County's emergency response capability. These issues include channel capacity, the importance of multiple channels, and the planning for a viable emergency communications system. An alternate EOC will be activated when the primary is not functional.

The following locations are established as the EOC for the planning area. (Note: These locations may be adjusted or changed depending on the specific circumstances of the event).

Primary OA EOC Location	Alternate EOC Location
OA EOC 1078 Dogwood Road, Suite 104 Heber, CA 92249 (760) 482-2400	County Planning & Development Services 801 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243

Department Operations Centers

A DOC is an operational and logistical entity that is designed to serve as a departmental coordinating body in support of incident management. The role of the DOC for Imperial County departments encompasses two broad functions:

- Manage and maintain internal departmental operations during an emergency/disaster incident, including ensuring departmental continuity of operations
- Contribute to County/OA response through communication and coordination with field response assets and the EOC, when necessary.

DOC activation is based on the mission of the department and is generally authorized by the Director of that department unless otherwise delegated. If the EOC is activated, DOCs can serve as extensions of ESFs to perform missions in support of field incident command in coordination with the County/OA EOC. The DOC shares objectives, strategies, and status updates at regular intervals with the EOC.

As such, personnel selected by the department to be part of a DOC receive training and participate in drills and exercises to develop their skills and knowledge of overall EOC operations. The following are the primary roles and responsibilities of the DOC:

- Maintains departmental operations, including:
 - Staffing
 - Finance
- Intra-department planning - Intra-department cooperation - Inter-departmental coordination (when EOC is not activated)
- Offers direct support to incident(s) and IC
- Receives resource requests from IC
- Prioritizes and manages departmental resources
- Serves as a point of contact for the EOC
- Receives resource allocation priorities
- Provides situation status reports

Field-DOC-EOC Coordination

Operations Centers, when activated, are responsible for maintaining direct communication and coordination with departmental resources in the field. DOCs also maintain direct communications and coordination with the County/OA EOC to share situational status information and coordinate resources. DOC-EOC interface will follow general ICS principles for chains of communication. ESF Coordinators in the EOC, when activated, will coordinate with the DOCs of support departments, as well as the EOCs of affiliated agencies.

In the absence of DOC activation, the field IC and the County/OA EOC will establish communications when the EOC is activated. Agency representatives from the EOC will be assigned to the field as appropriate to facilitate communication and coordination.

Coordination with Special Districts

Special Districts are formed under various laws that provide the necessary authority to operate. Special Districts often have unique resources, capabilities, and vulnerabilities. Coordination and communications with the EOC should be established among Special Districts who are involved in emergency response. This may be accomplished in various ways depending on the local situation. Special Districts will work with the local government in their service areas to determine how best to establish coordination and communications in an emergency. The Special District will have a liaison representative at the County EOC, and direct communications should be established between the Special District DOC and the County EOC.

Coordination with Private/Non-Profit Agencies and Volunteer Groups

Imperial County recognizes the valuable assistance and resources provided by non-governmental private sector partnerships and the importance of organizations performing voluntary community services. As a result, the County continues cultivating relationships with private/non-profit agencies and has established an extensive trained volunteer base to support emergency response operations within the County.

During an emergency, the County EOC may establish communication with private/non-profit agencies and volunteer groups through an agency representative, volunteer coordinator, or authorized personnel. Coordination, activation, and deployment of these members may be incident-driven. It will follow the appropriate organization response guidelines established for the specific private/non-profit agency or volunteer group.

During EOC activations, these agencies respond to County-focused emergencies and will coordinate and communicate directly with staff in the EOC. Ideally, the agency will provide a representative to the EOC and will serve as a liaison in the Management Section to better facilitate coordination. For private/non-profit agencies and volunteer groups with countywide response roles, and cannot respond to numerous city EOCs, may be represented at the OA level.

The following volunteer programs are managed and/or supported by OES and may be activated to provide support to the OA during EOC activations, shelter activations, and/or other jurisdictional-specific incidents:

Community Emergency Response Teams

The Imperial County CERT Program educates people about disaster preparedness and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, and disaster medical operations. Using their training, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event and take a more active role in preparing their community. CERT members may be activated as follows:

- In unincorporated communities that support a CERT Program, a CERT may be activated by contacting the assigned local CERT County Liaison.



- In cities/towns that support a CERT Program, the local Emergency Manager should be contacted for details regarding activating that jurisdiction's CERT.

Imperial Valley Disaster Recovery Team/Voluntary Organization Active in Disaster

The Imperial Valley Disaster Recovery Team (IVDRT)/VOAD is an organization based within a community or geographic area. It is composed of representatives from public, private, non-profit, and faith-based agencies, community groups, and businesses. The team's mission is to strengthen area-wide disaster coordination and address the long-term and unmet needs of Imperial County residents.

Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services

Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services volunteers hold Federal Communications Commission (FCC)-issued HAM Radio license. These members volunteer their time to provide auxiliary emergency communications for the County and affiliated Cities within the OA. The RACES mission is to provide support for any possible need relative to communications in an emergency.

The RACES unit of OES provides a variety of professional non-paid skills, including emergency tactical, administrative, and logistical communications between all government agencies, including County, city, and neighboring state agencies. This includes operations on all authorized equipment and frequencies when needed.

Spontaneous Unaffiliated Volunteers

A widely recognized need in Imperial County immediately following a disaster or incident is the successful management of Spontaneous Unaffiliated Volunteers (SUV) who respond to an incident with the intent of helping. It becomes essential to direct the outpouring of human resources to where it's most needed as quickly as possible to mitigate potential chaos and to give people an opportunity to be involved in their community's recovery.

The Imperial County VOAD serves as the lead coordinating organization of both affiliated and unaffiliated volunteers.

Coordination within the Operational Area

Coordination and communications should be established between activated local government EOCs and the OA. For most cities/towns, this channel is through the local Emergency Services Coordinator or designee by phone, radio, or computer. The Emergency Services Coordinator will notify and communicate with Imperial County OES, who serves as the County OA EOC. The OA's responsibilities involve coordinating with the city and other organizations to deploy field-level emergency response personnel, activate EOCs, and issue orders to protect the public.

The MACS is the decision-making system used by member jurisdictions of the Imperial County OA. Agencies and disciplines involved at any level of the SEMS organization work together to facilitate decisions for overall emergency response activities, including the sharing of critical resources and the prioritization of incidents.

Multi-Agency or Inter-Agency Coordination

Multi-agency coordination or inter-agency coordination is a process that allows all levels of government and all disciplines to work together more efficiently and effectively. Multi-agency coordination occurs across jurisdictional lines, or across levels of government. The primary function of multi-agency coordination is to coordinate activities above the field level and to prioritize the incident demands for critical or competing resources.

In the EOC, representatives who are authorized to represent or commit agency resources and funds are brought together to form multi-agency coordination or inter-agency coordination groups. They typically include:

- Representatives from the County's departments and agencies
- Representatives from outside agencies including Special Districts, volunteer agencies, and private organizations
- Coordination with agencies not represented in the EOC may be accomplished through other methods of communication
- Involvement by all departments and agencies in the EOC action planning process is essential for effective emergency management within the County.

These groups can:

- Provide coordinated decision-making and strategic guidance to support incident management activities
- Allocate resources among cooperating agencies
- Establish priorities among incidents
- Harmonize agency policies
- Establish priorities for response
- Develop strategies for handling multi-agency response problems
- Share information
- Facilitate communications

Local, Regional, State, and Federal Systems Integration

Together, the NRF, SEMS, NIMS, ICS, and this EOP combine the capabilities and resources of various governmental jurisdictions, incident management and emergency response disciplines, NGOs, and the private sector into a unified, coordinated, and seamless national framework for managing domestic incidents. Emergency responders at the field level, DOC staff, EOC staff, department executives, elected officials, and PIOs all play important roles in effective, comprehensive incident management across the County.

Section 5: Concept of Operations

Preparedness

The preparedness phase involves activities undertaken in advance of an emergency. These activities develop operational capabilities and improve effective response to disasters. Disaster plans are developed and revised to guide disaster response and increase available resources. Planning activities include developing hazard analysis, writing mutual aid agreements, training response personnel, and improving public information and communications systems.

These preparedness activities are part of implementing the County OA plan, as well as related plans and procedures, which are always in effect to provide authorization to accomplish these essential preparedness activities.

Emergency Preparedness Activities and Collaboration

Imperial County engages in comprehensive emergency preparedness efforts and initiatives to enhance the community's resilience to disasters. Internally, OES coordinates with County departments and agencies to ensure that all staff receive regular preparedness education and training, enabling them to respond effectively to emergencies and maintain continuity of essential services. This includes periodic reviews of plans and annexes and conducting drills, tabletop exercises, and workshops to familiarize staff with emergency roles, responsibilities, and procedures.

Externally, Imperial County prioritizes inclusive preparedness activities by actively engaging with diverse stakeholders, including individuals with access and functional needs, CBOs, VOADs, faith-based groups, local governments, Special Districts, the private sector, and other relevant entities. Through partnerships and collaborative initiatives, the County provides targeted individual and group preparedness information to address the unique needs of these groups.

Disaster and Citizens Corps Council

Imperial County's Disaster Citizens Corps Council, dedicated to promoting disaster readiness among residents, supports preparedness activities. The Council focuses on communication, education, training, and volunteer service to empower individuals to safeguard their families, homes, and communities against natural or man-made disasters. The Council strengthens community resilience by conducting regular outreach and providing hands-on training opportunities. Additionally, the Imperial County Fire Department and OES provide staff and support to the Council and its committees, ensuring effective coordination and implementation of initiatives. The Council meets at least quarterly, or as needed, to evaluate progress and report annually to the Board of Supervisors, reinforcing its commitment to enhancing countywide preparedness.

Access and Functional Needs Advisory Group

Imperial County is developing an Access and Functional Needs Advisory Group (AFN Advisory Group). This group will exist beyond the development of this EOP to provide feedback and recommendations on improving inclusive emergency management practices. Through meaningful partnerships with emergency managers, the AFN Advisory Group will focus on the best ways to integrate, identify, and address whole community considerations throughout the emergency management process.

During the development of this EOP, OES actively identified, engaged with, and facilitated outreach with access and functional needs Planning Team Members for both EOP planning efforts and recruitment for the long-term Group. This Group will collaborate to discuss, evaluate, and enhance the integration of diverse populations in all aspects of emergency planning, preparedness, response, and recovery.

The AFN Advisory Group will be established to:

- Strengthen relationships between the County and disability leaders.
- Enhance staff knowledge through interaction with the disability community.
- Advise the County and surrounding jurisdictions on inclusive emergency planning.
- Foster trust between emergency managers and the community.
- Provide feedback to enhance inclusiveness in emergency management.
- Recommend improvements for emergency plans, training, and exercises.
- Ensure consistent delivery of emergency services (e.g., transportation, sheltering, communication).
- Advise on programs that build individual and community capacity.
- Promote positive outcomes through after-action initiatives.
- Share lived experiences to inform emergency management practices.

The AFN Advisory Group will consist of approximately 8-12 people, meeting at least once, quarterly via video conference and/or in person. The Committee shall consist of diverse members of Imperial County such as:

- Community Representatives
- Policy Makers
- Local Philanthropic Organizations

For additional information on forming the AFN Advisory Group and related efforts, refer to the 2024 Cal OES's Jurisdictional Guidance for the Development of an Access and Functional Needs Advisory Committee.²⁰

²⁰ California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). (n.d.). Jurisdictional guidance for the development of an AFN advisory committee. Retrieved from chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.caloes.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/AFN/Documents/AFN-Library/Cal-OES-Jurisdictional-Guidance-for-the-Development-of-an-AFN-Advisory-Committee.pdf

Family Resource Centers

Family Resource Centers (FRCs) in Imperial County provide essential support services to youth and families, with seven locations throughout the county. These centers offer a holistic approach, integrating medical, social, mental health, and educational programs to promote family well-being. Through collaboration with various agencies, FRCs connect families to resources that support student success and community resilience, including counseling, health screenings, parent education, financial assistance, and academic support. FRCs play a crucial role in strengthening families' health, education, and stability in the Imperial Valley.

Imperial County Fire Prevention Program

The Imperial County Fire Prevention Program helps to reduce injuries, fatalities, business interruptions, and property damage caused by fires and other emergencies. To achieve this, the Fire Prevention Bureau actively engages in public education annually. It conducts presentations for various audiences, including local businesses, public safety organizations, healthcare providers, and schools. During Fire Prevention Week in October, the Bureau reaches approximately 3,000 children in grades K-3 with targeted safety presentations.

The Bureau enforces the 2010 California Fire, Building, and Electrical Codes, along with relevant County Ordinances as outlined in the Imperial Municipal Code. Additionally, it adheres to National Fire Protection Association standards, Title 19 of the California Public Safety Code, and the California Health and Safety Code.

The Bureau also runs an annual fire inspection program designed to safeguard business owners, employees, and patrons. This program leverages in-service fire engine companies to conduct inspections, enhancing the safety of County businesses. These inspections allow firefighters to pre-plan facility responses while fostering relationships with business owners, managers, and employees.

Emergency Operations Plan

OES is responsible for preparing and maintaining the EOP. The EOP Base Plan sets the objectives and policy for the County, and therefore, changes require the approval of the Board of Supervisors. The Functional and Hazard-Specific Annexes and Support Documents are tactical and reference documents and contain information that may change frequently. The OES Assistant Director will also be directly responsible for updating and revising the Functional and Hazard-Specific Annexes without needing the board of supervisors' approval.

Training and Exercise Plan

Imperial County has a Training and Exercise plan that notifies departments and agencies of training opportunities associated with emergency management operations. It is the departments and agencies' responsibility to ensure the proper staff participation and to maintain training records.

County OES establishes a training schedule with applicable courses of instruction on an annual basis to meet SEMS and NIMS training requirements. The primary purpose of these



exercises are to evaluate and improve the emergency response plan upon which the event is based and improve inter-organizational collaboration.

Additionally, Exercises and drills are conducted to provide a valued training and learning experience for all participants. All emergency exercises are scheduled according to state and federal guidance and program requirements.

More information on the County IPP and training/exercise requirements can be found in the [Error! Reference source not found.](#) section.

Inclusive Emergency Preparedness

Emergency management activities and operations must be conducted without discrimination based on race, color, national origin, limited English proficiency, and disability. In line with Section 308 of the [Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act](#), discrimination is prohibited on the basis of race, color, religion, disability, nationality, sex, English proficiency, age, or economic status in all disaster assistance programs.

To ensure equitable access to services during emergencies, Imperial County continues to prioritize actions that address the needs of individuals with access and functional needs and culturally diverse communities. These actions include modifications to services, buildings, and communication to help individuals fully participate in all programs and activities in the most integrated setting. More details regarding inclusive activities conducted during the update of this EOP can be located in Section 11 of this EOP.

Access and Functional Needs Considerations

The County of Imperial is committed to ensuring that individuals with access and functional needs are considered prior to a disaster. In collaboration with neighboring jurisdictions and Cal OES, the County will comply with [Assembly Bill 2311](#) and [Assembly Bill 477](#). The overall goal of AB2311 and AB477 is to ensure emergency managers and planners integrate whole community considerations, stakeholders, and partners as they update and maintain their EOPs to address access and functional needs before, during, and after disasters.

These considerations may include the following:

- Develop a general understanding of Imperial County's access and functional needs population and needs.
- Work with County jurisdictions to ensure that alert and warning methods are accessible to persons with hearing, speech, and vision disabilities and non-English speakers.
- Assist the PIO in developing pre-scripted emergency messages and associated communication methods appropriate for all access and functional needs of community elements.
- Assess transportation plans to ensure they address accessible public and private transit providers, as needed, to evacuate individuals with access and functional needs. This includes a mechanism to track equipment when life safety requires separating of the equipment from the owner during an evacuation.

Cultural Competence

In alignment with SB 160, Cultural Competency requires a County to integrate cultural competence in the next update to its emergency plan. Additionally, SB 160 mandates that counties provide forums for community engagement with culturally diverse communities. The bill defines "culturally diverse communities" to include various groups such as different races and ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, age groups, people with disabilities, and individuals with limited English proficiency. This integration seeks to ensure that emergency communications, evacuation, sheltering, mitigation, and prevention efforts effectively serve culturally diverse communities within the County. Counties are also encouraged to establish community advisory boards to assist in cohosting, coordinating, and conducting outreach for these forums.²¹

In response to this legislation, Imperial County has engaged geographically diverse locations and culturally diverse communities during the development and preparation of this EOP. These efforts included, but are not inclusive to, the formation of a diverse planning committee, conducting both virtual and in-person community meetings, a community feedback survey, collaboration with local cultural organizations, leveraging the local Family Resource Centers, providing outreach materials in both English, Spanish and other languages upon request and identifying representatives for the formation of a County AFN Advisory Committee.

In addition to engaging culturally diverse communities, it is equally important to ensure that public education and awareness efforts are accessible, inclusive, and effectively communicate critical emergency preparedness information to all members of the community.

Public Education and Awareness

Public information is a vital function during all phases of emergency management and contributes greatly to saving lives, ensuring public health and safety, protecting property, and preserving the environment. All public information efforts must provide accurate, coordinated, accessible, culturally sensitive, and timely information with the public.

Public awareness campaigns and other public education materials are developed and disseminated to support community and individual emergency preparedness efforts before an incident occurs. Some pre-incident awareness and education programs, communication plans, and protocols conducted within Imperial County include, but are not limited to:

- **Access to Emergency Preparedness Resources:** Emergency preparedness resources are available to assist individuals, families, and communities in preparing for emergencies or disasters. Those resources can be found at <https://www.icpds.com/information/prevention-and-preparedness> and the County OES EOP webpage, which publishes the EOP's Base Plan on its website for public access and awareness.

²¹ California State Legislature, *Senate Bill No. 160*, 2019-2020 Reg. Sess. (California, 2019), <https://legiscan.com/CA/text/SB160/id/2055642>.



- **CERT Training:** Imperial County is in the process of initiating CERT trainings throughout the County to educate individuals about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and train them on basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.
- **Public Service Announcements on Preparedness/Alerts/Warnings:** Imperial County Public Service Announcements (PSAs) allow information sharing with the public through the media.

Prevention and Mitigation

Mitigation encompasses activities that provide a critical foundation for reducing the loss of life and property from natural and/or human-caused disasters.

Communities cannot control when an incident occurs, but by understanding the potential risks, jurisdictions can take proactive steps that can save lives and reduce property damage. Increasing resilience through mitigation activities (e.g., land use planning and adoption of disaster-resistant building codes) reduces incident response requirements and can ultimately reduce the complexity of emergency operations planning.

Mitigation efforts include, but are not limited to:

- Amend local ordinances and statutes, such as zoning ordinances, building codes, and other enforcement codes
- Initiate structural retrofitting measures
- Assess tax levies or abatements
- Emphasize public education and awareness
- Undertake flood control projects
- Remove fuel in areas having a high potential for wildfires
- Assess and alter land use planning

Hazard Mitigation Planning

The most recent update to the Imperial County MJHMP was completed in 2021. The MJHMP outlines the County's strategy to reduce the loss of life and property by minimizing the impact of the hazards it faces. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 requires jurisdictions seeking certain disaster assistance funding to have approved hazard mitigation plans. Mitigation planning is a long-term effort that aligns with Imperial County's broader strategic development and emergency management goals.

The primary objective of the MJHMP is to identify practical, meaningful, attainable, and cost-effective mitigation solutions to reduce the County's vulnerability to identified hazards and to minimize both human and financial losses in the aftermath of a disaster.

Development of the Imperial County MJHMP included the following key activities:

- **Reviewing Existing Plans and Resources:** Assessing the County's planning capabilities, securing political support, and gathering input and approval from all participating jurisdictions and stakeholders.



- **Conducting Risk Assessments:** Identifying and evaluating natural and human-made hazards that could impact the County. This process incorporated historical hazard data, projected future probabilities, and an analysis of the potential impacts on Imperial County's communities.
- **Performing Vulnerability Assessments:** Summarizing the effects of hazards on the County's critical infrastructure, essential services, and future development. Vulnerability assessments also provided estimates of potential financial losses to structures and resources in hazard-prone areas.
- **Setting Mitigation Goals and Objectives:** Using risk and vulnerability assessments to establish clear mitigation goals and objectives. These form the basis for developing a range of actionable, attainable mitigation strategies designed to reduce long-term vulnerabilities.
- **Utilizing the Action Plan:** Developing and refining an Action Plan to guide the adoption, implementation, monitoring, and updating of the MJHMP. This ensures the plan remains relevant and that mitigation goals and objectives are continuously pursued over time.

Hazard Mitigation Planning Group

During the development of the MJHMP the County established a Hazard Mitigation Planning Group. This group included representatives from all participating jurisdictions and key community stakeholders. Planning Group meetings provided a forum to:

- Explain the MJHMP development process.
- Review hazards of concern and rank their significance.
- Assess the risks and vulnerabilities posed by identified hazards to community members, buildings, and infrastructure.
- Discuss and finalize mitigation goals, objectives, and actions through thorough collaboration until consensus was achieved.
- Develop a Capability Assessment and Action Plan to ensure proposed mitigation actions were realistic, attainable, and aligned with available funding sources and resource capabilities.

The County's MJHMP serves as the foundation for hazard mitigation efforts and provides a roadmap for enhancing the County's resilience to future disasters. Additional information on Imperial County's mitigation activities can be found in the 2021 MJHMP.

Response

Response operations address emergencies within Imperial County regardless of size or magnitude. Although the County's response is contingent upon the type and magnitude of the emergency, many elements of response are similar. During this phase, emphasis is placed on saving lives and property, control of the situation and minimizing the effects of the disaster/emergency. Some of the basic elements of emergency response common to all types of emergencies include the following:

- Event recognition
- Notification of response personnel
- Mobilization of response personnel
- Activation of emergency response facilities and resources
- Situation reporting and assessment
- Public alerting and information
- Protective action determination and implementation
- Re-entry and recovery

A response to a major emergency will involve all the above elements. The type and magnitude of the emergency will determine the level of response necessary. Some emergencies can be preceded with a build-up period lasting from hours to days, which, if recognized, provides advanced warning to the population groups which might be affected. In certain instances, all of the emergencies addressed in the plan could be preceded by events that could be recognized as advance warning.

These slow building events allow Imperial County OA resources to be mobilized and prepare for emergency response. In other instances, emergencies can occur with little or no advance warning. This will require the County and resources to be mobilized just prior to or after the onset of the event. Since emergency preparedness involves planning for worst-case events, Imperial County is committed to being prepared to respond promptly and effectively and be able to access mutual aid resources if the response effort requires assistance beyond the County's capabilities.

During emergency response, the IC or EOC Director will set priorities, objectives, and strategies. Regardless of the magnitude of the emergency, Imperial County will focus on the following priorities throughout the response:

- Life Safety
- Protect Health and Safety
- Protect Property
- Preserve the Environment

Emergency Communication

In a majority of incident scenarios, field response agencies (e.g., fire, EMS, law enforcement, public works, public health, animal care) will be alerted about an incident by the public through the 911 system, non-emergent dispatch centers, or similar means. Immediate response is accomplished within the affected area by the appropriate agency(ies) with



jurisdictional authority. As appropriate, special districts, non-governmental organizations, and segments of the private sector may provide assistance. Responding agencies shall manage all incidents in accordance with ICS organizational structures, doctrine, and procedures. When an incident grows in complexity beyond the scope of initial response assets, field response personnel shall follow pre-established automatic and/or mutual aid agreements to acquire more field resource support.

As incidents exceed the capabilities of field resources and/or are determined to be noteworthy beyond a typical field response, notifications should be made to the proper entities and resources requested through the proper channels in accordance with SEMS. Notifications and resource requests should be made through dispatch centers, duty officers, or other identified emergency contacts (e.g., Department Emergency Coordinators) as appropriate.

Alert and Warning

The ability to alert and warn the public is an essential capability in the OA emergency organization's mission to protect the public's health and safety and save lives. The words "alert" and "warning" are often used interchangeably, but in the context of the Plan, those words are used in specific senses:

- **Alert:** A communication intended to attract public attention to an unusual situation and motivate individual awareness
- **Warning:** A communication intended to inform members of the public to take one or more protective actions in order to reduce losses or harm

The specific modalities used to disseminate alert and warning messages will depend on many variables, including the type and severity of the incident and the protective actions (e.g., evacuations, shelter-in-place orders, etc.) being issued by field IC/Cs.

Imperial County ALERTSense

ALERTSense is a free service that allows an individual to sign up and receive notifications about emergencies that may affect the locations they care about. This service allows emergency response agencies to send out accurate and up-to-date information about incidents that may significantly impact community members. These emergency alerts could be related to specific hazards that require action to be taken, such as evacuation, shelter in place, boil water, etc. In addition to receiving information on a wireless device, an individual may also sign up to receive notifications on a traditional landline phone. Adding people's addresses will provide geographically targeted alerts when an emergency impacts their specific location.

California State Warning Center

The mission of the CSWC is to be the central information hub for statewide emergency communications and notifications. The CSWC is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It is responsible for receiving, coordinating, verifying, and disseminating information about events within California or that could affect California. Incidents such as hazardous materials



spills, earthquakes, floods, significant fires, weather watches and warnings, and train derailments are examples of incidents reported to the CSWC. Local government is responsible for reporting any major incidents within their jurisdiction to the CSWC.

The CSWC maintains the California Warning System (CALWAS), which is part of the National Warning System and communicates with Cal OES Regional Offices and County Warning Points during an emergency.

California Law Enforcement Telecommunications Systems

The California Law Enforcement Telecommunications Systems (CLETS) is a high-speed message-switching system that became operational in 1970. CLETS provides law enforcement and criminal justice agencies access to various databases and the ability to transmit and receive point-to-point administrative messages to other agencies within California or via the National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System (NLETS) to other states and Canada. Broadcast messages can be transmitted intrastate to participating agencies in the Group Bulletin Network and to regions nationwide via NLETS. The state provides the computer hardware, switching center personnel, administrative personnel, and circuitry to one point in each county. The local departments provide the circuitry and equipment that link them to their county termination point. Numerous departments have message-switching computer systems and computer-aided dispatch systems that directly connect to CLETS. The CLETS terminal for Imperial County is housed at the Imperial County Sheriff's Office.

California Health Alert Network

Supplemental support during communications disruption can come from the California Health Alert Network (CAHAN) which is a secure, web-based communication and information system available on a 24/7 basis for the distribution of health alerts, dissemination of guidance documents, coordination of disease investigation efforts, preparedness planning, and other activities that strengthen state and local emergency preparedness and response. CAHAN provides a collaborative work environment between local and state health agencies and local providers and partners. Primary CAHAN functions include alerting via multiple communication methods (e.g., pager, email, fax, landline, and cell phone); and a role-based directory that allows communication between specific groups.

National Weather Service

The National Weather Service (NWS) provides warnings for weather, hydrologic, and climate needs for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters, and oceans. Imperial County receives its notifications from the San Diego Forecast Office, which prepares any necessary warning for the County. The Weather Service can access the National Warning System to announce severe weather information, which is disseminated to the County's warning points using the CALWAS. The levels of notifications that the NWS issues include statements, watches, advisories, and warnings.



Social Media

Social media is not considered an alert and warning system however it is used to supplement the information and protective actions being disseminated by alert and warning message campaigns. The County provides emergency notifications to the public through official social media channels including Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter).

It is important to note that updates via social media accounts may not be as quick and up to date as notifications sent out by EAS. OES is currently developing pre-scripted templates to ensure ready-to-use and incident/hazard-specific messaging to disseminate to the public in English and Spanish.

The County PIO will be reviewing and updating social communications plans, policies, and procedures to ensure multi-language templates (English and Spanish) are prepared in advance and determine American Sign Language (ASL), closed captioning, and alt text capabilities. The PIO will also be exploring other social media platforms to use in the future such as Tik Tok and neighborhood apps.

To ensure the community is informed about the emergency and the available resources, Imperial County uses a broad variety of accessible communication methods in addition to the social media channels, including:

- Emergency alerts, warnings, and notifications
- Press conferences
- Town hall meetings
- Digital and Static billboards/message signs
- Direct phone calls to clients and partner agencies
- Email correspondence
- In-person contact when necessary
- Television and/or Radio Broadcasting
- Newspapers
- School/Church messages

Notification and Mobilization

A critical component of the early response to any emergency incident or planned event is ensuring that the proper resources are notified and mobilized. As the scale and complexity of any incident grows, it remains essential that the appropriate components of the emergency organization are notified and mobilized as needed to support incident response.

Notifications and resource mobilization should account for jurisdictional responsibility and occur in line with SEMS guidelines. There are unique considerations depending on whether an incident occurs with no notice (e.g., earthquake) or if the incident occurs with lead time, as would be the case during incidents that can be forecast (e.g., severe weather) or planned events.

Resource Mobilization

The initial response to an incident is the responsibility of the affected local jurisdiction(s). First responders arrive at the scene and operate based on established field-level plans and procedures. Responding agencies manage all incidents according to ICS doctrine and procedures.

Response agencies deploy personnel and mobilize resources to support the incident response. Additional resources are continuously activated and mobilized as the event grows and evolves. These may include resources from within the affected jurisdiction and, if those are exhausted, from neighboring or unaffected jurisdictions.

Establishing Incident Command

First responders and affected jurisdictions establish Incident Command to manage and direct resources. The on-scene IC coordinates initial actions and creates the first Incident Action Plan (IAP), which outlines incident priorities, allocates resources and includes a common communications plan. A UC facilitates coordinated decision-making across jurisdictions and agencies if multiple jurisdictions or agencies are involved. In cases involving multiple incidents or large-scale operations, the IC may implement an Area Command to oversee these incidents, each managed by separate ICS organizations. An essential part of Incident Command is the identification of the Agency Administrator, who is responsible for overseeing agency or jurisdictional policy.

Emergency Operations Center Activation

Activation Procedure

The County EOC is activated when field response agencies need support, a countywide perspective is needed, or multiple departments need to coordinate. An activation will be approved by the County Administrator/EOC Director. The County OES Director, assisted by support staff, will be responsible for the physical activation of the EOC. The EOC will be partially or fully staffed to meet the demands of the situation. Depending on the scale of the emergency and level of activation the OES EOC Director will contact all EOC Section Coordinators and provide the EOC activation level.

The following County personnel are authorized to activate the County OA EOC provided that all criteria for EOC activation are met:

- Chairman of the Board of Supervisors
- County Executive Officer
- County Fire Chief/OES Coordinator
- County Assistant Fire Chief

Activation Triggers

The activation of the EOC would likely be required because of one or more of the following reasons:



- The emergency or event is of significant proportion and will require multi-jurisdictional involvement requiring augmentation of local, state, and federal personnel and resources.
- An emergency that has occurred or might occur of such magnitude will require a large commitment of resources from two or more County departments over an extended period.
- As a result of the emergency or event, an immediate large-scale evacuation is required as determined by the field IC.
- Any other condition that in the judgment of the OES Director required the activation of the EOC.
- When the Governor proclaims a State of Emergency in the area which includes the County of Imperial.
- Automatically upon the proclamation of a State of War Emergency, as defined by the California ESA.
- A Presidential Declaration of a National Emergency that affects the County of Imperial.

Activation Steps

The following steps will be taken to activate the EOC:

1. Contact Key Personnel:

- Notify the OES Coordinator or their designee.
- Inform the Imperial County Fire Department Communication Center.

2. Provide Identification and Situation Overview

- Identify yourself, and if requested, give a callback number for confirmation.
- Offer a brief overview of the emergency or disaster situation prompting the EOC activation.

3. Specify Activation Level:

- Request EOC staffing at the appropriate level (Monitoring, 3, 2, or 1).

The EOC Director will follow the activation procedures outlined in the Management Section of the EOC Standard Operating Procedure. In addition, EOC personnel will utilize the EOC SEMS Position checklist to ensure that individuals in specific roles during a disaster are performing their duties in alignment with SEMS. For additional details, please refer to the [Imperial County Functional Annex: EOC SEMS Positions Checklist](#).

Activation Levels

Event/Incident Monitoring

“Monitoring” refers to the staffing of an EOC facility to carry out duties related to a training exercise, a pre-planned event, or a minor incident that would not require the OA, Cal OES Region, and State EOC to activate in support.



County OES may bring responders into the EOC to assist in monitoring an event that has the potential to escalate to the point that activation is necessary.

County OES supports the OA with a Duty Officer who is on call 24 hours per day (24/7) and is always interested in such “monitoring” events. Under any circumstances, County OES must be notified if and when the EOC is formally activated.

Examples: Parades, holiday activities, sports events, political events, concerts, minor fire/hazmat, severe weather incidents, etc.

Listed below are the three (3) Levels of Activation. Establishing Levels of Activation facilitates the implementation of an appropriate emergency response. Levels of Activation ensure that assets are committed in phases according to the specific requirements of any threat or hazard. Increasing and decreasing EOC staffing is a principle of SEMS, and its incorporation of ICS as modified in the EOC environment.

Level 3 EOC Activation

Level 3 is often referred to as “Low-level Activation.” The EOC is staffed with the daily operating staff members of OES, who carry out additional duties in support of activation. DOCs may also be activated.

Level 3 may prompt the minimum staffing of the EOC with an Emergency Manager, PIO, Duty Officer, an Emergency Communications Services Officer, and a few EOC responders to specifically fill designated EOC sections (Management, Operations, Planning/Intelligence, Logistics, and/or Finance/Administration).

Per SEMS and ICS principles, if Section positions are not filled, the EOC Director/Manager is responsible for all sections. Section Coordinators and a situation assessment activity in the Planning and Intelligence Section may be included in this level, etc. These additional duties often include communication, coordination, monitoring, receiving, and distributing information pertaining to an emergency or disaster. After hours, a **Level 3** EOC Activation is usually staffed by the on-call County OES Duty Officer.

Level 2 EOC Activation

Transitioning to a **Level 2 activation** means that Level 3 staffing has been deemed insufficient to meet the needs of the incident and additional positions are needed in the EOC.

Level 2 is often referred to as “Medium-level Activation.” The EOC is staffed with the daily operating staff members of County OES who carry out additional duties in support of activation. Additional trained EOC responders are also called in to staff specific functions within the Management, Operations, Planning/Intelligence, Logistics and Finance/Administration per SEMS/NIMS protocols. This may involve staffing the unfilled Section Chief positions and some Branch and Unit positions as needed. The decision to call in additionally trained EOC responders is based upon the magnitude and scale of the emergency or disaster as determined by the EOC Director.

A **Level 2** activation may necessitate a 24-hour A-shift/B-shift operation. After hours, a **Level 2** EOC Activation may be staffed by a reduced number of EOC Responders in the EOC or by an on-call County OES Duty Officer. Staffing is at the discretion of the EOC Director or designee as guided by incident\activities. County DOCs may also be activated.

Level 1 EOC Activation

Level 1 is often referred to as “Full or High-level Activation.” This encompasses the staffing of **Levels 3** and **2** along with additional trained EOC Responders to staff most, if not all, of the positions within the Management, Operations, Planning/Intelligence, Logistics and Finance/Administration SEMS Sections. All Sections have Section Chiefs, and most Branches and Units are also staffed.

During a **Level 1** Activation, the EOC operates on a 24-hour basis, rotating personnel into the EOC on 12-hour shifts. County DOCs may also be activated.

Figure 8: EOC Activation Levels

Activation Level	Condition/Definition	Staffing Requirement
Normal Operations/Duty Officer Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duty Officer Status Steady State Operations OES maintains situational awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duty Officer Only
Level 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small to moderate event / pre-planned event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EOC Director PIO Operations Section Coordinator Planning Section Coordinator
Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large-scale disasters requiring a high amount of state involvement and support from one or more County departments or local jurisdictions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EOC Director PIO Liaison Officer General Staff, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Section Coordinator Others as needed
Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catastrophic disaster that requires comprehensive state-level response and/or assistance or requires the response from multiple County departments and jurisdictional representatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EOC Director and Command Staff General Staff, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations Section Coordinator Planning Section Coordinator Logistics Section Coordinator

Activation Level	Condition/Definition	Staffing Requirement
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representatives from responding County departments Section staff as needed

Operational Period/Incident Action Planning

FEMA defines an Operational Period as, “the period of time scheduled for executing a given set of operational actions as specified in the IAP. The length of the operational period is typically 12 to 24 hours at the beginning of an incident requiring extensive response efforts and are subsequently reviewed and adjusted throughout the life cycle of the incident as operations require.

Typically, during OA EOC activations, the operational period may be a 12-hour shift for EOC responders. However, the initial operational period may vary from less than 12 hours or may exceed 12 hours depending on the severity of the incident and the availability of EOC responders.

Although many important tasks are accomplished during this initial period, efforts focus primarily on situational awareness and establishing initial incident priorities. Gaining an understanding of the situation includes gathering, recording, analyzing, and displaying information regarding the scale, scope, complexity, and potential incident impacts.

Comprehensive situational awareness is essential in order to develop and implement an effective IAP (IAP – Field Level) or EAP (EAP – EOC Level), a written plan that defines the incident objectives and reflects the tactics necessary to manage an incident during an operational period. Incident objectives answer the question of what must be accomplished during the operational period. The IAP is a set of activities, repeated each operational period that provides a consistent rhythm and structure to incident management.

Shift Change

Before the initial operational period concludes and it has been determined that the incident requires multiple operational periods, shifts will be changed at the designated intervals until deactivation. Shift changes should allow for a one-half-hour overlap to brief incoming personnel and would generally be scheduled one hour later than field personnel to stagger personnel during a shift change.

Emergency Operation Center Deactivation and Demobilization

As the incident diminishes, the EOC Director will evaluate the need to continue to modify or scale back EOP operations and/or staffing. At the appropriate point, the EOC Director will close EOC operations and demobilize all resources. Upon deactivation of their specific sections of the EOC or the entire organization, it is critically important that all documentation is collected and filed for subsequent recovery operations. EOC Responders must follow the deactivation procedures outlined in each Section of the EOC SOG.



Following smaller incidents, deactivation of the EOC will typically take place after on-scene incident management activities have ceased, when it is determined that on-scene personnel have the incident fully contained and there is limited or no possibility of escalation, or when the incident has become small and specific enough that a single DOC can manage the incident alone.

When de-activation occurs, EOC staff is responsible for:

- Ensuring that any open actions not yet completed will be taken care of after the deactivation
- Ensuring that all required forms or reports are completed and turned in prior to deactivation
- Being prepared to submit and/or participate in developing an AAR

Demobilization

The decision to demobilize will be made by the IC based on the status of the incident and the readiness of the County to transition back to normal operations. Once the decision to demobilize is made, the Planning Section will initiate the following demobilization steps:

- **Assessment of Operations:** The Planning Section will review the current operational status and determine which incident response elements are no longer required. This will include evaluating resources, staffing levels, and operational needs.
- **Resource Release:** The Planning Section will coordinate with relevant departments to begin the release of unused or excess resources, including equipment, personnel, and supplies. Resources will be returned to their original locations or redistributed as needed.
- **Staff Deactivation:** Incident response staff will be debriefed, and non-essential personnel will be released in phases. All staff will be informed of their demobilization status, and clear instructions will be provided regarding their next steps.
- **Return to Normal Operations:** The hospital will begin transitioning back to its standard operational procedures. This includes restoring any temporary measures put in place during the response, ensuring all essential services are fully operational, and communicating with hospital departments to ensure a smooth transition.
- **Recovery Phase Initiation:** Concurrent with the return to normal operations, the recovery phase will begin. This involves assessing the impact of the incident on the hospital's infrastructure, systems, and patient care, and implementing strategies for full recovery.
- **Debriefings and AARs:** As part of the demobilization process, the IC, in collaboration with the Planning Section Chief, will ensure that all incident staff participate in debriefing sessions. These debriefings will provide valuable insights into the response and highlight lessons learned. The AARs will be compiled to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan, identify areas for improvement, and inform future planning efforts.
- **Documentation and Reporting:** The Planning Section will ensure that all demobilization activities are thoroughly documented, including the return of resources, staff deactivation, and any logistical adjustments. Final reports will be prepared for review by the IC, senior leadership, and relevant stakeholders.

The IC, in coordination with the Planning Section Chief, will oversee the entire demobilization process, ensuring that it is executed efficiently and that lessons learned are integrated into future preparedness and response planning.

Emergency Proclamations and Disaster Declarations

In California, emergency proclamations play a critical role in activating state and federal resources in response to disasters. Emergency proclamations expand the emergency powers and authorities of the state and its political subdivisions. They also provide a mechanism for unaffected jurisdictions to provide resources and assistance to the affected jurisdictions.

The California ESA provides for three types of emergency proclamations:

- Local Emergency
- State of Emergency
- State of War Emergency

The California Health and Safety Code also establishes the ability of a local Health Officer to declare a *Local Health Emergency*.

At the Federal level, the Robert T. Stafford Act provides the President of the United States the ability to declare the following:

- Presidential Declaration of an Emergency
- Presidential Declaration of a Major Disaster

An overview of each level of an emergency proclamation/declaration is provided below.

Local Emergency Proclamation

The local governing body of a city, county, or an official designated by an adopted local ordinance (e.g., Chair of the Board of Supervisors, County Chief Executive Officer, City Mayor, City Manager, etc.) may proclaim a Local Emergency if there is an extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the territorial limits of a county, city, or where the proclaiming entity is overwhelmed and unable to abate an existing or potential emergency.²²

A Local Emergency proclamation provides some of the following provisions or considerations:

- Activates pre-established local emergency provisions such as special purchasing and contracting
- Allows the governing body to require the emergency services of any local official or employee and grants the authority to acquire or commandeer supplies and equipment for public use

²² California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. 2022. Cal OES Proclamation and CDAA Process Fact Sheet 2022-6. California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. <https://www.caloes.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Cal-OES-Proclamation-and-CDAA-Process-Fact-Sheet-2022-6.pdf>.



- Authorizes designated officials the ability to promulgate or suspend orders and regulations necessary to provide for the protection of life and property, including issuing orders or regulations imposing a curfew within designated boundaries
- Provides the ability to conduct emergency operations with broadened immunities from legal liability for performance or failure of performance
- Prerequisite for requesting the Governor's Proclamation of a State of Emergency and/or a Presidential Declaration of an Emergency or Major Disaster

As provided in the Imperial County Code, a local emergency may be proclaimed for good and sufficient causes by:

- The Board of Supervisors acts as a body if the Board is in session; or, if the Board is not in session;
- The Director of Emergency Services/Chief Executive Officer
- Whenever a local emergency is proclaimed when the Board of Supervisors is not in session, the Board shall take action to ratify the proclamation **within seven (7) days (Govt. Code Section 8630 ((b))**.
- The Board shall review the Local Proclamation at its regularly scheduled meetings **every 60 days** until the Local Emergency is terminated²³

Process for Proclaiming a Local Emergency

The process for proclaiming a Local Emergency is guided by the requirements of the California ESA, a jurisdiction municipal code, and is subject to general SEMS considerations. Imperial County Local Emergency proclamations are subject to compliance with the County's Emergency Ordinance (Chapter 2.104.060 of the County Code of Ordinances). The Emergency Ordinance grants the Board of Supervisors the authority to proclaim a Local Emergency. If the Board is not in session, the following, in priority order, are authorized by ordinance to proclaim: the Chair of the Board, the Chief Executive Officer, and the Director of Emergency Services or designee.

When the County has proclaimed a Local Emergency based upon conditions that include both incorporated and unincorporated territory of the County, it is not necessary for the cities to also proclaim the existence of a local emergency independently. Emergency proclamations also are not a prerequisite for rendering mutual aid and assistance under existing agreements or requesting assistance from the ARC or state agencies. They also are not a requirement to be eligible for Fire Management Assistance Grants, disaster loan programs designated by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), or disaster programs under the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Special districts will be included under a local emergency proclamation from the County. Under Public Contract Code §20567, §22002, and §22050, a Special District may proclaim a "District Emergency" that will allow for suspension of competitive bidding processes and spending thresholds when authorized by a four-fifths vote by the district's governing body

²³ California Government Code § 8630 (2024). Retrieved from [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=GOV§ionNum=8630#:~:text=\(a\)%20A%20local%20emergency%20may,adopted%20by%20that%20governing%20body](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=GOV§ionNum=8630#:~:text=(a)%20A%20local%20emergency%20may,adopted%20by%20that%20governing%20body)



in emergency situations. Individual district policies and procedures should direct the appropriate course of action.

When a local government requests a Governor's State of Emergency Proclamation, Directors' concurrence, and/or California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA) funding, the local government must provide information on local response efforts and specify the type and extent of state emergency assistance needed. This includes identifying any regulatory waivers required to ensure the protection of life and property during the response.

Each political subdivision within the Imperial County OA maintains the authority and responsibilities to proclaim an emergency within its jurisdiction, following the procedures set by its governing body. The Imperial County Board of Supervisors retains the authority to proclaim an emergency for the County and its geographic area, as outlined in County Ordinance Chapter 2.104.

Notification Process

The following is the notification process for local governments proclaiming an emergency consistent with the SEMS, Government Code Section 8607:

- Local governments should notify the OA and provide a copy of the local emergency proclamation as soon as possible.
- The OA will then notify the Cal OES Southern Region and forward a copy of the proclamation, and if applicable, the governing board resolution.
- The Cal OES Southern Region will ensure notification to the Cal OES Director and Deputy Directors and shall be the primary contact between the Cal OES Director, OA, and local jurisdictions for updates on any requests for assistance.
- The Cal OES Director will respond in writing to the local government regarding the status of any requests for assistance included within the local proclamation or accompanying documentation.

Governor's Proclamation of a State of Emergency

The Governor may proclaim a State of Emergency based on the County or local governing body's formal request and Cal OES's recommendation. If appropriate, the Governor will draft and sign the formal Proclamation. A proclaimed State of Emergency grants the Governor expanded emergency powers, including the authority to:

- Exercise police powers within the designated area, as allowed by the State Constitution and California laws.
- Commandeer public and private property and personnel, ensuring resources are available and dedicated to the emergency.
- Direct state agencies to utilize personnel, equipment, and facilities to prevent or alleviate damage from the emergency, and to provide supplemental services and equipment to local governments to restore essential services and protect public health and safety.

A local governing body's request is not always necessary for the Governor to proclaim a State of Emergency. The Governor may do so if the safety of people and property is threatened by extreme peril or if emergency conditions exceed the local authorities' capacity to respond.

CDAА Request Process

As set forth in the California Government Code, Title 2, Division 1, Chapter 7.5 – CDAА only a governing body of a city (mayor or chief executive), county (chairman of a board of supervisors or county administrative officer), or city and county may seek financial assistance through CDAА, by order of a **Director's Concurrence** or **Governor's Proclamation**. The request for CDAА can be included in a local emergency proclamation; however, it is more appropriate to request CDAА on separate letterhead once the governing body has identified and can certify that local resources are insufficient, and the situation is beyond its capabilities. CDAА authorizes the Cal OES Director, at his/her discretion, to provide financial assistance to repair and restore damaged public facilities and infrastructure. Cal OES must receive a request from the local government **within 10 days** after the actual occurrence of a disaster (Govt. Code Section 8685.2).

Verification of Damages

When the governing body submits its local emergency proclamation to the Cal OES Regional Operations, the package should include an Initial Damage Estimate (IDE). An IDE is the local government's identification of the impacts and local response and recovery activities. The IDE assists Cal OES in understanding the jurisdiction's damages and prioritizing Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) efforts, which can lead to a state or federal disaster declaration. An OA must include all its affected governing bodies (cities, towns, etc.), special districts (school districts, water districts, community services districts, etc.), and private non-profit organizations within the IDE. Cal OES Regional Operations then forward the IDE to Cal OES headquarters, which includes a Regional Event Summary (RES) delineating the event's impact.

An IDE should include:

- Type and extent of public and private sector damage;
- Estimates of damages and emergency response costs; and
- Any acute public health and environmental issues

To assist the Governor in determining if funding under CDAА should be granted, the IDE and RES are reviewed, and if warranted, a State pre-assessment is conducted by Cal OES Recovery. Cal OES works with local jurisdictions' emergency management and/or public safety agencies in the OA's affected by the disaster event to accomplish these assessments. Once a determination is made, Cal OES will notify the requesting jurisdiction in a timely manner (verbally by Cal OES Region and in writing by Cal OES Recovery).

Local Health Emergency

Under California Health and Safety Code Section 101080, the local Health Officer has the authority to declare a Local Health Emergency when there is an imminent threat from any contagious, infectious, or communicable disease, chemical agent, noncommunicable

biological agent, toxin, or radioactive substance within the jurisdiction. The Local Health Emergency will not remain in effect for more than seven days unless ratified by the Board of Supervisors or city council, depending on the jurisdiction. The need for continuing the Local Health Emergency must be reviewed at least every 30 days until it is lifted. The emergency should be terminated as soon as conditions allow.

State of Emergency

The Governor of California, or the Cal OES Director if the Governor is inaccessible, can proclaim a State of Emergency based on the formal request from the local governing body and the recommendation of Cal OES. The Governor may also proclaim a State of Emergency without a request from the local governing body if they determine that the circumstances described in Section 8558(c), Chapter 7 of Division 1 of Title 2 of the Government Code are met, or that local authority is inadequate to deal with an emergency. The Governor has expanded emergency powers during a proclaimed State of Emergency. A State of Emergency proclamation provides some of the following provisions or considerations:

- The Governor is vested with the power to use and commandeer public and private property and personnel to ensure all resources within California are available and dedicated to the emergency when requested
- The Governor can direct all state agencies to utilize and employ personnel, equipment, and facilities for the performance of any and all activities designed to prevent or alleviate actual and threatened damage due to the emergency. They can direct them to provide supplemental services and equipment to political subdivisions to restore any services to provide for the health and safety of the residents of the affected area
- The Governor may make, amend, or rescind orders and regulations during an emergency and temporarily suspend any non-safety-related statutes, or ordinances, regulations, or rules that impose restrictions on the emergency response activities
- Authorizes Cal OES Director to provide financial relief for emergency actions and restoration of public facilities and infrastructure
- Prerequisite when requesting a Presidential Declaration of Emergency or Major Disaster

State of War Emergency

In addition to a State of Emergency, the Governor can proclaim a State of War Emergency whenever California or the nation is attacked by an enemy of the United States or upon receipt by California of a warning from the federal government indicating that such an enemy attack is probable or imminent. The powers of the Governor granted under a State of War Emergency are commensurate with those granted under a State of Emergency.

Presidential Declaration of an Emergency

The President of the United States can declare an Emergency under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act thereby providing federal government resources to support the states' response, recovery, and mitigation activities. The President

can declare an emergency for any occasion or instance when they determine federal assistance is needed. Emergency declarations supplement state and local or tribal government efforts in providing emergency services, such as the protection of lives, property, public health, and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of a catastrophe in any part of the United States. The total amount of assistance provided for in a single emergency may not exceed \$5 million. The President shall report to Congress if this amount is exceeded. While Presidential Declarations under the Stafford Act release federal resources and funding to support response and recovery, federal agencies may also provide assistance under other authorities or agreements that do not require a Presidential Declaration.

Presidential Declaration of a Major Disaster

The President of the United States can also declare a Major Disaster under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. The President can declare a major disaster for any natural event, including any hurricane, tornado, storm, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, tsunami, earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide, mudslide, snowstorm, or drought, or, regardless of cause, fire, flood, or explosion, that the President determines has caused damage of such severity that it is beyond the combined capabilities of state and local governments to respond. A major disaster declaration provides a wide range of federal assistance programs for individuals and public infrastructure, including funds for both emergency and permanent work. When certain eligibility criteria are met, a Presidential Declaration of Major Disaster can make certain FEMA disaster assistance programs available, including Public Assistance (PA), Individual Assistance (IA), and Hazard Mitigation Assistance.

Evacuation and Transportation

Evacuation

The Sheriff's Office has led responsibilities in emergencies involving evacuations within Imperial County. The Sheriff's Office will provide:

- Situation estimates
- Allocate a liaison officer, preferably of supervisory rank
- Allocate the liaison at the established ICP
- Control of emergency vehicle ingress and egress routes
- Establish and maintain perimeter security
- Communicate with people within the area involved, warning them to leave and directing them to a pre-determined shelter location
- Secure the evacuated area and shelter care location

Evacuations are planned and executed as a coordinated effort by all first responder partners. Once an incident is deemed to potentially endanger the public where evacuation is necessary to preserve life safety, the Sheriff's Office will coordinate with County OES and other response partners to determine when, if, and how to evacuate.

In coordination with the Sheriff's Office, County OES is developing an evacuation plan to coordinate and support the safe and effective evacuation of the Imperial County population.

The evacuation plan will account for individuals with access and functional needs by ensuring accessible transportation resources that comply with the ADA. These individuals may rely on public or specialized transportation to evacuate safely during disasters. State law (Gov. Code §§ 8593.3(a) and 8593.9(b)) emphasizes the need for inclusive planning and coordination.

Involvement of Access and Functional Needs Representatives

Access and functional needs representatives play a critical role in developing emergency evacuation and plans. Their involvement ensures that the needs of individuals with disabilities and other functional limitations are addressed. Access and functional needs representatives typically participate in:

- Planning committees and workshops.
- Conducting community needs assessments.
- Reviewing and advising on policies, procedures, and resource allocation.
- Recommending strategies for ensuring accessibility in evacuation, shelters and transportation systems.

For additional information on inclusive evacuation planning, please refer to Cal OES's Integrated Evacuation Planning for Jurisdictions and Individuals with Access and Functional Needs.²⁴

Animal Evacuations

In support of human evacuations, the Imperial County Public Health Department's Animal Care and Control (ACC) will facilitate the evacuation of domestic animals. This effort is coordinated through ACC staff, local agencies, and volunteer organizations. The ACC also provides shelter for animals removed from evacuation zones by their owners, volunteers, or ACC personnel.

The primary objective is to relocate animals from hazardous areas to safe locations that meet their immediate needs, including food, water, shelter, and medical care. Additional efforts include identifying lost and found animals, arranging temporary sheltering, and supporting disaster recovery efforts such as foster care, reunification, long-term sheltering, and humane disposal when necessary.

Animal Care and Control Responsibilities

- Coordinates and oversees the evacuation of domestic animals;
- Provides boarding services for animals displaced by disasters; and works in collaboration with local law enforcement, fire departments, and emergency response agencies.

Emergency Response Activation

²⁴ California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. n.d. Cal OES Integrated Evacuation Planning Guide. California Governor's Office of Emergency Services. <https://www.caloes.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/AFN/Documents/AFN-Library/Cal-OES-Integrated-Evacuation-Planning-Guide.pdf>.



During work hours, ACC or County Dispatch notifies the ACC Supervisor of an emergency requiring staff response. After hours, the on-call ACC staff is alerted to prepare for deployment.

Initial Response Actions:

- Mobilization of Personnel: Staff, including field and shelter services, are placed on duty, on-call, or on standby as needed.
- Coordination with Key Agencies: maintain open communication with County Fire and Sheriff's Office; Establish contact with the American Red Cross to coordinate sheltering efforts; and communicate with volunteer organizations and external resources for additional support.
- Operational Preparedness: Set up a staging area for response efforts; and Implement tracking systems for rescued and sheltered animals; Incident Response & Evacuation Efforts.

ACC staff, whether on duty, on standby, or on-call work in coordination with local law enforcement and fire officials within the ICS to evacuate domestic animals from voluntary and mandatory evacuation areas. All available resources are deployed while ensuring that essential services continue throughout the county. Prioritization is based on the severity and needs of the incident. Animal evacuation efforts may be initiated at the request of the EOC or the Public Health DOC in response to a local hazard or in support of another jurisdiction.

Transportation

When local evacuations become necessary, ensuring that all community members, including those with access and functional needs, have equitable access to transportation, medical needs, and essential resources is imperative. This includes maintaining connections with family members, personal caregivers, service animals, and essential equipment and technologies.

To be compliant with the ADA (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq.) for individuals who are dependent on public transportation (Gov. Code § 8593.3 subd. (a) and § 8593.9 subd. (b)). The County recognizes the importance of advanced planning to meet the transportation needs of individuals with access and functional needs during large-scale evacuations.

Imperial County's Active Transportation Plan addresses the specific needs of individuals with mobility impairments, cognitive or sensory disabilities, and those facing transportation disadvantages. Transportation partners, coordinated through the IC or OES, support community evacuation efforts to ensure timely and safe movement.²⁵

All Imperial Valley Transit (IVT) vehicles are fully equipped with wheelchair lifts or ramps and a securement area with space for two wheelchairs. Most IVT buses kneel by lowering the front steps for easier boarding by passengers with mobility limitations. This ensures that individuals with mobility challenges have reliable and accessible transportation during

²⁵ Imperial County Public Works Department. (2019). Imperial County Transportation Plan (Final IATP Report, Version 2). Retrieved from https://publicworks.imperialcounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Final_IATP-Report_v2-February-2019-1.pdf



evacuations. According to the Imperial County Transportation Commission, all available transportation services and vehicles will be utilized to serve the County during emergencies. IVT maintains a fleet of over 60 vehicles with a total seating capacity of approximately 1,000 passengers, supported by 65 drivers. The fleet consists of 16 forty-foot buses, 14 twenty-seat buses, 16 passenger buses, and six passenger vans, all of which are ADA-accessible.

Moreover, Imperial County has MOUs in place with local school districts to utilize school buses during emergencies. These agreements ensure that buses can be mobilized to support evacuation efforts, transport residents to designated shelters, and assist in the relocation of individuals with access and functional needs.

Additionally, the Imperial County Sheriff's Office department has 17 transportation vehicles and a dedicated bus for inmate transportation. Emergency evacuation planning incorporates County Fleet resources, strengthening local transportation capabilities during disasters.

The County will ensure that emergency evacuation transportation resources are accessible to everyone, including those located in homes, apartments, schools, homeless encampments, and medical or nursing facilities. In addition, the County will also assess how individuals with access and functional needs access transit resources in community areas with limited public transportation options.

Mass Care and Shelter Operations

Mass Care and Sheltering

Mass care and sheltering is coordinated by County OES, Health and Human Services Agency and the ARC. Imperial County relies on ARC to organize and manage shelters. The ARC is also responsible for providing wrap-around services such as medication, dietary/nutrition, personal care assistance, ADA assessments, etc. to support displaced individuals. The County coordinates the need for accessible resources, such as cots, handwashing stations, portable restrooms, showers, manual wheelchairs, and other necessary equipment, to evacuees with access and functional needs considerations at shelters through ARC.

Once the ARC is engaged, County staff will support their efforts with additional staff and/or supplies. The ARC has a trailer staged in the County for specific use when a shelter is needed, including a trailer containing 100 cots, blankets, coffee pots, associated accessories, wheelchairs, and an activity box of items for children. If more emergency shelter supplies are needed, additional ARC trailers can be requested from other neighboring counties. Food and water for these shelters would be provided by the ARC, the County, and other volunteer groups.

When a shelter is activated, ARC immediately conducts an individual assessment for each client to determine their specific needs, including ADA accommodations. The following services are available to support individuals requiring specialized care:

- **Medical Assistance:** ARC has a Disaster Health Services team, consisting of licensed nurses, that provide medication support, first aid, and other necessary medical care.



- **Wrap-Around Services:** The Disability Integration Team is responsible for assisting clients with functional needs. They collaborate with local resources and agencies to ensure that clients receive the necessary support and services.
- **Dietary and Nutrition Support:** ARC has a feeding team that ensures that dietary restrictions and nutrition requirements are met for all clients.
- **Personal Care Assistance:** ARC coordinates with community partners to assist individuals requiring personal care support, such as mobility assistance or hygiene aid.
- **Accessible Resources:** ARC provides various resources for individuals with access and functional needs, including ADA-compliant cots, manual wheelchairs, and accessible restrooms and showers when available to ensure equitable access to emergency shelter services.
- **Communication and Needs Assessment:** When a shelter opens, an initial assessment is conducted, and a resource table is available most of the time to provide necessary communication resources and support.
- **Translation and Communication Accessibility:** ARC provides Video Response Interpreting (VRI) for ASL and other world languages, along with access to translators for multiple languages to assist non-English-speaking individuals.

Public Health and Behavioral Health collaborate with Social Services Department to deploy wrap-around service teams across the County. These teams offer comprehensive support to displaced individuals.

Additionally, the Public Health Department's Environmental Health Division conducts shelter assessments. Imperial County Behavioral Health Services professionals actively assess the needs of those affected by displacement, ensuring they receive appropriate medical and psychological care.

Imperial County will involve access and functional needs representatives in the planning and preparedness of emergency care, shelter plans, and exercises within the County. This will ensure that this population's specific needs and concerns regarding communication, maintaining health, independence, support, safety, determination, and transportation are considered in emergency planning.

Community Resilience Centers

Several fire stations within Imperial County are designated Resilience Centers. These newly established fire stations are equipped with generators and can serve to relieve community members during extreme heat or cold conditions. These stations can be found at the following locations:

- Station 7 at 8071 Luxor Ave in Niland, CA
- Station 3 at 1862 W Evan Hewes Highway in Seeley, CA
- Station 8 at 518 Railroad Ave in Winterhaven, CA

In addition, Imperial County Family Reunification Centers will also serve as conduits for sharing information on the location of other local city designated Resilience Centers during an emergency or disaster. The County will actively collaborate with the City Resilience Center to enhance coordination, resource sharing, and service accessibility during crises. There are



seven FRCs located throughout Imperial Valley in Brawley, Calexico, Calipatria-Niland, Central Union High School District, El Centro FACT, Heber, and San Pasqual. These centers provide accessible services for youth and their families by integrating medical, social, mental health, and educational resources. Through the collaboration of multiple agencies, the FRCs work to ensure the overall well-being of community members. .

The contact information for each center is as follows:

- **Brawley FRC** – (760) 312-6095
- **Calexico FRC** – (760) 768-3905
- **Calipatria-Niland FRC** – (760) 348-2101
- **Central Union FRC** – (760) 336-4540
- **El Centro FACT Center** – (760) 335-5170
- **Heber FRC** – (760) 337-6530
- **San Pasqual FRC** – (760) 572-0222 Ext. 6

Power Outage Support

The California Independent Systems Operator (ISO) oversees the California power grid, which includes a network of long-distance, high-voltage transmission lines and substations that transport bulk electricity to utilities within the County for distribution to customers. When the grid cannot meet electrical demand, the California ISO instructs utilities to reduce their load and issues emergency energy interruption notices. If operating reserves reach critical levels, the California ISO will alert the CSWC. The CSWC will then use official communication channels to notify the County of the energy alert.

Within the County, the IID, also referred to as the Utility District, maintains a presence in the EOC and coordinates response to power outages in coordination with SCE service areas as applicable. IID provides real-time updates on power grid conditions, potential outages, and estimated restoration times. They work closely with the County's OES to assess the impact of a power outage event on residents, businesses, and critical infrastructure.

During a power outage event, IID helps identify priority restoration areas and deploys resources accordingly to minimize disruptions to essential services, such as hospitals, cooling centers, and emergency response facilities. Additionally, IID supports efforts to assist AFN populations, ensuring that individuals relying on electrically powered medical equipment receive appropriate assistance.

Additionally, Southern California Edison (SoCal Edison) is responsible for servicing the upper extreme north of the County, requiring coordination between IID, SoCal Edison, and emergency management agencies to ensure a unified response to power disruptions across different service areas.

Recovery

Recovery focuses on the timely restoration, strengthening, and revitalization of infrastructure, housing, and a sustainable economy, as well as the health, social, cultural, historical, and environmental fabric of communities affected by a catastrophic incident.

At the onset of an emergency, actions are taken to enhance the effectiveness of recovery operations. Recovery is comprised of steps the County will take during and after an emergency to restore government function and community services to levels existing prior to the emergency. Recovery is both a short and long-term process.

Short-term operations seek to restore vital services to the community and provide for the basic needs of the public, such as bringing necessary lifeline systems (e.g. power, communications, water and sewage, disposal of solid and hazardous waste, or removal of debris) to an acceptable standard while providing for basic human needs (e.g. food, clothing, and shelter). Recovery also includes cost recovery activities.

The recovery period is also an opportune time to institute mitigation measures, particularly those related to the recent emergency. This is also the phase of reassessing procedures and functions of all annexes of this disaster plan for deficiencies. Resources to restore or upgrade damaged areas may be available if it can be shown extra repairs will mitigate or lessen the chances of, or damage caused by, another similar disaster in the future.

The recovery period is also an opportune time to institute mitigation measures, particularly those related to the recent emergency. This is also the phase of reassessing procedures and functions of all annexes of this disaster plan for deficiencies. Resources to restore or upgrade damaged areas may be available if it can be shown extra repairs will mitigate or lessen the chances of, or damage caused by, another similar disaster in the future.

Short-Term Recovery

Short-term recovery operations will begin during the Response phase of the emergency. Short-term recovery operations will include all the agencies participating in the OA.

The major objectives of short-term recovery operations include:

- Rapid debris removal and cleanup
- Orderly and coordinated restoration of essential services (electricity, water, and sanitary systems)

The goal of short-term recovery is to restore local government to at least a minimal capacity. Short-term recovery includes:

- Expanded social, medical, and mental health services
- Re-establishment of the County continuity of government
- Re-establishment of transportation routes
- Abatement and demolition of hazardous structures



Long-Term Recovery

The goal of long-term recovery is to restore facilities to pre-disaster conditions if this is desirable. Long-term recovery activities include hazard mitigation activities, restoration or reconstruction of public facilities, and disaster response cost recovery.

The major objectives of long-term recovery operations include:

- Coordinated delivery of social and health services
- Recovery of disaster response costs
- Effective integration of mitigation strategies into recovery planning and operations to ensure a maximum reduction of vulnerability to future disasters
- Re-establishing the local economy to pre-disaster levels

Recovery Organization

State and Federal response and recovery operations will be mutually coordinated with the OA to ensure effective mobilization of resources to, and in support of, the impacted jurisdictions in accordance with the California Catastrophic Incident Base Plan: Concept of Operations dated September 23, 2008.

For the County, recovery operations will be managed and directed by the County Executive Officer. The County Executive Officer and designated representatives will coordinate and manage recovery issues involving OA jurisdictions and Special Districts.

As illustrated in Figure 9, County Fire, OES, Public Works, and other designated County staff will assist the County Executive Officer in facilitating and leading the recovery process. County departments will also be represented and responsible for specific functions throughout the recovery process. Refer to Table 10 for a detailed breakdown of the roles and functions assigned to each department and agency involved in the recovery process.

Figure 9. Recovery Operations Organization Chart

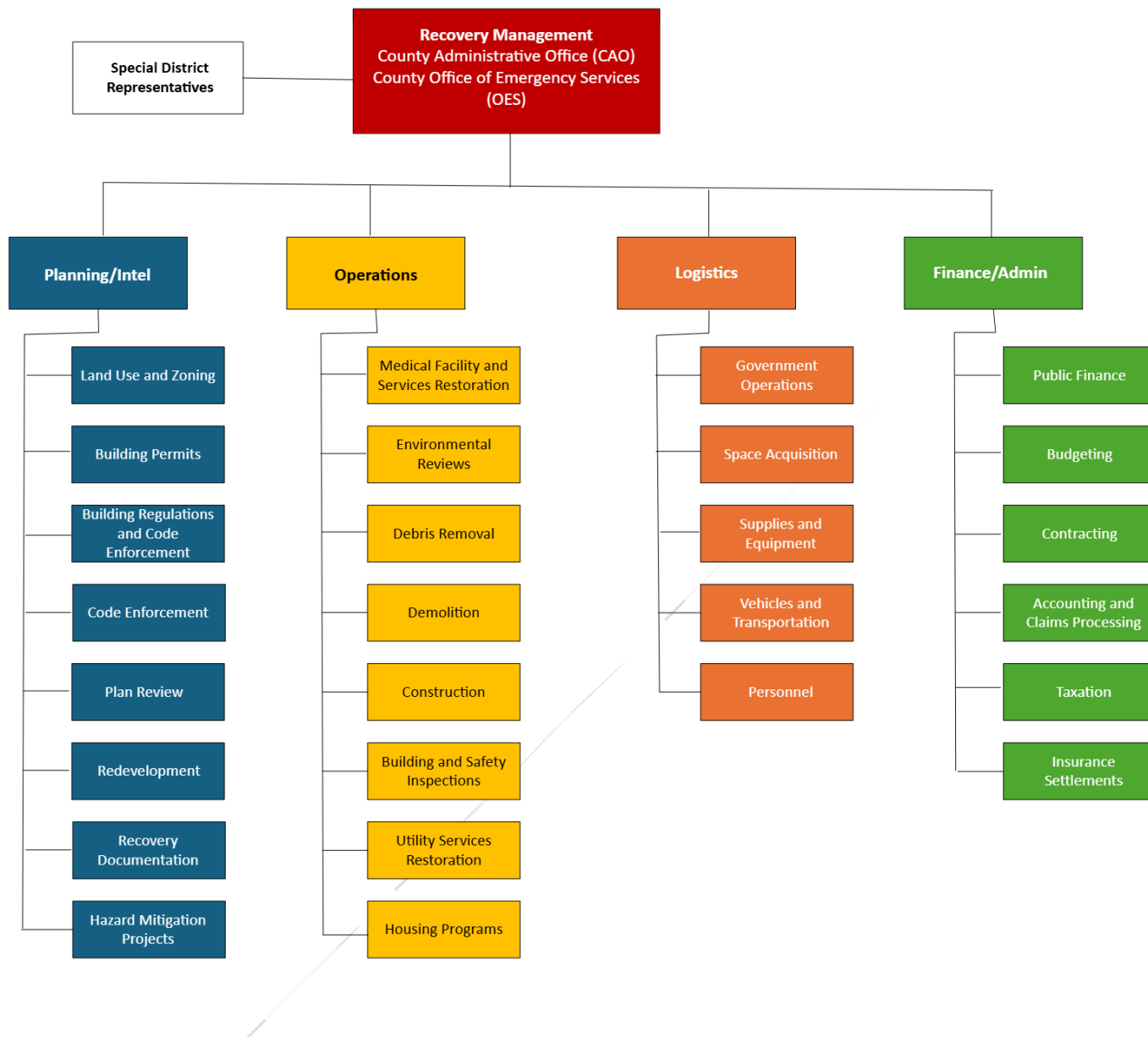


Table 10. Recovery Operations Responsibilities

Departments/Agencies	Function
County Executive Office	Political process management, interdepartmental coordination, policy development, decision-making, and public information. Government operations and communications, space acquisition, supplies and equipment, vehicles, personnel, and related support.
County Counsel	Emergency authority, actions, and associated legal risks and liabilities advisor, preparation of legal opinions, and preparation of new and amended ordinances, resolutions, and emergency proclamations.
County Land Use Services and City/Town Planning Departments	Land use and zoning variance, permits and controls for new development, revision of building regulations and codes, code enforcement, plan review, and building and safety inspections.
County Public Works/Solid Waste and County Special Districts	Debris removal, demolition, construction, management of and liaison with construction contractors, and restoration of utility services.
County Public Health/ICEMS	Restoration of Public Health medical facilities and associated services and performance of environmental reviews.
Community and Economic Development	Administrator of PA programs; including low-income and accessible housing needs. Public finance, contracting, accounting claims processing, and insurance settlements.
County Auditor/Controller-Procurement Services and Risk Management	Public finance, contracting, accounting claims processing, and insurance settlements.
County OES	Applications for disaster financial assistance, liaison with assistance providers, and onsite recovery support.



Recovery Damage/Safety Assessment

The recovery damage/safety assessment is the basis for determining the type and amount of State and/or Federal financial assistance necessary for recovery. County OES staff will prepare and file an IDE with Cal OES during the incident to support a request for a gubernatorial proclamation and for use by Cal OES to request a presidential declaration.

A detailed damage/safety assessment report will be coordinated through the incident with the County OES and other applicable County departments. Each County jurisdiction will complete a detailed damage/safety assessment and will forward this report to County OES for inclusion in the County's IDE report.

Building codes and land use regulations can reduce most of the structural damage that would otherwise result from a disaster. Nevertheless, damage will usually occur, and a fast and accurate assessment of conditions is essential for immediate response and long-term recovery.

Damage/safety assessment is a multi-department responsibility. A summary of those responsibilities follows:

- **Public Works** - Assessment of flood control systems, structures, and capabilities; damage related to debris; County transportation issues.
- **Fire** - Assessing situations where hazardous materials are involved. Also, will provide windshield (initial) surveys to assess damage, initiate initial life safety activity, and identify impacts to critical facilities.
- **Planning & Development** - Perform detailed physical damage assessment on a building-by-building basis on non-governmental buildings. Coordinate engineering contracts and volunteer services.
- **Assessor** - Utilize damage assessment information to correlate, verify, and document damage assessment losses in dollar values. Coordinate with Fire and Planning & Development.
- **Auditor/Controller** - Utilize damage assessment information collected to correlate, verify, and document losses in dollar values. Provide a financial basis for County claims for reimbursement from federal and state sources.
- **Facilities Management** - Responsible for both the initial and detailed assessment of all County buildings.
- **Sheriff** - Provide initial assessment of damage observed, identify impacts to critical facilities, and provide airborne surveillance where required.
- **Information Systems** - Provide initial and detailed assessments of damage to County telecommunications systems.
- **Public Safety Dispatch Centers** - Provide immediate assessment of structural integrity to determine its continued availability or use.
- **Public Health** - Obtain damage estimates from Public Health medical facilities.
- **OES** - Compile damage assessment data for transmission to Cal OES.

Recovery Documentation and Reporting

Recovery documentation and reporting are essential to recovering eligible emergency response and recovery costs. Timely damage/safety assessments, documentation of all incident activities, and accurate reporting will be critical in establishing the basis for eligibility for disaster assistance programs.

County OES is responsible for coordinating the preparation of the appropriate documentation for an incident and the development/filing of specific recovery reports to Cal OES.

The recovery documenting information should include the location and extent of damage, and estimates of costs for:

- Debris removal
- Emergency work
- Repairing or replacing damaged facilities to a non-vulnerable and mitigated condition
- The cost of compliance with building codes for new construction, repair, and restoration will also be documented. The cost of improving facilities may be provided under federal mitigation programs

After-Action Reports

Following the OA EOC deactivation, the County will conduct the process necessary to develop an AAR/Improvement Plan (IP), including a section addressing corrective actions.

What is an After-Action Report?

An AAR is a structured review process to evaluate an event, incident, or exercise. The purpose of an AAR is to analyze what happened, why it happened, and how future responses can be improved.

Key Elements of an AAR:

- Event Summary – Provides an overview of the incident, exercise, or operation.
- Objectives & Outcomes – Compares planned objectives with actual results.
- Strengths – Highlights successful actions and strategies.
- Areas for Improvement – Identifies challenges and gaps in response efforts.
- Recommendations & Action Plans – Suggests corrective actions to enhance future performance.

AARs are essential for continuous improvement in emergency management, public safety, business operations, and military training. They promote accountability, knowledge-sharing, and preparedness for future events.

AAR Coordination and Completion

Coordinating the AAR process when multiple agencies/jurisdictions are involved in the same emergency may be useful. Jurisdictions are encouraged to work together in the

development of AARs when appropriate and feasible. For example, an OA may take the lead in coordinating the development of an AAR, which involves several jurisdictions. If appropriate, jurisdictional reports may become part of an overall OA report.

Coordination is required in passing on information to and cooperating with other EOC Branches and elements of the emergency organization. The dissemination of information, establishment of priorities, and distribution of resources cannot be done by one person, agency or department. A concerted effort on the part of many individuals in many agencies or departments will be required.

County OES is responsible for completing the AAR according to the regulations noted above. The AAR will provide, at a minimum, the following:

- Serve as a source for documentation of response activities
- Identify problems/successes during emergency operations
- Analyze the effectiveness of the components of SEMS
- Describe and define a plan of action for implementation of improvements

The SEMS approach to using AARs emphasizes improving emergency management at all levels. The AAR provides an avenue for documenting system improvements and, if desired, providing a work plan for implementing these improvements.

For an example of how an AAR is organized, refer to FEMA's Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) [AAR/Improvement Planning HSEEP Template](#).

Local Government Reporting

SEMS regulations, outlined in Title IX, Division 2, Chapter 1, Section 2450(a), require any federal, state, or local jurisdiction that proclaims or responds to a Local Emergency for which the Governor has proclaimed a State of Emergency or State of War Emergency to submit an AAR to Cal OES **within 90 days** following the end of the emergency incident period. The AAR identifies corrective actions, documenting necessary improvements and guiding future disaster planning and training.

State AAR Report Coordinated by Cal OES

California ESA, Article 9.5, Government Code Section 8607(f) – The OES shall, in cooperation with involved state and local agencies, complete an AAR within 180 days after each **declared disaster**. This report should review public safety response and disaster recovery activities and shall be made available to all interested public safety and emergency management organizations.

Disaster Assistance Programs

Federal Individual Assistance Programs

The Federal Individual Assistance Program has been developed for the distinct needs of four distinct groups: individuals, businesses, agriculture, and government assistance. When requesting the implementation of disaster assistance programs, some key areas of concern

must be adequately addressed. These areas include the needs of distinct groups, disaster assistance available at each level of declaration, and the level of detail required on each request for disaster assistance.

County OES will complete the necessary federal program application and supporting materials for the County. Each jurisdiction and special district is responsible for completing and submitting the required documents for both state and federal PA programs.

The Disaster Assistance Program developed four distinct types of assistance, as outline in Table 11:

Table 11: Disaster Assistance Programs

Assistance Type	Description
Individual Assistance	May receive loans or grants for real estate and personal property, dental, funeral, medical, transportation, unemployment, sheltering, and rental assistance, depending on the extent of the damage.
Businesses Assistance	Individuals and entities, including those with agricultural interests, may access loans offered by SBA to help address physical and economic losses resulting from a disaster or emergency.
Agricultural Assistance	The United States Department of Agriculture offers programs for agricultural or other rural interests, including assistance for physical and production losses.
Government Assistance	Funds and grants are available to the government and certain non-profit organizations to repair, reconstruct, and mitigate the risk of future damage. A state grant program is available to local governments to respond to and recover from disasters. Federal grant programs are available to assist governments and certain non-profit organizations in responding to and recovering from disasters.

Federal Public Assistance Program

The Federal PA Program is authorized under the Federal Disaster Relief Act of 1974, as amended by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Amendments of 1988. The federal program requires a local emergency proclamation, a State of Emergency proclamation, or a Federal Declaration of a Major Disaster or Emergency.

State agencies, counties, cities, Special Districts, K-12 schools, colleges, private and non-profit organizations, including educational, utility, emergency, medical, and custodial care facilities, are eligible for the Federal PA Program.

There are seven categories of work projects under the program:

- **Category A** - Debris Clearance



- **Category B** - Emergency Protective Measures
- **Category C** - Road System Repairs
- **Category D** - Water Control Facilities
- **Category E** - Buildings and Equipment
- **Category F** - Public Utility Systems
- **Category G** - Other (Parks, Recreational Facilities, etc.)

Cal OES is responsible for processing all subgrants for applicants, including providing technical assistance and advice to subgrantees, providing state support for damage survey activities, ensuring that potential applicants for assistance are aware of available federal assistance, and submitting documents necessary for grant awards.

Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) activities are aimed at reducing or eliminating future damages. Activities include hazard mitigation plans approved by FEMA and cost-effective hazard mitigation projects. HMGP grants are provided on a cost-share basis of 75 percent federal share and 25 percent non-federal share.

Effective hazard mitigation and preparedness rely on understanding local risks and investing in long-term, sustainable projects that build community resilience. In line with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, the County regularly updates and maintains an MJHMP. This plan evaluates risks from hazards and social vulnerabilities, and outlines strategies to reduce these risks within the County's jurisdiction.

After a disaster that results in a Presidential Disaster Declaration, FEMA's HMGP provides funding for plans and projects aimed at reducing the impacts of future natural disasters. Eligible applicants for this funding include state agencies, local governments, federally recognized tribes, special districts, and certain private nonprofits. To be eligible for funding for hazard mitigation projects, state, local, tribal, and territorial governments must have a developed and adopted hazard mitigation plan.

Federal funding is provided under the Robert T. Stafford Emergency Assistance and Disaster Relief Act (Stafford Act) through FEMA and Cal OES. Cal OES is responsible for identifying program priorities, reviewing applications, and forwarding recommendations for funding to FEMA. FEMA has final approval for activity eligibility and funding.

Section 6: Mutual Aid

California's emergency assistance is based on a statewide mutual aid system designed to ensure that adequate support and/or additional resources are provided to a jurisdiction whenever its own resources are overwhelmed or inadequate. The basis for this system is the California Disaster and Civil Defense MMAA, which is entered into by and between the State of California, its various departments and agencies, and the various political subdivisions, municipal corporations, and public agencies to assist each other by providing resources during an emergency. This plan promotes the establishment of emergency assistance agreements between public and private sector agencies at all levels.

If local government resources prove to be inadequate during a disaster, requests will be made for assistance from other local jurisdictions and higher levels of government according to existing or emergency-negotiated mutual aid agreements and compacts. Such assistance may take the form of equipment, supplies, personnel, or other capabilities.

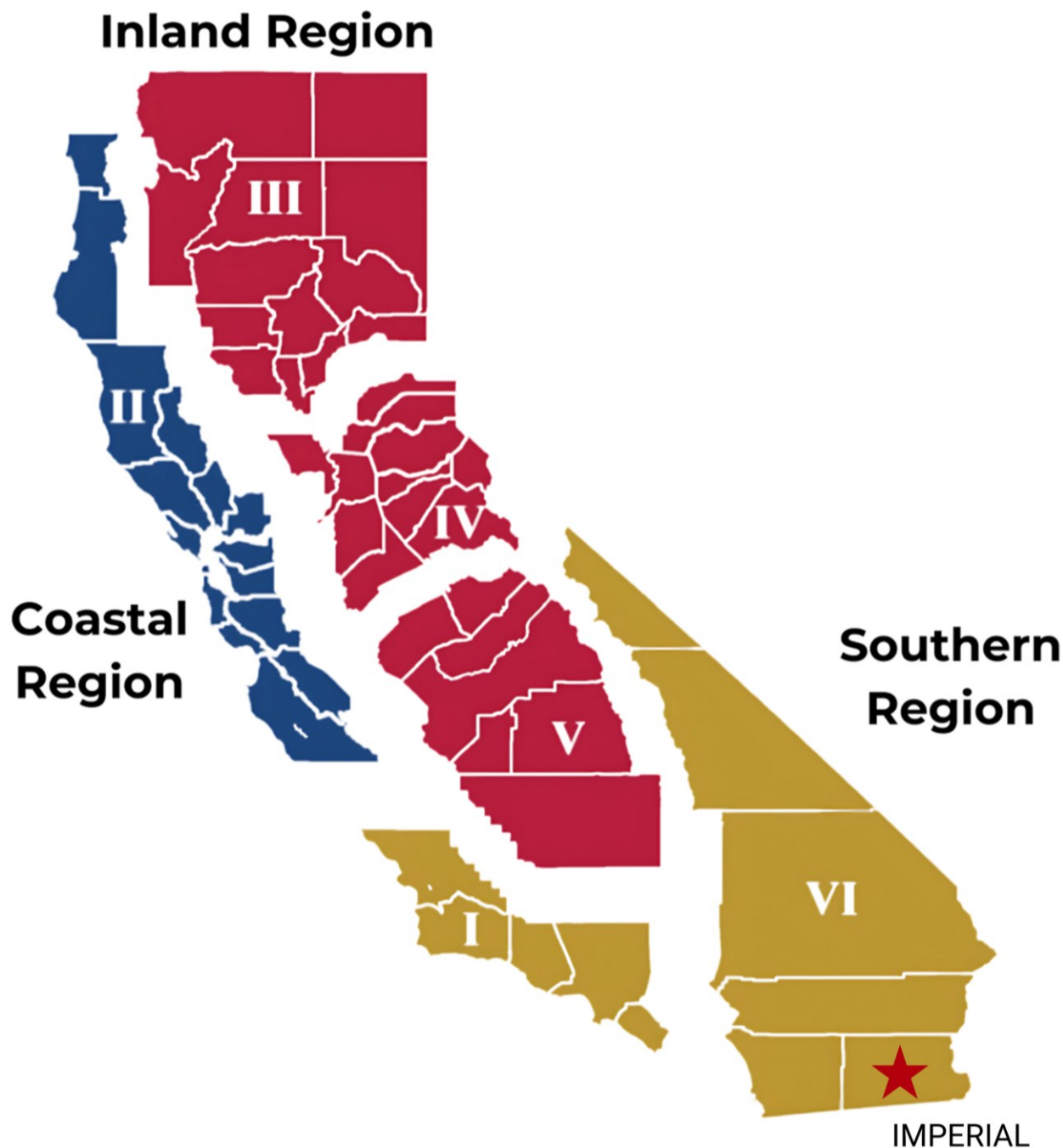
All mutual aid agreements and compacts will be entered into by duly authorized officials and will be formalized in writing whenever possible. The agreement obligates each signatory entity to provide aid to each other during an emergency without the expectation of reimbursement. Under specific conditions, federal and state monies may be appropriated to reimburse public agencies that aid other jurisdictions. If other agreements, MOUs, and contracts are used to provide assistance for consideration, the terms of those documents may affect disaster assistance eligibility and local entities may only be reimbursed if funds are available.

Formal mutual aid requests will follow specified procedures and are processed through preidentified mutual aid coordinators. Mutual aid requests will follow discipline-specific chains (i.e. fire, law enforcement, emergency management, etc.) from one level of government to the next. The mutual aid coordinator receives the mutual aid request and coordinates the provision of resources from within the coordinator's geographic area of responsibility. In the event resources are unavailable at one level of government, the request is forwarded to the next higher level of government to be filled.

Mutual Aid Regions

To facilitate the coordination and flow of mutual aid, the State is divided into six Mutual Aid Regions. As depicted in Figure 10. California Mutual Aid Region Map: Coastal, Inland, and Southern Regions Imperial County OA is located in Region VI, including Mono, Inyo, San Bernardino, Riverside, San Diego, and Imperial.

Figure 10. California Mutual Aid Region Map: Coastal, Inland, and Southern Regions



Mutual Aid Agreements

The California Disaster and Civil Defense MMAA creates a formal structure wherein each jurisdiction retains control of its own facilities, personnel, and resources, but may also receive or render assistance to other jurisdictions within the state. In addition, part of the MMAA is the Emergency Management Mutual Aid (EMMA) which can provide supplemental emergency management personnel from a non-impacted jurisdiction to the County OA. If the County recognizes a need for additional response staff to support EOC operations and manage the emergency, they may request EMMA early or at any stage in the response to a disaster. The County will request EMMA through the Cal OES Inland Region.

It shall be the policy of the County to utilize mutual aid as the primary means to extend personnel and resources for the County Emergency Organization. Mutual aid procedures should be consistent with California MMAA, California Law Enforcement Mutual Aid, and the California Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid System.

Mutual Aid can be requested for resources pertaining to:

- Fire and Rescue
- Law Enforcement
- Coroner
- Emergency Management
- Public Information
- Medical and Health
- Communications
- Transportation Services
- Facilities
- Hazardous Materials
- Volunteer and Private Agencies

Mutual Aid Coordination

Formal mutual aid requests will follow an established process for ordering, tracking, mobilizing, and demobilizing. Depending on the scale of the emergency, limited resources may need to be rationed or controlled and are processed through pre-identified mutual aid coordinators. Mutual aid requests will follow discipline-specific chains (e.g., fire, law enforcement, emergency manager, etc.) from one level of government to the next. The Mutual Aid Coordinator receives the mutual aid request and coordinates the provision of resources from within the coordinator's geographic area of responsibility. In the event resources are unavailable at one level of government, the request is forwarded to the next higher level of government to be filled.

- **Field Level Requests:** Requests for MMAA resources originate from the Field Level and are managed by the IC. If the IC is unable to obtain the resource through existing local channels, the request is elevated to the next successive government level until obtained or canceled.



- **Local Government Requests:** Local jurisdictions are responsible for the protection of life and property within the municipal geographic boundaries. The local jurisdiction where the incident occurred should assess its resource inventory and existing local agreements to determine if the requested resource is available. When locally committed resources are exhausted and mutual aid is needed, the local official will request assistance from the OA Mutual Aid Coordinator.
- **Operational Area Requests:** The OA is a composite of its political subdivisions (i.e. municipalities, contract cities, Special Districts, and County agencies). The OA Mutual Aid Coordinator assesses the availability of resources within the OA and fulfills the resource request based on that assessment. In the event that resources are unavailable at the OA level, the request is forwarded to the responsible Region Mutual Aid Coordinator to be filled.
- **Region-Level Requests:** The state is geographically divided into six Mutual Aid Regions. For Law Enforcement Mutual Aid, Region I is divided into two sub-regions. Each Mutual Aid Region is comprised of multiple OAs and has a Regional Mutual Aid Coordinator. The Region Mutual Aid Coordinator is granted the authority to coordinate the mutual aid response of discipline-specific resources within the Region to support a mutual aid request by a jurisdiction also within the Region. In the event that resources are unavailable at the Region level, the request is forwarded to the State Mutual Aid Coordinator to be filled.
- **State-Level Requests:** On behalf of the Governor, the Secretary of Cal OES has the responsibility for coordination of state mutual aid resources in support of local jurisdictions during times of emergency. The Secretary will analyze and coordinate the request by forwarding the request to an unaffected REOC or tasking an appropriate state agency to fill the need.
- **Interstate Mutual Aid:** In the event that resource requests are unfilled using local, regional, or state resources, Mutual Aid may be obtained from other states. California is a member of the interstate EMAC, a congressionally ratified organization that provides form, structure, and procedures for rendering emergency assistance between states. After a State of Emergency Declaration, California can request and receive reimbursable assistance through EMAC for other member states quickly and efficiently without issues of liability. The Secretary of Cal OES and the state's EMAC Coordinator are responsible for facilitating requests for assistance pursuant to EMAC.

Volunteer, Non-Governmental and Private Agencies Mutual Aid

A significant component of the mutual aid system is through volunteer and private agencies. These include agencies such as the ARC and Salvation Army, which mobilize to assist with mass care and sheltering. These agencies mobilize volunteers and resources through their systems and processes. They are also able to identify resource needs that are not met within their systems, which can then be requested through the mutual aid system in coordination with the appropriate level of government. During these large-scale incidents, these agencies will typically provide a representative to the County EOC.

Many private agencies, churches, non-profits, and other organizations offer to provide their assistance during emergencies. If needed, the County may request the agency to provide a liaison to the EOC to help facilitate and coordinate mutual aid.

Mutual Aid Resource Management

It is the policy of the state that contracts and agreements for emergency response and disaster repair and restoration should be entered into by the lowest level of government. When local resources are exhausted and additional resources are required, resource requests (mission tasking) will follow an established process for ordering, tracking, mobilizing, and demobilizing. Depending on the scale of the emergency, limited resources may need to be rationed or controlled.

All resource requests, at each level, must include the following:

- Clearly describe the current situation
- Describe the requested resources
- Specify the type or nature of the service the resource(s) will provide
- Provide delivery location with a common map reference
- Provide local contact at delivery location with primary and secondary means of contact
- Provide the name of the requesting agency and/or OA Coordinator point of contact
- Indicate the time frame needed and an estimate of the duration
- Resource requests involving personnel and/or equipment with operators will need to indicate if logistical support is required (e.g., food, shelter, fuel, and reasonable maintenance)

Each state agency and local government entity should identify sources for materials and supplies internally and externally. The County currently utilizes the following systems for mobilizing/demobilizing, tracking, re-assigning, and accounting for County assets:

- Sheriff Computer Aided Dispatch – Fire/Law Enforcement/Animal Control Resources
- Imperial County currently utilizes the **WebEOC Resource Manager Database program** to manage and coordinate emergency data and activities, including documentation of OES Resources, Public Health Resources, and ICEMS (Southern Counties Emergency Medical Agency) Resources. However, the County is transitioning to **Cal EOC360**, a more advanced emergency management platform designed to enhance operational efficiency, streamline communication, and integrate seamlessly with state-level emergency response systems.

The requesting agencies are responsible for reporting to Cal OES the daily number and status of resources deployed on a mission.

When resources are unavailable within the state or through existing agreements with other states, California may request assistance from the federal government. Requests for federal assistance during an emergency will be coordinated through the SOC.

Section 7: Information Collection, Analysis, and Dissemination

The County EOC is responsible for gathering timely, accurate, accessible, and consistent intelligence during an EOC activation. Vetted intelligence is to be shared to ensure a coordinated and effective emergency response. Situation reports are to be created to establish a common operating picture and is to be used to adjust the operational goals, priorities, and strategies.

The process of planning, collecting, and sharing information during an emergency involves collaboration across all sections of the County EOC. To ensure effective intelligence flow at all levels, public communication systems and protocols should organize, integrate, and coordinate intelligence across government agencies while considering the needs of the entire community, including individuals with access and functional needs.

Information Tools and Methods

Various tools and methods are employed within the EOC to gather and disseminate critical information. It is essential to verify all data before distribution, with unverified data clearly marked as unconfirmed. The following methods are utilized in the County EOC:

- **Status Boards:** Displays of essential information on erasable boards or through computer projections within the EOC
- **Activity Logs:** Detailed records maintained by EOC staff, which are submitted to the Planning Section for review and use
- **Microsoft Teams:** A cloud-based platform used for messaging and file sharing, supporting situational and logistical awareness
- **Flash Reports:** Time-sensitive and critical updates that fall outside routine reporting schedules
- **Situation Reports:** Summaries providing an overview of the emergency status during specific timeframes
- **Preliminary Reports:** Initial updates are distributed within the first two hours of an incident to outline the overall situation. Effective communication systems and protocols must be established by emergency response agencies at all levels to organize, integrate, and coordinate intelligence.

Situation reports must flow systematically among various levels of government as follows:

Figure 11. Flow of Situation Reports



Information Management Systems

Imperial County OA EOC operates various information management systems to support communications, including the following:

Cal EOC360 Web-Based Management System

Cal EOC360 is a web-based crisis information management system that provides real-time access for federal, state, and local emergency response agencies throughout California. This system supports standardized reporting and data collection and complies with SEMS and NIMS.

Imperial County employs Cal EOC360 to enhance crisis information sharing and coordination across its OA. The platform allows the County to maintain a common operating picture, ensuring situational awareness and efficient information exchange during emergencies. OA EOC responders use Cal EOC to share real-time updates with partner agencies, cities, and towns within the OA. This capability enables the coordinated deployment of resources and strengthens the overall emergency response effort.

Through Cal EOC360, Imperial County also coordinates directly with Cal OES. The system facilitates the collection and exchange of incident situation information, the management of resource requests, and the submission of reports to Cal OES. During emergencies, the OA provides situational status reports to Cal OES' Inland Region.

The primary purpose of Cal EOC360 is to enhance the County's ability to respond to disasters while achieving integrated communication across all levels of SEMS. The system increases the efficiency and effectiveness of EOC operations by improving the ability to:

- Respond to, manage, and coordinate resource requests
- Collect, process, and disseminate information during and after disasters

During and after an emergency or disaster, the following reports and requests are submitted to Cal OES via Cal EOC360 :

- Situation Status Reports
- Mutual Aid Requests
- Local Declarations, Gubernatorial, and Presidential Declaration Requests
- AARs and Improvement Plans

Operational Area Satellite Information System

The Operational Area Satellite Information System (OASIS) is a satellite-based communication system linking the OA EOC with cities, towns, County department DOCs, and Cal OES. OASIS tool is a valuable resource in emergency management, helping organizations prepare, respond, and recover from disasters more efficiently. It integrates technology and strategic planning to create more coordinated and effective disaster response efforts. Imperial County utilizes the OASIS system to:

- Enhance situational awareness
- Improve response time and decision-making



- Facilitate collaboration between multiple agencies
- Increase the effectiveness of training exercises

Emergency Alert System

The Emergency Alert System (EAS) is a national public warning system commonly used by state and local authorities to deliver important emergency information, such as weather and AMBER alerts, to affected communities. EAS Participants – radio and television broadcasters, cable systems, satellite radio and television providers, and wireline video providers – deliver local alerts on a voluntary basis, but they are required to provide the capability for the President to address the public during a national emergency.

FEMA, the FCC, and NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) work collaboratively to maintain the EAS and WEAs, which are the two main components of the national public warning system and enable authorities at all levels of government to send urgent emergency information to the public.

These systems collectively enhance the OA's ability to maintain robust communications with local, regional, and state-level partners during emergencies, supporting a coordinated and effective response. The EAS system is designed to facilitate public safety by providing timely alerts for people to take immediate action to protect themselves and their families during emergencies. This can include such activities as evacuating from affected hazard areas, seeking shelter, or avoiding hazardous conditions.

Section 8: Public Information and Communication

Public information plays a critical role in all phases of emergency management by saving lives, ensuring public safety, and protecting property and the environment. ESF 15 – Public Information ensures accurate, coordinated, timely, and accessible communication to affected audiences, including government entities, media, private sector, and the public, particularly those with access and functional needs.

Public Information Officer

Effective public information requires collaboration among federal, state, tribal, and local governments, as well as private and nonprofit organizations. This function involves gathering, verifying, and disseminating information through structured processes. Under SEMS, jurisdictions overseeing emergency responses manage public information in a centralized and coordinated manner. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) oversees countywide public information efforts when activated at Level 2 of the OA EOC.

The PIO ensures accurate incident-related updates and communicates government functions to internal and external audiences. Public messaging is carefully crafted to reflect political, economic, and social considerations and is coordinated with elected officials to maintain consistency with public policy. Imperial County prioritizes standardized, bilingual emergency messaging through the **Imperial County Ready campaign**.

Joint Information System

The JIS integrates incident information and public affairs into a unified and organized structure that provides accurate, coordinated, culturally sensitive, multi-lingual, and timely information to media and the public about emergency events that occur within and/or impact the OA. It includes the plans, protocols, procedures, and structures used to provide public information.

Joint Information Center

The JIC is a central location that facilitates the operation of the JIS. It is a location where personnel with public information responsibilities perform critical emergency information functions, crisis communications, and public affairs functions. JICs may be established at the OA EOC, at incident sites, or can be components of Federal, State, tribal, territorial, regional, or local MACS (e.g., MAC Groups or EOCs).

Public Information Accessibility

In times of crisis, clear, inclusive, and accessible communication is essential. Imperial County is committed to ensuring that all public messaging—whether verbal, written, or digital—



reaches every individual, including those with access and functional needs. Emergency communication efforts are designed to be culturally and linguistically appropriate, fully compliant with accessibility laws, and responsive to the needs of impacted communities.

To achieve this, Imperial County collaborates with access and functional needs stakeholders to continuously enhance and validate emergency messaging. Key agencies—including OES, the Sheriff's Office, Communications, Fire Department, Human Resources, Public Health, Behavioral Health and Social Services—work in coordination to identify community needs and allocate resources effectively, ensuring no one is left behind.

Imperial County ensures full compliance with **civil rights and accessibility laws**, including:

- **Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act**, prohibiting discrimination based on national origin.
- **Titles II & III of the ADA**, mandating effective communication for people with disabilities.

This commitment guarantees equal access to emergency information for individuals with disabilities and those with LEP.

Language Accessibility Services

To bridge communication gaps, the County offers:

- ASL, closed captioning, and Alt Text for digital accessibility.
- English/Spanish translation services to reach bilingual populations.

However, ASL resources are limited, with only two available interpreters in the County. Additionally, there are no formal contracts or MOUs for press conference interpretation, though interpreters have been sourced from educational institutions or in-house staff in past emergencies.

Depending on the emergency, various departments such as the Public Health Department, Social Services Department, and others may provide support including:

- A designated **language line** and **Insight Video Interpreting** services.
- **On-demand interpretation** is available 24/7, 365 days a year, covering 240+ languages, including ASL, via mobile apps and web browsers with end-to-end encryption for privacy and security.

Imperial County's call centers play a vital role in public information efforts, offering:

- **State-funded language services and TTY capabilities** for the deaf and hard of hearing.
- **Text-to-911**, providing a direct, real-time emergency communication option.
- **Critical referrals**, including shelter locations, road closures, and health and social services.

During disasters, some Imperial County Departments may activate call center services to assist the public by providing critical emergency information, guidance, and resources.



The call center services may offer multilingual assistance, emergency shelter referrals, updates on disaster response efforts, and connections to essential services such as medical aid, transportation, and food distribution.

For additional information on emergency communication, refer to the EOP's Public Information Annex.

Section 9: Continuity of Operations and Government

A major disaster could include the death or injury of key officials, partial or complete destruction of established government seats, and the destruction of public and private records essential to continued operations of government and industry. Law and order must be preserved, and government services must be maintained. Applicable portions of the California Government Code and the Constitution of the State of California provide authority for the continuity and preservation of local government.

Continuity of leadership and government authority is particularly important with respect to emergency services, the direction of emergency response operations, and the management of recovery operations. To this end, it is essential that the County and all the Cities and Towns within the County continue to function as government entities. The California Government Code and the Constitution of California provide the authority for state and local governments to reconstitute themselves if incumbents cannot serve.

Under California's concept of mutual aid, local officials remain in control of their jurisdiction's emergency operations, while others may provide additional resources upon request. A key aspect of this control is to be able to communicate official requests, situation reports, and other emergency information throughout any disaster situation.

To ensure continuity of government the government must address seven elements at all levels:

- Succession of Officers
- Seat of Government
- Emergency Powers and Authority
- Emergency Plans
- Primary and Alternate Emergency Operations Center(s)
- Preservation of Vital Records
- Protection of Critical Infrastructure



Succession and Powers of The Director of Emergency Services

The following lines of succession for the Director of Emergency Services is identified under Section 2.104.050 of the Imperial County Code:

1. Vice-Chair of the Board of Supervisors
2. Assistant Director of Emergency Services/Fire Chief
3. County Executive Officer
4. Assistant Fire Chief

The Imperial County Code Section 2.104.060 empowers the Director of Emergency Services to:

1. Request the Board of Supervisors to proclaim the existence of a "Local Emergency" if the Board of Supervisors is in session.
2. Request the Chair of the Board of Supervisors to issue such a proclamation if the Board of Supervisors is not in session. Or, in the absence of the Chair of the Board of Supervisors, request the Vice-Chair of the Board of Supervisors to issue such a proclamation if the Board of Supervisors is not in session. Or, in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Board of Supervisors, to issue such a proclamation if the Board of Supervisors is not in session.
3. Recommend that the Board of Supervisors request the Governor to proclaim a "State of Emergency" when, in his or her opinion, the locally available resources are inadequate to cope with the emergency.
4. Control and direct the effort of the emergency organization of this County to accomplish the purposes in this Chapter.
5. Direct cooperation between and coordination of services and staff of the emergency organization of this County and resolve questions of authority and responsibility that may arise between them; and
6. Represent this County in all dealings with public or private agencies on matters pertaining to emergencies as defined herein.

Succession of Head Departments Officers

The California Government Code Section 8637, Article 15, Chapter 7, Division 1, Title 2 permits the political subdivision to provide for the succession of officers who head departments having duties in the maintenance of law and order or in furnishing public services relating to health and safety.

Standby Officers

California Government Code Section 8638, Article 15, Chapter 7, Division 1, Title 2 permits the governing body to appoint up to three (3) standby officers for each member and up to three (3) standby officers for the political subdivision's chief executive. The standby officers shall have the same authority and power as the regular officers.

Reconstituting the Governing Body with Temporary Officers

The California Government Code Section 8644, Article 15, Chapter 7, Division 1, Title 2 establishes a method for reconstructing the governing body. It authorizes that, should all members of the governing body, including all standby members, be unavailable, temporary officers shall be appointed by the Chairman of the Board of any other County within 150 miles of the political subdivision or, if unavailable, by the mayor of any city within 150 miles of the political subdivision.

Meeting of Governing Body During an Emergency

The California Government Code Section 8642, Article 15, Chapter 7, Division 1, Title 2 directs local governing bodies to convene as soon as possible whenever a state of emergency or local emergency exists and at a place not necessarily within the political subdivision.

Duties of Governing Body During an Emergency

The California Government Code Section 8643, Article 15, Chapter 7, Division 1, Title 2 provides that the duties of the governing body during emergencies shall include ascertaining the damage to the political subdivision and its personnel and property, reconstituting itself and the political subdivision, and performing functions in preserving law and order and furnishing local services.

Imperial County Lines of Succession

As outlined in Figure 12, the Lines of Succession for primary Imperial County emergency response functions within County Departments are structured as follows:

Figure 12. Imperial County Department Line of Succession

Function/Department	Title/Position
Agricultural / Seal of Weights	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agricultural Commissioner 2. Assistant Agricultural Commissioner 3. Deputy Agricultural Commissioner
Air Pollution Control	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Air Pollution Control Officer 2. Assistant Air Pollution Control Officer

Function/Department	Title/Position
	3. Division Manager
Assessor	1. Assessor 2. Assistant Assessor 3. Auditor Appraisal Supervisor
Auditor / Controller	1. Auditor/Controller 2. Assistant Auditor/Controller 3. System and Audit Manager
Behavioral Health	1. Director 2. Assistant Director 3. Deputy Director of Youth and Young Adults
Child Support Services	1. Director 2. Assistant Director 3. Program Manager & Administrative Services Manager
Clerk of the Board	1. Clerk of the Board 2. Assistant Clerk of the Board 3. County Executive Officer
Cooperative Extension	1. County Director 2. Safety Coordinator 3. Officer Supervisor
County Clerk / Recorder	1. Clerk/Recorder 2. Assistant Clerk/Recorder
County Counsel	1. County Counsel 2. Assistant County Counsel 3. Senior Deputy County Counsel
County Free Library	1. County Librarian 2. Assistant County Librarian 3. Library Technician
District Attorney	1. District Attorney 2. Assistant District Attorney 3. Chief Investigator 4. Assistant Chief Investigator
Executive Office	1. County Executive Officer 2. Assistant County Executive Officer 3. Deputy County Executive Officer
Airport	1. County Executive Officer 2. Assistant County Executive Officer 3. Manager
Community & Economic Development	1. County Executive Officer 2. Assistant County Executive Officer 3. Manager
EEO/ADA	1. County Executive Officer 2. Assistant County Executive Officer 3. Administrative Analyst

Function/Department	Title/Position
Fleet Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fleet Supervisor 2. Lead Mechanic 3. Mechanics
Info / Technical Services (ITS)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ITS Manager 2. ITS Network Administrator 3. ITS Communications Specialist
Procurement Services	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Purchasing Supervisor 2. Systems Coordinator 3. Office Technician
Fire Protection / OES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. County Fire Chief 2. Assistant County Fire Chief 3. Deputy Chief
Human Resources & Risk Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Director 2. Assistant Director 3. Risk Management Analyst
Planning & Development Services Parks & Recreation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Director 2. Assistant Director 3. Planning Division Manager 4. Building Division Manager
Probation & Corrections	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chief 2. Assistant Chief 3. Division Manager
Public Administrator / Area Agency on Aging (AAA)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public Administrator 2. Assistant Public Administrator 3. Area Agency on Aging Manager
Public Defender	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Department Head 2. Assistant Public Defender 3. Senior Deputy Public Defender
Public Health / EHS Animal Control / EMS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Director 2. Deputy Director EMS/Disaster Preparedness Manager
Public Works	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Director 2. Deputy Director of Public Works/Engineering 3. Deputy Director of Public Works/Admin 4. Deputy Director of Field Operations
Registrar of Voters	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Registrar of Voters 2. Office Tech 3. Office Assistant III
Retirement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Retirement Administrator 2. Assistant Administrator 3. Account/Auditor
Sheriff / Coroner	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sheriff 2. Undersheriff 3. Chief/Operations Division



Function/Department	Title/Position
	4. Coroner's Sergeant
Social Services	1. Director 2. Assistant Director 3. Deputy Director
Treasurer / Tax Collector	1. Treasurer – Tax Collector 2. Assistant Treasurer – Tax Collector 3. Division Manager
Workforce Development	1. Director 2. WDB Lead Analyst III 3. Administrative Manager

Alternate Government Facilities

Imperial County Seat of Government

Section 23600 of the California Government Code provides that the Board of Supervisors shall designate alternate County seats that may be located outside County boundaries (real property cannot be purchased for this purpose). A resolution designating the alternate County seats must be filed with the Secretary of State, and additional seats may be designated after the original site designations if circumstances warrant.

The Board of Supervisors may designate alternates to serve as acting officers in their principal positions for appointed officials of Board-governed Special Districts when necessary.

In general, the seat of the County government is the place where the Board of Supervisors sits and meets:

Imperial County Administration Center

Board Chambers

950 Main Street, Second Floor

El Centro, CA 92243

Alternate Seat of Government

The Chairman or Vice Chairman or other member of the Board of Supervisors may designate alternate or temporary seats of government in the event the above referenced location is deemed unsafe. The alternate location would depend upon the extent of damages resulting from a countywide event. However, alternate locations may be as follows:

Imperial County Courthouse

208 Main Street
Brawley, CA 92227

Imperial County Courthouse

415 East Fourth Street
Calexico, CA 92231

Imperial County Center Four

2995 S. 4th Street, Suite 105
El Centro, CA 92243

Disaster Service Workers

Under the California Government Code, Sections §3100-3109, all public employees must serve as Disaster Service Workers (DSWs). This includes all individuals employed by counties, cities, state agencies, or public districts within California. DSWs are crucial in providing service and support during declared emergencies or disasters.



County employees may be called upon to assist with emergency management operations in a significant emergency. Their duties may include serving in positions within the EOC, supporting shelter operations, or assisting at a logistics base in the field.

- County employees may be required to work at any time during a declared emergency and may be assigned to disaster service duties
- These assignments may involve working at different locations, times, or under conditions outside their usual responsibilities
- DSW assignments can include roles within the EOC, in the field, or at another designated location

It is important to note that Imperial County employees who do not normally have a role in emergency response will not be assigned tasks that are hazardous or beyond their capabilities.

During a disaster, employees may be understandably concerned about the safety of their families, which could affect their ability to focus on their work. To help address this, employees assigned to disaster response duties are strongly encouraged to make arrangements with family, friends, or neighbors to monitor their households and communicate any relevant information through the County EOC. Having these preparations in place will provide employees with peace of mind, allowing them to focus on their disaster response tasks. Additionally, all staff members are reminded of the importance of preparing their families for emergencies and disasters to ensure their safety and security during times of crisis.

Vital Records Retention

The preservation of vital records is of high importance to Imperial County. The County has an established Records Management Program, which is tasked to manage County records efficiently and economically by reducing the number of unnecessary records being stored, creating a Countywide Records Retention Program, setting up standards and procedures for storing records, administering salvage paper programs, and maintaining historical records of the County.

The preservation of vital records is critical to the County's recovery from a catastrophic event. In addition to the information retrieval requirements of response, each response function has a record-keeping component. Although the principal focus of vital records preservation is to support recovery through reimbursement of disaster-related costs, vital records also have a broader and arguably more important function. Vital records become vital because they help to describe a reasonably complete compilation of damage, death, physical and mental trauma, and allocation of public and private resources making it possible to learn from the disaster experience.

Vital records for the County are maintained by various Departments, including the following:

- The Clerk of the Board maintains records of the Board of Supervisors' actions, which include contracts for services, emergency proclamations, approval of emergency expenditures, programs, and requests for grant funds



- The County Clerk-Recorder maintains records regarding birth, death, and marriage certificates
- The County Treasurer/Tax Collector maintains records regarding property taxes
- The County Assessor maintains records regarding the value of real property
- The County Auditor/Controller maintains records regarding budgets, accounting and audits
- The County Information Technical Services maintain the County's archives and records management system

Section 10: Administration and Logistics

Administration

The Board of Supervisors serves as the overarching Legislative body of Imperial County for planning and provision of services related to the public needs and requirements of state and federal laws, as well as approving this Imperial County EOP. Imperial County OES is the lead for the development and implementation of the County's EOP, and for ensuring that the following administrative actions are taken prior, during, and after an emergency:

Before:

- SOGs
- Track emergency services training records
- Document drills and exercises to include the critiques
- Include non-government organizations in the County's emergency planning activities

During and After:

- Maintain written log-type records
- Issue press releases
- Submit status reports and initial damage assessment
- Utilize pre-established bookkeeping and accounting methods to track and maintain records of expenditures and obligations
- Document recovery operations

Logistics

Additionally, OES is the lead for ensuring that the following logistical actions are taken before and during an emergency:

Before:

- Acquire and type County equipment
- Stockpile supplies
- Designate emergency facilities, such as shelter sites
- Establish mutual aid agreements, such as with ARC; and prepare a resource contact list

During:

- Move emergency equipment into place
- Arrange for food and transportation

- Arrange for shelter facilities; if needed, call on mutual aid; and if needed, provide backup power and communications

Emergency Procurement

During a declared local or state-level emergency, the purchasing card (p-card) authority may be expanded to enable cardholders to acquire additional commodities. This expansion facilitates a rapid response and enhances the self-sufficiency of response teams in affected areas for an extended period.

To further expedite the procurement of mutual aid resources, the County purchasing agent can implement the following strategies:

- Expedite the contracting process for mutual aid resources, allowing for quicker procurement of essential supplies.
- Leverage established relationships with supply companies to secure supplies and equipment more efficiently. These partnerships can ensure quicker access to necessary resources during emergencies.
- Activate mutual aid agreements with local organizations and other entities to ensure a coordinated response. These agreements provide a framework for resource sharing, including personnel, equipment, and facilities.

Expedited Administrative Processes During Emergencies

Administrative preparedness ensures that fiscal, legal, and procurement practices are integrated into all stages of emergency management, effectively removing barriers that could delay emergency response. This includes:

- **Emergency Funding Access:** Establishing pre-approved mechanisms for the immediate release and allocation of emergency funds.
- **Accelerated Hiring and Workforce Mobilization:** Streamlining temporary hiring processes and allowing for rapid reassignment of personnel to support response operations.
- **Legal and Regulatory Flexibility:** Implementing emergency provisions that allow temporary adjustments to procurement and funding regulations while maintaining compliance with governing laws.

Emergency Purchasing Authority

In situations where the Purchasing Agent or authorized personnel are unavailable, department heads or their designee are empowered to procure necessary supplies, materials, or equipment essential for:

- Maintaining the continued operation of their department
- Preserving life or property during emergencies



All emergency purchases must be:

- **Documented:** Detailed records of the procurement, including justification for the emergency purchase, vendor information, and costs incurred, must be maintained.
- **Submitted for Approval:** As soon as practical, the documentation should be submitted to the Purchasing Agent for review and approval.
- **Board of Supervisors Involvement:** If the Purchasing Agent does not approve the emergency purchase, the Board of Supervisors may ratify the expenditure by a four-fifth (4/5) vote.

For more information on emergency procurement refer to the [County Ordinance 2.52.040](#).

Section 11: Plan Administration

Upon final approval of the Plan, a listing of specific agencies and individuals will be documented on the “Record of Distribution” Form and will be inserted into the front section of this Plan. It will be the responsibility of County OES to periodically revise and update the Plan. Such revisions/updates will be documented on the “Update/Revision List Form” and the form will be inserted into the front section of this Plan.

Annexes may be added to the Plan at future dates, as needed, and will also be documented on the “Record of Changes” Form and the form will be inserted into the front section of this Plan.

Plan Development

The EOP will be part of a typical plan development/maintenance cycle to ensure the Plan remains current and up to date. Development/maintenance consists of:

- **Review** the Plan each year as it moves toward the next required revision (four-year cycle)
- **Train** on the Plan to ensure Governments and response agencies are familiar with its content
- **Exercise** the Plan as much as feasible, especially through functional and full-scale exercises to address the inclusive needs of the community
- **Evaluate** the Plan after each functional and full-scale exercise or actual emergency
- **Improve** the Plan based on lessons learned through real or exercised events and their subsequent AARs

This section of the plan describes the overall approach to planning and the assignment of plan development and maintenance responsibilities. Refer to Figure 13, for the plan development process.

Figure 13: Plan Development Process



EOP Planning Team

The Imperial County OES EOP Planning Team is an inclusive team led by County OES and convened to develop, renew, and update drafts of the EOP Base Plan and its Annexes. The Planning Team ensures representation from key sectors, including government agencies, private sector partners, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and Access and Functional Needs (AFN) advocates, to reflect the diverse needs of the community.

As the Planning Team meets and works through successive drafts, they integrate necessary documents, tables, charts, and graphics to support the Plan's context. The final draft is then circulated for comments among organizations within Imperial County that have responsibilities for implementing the EOP. The 2024-25 EOP Planning Team met bi-monthly and engaged representatives from various departments, including those with AFN expertise, with representatives from:

- Imperial County OES
- Imperial County Sheriff's Office
- Imperial County Fire Department
- Imperial County EMS Agency
- Imperial County Social Services
- Imperial County Public Health
- Imperial County Public Works
- Imperial County Executive Officer
- Imperial County Public Information Officer
- Imperial County Behavioral Health
- Imperial County Human Resources
- Imperial County Transportation Commission
- Imperial County Procurement Department
- Imperial County Planning & Development
- Imperial County Community and Economic Development

The EOP is reviewed for its conformity to applicable regulatory requirements and the standards of federal or state agencies and for its usefulness in practice. Once validated, the Imperial County EOP Planning Team presents the Plan to the appropriate officials for signature and promulgation. The promulgation process is based on Imperial County Code Title 5 Chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4 of Division 2, Emergency Organization and Functions. Once approved, the Imperial County OES Director arranges to distribute the Plan to stakeholders who have roles in implementing the EOP.

EOP Update Planning Process

Imperial County Webpage Updates

At the outset of updating the EOP for Imperial County, OES launched a dedicated EOP Update webpage, as illustrated in Figure 14 on the Imperial County website, to keep the public informed about the 2024-25 update process. This online resource provided an overview of the public information sessions, detailing the dates and locations of the event.

As shown in [Figure 15](#), the webpage also served as a platform for community engagement opportunities related to the EOP update. Furthermore, [Figure 16](#) highlights the ways the public could get involved, including participation in planning team collaborations, community meetings (both in-person and virtual), and the public comment period. Additionally, the registration process included information on requesting reasonable accommodation for those in need.

Figure 14: Imperial County EOP Webpage Updates

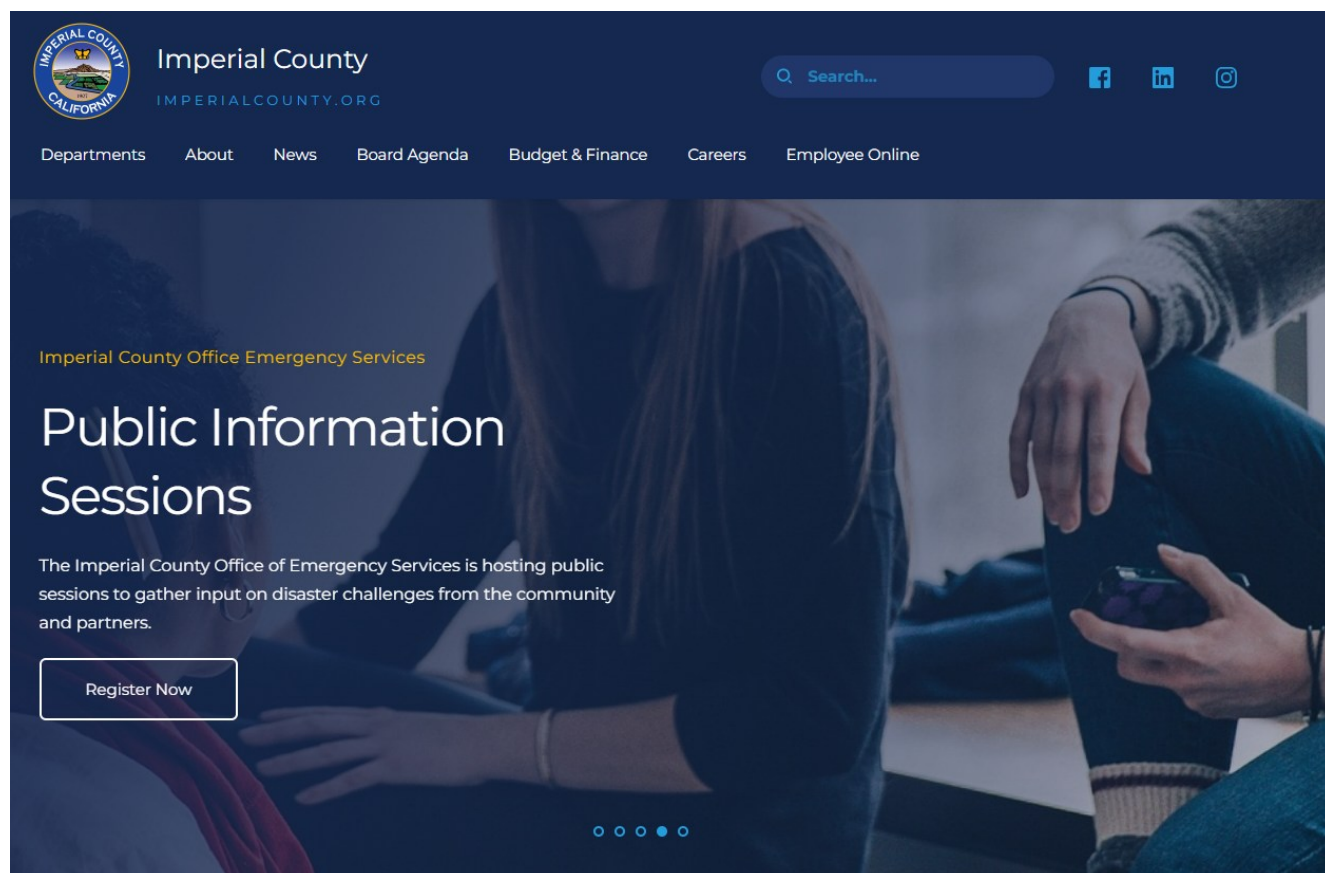


Figure 15. Imperial County Community Meetings Announcement

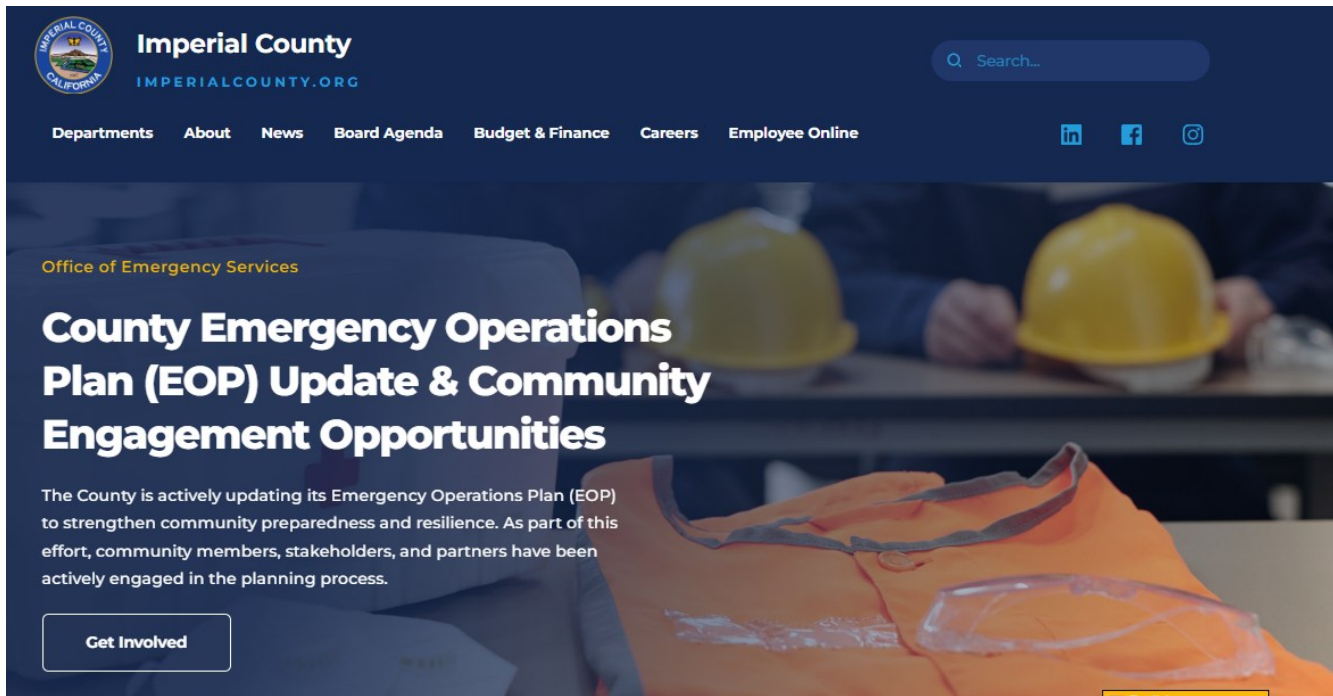
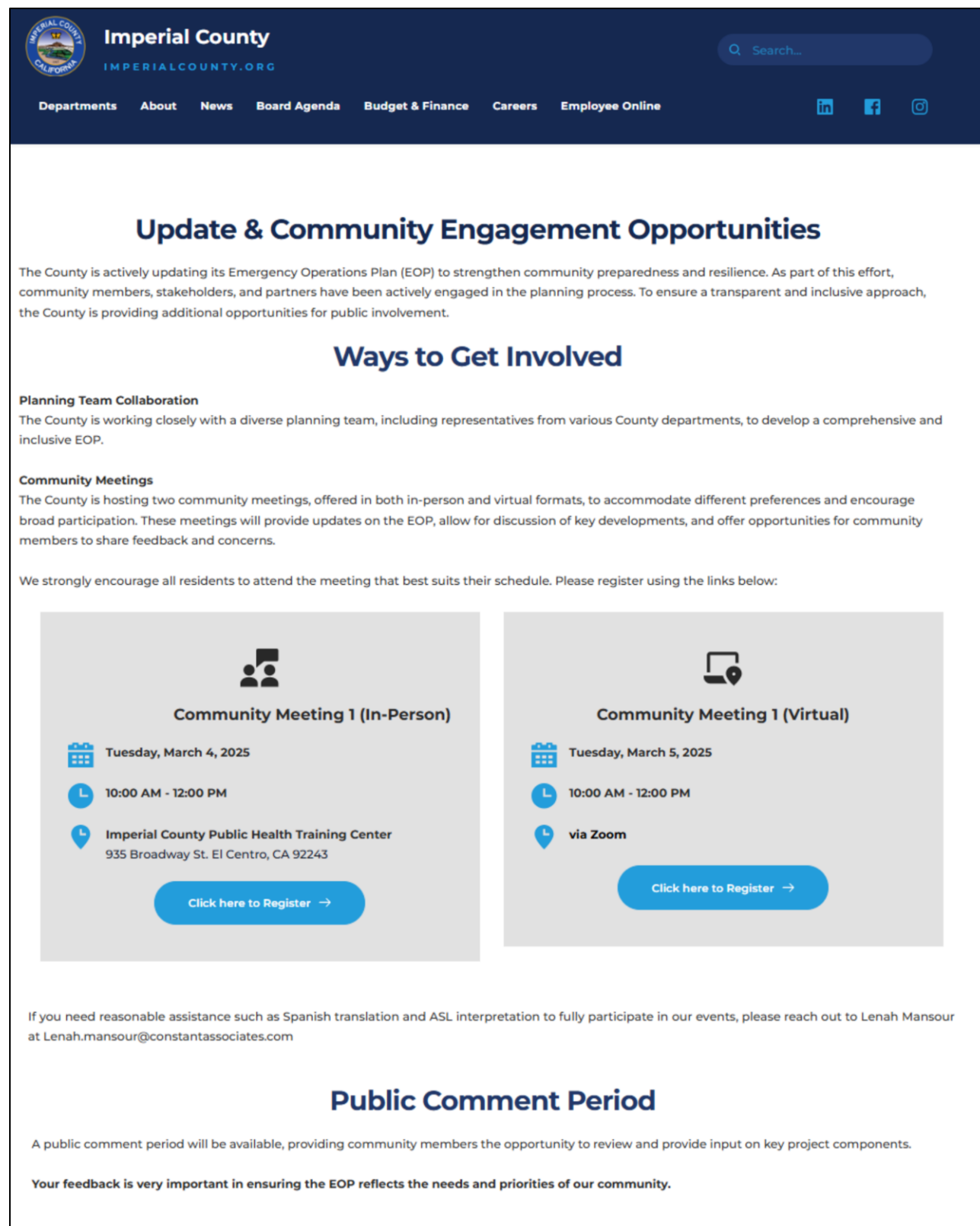


Figure 16. County Website Community Engagement Opportunities

The screenshot shows the Imperial County website's "Update & Community Engagement Opportunities" page. The header includes the Imperial County logo, the text "Imperial County" and "IMPERIALCOUNTY.ORG", a search bar, and a navigation menu with links to Departments, About, News, Board Agenda, Budget & Finance, Careers, and Employee Online. Social media icons for LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram are also present. The main heading is "Update & Community Engagement Opportunities". Below it, a paragraph states that the County is updating its Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and providing additional opportunities for public involvement. The section "Ways to Get Involved" includes "Planning Team Collaboration" and "Community Meetings". The "Community Meetings" section describes two meetings: an in-person meeting on Tuesday, March 4, 2025, at the Imperial County Public Health Training Center, and a virtual meeting on Tuesday, March 5, 2025, via Zoom. Both meetings are from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. A "Click here to Register" button with a right arrow is provided for each meeting. A note at the bottom states that if reasonable assistance is needed, residents should reach out to Lenah Mansour at lenah.mansour@constantassociates.com. The section "Public Comment Period" follows, stating that a public comment period will be available for reviewing and providing input on key project components, and that feedback is important for ensuring the EOP reflects the needs and priorities of the community.



Community and Access and Functional Needs Stakeholder Engagement

Community engagement is a critical component of the emergency planning process, particularly when ensuring that the needs of all community members, including culturally diverse and access and functional needs populations. As noted earlier in this EOP, Imperial County is dedicated to creating an inclusive and accessible EOP that reflects the diverse needs of the community. To facilitate this, the County has hosted multiple public information sessions and various engagement activities to gather input from the public to ensure this EOP is representative of all community members. These efforts ongoing are integral in shaping an emergency response system that is equitable, culturally competent, and responsive to the unique challenges faced by different community groups.

Public Information Sessions

Imperial County hosted a series of three Public Information Sessions to engage the public in the planning process.

The Public Information Sessions provided an overview of the update to the County EOP and collected comments and feedback from the public. The first two (2) Public Information Sessions were held in person at the Imperial County Public Health Department. A third Public Information Session was held virtually over Zoom. To ensure equity and inclusivity in meetings, Spanish and ASL interpretation was made available, along with Spanish translation for all outreach materials.

Each Public Information Session was advertised ahead of time on Imperial County's Website as well as their Social Media platforms in both English and Spanish.

Meeting	Date/Time	Location/Virtual
Public Information Session 1	12/11/2024 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM	Imperial County Public Health Department 935 Broadway, El Centro, CA 92243
Public Information Session 2	12/11/2024 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM	Imperial County Public Health Department 935 Broadway, El Centro, CA 92243
Public Information Session 3	12/13/2024 10:00 – 12:00 PM	Held virtually via Zoom

Community Meetings

Later in the planning process, two community meetings were held, one in person and one virtual, to provide the community an opportunity to review and comment on the draft EOP prior to its finalization.

Meeting	Date/Time	Location/Virtual
Community Meeting #1	March 4 th , 2025	Imperial County Public Health Training Center
Community Meeting #2	March 5 th , 2025	Virtual

Social Media Engagement

Imperial County utilized social media platforms to actively promote the update to this EOP. Below is an example posting on Instagram by Imperial County regarding a public information session on disaster preparedness..



Additional Community Engagement

During the public comment period the following types of groups, inclusive of access and functional needs representatives and individuals from diverse communities, were engaged to provide input on the update to this EOP.

Community Group	Population
Imperial Valley Continuum of Care	Homeless
Imperial County Behavioral Health Services	Behavioral Health
Area Agency on Aging	Commission on Aging

Community Group	Population
Ventanilla de Salud Calxico	General/Farmworkers
Imperial Valley Food Bank	General
ICOE	Schools
Brawley Feed the Need	Homeless
Brown Bag Coalition	Homeless
Imperial County Veteran's Services Office	Veterans
North End Alliance	Rural

Plan Maintenance and Development

This Plan, appendices, and functional and hazard-specific annexes will be maintained through a cooperative process with Imperial County department/agencies and the community. This Plan shall be reviewed as needed, at least annually, and will be updated by the County every three (3) years, revised by County OES, approved by the Board of Supervisors, and distributed by OES. The Imperial County OES Director is responsible for the preparation and maintenance of this Plan.

Those agencies having assigned responsibilities under this plan are obliged to inform the Imperial County OES when significant changes occur or are imminent. Proposed changes will be submitted, in writing, to County OES. After review, changes will be published and distributed to all departments/agencies identified within the EOP distribution list and noted on the Record of Changes.

Upon the delegation of authority from the Director of Emergency Services, specific modifications can be made to this plan without the signature of the Board of Supervisors. The plan may be modified because of post-incident analyses and/or post-exercise critiques. It may be modified if responsibilities, procedures, laws, rules, or regulations pertaining to emergency management and operations change. County OES will maintain the EOP Record of Changes. This EOP update supersedes all previous versions of this document.

Record of Changes

A Record of Changes has been implemented to record all updates/revisions to this Plan. Each revision will include a change number, the date of revision, the point of contact of who made the change, and a brief description of the change.



Record of Distribution

This Plan includes a distribution list that indicates who receives copies of the Plan. County OES is responsible for distribute copies of this Plan to governmental departments/agencies as identified in the Record of Distribution section. In addition, a copy of this plan will be available on the County OES website.

The final draft of the Plan was presented to the Disaster Council for review and to ensure that policy issues regarding coordination of functions are clearly understood and/or clarified. The final draft was also sent to County Counsel for review to ensure its legal sufficiency. Upon sign-off by the General Counsel and the Disaster Council, the Plan was submitted to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

The Board of Supervisors is responsible for issuing a Letter of Promulgation or Resolution denoting approval of the Plan. The Board of Supervisors exercises overall authority and responsibility for the contents of this Plan.

Standard Operating Procedure Development

SOPs specific to the Hazard-Specific Annexes shall be developed, maintained, and updated on a regular basis by each County department and emergency response agency, for approval by the County OES Director. Each department/agency shall send an updated copy of their SOPs to the Program Coordinator.

Section 12: Training And Exercises

Training

In accordance with HSPD—5, the Imperial County Board of Supervisors adopted NIMS, which requires all County employees to undergo training. The County OES is responsible for coordinating the County's emergency preparedness training and exercise program and ensuring compliance with NIMS/SEMS/ICS.

Training and exercises are essential to ensure that emergency response personnel at all government and public levels are operationally ready. As part of the emergency management training curriculum, it is recommended that personnel with emergency responsibilities complete relevant emergency management courses.

In addition to SEMS and NIMS courses, County employees are provided with EOP orientation, DSW training, EOC Section-Specific training, and other additional specialized training as available. Imperial County Fire/OES is responsible for providing and maintaining the training and testing records to demonstrate compliance with SEMS and NIMS requirements.

Imperial County is currently developing a Multi-Year Training and Exercise plan to outline the emergency management program's training and exercise focus areas. This plan will help enhance operational capabilities and services across all phases of emergency management and increase the disaster readiness of EOC personnel in the County.

Exercises

Exercises allow personnel to become thoroughly familiar with the procedures, facilities, and systems used in emergencies. The County participates in all-hazard exercises that involve emergency management/response personnel from multiple disciplines and/or multiple jurisdictions. These events primarily aim to assess and enhance relevant emergency response plans, while also providing valuable training and learning experiences for all participants, including those with access and functional needs.

FEMA's HSEEP is a performance- and capabilities-based framework that offers a standardized approach for designing, developing, facilitating, evaluating, and improving exercises. In recognition of this, the signatories to this Plan agree to take part in HSEEP exercises, which will be identified and scheduled annually in the County OES Management's workplan. County OES will notify county departments, cities/towns, and special districts about training opportunities related to emergency management. Those with responsibilities outlined in this plan must ensure their personnel are adequately trained to fulfill these duties.

Key characteristics of these exercises include:

- Inclusion of realistic scenarios
- Emphasis on standardized emergency management practices
- Alignment with risk assessments (credible threats, vulnerabilities, and consequences)



- Inclusion of non-governmental organizations and the private sector, when appropriate
- Incorporation of SEMS and NIMS concepts and principles
- Addressing continuity of operations
- Consideration of access and functional needs populations

Regularly scheduled tests and exercises ensure that emergency management policies and plans are meeting their stated objectives. These activities raise awareness of potential hazards, test emergency plans and procedures, train response personnel, and demonstrate the jurisdiction's operational capabilities. Local preparedness is strengthened through a continuous cycle of planning, training, and exercising, ensuring that emergency resources are ready to respond appropriately at the right time. Training and exercises of the emergency management organization (EOC, ICS, and/or other agencies) components vary from seminars/workshops to full-scale demonstrations.

Appendices

This appendices section serves as a condensed version of the full EOP Base Plan for public review. It provides an overview of key procedural elements and resources included in the final plan. While this version captures essential components, the finalized EOP will feature a more comprehensive set of appendices to support emergency response and preparedness efforts.

The complete set of appendices in the final EOP will include:

- **County Emergency Proclamation Sample** – A template outlining the necessary steps and language for declaring a local emergency.
- **EOC Activation Procedure** – A detailed guide on the activation levels and operational framework of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
- **Training and Exercise Resources** – A compilation of training programs and exercise opportunities to enhance emergency preparedness.
- **Contact Lists of County Departments** – A directory of key personnel and emergency contacts within Imperial County departments.
- **American Red Cross Pre-Identified Shelters** – A list of ARC-designated emergency shelters available for community use during disasters.

This document is intended for informational and planning purposes only. It does not replace the finalized EOP, which will undergo additional revisions, stakeholder input, and official approvals before publication.

Appendix A: Acronyms and Glossary of Terms

Acronym	Term	Additional Information
AAA	Area Agency on Aging	Area Agencies on Aging are local organizations that coordinate and provide a range of services to support older adults and individuals with disabilities, helping them maintain independence and improve their quality of life.
AAR/IP	After-Action Report/Improvement Plan	An AAR/IP is a comprehensive document that evaluates the actions taken during an incident or exercise, assessing their effectiveness, and providing recommendations for improvement.
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act	The Americans with Disabilities Act is a federal law enacted in the United States in 1990. It is designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities and to ensure they have equal opportunities in various aspects of life, including employment, public accommodations, transportation, and government services.
AFN	Access and Functional Needs	<p>OAFN (Office of Access and Functional Needs) utilizes a whole community approach by offering training and guidance to emergency managers and planners, disability advocates and other service providers responsible for planning for, responding to and helping communities recover from disasters.</p> <p>The term AFN can also be used when describing people, populations, or groups of individuals with AFN. Be sure to use people first language (individuals with AFN, people with disabilities, community members who are visually impaired) not ability first language (disabled people, blind community, wheelchair bound).</p> <p>Note: Previous acronym used for people with access and functional needs has taken on an offensive meaning in slang usage. Therefore, it is not being used by CONSTANT going forward.</p>
ARC	American Red Cross	The American Red Cross provides emergency assistance, disaster relief, and education in the United States, supporting individuals and communities in times of need.
ASL	American Sign Language	A visual language used by the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community in the United States, where gestures, facial expressions, and body movements convey meaning.
ATSDR	Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry	A federal public health agency that protects communities from harmful health effects related to exposure to hazardous substances in the environment.
CA-ESF	California Emergency Support Functions	The CA-ESFs are a grouping of State agencies, departments, and other stakeholders with similar functional activities/responsibilities whose responsibilities lend to improving the state's ability to collaboratively prepare for, effectively mitigate, cohesively respond to, and rapidly recover from any emergency. CA-ESFs unify a broad-spectrum of stakeholders with various capabilities, resources, and authorities to improve collaboration and coordination for a particular discipline. They also provide a framework for the state government to support regional and community stakeholder collaboration and

Acronym	Term	Additional Information
		coordination at all levels of government and across overlapping jurisdictional boundaries.
CAHAN	California Health Alert Network	CAHAN is a statewide communication system established to facilitate the rapid dissemination of public health alerts, notifications, and information among healthcare providers, public health agencies, and emergency response partners in California.
Cal EOC360	CalEOC360	Cal EOC360 is a web-based emergency management information system used by Cal OES to document routine and emergency events/incidents. Cal EOC360 provides a real-time common operating picture and resource request management tool for emergency managers at the state levels during exercises, drills, local or regional emergencies, and/or statewide emergencies.
CALTRANS	California Department of Transportation	The state agency responsible for designing, constructing, maintaining, and operating California's highway, bridge, and rail transportation systems.
CALWAS	California Warning System	A statewide emergency warning system used to alert government officials and emergency personnel of impending or ongoing emergencies.
Cal OES	California Office of Emergency Services	Cal OES is responsible for overseeing and coordinating emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and homeland security activities within the state of California. Cal OES regularly dispatches team members to join first responders, emergency leaders and those affected by disasters that threaten public safety, to tell their stories and provide information essential to the public.
CALWAS	California Warning System	CALWAS refers to a network of systems and protocols established by the State of California to provide timely and effective warnings and notifications to the public and relevant agencies about various emergencies and disasters.
CBO	Community Based Organization	CBOs are civil society nonprofits that operate within a single local community as a subset of the wide group of nonprofits, usually run on a voluntary basis and self-funded. They are essentially a subset of the wider group of nonprofits. Like other nonprofits they are often run on a voluntary basis and are self-funding. CBOs often have close relationships with the communities they serve. CBOs leveraged partnerships to procure and distribute resources to unserved communities, acting as advocates for communities and working with federal, state, and local agencies to accomplish
CBRNE	Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosives	CBRNE refers to hazardous materials and threats that pose significant risks to public health, safety, and security. These hazards are typically associated with terrorism, industrial accidents, or warfare, requiring specialized emergency response and preparedness measures.
CDAA	California Disaster Assistance Act	CDAA provides state financial assistance for recovery efforts to counties, cities, special districts, and certain eligible private non-profit agencies after a Cal OES Secretary's Concurrence or a

Acronym	Term	Additional Information
		Governor's Proclamation. CDAA may be implemented as a "stand alone" funding source following a state disaster.
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	The CDC is a federal agency within the United States Department of Health and Human Services. Its primary mission is to protect public health and safety by controlling and preventing the spread of diseases, injuries, and health threats.
CEO	County Executive Office	Serves as the administrative arm of the Imperial County government, operating under the guidance of the five-member Board of Supervisors. The office is responsible for planning, organizing, directing, controlling, and coordinating county activities. This includes advising the Board of Supervisors on functions of officials and boards not under the direct jurisdiction or control of the County Executive Officer.
CERT	Community Emergency Response Team	CERT educates volunteers about disaster preparedness for the hazards that may occur where they live. The CERT program offers a consistent, nationwide approach to volunteer training and organization that professional responders can rely on during disaster situations, allowing them to focus on more complex tasks.
CESRS	California Emergency Services Radio System	The California Emergency Services Radio System (CESRS) serves as an emergency communications system for Cal OES and county emergency services organizations.
CLETS	California Law Enforcement Telecommunications System	CLETS is a computerized, statewide telecommunications system that provides law enforcement agencies and other authorized criminal justice entities in California with access to a wide range of critical information and services. CLETS is designed to facilitate the rapid and secure exchange of law enforcement and criminal justice data among agencies and organizations for the purposes of investigation, public safety, and enforcement.
CPG	Comprehensive Preparedness Guide	A series of guidelines developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to assist local, state, tribal, territorial, and federal agencies in planning for all hazards. These guides provide standardized best practices, frameworks, and templates to enhance emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation efforts.
CSD	Community Service District	A special district established under California law (Government Code §61000 et seq.) to provide essential municipal services to unincorporated areas that are not part of a city. CSDs serve as local government entities with the authority to deliver various public services, such as water supply, fire protection, waste management, and recreation, based on the needs of their communities.
CSTI	California Specialized Training Institute	CSTI is a training and educational organization that operates within Cal OES. CSTI provides specialized training programs, courses, and resources to emergency responders, public safety personnel, and other stakeholders involved in emergency management, homeland security, and disaster response in the State of California.
CSWC	California State Warning Center	The California State Warning Center (CSWC) is the official State Warning Point. The CSWC is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week watching over California to identify potential and emerging

Acronym	Term	Additional Information
		threats, provide alert notification to all levels of government as well as critical situational awareness during an emergency or disaster.
CWIRS	Countywide Integrated Radio System	The radio communications network used by County departments except Fire and Sheriff. CWIRS is a back-up communications system that can be used by County departments in times of emergency when conventional and cellular communications are disrupted.
DOC	Department Operations Center	A DOC is a designated facility or location where representatives from various departments or agencies within an organization or jurisdiction gather to coordinate and manage response and recovery efforts during an emergency or disaster. The primary purpose of a DOC is to facilitate communication, collaboration, and decision-making among key personnel and agencies involved in the emergency response.
DSW	Disaster Service Worker	A DSW is an individual who is legally designated and trained to provide essential services and support during emergencies and disasters within the framework of emergency management.
EAP	Emergency Action Plan	EAPs are comprehensive written documents that outline specific procedures and guidelines for responding to various types of emergencies or disasters within an organization, facility, or community.
EAS	Emergency Alert System	EAS is a national public warning system in the United States designed to rapidly disseminate emergency alerts and information to the public during significant emergencies or disasters.
EMAC	Emergency Management Assistance Compact	A congressionally ratified organization that provides form and structure to interstate mutual aid. Through EMAC, a disaster-affected state can request and receive assistance from other member states quickly and efficiently, resolving two key issues upfront: liability and reimbursement.
EMMA	Emergency Management Mutual Aid	EMMA is a cooperative arrangement or formal agreement between multiple jurisdictions, agencies, organizations, or entities to provide and receive assistance during emergencies or disasters. The primary goal of EMMA is to enhance the capacity to respond effectively to incidents that exceed the resources or capabilities of a single entity.
EMS	Emergency Medical Services	EMS refers to a system of prehospital medical care and emergency transportation that is designed to provide rapid and specialized medical assistance to individuals who are experiencing acute medical conditions, injuries, or emergencies. EMS is a critical component of the healthcare system and plays a vital role in delivering immediate medical care, stabilizing patients, and transporting them to appropriate healthcare facilities for further treatment.
EOC	Emergency Operations Center	The EOC is the focal point for coordination of the City's emergency planning, training, response, and recovery efforts.
EOP	Emergency Operations Plan	An EOP is a comprehensive written document that outlines the strategies, procedures, and organizational structures for

Acronym	Term	Additional Information
		responding to and managing emergencies and disasters within a specific jurisdiction, organization, or community.
ESA	California Emergency Services Act	California Emergency Services Act: An Act within the California Government Code to ensure preparations within the state will be adequate to deal with natural, human-caused, or war caused emergencies which result in conditions of disaster or in extreme peril to life, property, 159 and the natural resources of the state, and generally to protect the health and safety and preserve the lives and property of the people of the state.
ESF	Emergency Support Function	A structured framework used in the National Response Framework to coordinate federal, state, and local responses to disasters and emergencies in the United States. Each ESF is assigned to a specific sector of emergency management and is led by one or more responsible agencies.
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation	The FBI is a federal law enforcement agency within the United States Department of Justice. It is responsible for investigating and enforcing federal laws, preventing and responding to criminal and national security threats, and upholding the nation's justice system.
FCC	Federal Communications Commission	The Federal Communications Commission is an independent U.S. government agency responsible for regulating interstate and international communications via radio, television, wire, satellite, and cable. Established by the Communications Act of 1934, the FCC's mission is to promote competition, innovation, and investment in communication services, ensure public safety through reliable communication networks, and protect consumers by enforcing fair practices and accessibility standards. The FCC also allocates spectrum for public and private use and oversees policies to expand broadband access nationwide.
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency	FEMA is a federal agency within the United States Department of Homeland Security responsible for coordinating the federal government's response to natural and man-made disasters and emergencies. FEMA's mission is to help people and communities prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the impacts of disasters and emergencies.
FHSZ	Fire Hazard Severity Zone	FHSZ maps consider the likelihood that an area will be burned over a 30- to 50-year period and do not consider modifications from fuel reduction efforts.
FTS	Field Treatment Site	A temporary location established during emergencies to provide medical evaluation, triage, and treatment to patients outside of traditional healthcare facilities.
GIS	Geographical information System	GIS is a computer-based technology and software tool used for capturing, storing, managing, analyzing, and visualizing geographic or spatial data.
HMGP	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program	A Federal Emergency Management Agency program that provides funding to states, tribes, and local governments for projects that reduce the risk of future disasters.
HSEEP	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program	HSEEP is a standardized program developed by FEMA that is used to design, develop, conduct, and evaluate exercises focused on homeland security and emergency management. HSEEP

Acronym	Term	Additional Information
		provides a systematic and adaptable framework for planning, executing, and assessing exercises to improve the preparedness and response capabilities of federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, and private-sector entities.
HSPD	Homeland Security Presidential Directive	A series of directives issued by the U.S. President to establish policies, procedures, and practices for homeland security.
IA	Individual Assistance	A FEMA program providing financial or direct assistance to individuals and households affected by a disaster.
IAP	Incident Action Plan	An IAP is a written document that outlines the objectives, strategies, tactics, and resources needed to manage and respond to a specific incident or emergency effectively.
IC	Incident Command	The ICS organizational element responsible for overall management of the incident and consisting of the Incident Commander or Unified Command and any additional Command Staff activated.
ICP	Incident Command Post	The field location where the primary functions of incident command are performed. The ICP may be co-located with the Incident Base or other incident facilities.
ICS	Incident Command System	A standardized approach to the command, control, and coordination of on-scene incident management, providing a common hierarchy within which personnel from multiple organizations can be effective. ICS is the combination of procedures, personnel, facilities, equipment, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, designed to aid in the management of on-scene resources during incidents. It is used for all kinds of incidents and is applicable to small, as well as large and complex, incidents, including planned events.
IDE	Initial Damage Estimate	An IDAE is the local governments' identification of the impacts and local response and recovery activities
IPAWS	Integrated Public Alert and Warning System	IPAWS is a comprehensive and technologically advanced framework within the United States that integrates multiple communication systems and alerting authorities to disseminate emergency alerts and warnings to the public. IPAWS is managed by FEMA and is designed to ensure that critical emergency information reaches individuals, communities, and organizations through various communication channels.
ISO	Independent Systems Operator	An organization responsible for managing the operation of a region's electricity grid and ensuring the reliability of electricity delivery.
ITS	Information / Technical Services	Imperial County department that provides technical support, data management, and information sharing during emergencies or routine operations.
IVDRT	Imperial Valley Disaster Recovery Team	A local organization dedicated to disaster preparedness, response, and recovery efforts within the Imperial Valley region.
IVHD	Imperial Valley Healthcare District	A local health care district established in 2023 to serve all of Imperial County, California. Its formation aims to consolidate and enhance health care services in the region by integrating existing health care entities.

Acronym	Term	Additional Information
IVT	Imperial Valley Transit	A public transportation service providing bus routes and transit options throughout the Imperial Valley region
JIC	Joint Information Center	A JIC is a central location or facility where PIOs and communication staff from multiple agencies and organizations work together to gather, verify, coordinate, and disseminate accurate and timely information to the public, media, and other stakeholders during an emergency or incident. The primary goal of a JIC is to provide clear and consistent messaging to keep the public informed, manage rumors and misinformation, and support public safety and emergency response efforts.
JIS	Joint Information System	A JIS is a standardized framework and structure used to organize and coordinate public information and communication efforts during multi-agency or multi-jurisdictional incidents and emergencies. The primary purpose of the JIS is to ensure that a consistent, coordinated, and accurate flow of information is maintained among all responding agencies and organizations, as well as to the public, media, and other stakeholders.
MAC Group	Multiagency Coordination Group	Typically, administrators/executives, or their appointed representatives, who are authorized to commit agency resources and funds, are brought together and form MAC Groups. MAC Groups may also be known as multiagency committees, emergency management committees, or as otherwise defined. It can provide coordinated decision-making and resource allocation among cooperating agencies and may establish the priorities among incidents, harmonize agency policies, and provide strategic guidance and direction to support incident management activities.
MACS	Multiagency Coordination System	Multiagency coordination systems provide the architecture to support coordination for incident prioritization, critical resource allocation, communications systems integration, and information coordination. The elements of multiagency coordination systems include facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications. Two of the most commonly used elements are EOC and MAC Groups. These systems assist agencies and organizations responding to an incident.
MJHMP/HMP	Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan / Hazard Mitigation Plan	HMPs outline strategies, actions, and measures to reduce or eliminate the long-term risks and vulnerabilities associated with natural and human-made hazards. The primary goal of an HMP is to enhance a community's resilience by proactively identifying, prioritizing, and addressing potential hazards and their associated impacts, ultimately reducing the frequency and severity of disasters.
MMAA	California Disaster and Civil Defense Master Mutual Aid Agreement (MMAA)	An agreement entered into by and between the State of California, its various departments and agencies, and the various political subdivisions, municipal corporations, and public agencies of the State of California to assist each other by providing resources during an emergency. Mutual Aid occurs when two or more parties agree to furnish resources and facilities and to render services to each other in response to any type of disaster or emergency.

Acronym	Term	Additional Information
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations	An organization that operates independently of any government, typically to address a social or political issue.
NIMS	National Incident Management System	NIMS is a comprehensive and standardized framework and set of guidelines established by FEMA to facilitate effective incident management and response, regardless of the type, size, or complexity of the incident or emergency. NIMS provides a common language and organizational structure that enables diverse agencies, jurisdictions, and organizations to work together seamlessly during incidents, promoting a coordinated and efficient response.
NLETS	National Law Enforcement Telecommunications System	NLETS is a secure and encrypted information-sharing network used by law enforcement agencies across the United States, Canada, and other countries. NLETS serves as a vital tool for law enforcement professionals, allowing them to access and exchange critical criminal justice and public safety information quickly and efficiently.
NRF	National Response Framework	The NRF is a guide and comprehensive framework developed by FEMA to establish the structure, roles, and responsibilities for responding to all types of disasters and emergencies, whether they are natural, technological, or human-made. The NRF is a key component of NIMS and is designed to ensure a coordinated, unified, and effective response by various federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, and private sector partners.
NWS	National Weather Service	The National Weather Service is a federal agency under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) responsible for providing weather, water, and climate forecasts and warnings to protect life and property and enhance the national economy. With a network of local offices, meteorologists, and advanced technologies, the NWS delivers accurate and timely information about severe weather, floods, hurricanes, wildfires, and other hazards.
OA	Operational Area	Operational Area: An intermediate level of the state emergency organization, consisting of a county and all other political subdivisions within the geographical boundaries of the county.
OASIS	Operational Area Satellite Information System	A satellite-based communication system used by California's emergency management agencies to support coordination during disasters.
OES	Office of Emergency Services	An office at any level of government, which coordinates overall emergency services within their jurisdiction. OES is responsible for coordination of emergencies and establishing plans.
PA	Public Assistance	A FEMA program that provides financial assistance to governments and certain nonprofits to support response and recovery efforts following a disaster.
PDA	Preliminary Damage Assessment	A PDA is a systematic and organized process used in emergency management to evaluate and assess the extent of damage and impact caused by a disaster or emergency event. The primary purpose of a PDA is to gather essential information to determine whether a state or jurisdiction qualifies for federal disaster assistance and to support decision-making regarding the allocation of resources for response and recovery efforts.

Acronym	Term	Additional Information
PIO	Public Information Officer	A member of the Command Staff (Management Staff at the SEMS EOC Levels) responsible for interfacing with the public and media and/or with other agencies with incident-related information requirements.
PNP	Private Non-Profit	A Private Nonprofit (PNP) organization is a tax-exempt entity that operates independently of government control to serve public or community interests. PNPs are often mission-driven and provide essential services such as education, healthcare, social services, utilities, and cultural programs. These organizations rely on funding from donations, grants, and service fees, and they reinvest any surplus revenue into their programs and operations.
PSPS	Public Safety Power Shutoffs	A PSPS is a preemptive measure taken by utility companies to intentionally shut off power in specific areas during extreme weather conditions to reduce the risk of wildfires. PSPS events are typically enacted when high winds, low humidity, and dry vegetation increase the likelihood of power lines sparking a fire.
RACES	Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services	Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES): An emergency services tool designed to make efficient use of skilled radio amateurs throughout the State in accordance with approved civil defense communications plans. Operators are registered with Cal EMA to provide emergency communications support
RDMH	Regional Disaster Medical Health	A State system that coordinates medical and health resources at the regional level during emergencies
REOC	Regional Emergency Operations Center	REOCs are used to coordinate information and resources among OAs and between the OA's and the State level. Cal OES has three administrative response regions: Inland, Coastal, and Southern based in Sacramento, Fairfield, and Los Alamitos, respectively. Cal OES regions have the responsibility to carry out the coordination of information and resources within the region and between the different levels of SEMS to ensure effective and efficient support to local response. The regions serve as the conduit for local and regional perspective and provide a physical presence for Cal OES functions at the local level in all phases of emergency management.
RES	Regional Event Summary	The purpose of an RES is to document an incident's impact, response efforts, lessons learned, and recommendations for future preparedness and response actions.
SB	Senate Bill	A proposed law introduced in the state Senate, often addressing topics related to emergency management, public safety, or other state-level concerns
SBA	U.S. Small Business Administration	The SBA provides a wide range of programs and services aimed at helping small businesses grow, access financing, and navigate the complexities of entrepreneurship. Its primary mission is to foster small business development and entrepreneurship to strengthen the economy.
SEMS	Standardized Emergency Management System	A system required by the California Government Code for managing response to multi-agency and multijurisdictional emergencies in California. SEMS consists of five organizational levels which are activated as necessary: Field Response, Local Government, Operation Area, Region, and State.

Acronym	Term	Additional Information
SOC	State Operations Center	The SOC is operated by Cal OES at the State Level in SEMS. It is responsible for centralized coordination of state resources in support of the three REOCs. It is also responsible for providing updated situation reports to the Governor and Legislature.
SOG	Standard Operating Guide	An SOG is a document that outlines the standardized procedures, protocols, and guidelines to be followed by emergency response personnel and agencies during various phases of an emergency or disaster. These guides are designed to ensure that responders have clear and consistent instructions for their roles and responsibilities, helping to facilitate a coordinated and efficient response.
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure	SOPs are step-by-step guidelines and instructions that outline the prescribed actions, protocols, and processes to be followed by emergency response personnel and organizations during various phases of an emergency or disaster. SOPs are designed to ensure consistency, efficiency, and effectiveness in response efforts while minimizing risks and ensuring the safety of responders and the public.
SUV	Spontaneous Unaffiliated Volunteers	Individuals who offer to help during emergencies without prior training or affiliation with an emergency management organization.
SVI	Social Vulnerability Index	
UC	Unified Command	Unified Command is a collaborative incident management approach used when multiple agencies or jurisdictions are involved in responding to an emergency. Under UC, representatives from all relevant organizations work together to establish shared objectives, coordinate strategies, and make joint decisions without losing individual authority. This structure promotes effective communication, resource sharing, and a unified response effort, ensuring a more efficient resolution of complex or large-scale incidents. UC is a key component of the Incident Command System and is often used in multi-agency or multi-jurisdictional emergencies.
VOAD	Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters	VOAD associations improve outcomes for people affected by disasters by facilitating cooperation, communication, coordination, and collaboration among nonprofit organizations, community-based groups, government agencies, and for-profit companies. California is home to two regional VOAD associations—NorCal VOAD and SoCal VOAD which share the California State VOAD seat at National VOAD. Each strives to include all the nonprofit organizations, government agencies, and for-profit companies that provide or coordinate disaster-related services in its service area. A VOAD association enables its members to share information and coordinate the deployment of resources to improve outcomes for people affected disasters.
VRI	Video Response Interpreting	A service that provides on-demand video access to sign language or spoken language interpreters to aid communication during emergencies.
WEA	Wireless Emergency Alert	WEA is an emergency alert system in the United States that delivers concise and critical emergency messages to mobile devices within a specific geographic area. WEAs are designed to



Acronym	Term	Additional Information
		alert the public about imminent threats or emergencies, such as severe weather events, natural disasters, AMBER alerts (child abduction emergencies), and presidential emergency messages. This system uses the cellular network to broadcast brief emergency notifications to compatible mobile devices, even if individuals have not opted in to receive them.
WUI	Wildland-Urban Interface	Areas where human development meets or intermingles with undeveloped wildland, often posing increased wildfire risks

Appendix B: Authorities and Resources

Imperial County Resolutions

- County Resolution No. 20: California Master Mutual Aid Agreement: Adopted and approved on January 1951.
- County Resolution No. 95-12: Adoption of Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS): Adopted in September 1995, this Resolution contains language supporting the County's use and implementation of SEMS and the OA Concept.
- County Resolution No. 2006-013: Adoption of National Incident Management System (NIMS): Adopted NIMS and also included language that the County would continue use of SEMS.
- County Resolution No. 2.104.030: Establish Disaster Council: County Ordinance No. 237 also defines the County's Disaster Council membership (2.104.030) and powers/duties (2.104.040).
- County Resolution No. 2021-02: Imperial County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update: Adopted in February 2021 this resolution adopted the updated County's MJHMP.

Local

- [Imperial County Emergency Operations Plan \(EOP\) 2016](#)
- [Imperial County General Plan 2022](#)
- [Imperial County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan \(MJHMP\) 2021](#)

State

- [Cal OES Emergency Plan Review Crosswalk, Local Government Agencies \(Checklist for Reviewing Emergency Plans\)](#)
- [Cal OES Review of Local Emergency Plans](#)
- [Cal OES Updates to County Emergency Plan Legislation, Content, Submission, and Review Fact Sheet](#)
- [Cal OES SEMS Guidelines and Overview: Standardized Emergency Management System](#)
- [Integrating Access and Functional Needs within the Emergency Planning Process: Best Practices for Stakeholder Inclusion](#)
- [Jurisdictional Guidance for Development of an AFN Advisory Committee](#)
- [State of California Alert and Warning Guidelines](#)
- [State of California Planning Best Practices for County Emergency Plans](#)

Federal

- Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101, Version 3.0 – FEMA (May 2018), [Comprehensive Preparedness Guide \(CPG\) 201, 3rd Edition](#)



- Considerations for Fusion Center and Emergency Operations Center Coordination – Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 502 – FEMA (May 2010)
- [FEMA Planning Considerations: Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place, Guidance for State, Local, Tribal and Territorial Partners](#)
- National Incident Management System [National Incident Management System | FEMA.gov](#),
- National Incident Management System Training Program 2020,
- [National Incident Management System Training Program](#)
- United States Census Bureau, [Census.gov | U.S. Census Bureau Homepage](#)

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