

TUSCALOOSA COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Tuscaloosa County is vulnerable to a variety of hazards that threaten our communities, businesses and the environment. The Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) establishes a framework for ensuring the county will be adequately prepared to deal with all hazards. The EOP outlines the roles and responsibilities for all agencies, departments and organizations with an emergency support function.

The EOP address the four phases of emergency management (Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery). The plan parallels the Alabama Emergency Operations Plan and the National Response Plan in describing how emergencies are planned for and managed and how resources will be coordinated. The EOP is consistent with the accepted standards and principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS). (NIMS is a nationally accepted emergency management system for addressing all types of hazards and for integrating multiple agencies, jurisdictions and disciplines into a coordinated response and relief effort.

Major emergencies and disaster incidents are unique events that present the community and emergency personnel with extraordinary problems and challenges that cannot be adequately addressed within the routine operations of government. Since disasters differ in important ways and it is impossible to plan for every contingency, highly detailed operational procedures are avoided in the plan in favor of a streamlined all hazards preparedness approach.

While Homeland Security is a key element of the EOP, the plan is intended to provide a basis for the coordinated management of disaster incidents so that the impact to people, property, public services and economy are minimized and normal community conditions can be restored as rapidly as possible.

All agencies and departments are responsible for developing and maintaining current internal plans and procedures for carrying out the assigned emergency functions described in the EOP. The coordination of these plans and procedures with the EOP is an ongoing process through regular training and exercises.

There are three main sections to this comprehensive plan: The Basic Plan, Hazard Specific Appendices and Emergency Support Function Annexes with supporting attachments and tables. Due to Homeland Security concerns, the specifics contained within this document are confidential; nevertheless, the following is a brief description of each section:

THE BASIC PLAN (BP) – This section addresses, in general terms, the responsibilities of the various Tuscaloosa County jurisdictions, their agencies and departments and non-governmental organizations. It describes the method of operations, financial management policies, continuity of government, references and authorities and hazard/vulnerabilities analysis. The Basic Plan also covers recovery issues to ensure a rapid and orderly implementation of rehabilitation and restoration operations for persons and property affected by disaster.

HAZARD SPECIFIC APPENDICIES – These appendices to the Basic Plan describe how agencies, departments and organizations will coordinate specific hazards that threaten Tuscaloosa County.

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION (ESF) ANNEXES – These annexes organize agencies, departments and organizations into emergency support functions. The structure of this section is required by Presidential Directive and is patterned after the National Response Plan. Each of these annexes contains a method of operation and the responsibilities of the primary and support agencies that will respond during a multi-agency or multi-jurisdictional major emergency or disaster.

Additionally, there are Supporting Attachments and Tables affixed to each ESF. These pages provide a variety of charts, figures, tables and lists pertaining to that ESF.

Below is a description of the 18 ESFs described in the Tuscaloosa County EOP:

ESF 1 – Transportation – This ESF provides guidance for overall coordination of transportation assistance to emergency operations requiring transportation to perform the respective ESF's missions during a major disaster or emergency. Priority of the transportation function will be to support any evacuation operations.

ESF 2 – Communications/Warnings – This ESF describes the communication systems and presents available communication sources, policies and procedures to be used during emergency situations. This function will assure the provision of required telecommunications and emergency radio support to operations and will provide technical assistance in the assessment and reconstruction of the communications infrastructure. ESF 2 also describes the functioning of the system used for public alerts and warnings within the county.

ESF 3 – Infrastructure – This combined ESF coordinates public and private sector response and recovery activities for continued infrastructure services during emergencies and disasters. The primary responsibilities addressed are for functioning and restoring operations at critical public works. This may include construction management and inspections, emergency contracting and emergency repairs.

ESF 4 – Firefighting – This ESF provides for the coordination of fire fighting activities to ensure the safety of life and property during actual or imminent emergency situations.

ESF 5 – Information and Planning – This ESF collects processes and disseminates information about a potential or actual emergency or disaster to facilitate effective response and recovery operations. This function includes recovery operations, situation unit, damage assessment, weather information, demobilization actions, expedient training, technical specialists, family center operations, planning for dislocated populations, re-entry inspections and permits and Geographic Information System (GIS).

ESF 6 – Mass Care/Sheltering/Evacuations – This ESF provides for the protection of the population from the effects of hazards through the identification of shelters and provision of mass care and social services in shelters. The function also describes procedures for the evacuation of portions of the population due to effects of a hazard.

ESF 7 – Resource Support – ESF 7 provides a system of identifying and locating resources and a method of activating those resources during an emergency. The preservation, conservation and replenishment of these resources are also included.

ESF 8 – Health and Medical Services – This function provides a coordinated response to public health and human services needs following an emergency; provides a structure to receive assistance from hospitals, field medical teams and volunteer medical personnel to assist persons with medical needs.

ESF 9 – Search and Rescue – This ESF includes developing search patterns and procedures to locate emergency victims in damaged areas; and locating, extricating and providing for the immediate medical treatment of victims trapped in damaged and collapsed structures.

ESF 10 – Hazardous Materials – This Emergency Support Function provides basic information and concepts for coping with potential hazardous material incidents (chemical, biological and radiological) within Tuscaloosa County. This document establishes a plan of action for coordination and support of emergency response operations, as required pursuant to the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA; Title III – “The Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act of 1986, Sec. 303c.

ESF 11 – Food and Water – This ESF describes the procedures required to identify food and water needs in the aftermath of a disaster or emergency; obtain these needs and transport such needs to the disaster work area. Food supplies obtained and distributed by ESF 11, will be dispensed to the disaster work victims by ESF 6 (Mass Care).

ESF 12 – Energy – This function provides for the effective utilization of available electric power, water resources, natural gas and petroleum products to meet essential needs in Tuscaloosa County during an emergency or disaster. It also provides for the restoration of public or private utilities affected by the situation.

ESF 13 – Public Information – This function facilitates developing, conducting and maintaining a program of dissemination of Emergency Public Information to the public

through the media. Public Information provides critical information related to specific emergency actions and recommendations for protective measures.

ESF 14 – Volunteers and Donated Goods – This ESF provides guidance to expedite the delivery of needed donated goods and volunteer services to support relief efforts in a disaster.

ESF 15 – Law Enforcement and Security – The function provides for crime prevention, maintenance of law and order and traffic control during emergencies and disasters. ESF 15 also describes the operational policies to be implemented for the purpose of minimizing the impact of civil disturbances upon citizens and property.

ESF 16 – Animal Care – This emergency support function provides direction and assignment of responsibility for animal issues before, during and after an actual or potential disaster to facilitate overall coordination of animal protection and care. The goal of this ESF is to protect domesticated and non-domesticated animals (including pets, livestock and wild animals), the public health, the public food supply, the environment and to ensure the humane care and treatment of animals in the event of a major disaster or emergency that causes animal suffering.

ESF 17 – Terrorism Response – ESF 17 provides a concept of operations for a countywide uniform response to a terrorist incident. It also provides guidance to protect citizens and property from further injury or damage that may have been caused by a terrorist incident. Additionally, it establishes procedures for requesting and coordinating county, state and Federal assistance in response to a terrorist act.

ESF 18 – Recovery Operations – This function facilitates the community’s transition from a disaster situation to the resumption of normal activities at former or improved levels.

For the Emergency Operations Plan to be activated it must be legalized by a Letter of Promulgation from the Chief Elected Officials within Tuscaloosa County. That letter follows below:

LETTER OF PROMULGATION

Pursuant to the authority granted by ordinances and proclamations as passed by the various municipal and county governing bodies within Tuscaloosa County, this Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is promulgated. It is to provide guidance in mitigating, preparing for, responding to and recovering from emergencies and disasters that threaten lives and property within the various jurisdictional boundaries of Tuscaloosa County.

The signitors to this Letter of Promulgation declare that their jurisdiction's individual departments and agencies will adhere to the policies set forth in this document. Further, the signitors agree that the operations described in this plan will be implemented through Standard Operating Procedures/Guidelines (SOPs/SOGs) as developed by their departments and agencies.

This plan is designed to clearly and succinctly define the roles, responsibilities, resources and methods necessary to ensure that emergency assistance becomes available as soon as possible in the time leading up to, during and after a disaster, attack or major incident that would or does exceed a routine daily emergency response.

This EOP is a comprehensive and strategic document that incorporates elements of the current *Federal Emergency Response Plan*, the draft *National Response Plan*, FEMA Region IV *Regional Response Plan*, and the *State of Alabama Emergency Operations Plan*. The format of this plan is an attempt to allow rapid integration of federal, state and local planning and response efforts.

The Tuscaloosa County EOP will be maintained by the Tuscaloosa County Emergency Management Agency's Planning Officer under the oversight of the Tuscaloosa County EMA Director. The plan will be reviewed annually and needed changes, additions and/or deletions will be made and distributed to the departments, agencies and organizations that possess a copy of the EOP.

This EOP becomes operational upon the signatures (next page) of all members of the Chief Elected Officials Group (CEOG), which have executive authority over mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery duties within their political jurisdictions as identified within this document.

SIGNATURE PAGE

Chief Elected Officials Group:

We, the undersigned members of the Chief Elected Officials Group declare this document legally in effect on the date stated below and order its implementation by all agencies and departments of each jurisdiction represented below.

Alvin P. DuPont, Mayor
City of Tuscaloosa

W. Hardy McCollum, Chairman
Tuscaloosa County Commission

Harvey Fretwell, Mayor
City of Northport

Edmund M. Sexton, Sheriff
Tuscaloosa County Sheriff's Department

Acting as Chief of Staff to the Chief Elected Officials Group, the Tuscaloosa County Emergency Management Agency Director or designee will maintain this document and coordinate operations as set forth in this plan.

Ronald P. Hampel, Director
Tuscaloosa County Emergency Management Agency

Date of Implementation: 30 June 2004