



CITY OF  
**PALO ALTO**

# EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN





**City of Palo Alto**  
***Office of Emergency Services***

275 Forest Avenue | Palo Alto, CA 94301  
[www.cityofpaloalto.org/oes](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/oes)

# **EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN**

March 2025



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) outlines how the City of Palo Alto—its government, stakeholder agencies, community groups, business community, and residents—coordinate its response to major emergencies and disasters. This plan is regularly reviewed and updated by staff and approved by the City Council.

The EOP identifies operational strategies and plans for managing inherently complex and potentially catastrophic events. City assets, resources, and departments are potentially vulnerable and may become overwhelmed. A primary goal of the EOP is to promote flexibility whenever possible based on good judgment and common sense. This document facilitates emergency response and short-term recovery functions for emergencies and disasters that are outside of the expected capabilities of normal City operations.

Palo Alto has officially adopted and integrated the following emergency management, response, and coordination systems:

- Incident Command System (ICS)
- Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS)
- National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- National Response Framework (NRF)

This EOP addresses the following phases of emergency management:

- Preparedness
- Response
- Recovery
- Mitigation

The City has adopted a “whole community” approach that actively promotes the inclusion and integration of community partners, neighbors, residents, people with disabilities and access and functional needs, people with language or cultural differences, and other stakeholders in all phases of emergency management planning. Through such collaboration, the City will be better prepared to meet the needs of its residents and daytime populace alike.

The City’s Emergency Operations Center (EOC) provides a centralized location where emergency management coordination and decision-making can be supported during a critical incident, major emergency, disaster, or significant event. When activated, the EOC provides support for critical tasks related to communications, coordination, resource management, and executive leadership.

If Palo Alto determines that the effects of an emergency are beyond the capability of local resources or may become so, then a local emergency can be proclaimed. There are specific circumstances where the City of Palo Alto can proclaim an emergency even if not beyond capabilities, for example during COVID-19 and severe storms the City proclaimed an emergency. A local proclamation of emergency allows the City Manager and staff to take measures necessary to protect and preserve public health and safety and support requests for county, state, and federal assistance. A proclamation also provides City staff with additional powers and authorities to increase the speed and effectiveness of City response activities.

The Palo Alto EOP provides an all-hazard approach to enable Palo Alto EOC staff and City employees managing emergency incidents and planned events. This plan is divided into three sections:

**Basic Plan** -- presents the planning assumptions, policies, and concept of operations that guide the responsibilities for emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation for Palo Alto.

**Annexes** – Hazard specific and functional applications of the EOP

## AUTHORITY, APPROVAL, IMPLEMENTATION & DISTRIBUTION

This Emergency Operations Plan is sanctioned under the authority of the Palo Alto Municipal Code (Palo Alto Municipal Code, 2024) and issued under the authority of the City Manager acting as the statutory Director of Emergency Services. This plan applies to the operations and management of the City of Palo Alto and its respective departments and agencies.

This document shall be the official all-hazards Emergency Operations Plan for the City of Palo Alto and shall supersede all previous plans for this purpose. Nothing in this plan shall be construed in a manner that limits good judgment and common sense in matters not foreseen.

This plan is approved by the City Manager for the City of Palo Alto and adopted by the City Council. The delegation of authority for specific modifications that may be made to the plan without the senior official's signature is the Office of Emergency Services Chief. Copies of the plan will be subsequently distributed electronically to each City Department, the EOC, and EOC section chiefs.

City of Palo Alto

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Ed Shikada, City Manager

Date

# EOP ADOPTION RESOLUTION

Resolution No. 10255

Resolution of the Council of the City of Palo Alto Adopting the City of Palo  
Alto 2025 Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

## RECITALS

A. The City of Palo Alto has developed an updated Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) in order to help coordinate resources to make our community safer and better prepared to deal with all hazards.

B. The Palo Alto/Stanford Citizen Corps Council is part of the Emergency Services Council as provided by Palo Alto Municipal Code section 2.12.030(a)(5), stating that members include "[s]uch representatives of civic, business, labor, veterans, professional or other organizations having an official emergency responsibility, as may be appointed by the [City Manager] with the advice and consent of the city council."

C. Per Palo Alto Municipal Code section 2.12.080, the Citizen Corps Council and the Emergency Services Council recommend that the City Council adopt the new 2025 EOP.

The City Council of the City of Palo Alto hereby RESOLVES as follows:

SECTION 1. The City Council hereby adopts the 2025 Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), attached hereto and incorporated by reference.

SECTION 2. The City Council hereby consents to the updated Palo Alto/Stanford Citizen Corps Council (CCC) membership list.

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**SECTION 3.** The Council finds that this is not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act and, therefore, no environmental impact assessment is necessary.

INTRODUCED AND PASSED: NOVEMBER 3, 2025

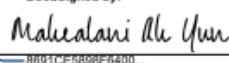
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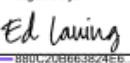
NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTENTIONS:

ATTEST:

Signed by:  
  
Mahalani Lu Yuen  
8807CE58888-8400...  
City Clerk

Signed by:  
  
Ed Lauing  
880L2UDE663824EB...  
Mayor

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

APPROVED:

Signed by:  
  
Aylin Bilek  
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City Attorney or designee

Signed by:  
  
Ed Shikada  
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City Manager

Signed by:  
  
Director of Emergency Services  
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Signed by:  
  
Director of Administrative Services  
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## RECORD OF CHANGES

With the input from key stakeholders, City of Palo Alto's Office of Emergency Services is responsible for maintaining, reviewing, and updating this Emergency Operations Plan. Collaborative plan revisions and updates are essential to ensure accuracy and validity of the EOP, therefore any plan changes and updates will be captured in the table below.

PLAN CHANGES / UPDATES			
Date	Change	Updated by	Department
11/03/2025	EOP Update	Andres Orozco	OES

## RECORD OF DISTRIBUTION

The City of Palo Alto's EOP is posted online with the City's Office of Emergency Services maintaining the primary copy.

## Disclosure Exemptions

While sections of this document may be available for public review, other portions may contain sensitive information relevant to the emergency response operation of the City of Palo Alto. Portions that include information with significant implications on City, county, state and /or national security or are otherwise exempt from public disclosure are placed in attachments in accordance with the provisions of the California Public Records Act § 7920 *et seq.*

## Adherence to the Plan (EOP)

Information provided in this plan is guidance and not policy. Decisions and directions about the most appropriate approach and course of action for response and recovery may be influenced by numerous factors and will be determined based on the best information available at the time.



## DEPARTMENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The City of Palo Alto's departments may be called upon for the departments' capabilities and resources to respond to and recover from an emergency or disaster. The lead and support roles are outlined in the table below. It is important to note that lead and support roles will vary depending on the emergency or disaster. For example, the lead agency for wildfire response is the Palo Alto Fire Department while the Community Services Department may play a support role in firefighting by utilizing the Community Services Open Space Rangers. There are corresponding City annexes and plans that each department can refer to before and during an emergency to familiarize themselves with emergency functions. Additional information on roles and responsibilities, EOC activation authorities, and procedures can be found in the Palo Alto EOC Manual.

The Emergency Support Functions listed in the following table are aligned with the State of California Governor's Office of Emergency Services Emergency Support Functions (ESFs). For more information on CAL OES ESFs, please visit [CAL OES Emergency Support Functions](#).

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT	ROLES	RESPONSIBILITIES	PA Corresponding Annex/Plan
<b>City Council</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ESF 5 Management <a href="#">State ESF 5</a></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Empower City Manager in their role as Director of Emergency Services</li><li>• Through the City Manager, provide policy-level guidance, direction, and decisions related to the incident(s)</li><li>• Liaison with County Board of Supervisors</li><li>• Reinforce public information and community engagement efforts as needed</li><li>• Convene or represent the City at public meetings as needed</li><li>• Review potential or threatened litigation as needed</li><li>• Review and approve proclamation of local emergency</li><li>• Review requirements for special legislation and development of policy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continuity of Operations Plan/Continuity of Governance (COOP/COG)</li></ul>

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT	ROLES	RESPONSIBILITIES	PA Corresponding Annex/Plan
<b>City Attorney and City Clerk</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESF 5 Management <a href="#"><u>State ESF 5</u></a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess City operations and provide legal counsel as needed</li> <li>• Review potential or threatened litigation as needed</li> <li>• Facilitate and administer proclamations of local emergencies</li> <li>• Oversee and ensure preservation of Vital City documents and records</li> <li>• Facilitate public meetings as needed</li> <li>• Institute Emergency Stand-By Council when necessary</li> <li>• Assist the City Manager as liaison to City Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuity of Operations Plan/Continuity of Governance (COOP/COG)</li> <li>• Department Policies, Emergency Plans (DEPs) and other related procedures</li> </ul>
<b>City Manager</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESF 15 Public Information <a href="#"><u>State ESF 15</u></a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of Emergency Services (City Manager or designee)</li> <li>• Establish EOC operational priorities</li> <li>• Authorize proclamations of local emergencies</li> <li>• Approve public information release</li> <li>• Guide public warnings and alerts</li> <li>• Primary liaison to City Council</li> <li>• Develop and maintain communication with other government bodies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuity of Operations Plan/Continuity of Governance (COOP/COG)</li> <li>• Recovery Annex (TBP)</li> <li>• Emergency Public Information and Warning Annex (TBP)</li> </ul>

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT	ROLES	RESPONSIBILITIES	PA Corresponding Annex/Plan
<b>Office of Emergency Services</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESF 1-18</li> </ul> <p><u><a href="#">State ESF Functions 1-13, 15-18</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">Federal ESF 14</a></u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage emergency management program and operations including managing and facilitating the City's EOC</li> <li>Coordinate incident management and response efforts</li> <li>Develop plans, procedures, and agreements to assist incident response</li> <li>Conduct EOC action planning</li> <li>Lead Emergency Management Mutual Aid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All</li> </ul>
<b>Planning and Development Services Department</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESF 3</li> <li>Construction and Engineering</li> </ul> <p><u><a href="#">State ESF 3</a></u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff the Plans Section during EOC Activations</li> <li>Building Inspection and Code Enforcement</li> <li>Building Damage Assessment</li> <li>Emergency Repair Permitting</li> <li>Employ GIS and Analytics within capabilities</li> <li>Community Planning support during recovery phase</li> <li>Establish Local Assistance Center when directed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Damage Assessment Annex</li> <li>Continuity of Operations Plan/Continuity of Governance (COOP/COG)</li> <li>Department Emergency Plans (DEPs) and other related procedures</li> <li>Recovery Annex (TBP)</li> </ul>
<b>Administrative Services Department/Finance Department</b>  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESF 7 Resources</li> </ul> <p><u><a href="#">State ESF 7</a></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESF 14 Recovery</li> </ul> <p><u><a href="#">Federal ESF 14</a></u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff the Finance and Administration Section during EOC activations</li> <li>Finance &amp; Revenue Services</li> <li>Provide emergency procurement assistance</li> <li>Anticipate and track financial resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Damage Assessment Annex</li> <li>Continuity of Operations Plan/Continuity of Governance (COOP/COG)</li> <li>Department Emergency Plans (DEPs) and other related</li> </ul>

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT	ROLES	RESPONSIBILITIES	PA Corresponding Annex/Plan
<b>Administrative Services Department/Finance Department</b> 		for staff, mutual aid requests, volunteers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop financial mechanisms, procurement applications and contracts to facilitate procurement</li> <li>• Oversee staff timekeeping</li> <li>• Oversee compensations and claims</li> <li>• Provide fiscal oversight and tracking of expenses</li> <li>• Oversee coordination for Public Assistance efforts with FEMA.</li> </ul>	Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recovery Annex</li> <li>• Multi Agency Coordination (MAC) Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Fire Department</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESF 4 Fire and Rescue <a href="#"><u>State ESF 4</u></a></li> <li>• ESF 10 Hazardous Materials <a href="#"><u>State ESF 10</u></a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff the Operations Section During EOC Activations</li> <li>• May augment the Plans Section during EOC activations</li> <li>• Orchestrate all firefighting and fire rescue operations</li> <li>• Direct EMS operations</li> <li>• Coordinate for Fire and EMS mutual aid resources</li> <li>• Conduct hazardous material response operations</li> <li>• Enhance emergency public warning and alerts when necessary</li> <li>• Aid in evacuation and re-entry operations</li> <li>• Enhance damage assessment efforts</li> <li>• Provide incident planning and management support as needed</li> <li>• Lead Fire Mutual Aid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage Assessment Annex</li> <li>• Hazard Specific Annexes (Storm/Flood, Earthquake, Terrorism, Fire, HazMat)</li> <li>• Multi Agency Coordination (MAC) Plan</li> <li>• Emergency Public Information and Warning Annex (TBP)</li> <li>• Airport Emergency Plan</li> <li>• Evacuation Annex (<i>Draft in production</i>)</li> <li>• Continuity of Operations Plan/Continuity of Governance</li> <li>• Department Emergency Plans (DEPs) and other related procedures</li> </ul>

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT	ROLES	RESPONSIBILITIES	PA Corresponding Annex/Plan
<b>Human Resources</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESF 8 Public Health and Medical <a href="#"><u>Federal ESF 8</u></a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff the Finance and Administration Section during EOC activations</li> <li>Manage City Disaster Service Workers</li> <li>Manage Human Resources related matters</li> <li>Provide risk management and employee safety oversight.</li> <li>Assess employee needs) Screen and track spontaneous volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compensation and Claims procedures</li> <li>Continuity of Operations Plan/Continuity of Governance (COOP/COG)</li> <li>Department Emergency Plans (DEPs) and other related procedures</li> </ul>
<b>Information Technology Department</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESF 2 Communications <a href="#"><u>State ESF 2</u></a></li> <li>ESF 18 Cybersecurity <a href="#"><u>State ESF 8</u></a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff the Logistics Section during EOC activations</li> <li>Protect, restore, and sustain cyber and information technology resources</li> <li>Oversee and manage telecommunication infrastructure</li> <li>Provide additional technology support as needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communications Annex (TBP)</li> <li>Continuity of Operations Plan/Continuity of Governance (COOP/COG)</li> <li>Cybersecurity Annex (<i>Draft in production</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>Community Services Department</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESF 6 Care and Shelter <a href="#"><u>State ESF 6</u></a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff and assist the Operations Section during EOC Activations</li> <li>Manage emergency care and shelter operations</li> <li>Support infrastructure restoration</li> <li>Assist in debris clearance from public rights of way</li> <li>Facilitate evacuation and re-entry operations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mass Care and Shelter Annex</li> <li>Damage Assessment Annex</li> <li>Recovery Annex</li> <li>Continuity of Operations Plan/Continuity of Governance (COOP/COG)</li> </ul>

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT	ROLES	RESPONSIBILITIES	PA Corresponding Annex/Plan
<b>Police Department</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESF 2 Communications <a href="#"><u>State ESF 2</u></a></li> <li>• ESF 13 Law Enforcement <a href="#"><u>State ESF 13</u></a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff the Operations Section During EOC Operations</li> <li>• Conduct law enforcement operations</li> <li>• Enhance emergency public warning and alerts</li> <li>• Facilitate evacuation and re-entry operations</li> <li>• Provide access and control to affected areas</li> <li>• Provide facility and resource security</li> <li>• Enforce curfew as directed</li> <li>• Provide public safety and security assistance</li> <li>• Provide traffic control</li> <li>• Oversee Law Enforcement Mutual Aid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications Annex (TBP)</li> <li>• Evacuation Annex (<i>Draft in production</i>)</li> <li>• Emergency Public Information and Warning (TBP)</li> <li>• Mass Care and Shelter Annex</li> <li>• Continuity of Operations Plan/Continuity of Governance (COOP/COG)</li> <li>• Department Emergency Plans (DEPs) and other related procedures</li> <li>• Hazard Specific Annexes (Storm/Flood, Earthquake, Terrorism, Fire, HazMat)</li> </ul>
<b>Animal Control Division</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESF 6 Care and Shelter <a href="#"><u>State ESF 6</u></a></li> <li>• ESF 11 Food and Agriculture <a href="#"><u>State ESF 11</u></a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the status of animal care needs</li> <li>• Determine status of available shelters for animal care populations (pets, large animals, livestock)</li> <li>• Determine need of veterinary services</li> <li>• Provide animal support services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mass Care and Shelter Annex</li> <li>• Department Emergency Plans (DEPs) and other related procedures</li> <li>• Continuity of Operations Plan/Continuity of Governance (COOP/COG)</li> </ul>
<b>Library</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESF 6 Care and Shelter <a href="#"><u>State Level ESF 6</u></a></li> <li>• ESF 15 Public Information <a href="#"><u>State ESF 15</u></a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance community care and shelter efforts with library facility and personnel resources</li> <li>• Establish community call center when directed and in partnership with IT and CMO</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department Emergency Plans (DEP) and other related procedures</li> </ul>

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT	ROLES	RESPONSIBILITIES	PA Corresponding Annex/Plan
<b>Public Works</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESF 1 Transportation <a href="#"><u>State ESF 1</u></a></li> <li>• ESF 3 Construction and Engineering <a href="#"><u>State ESF 3</u></a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff the Operations Section during EOC Activations</li> <li>• Conduct infrastructure protection, emergency repair, and restoration</li> <li>• Communicate movement operation/restrictions (traffic and access)</li> <li>• Conduct debris clearance and manage debris operations</li> <li>• Conduct flood fight operations</li> <li>• Provide engineering services</li> <li>• Coordinate with state agencies on state-controlled highways and roads</li> <li>• Manage city facilities</li> <li>• Maintain, repair, and restore wastewater collection infrastructure</li> <li>• Assist in damage assessment efforts</li> <li>• Assist in evacuation and re-entry operations</li> <li>• maintain, repair, and operate Regional Water Quality Control Plant</li> <li>• Manage and respond to issues affecting storm water system</li> <li>• Maintain backup generators</li> <li>• Oversee Public Works Mutual Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Energy Assurance Plan</li> <li>• Damage Assessment Annex</li> <li>• Evacuation Annex <i>(Draft in production)</i></li> <li>• Emergency Public Information and Warning</li> <li>• Airport Emergency Plan</li> <li>• Continuity of Operations Plan/Continuity of Governance (COOP/COG)</li> <li>• Department Emergency Plans (DEPs) and other related procedures</li> <li>• Hazard Specific Annexes (Storm/Flood, Earthquake, Terrorism, Fire, HazMat)</li> </ul>

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT	ROLES	RESPONSIBILITIES	PA Corresponding Annex/Plan
<b>Utilities</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESF 3 Construction and Engineering <a href="#"><u>State Level ESF 3</u></a></li> <li>• ESF 12 Utilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist the Operations Section during EOC Activations</li> <li>• Conduct utilities infrastructure protection, emergency repair, and restoration</li> <li>• Enhance public warnings and alerts</li> <li>• Provide utilities engineering services</li> <li>• Maintain, repair, and restore electric, water, gas, wastewater collection, and fiber infrastructure</li> <li>• Conduct utility damage assessment efforts</li> <li>• Provide potable water in support of care and shelter operations</li> <li>• Coordinate with regional water supplies and neighboring water utilities</li> <li>• Coordinate with Pacific Gas &amp; Electric for the restoration of PG&amp;E electrical and gas transmission and distribution services to the Utilities</li> <li>• Oversee Utilities Mutual Assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Energy Assurance Plan</li> <li>• Damage Assessment Annex</li> <li>• Evacuation Annex <i>(Draft in production)</i></li> <li>• Emergency Public Information and Warning</li> <li>• Continuity of Operations Plan/Continuity of Governance (COOP/COG)</li> <li>• Department Emergency Plans (DEPs) and other related procedures</li> <li>• Hazard Specific Annexes (Storm/Flood, Earthquake, Terrorism, Fire, HazMat)</li> <li>• Electric Utility Wildfire Mitigation Plan</li> </ul>
<b>Office of Transportation</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ESF 1 Transportation <a href="#"><u>State Level ESF 1</u></a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist the Planning Section during EOC Activations</li> <li>• Develop road condition information for PD, FD, Department of Transportation, Public Works, RACES, Utilities, County of Santa Clara, American Red Cross, Media</li> <li>• Assist in transportation planning to support operational objectives</li> <li>• Assist in coordination of regional resources as needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evacuation Annex <i>(Draft in production)</i></li> <li>• Continuity of Operations Plan/Continuity of Governance (COOP/COG)</li> <li>• Department Emergency Plans (DEPs) and other related procedures</li> <li>• Hazard Specific Annexes (Storm/Flood, Earthquake, Terrorism, Fire, HazMat)</li> </ul>

## 1.0 REFERENCES

The following are the references used in developing the plan.

### 1.1 Local Authorities and References

- City of Palo Alto Municipal Code
- City of Palo Alto
- Santa Clara County Office of Emergency Management
- Santa Clara County Emergency Operations Plan
- The Santa Clara County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, including the Palo Alto Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Annex

### 1.2 State Authorities and References

- California Government Code
- California Emergency Services Act 2023
- California Disaster Assistance Act
- California Code of Regulations
- California Governor's Office of Emergency Services
  - Standardized Emergency Management Systems Guidelines
  - Cal OES EOP Crosswalk (2024) local government
  - State of California Emergency Operations Plan
  - California Disaster and Civil Defense Master Mutual Aid Agreement
  - Orders and Regulations that may be promulgated by the Governor during a State of Emergency or a State of War Emergency
  - California-Federal Emergency Operations Center Guidelines: Integrating Federal Disaster Response Assistance with California's Standardized Emergency Management System

### 1.3 Federal Authorities and References

- National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) / Department of Homeland Security
- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, PL 100-707
- Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006
- National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- National Response Framework (NRF)
- Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plans Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG-101)
- Homeland Security Presidential Directives (5, 8)

# BASIC PLAN

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

The EOP serves as the core planning document for Palo Alto's emergency management activities. The responsibilities of City departments, groups, and staff are outlined in the EOP Basic Plan and associated annexes. To ensure adequate preparedness, City departments should actively participate in preparedness and planning activities including the development of departmental plans and necessary policies and procedures to fulfill assigned roles and obligations during an emergency.

As outlined in federal planning guidance, FEMA's Comprehensive Planning Guide 101 (CPG-101), the City's emergency management program and the EOP embrace and implement the "whole community" approach to emergency management. The city recognizes the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBO), faith-based organizations (FBO), private-sector businesses, educational institutions, and other stakeholders before, during and after disasters. The EOP is intended to reflect the wide variety of support that may be required by residents, visitors, and businesses, including people with disabilities and people with access or functional needs. Consideration for people with disabilities, access or functional needs is implemented in the City's emergency planning.

Internal and external stakeholders and non-government organization (NGOs) agencies will need to collaborate with the City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and among one another, including in circumstances where normal telecommunications may be impaired. By understanding the elements of this plan, the City and such organizations can facilitate that process.

Members of the community should be aware of the potential risks and hazards that are present and the responsibility to stay informed, make an emergency plan, and build an emergency kit.

### 2.1 Purpose

The purpose of this EOP is to provide and outline the framework, concepts, and policies of Palo Alto's emergency procedures and operations to ensure effective management and coordination of the City's response to emergencies and disasters. It identifies roles and responsibilities for various staff members and departments regarding preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation activities. This plan serves as a foundational document for other related City plans, as well as a reference document for other government and non-government organizations and entities. It is intended to be used in concert with other related plans, such as mitigation, recovery, and continuity of operations. This EOP complies with current federal, state, and local laws and regulations and incorporates best practices.

### 2.2 Goals and Objectives

The overall objective of emergency management is to ensure the effective coordination of plans, policies, response forces, and resources in preparing for and responding to situations associated with natural disasters, technological incidents and human-caused (deliberate) attacks, including national security emergencies. To fulfill its responsibilities, the emergency management organization will accomplish the following objectives during an emergency/disaster:

## GOAL 1

### Save Lives

- **Objective 1.1:** Prepare and disseminate emergency public information to alert, warn, and inform the public.
- **Objective 1.2:** Provide effective life safety measures.

## GOAL 2

### Incident Stabilization and Restoration of Essential Services

- **Objective 2.1:** Maintain overall coordination/support of emergency response and recovery operations.
- **Objective 2.2:** Coordinate and liaise with appropriate federal, state, and other local government agencies, as well as applicable segments of private sector entities and volunteer agencies.
- **Objective 2.3:** Establish priorities and resolve conflicting demands for support.
- **Objective 2.4:** Provide accurate documentation and records required for cost recovery efforts.
- **Objective 2.5:** Provide for the rapid resumption of impacted businesses and community services.

## GOAL 3

### Protection of Property and the Environment

- **Objective 3.1:** Provide effective response efforts to reduce property loss and damage to the environment.

## 2.3 Scope

The EOP applies to any significant emergency association with any hazard or threat, natural, technical, or human-caused, which may affect the City and result in a planned, coordinated response effort by City government. While all City resources may be called upon as needed, specific departmental responsibilities are outlined in the EOP Basic Plan and associated annexes. To ensure the City is adequately prepared, all City departments are required to actively participate in preparedness and planning activities to include the development and review of departmental plans, policies, procedures, resource information and contact information as necessary to fulfill their assigned roles and obligations.

For the purpose of this EOP:

- The **City** refers to the physical location and geo-political boundaries and space described as the City of Palo Alto
- The **City of Palo Alto** refers to the political entity, a municipality in the northern portion of Santa Clara County
- The **County** refers to the County of Santa Clara and its geo-political boundaries.
- **Event** refers to a preplanned or anticipated activity that require City resources from others – government, private sector, and/or community organization. These gatherings may draw large crowd which could make them vulnerable in the case of a natural or human caused emergency.
- **Incident** refers to an unplanned occurrence – natural, technological, or human caused which requires a response to safeguard life and property.

## 2.4 Limitations

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While many of the elements outlined in the EOP are designed for flexibility and can be utilized as needed to address several emergency and non-emergency events, some activities require special activation or a formal disaster declaration (proclamation) by the City Council. Similarly, the EOP is not meant to outline procedures for routine incidents or minor emergencies which are adequately addressed through existing processes.

The EOP identifies operational strategies and plans for managing inherently complex and potentially catastrophic events. Assets, resources, and departments are potentially vulnerable and may become overwhelmed. Deviations from the organizational and response structures outlined in the EOP may be required, based upon evolving needs and available resources.

The EOP is an operational plan and does not address or manage response tactics. Tactics are managed by the various departments in their respective field operations protocols and procedures.

The EOP is designed to promote flexibility whenever possible and is not intended to limit the use of good judgment and common sense in matters not foreseen or adequately addressed by elements of the EOP and its associated annexes or plans.

## 2.5 Situation / Hazard Assessment

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Technological hazards, human-caused incidents, and natural hazards are identified in the City's Threats and Hazards Identification Risk Assessment and Hazard Mitigation Plan. The City's current Hazard Mitigation Plan Annex identifies the following as the high and medium natural hazards for the City:

Hazard Type	Probability
Heavy Rain / Severe Storm	Highly Likely
High Wind	Highly Likely

Extreme Heat	Highly Likely
Wildfire	Highly Likely
Earthquake	Likely

## 2.6 Planning Assumptions

Planning assumptions are considered information accepted by planners as being true to provide a planning framework in the absence of facts. Palo Alto OES planners have made the following assumptions in preparing the Emergency Operation Plan:

- Palo Alto is susceptible to several hazards and risks that may result in critical incidents which may include natural, technological, or human caused.
- Emergencies may occur at any time with little or no warning and may exceed the capabilities of local, state, and federal governments, and the private sector in the affected areas.
- All City departments will participate in planning and preparedness activities as available.
- City personnel will be adequately trained to perform the emergency roles to which they are assigned; however, some employees may not be trained but will have to perform a role due to extenuating circumstances.
- The City's EOC may be partially or fully activated to support operations during critical incidents.
- The City of Palo Alto is primarily responsible for emergency action within their municipality and plans to commit all available resources to save lives, minimize injuries to persons, and minimize damage to property and the environment.
- City departments will participate during a significant emergency or disaster; however, personnel may be unavailable or unable to report to work.
- Palo Alto will utilize SEMS, ICS, and NIMS in emergency response and management of operations.
- The City will commit their resources to a reasonable degree before requesting mutual aid assistance.
- Non-essential City operations will likely be reduced or cancelled to prioritize resources.
- Following a major disaster or catastrophic incident, Palo Alto may have to rely on their own resources to be self-sustaining until mutual aid is available.
- Transportation infrastructure may be disrupted and access to critical facilities may be blocked.
- Critical infrastructure and utilities (natural gas, water, electricity, sanitary sewer, garbage, recycling, communications, among others) may be severely impacted.
- Residents, businesses, and other entities may need to be self-sufficient for one week or more.
- Reasonable accommodations will be made for people with disabilities and/or access and functional needs, but additional planning, resources, and support may be required during emergencies.

## 3.0 CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

In accordance with state and federal laws and guidance, the City of Palo Alto officially adopted and integrated the following emergency management, response, and coordination systems into the current emergency management operations:

Collectively, the congruent operational systems outline how critical incidents, emergency, and disasters will be coordinated in the field across all levels of government – local, county, regional, state, and federal.

- Incident Command System
- Standardized Emergency Management System
- National Incident Management System NIMS

### 3.1 Field-Level Coordination

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As mandated by both SEMS and NIMS, Palo Alto utilizes the Incident Command System (ICS) to manage response activities in the field. ICS provides for common terminology, processes, and position titles, while allowing the delegation of functions (or tasks) to subordinate positions to promote proper span of control and unity of command. ICS is applicable to any size incident and is designed to scalable as the needs of an incident expand or contract. When utilized, the standardization of ICS principles and nomenclature can integrate large numbers of personnel from disparate organizations.

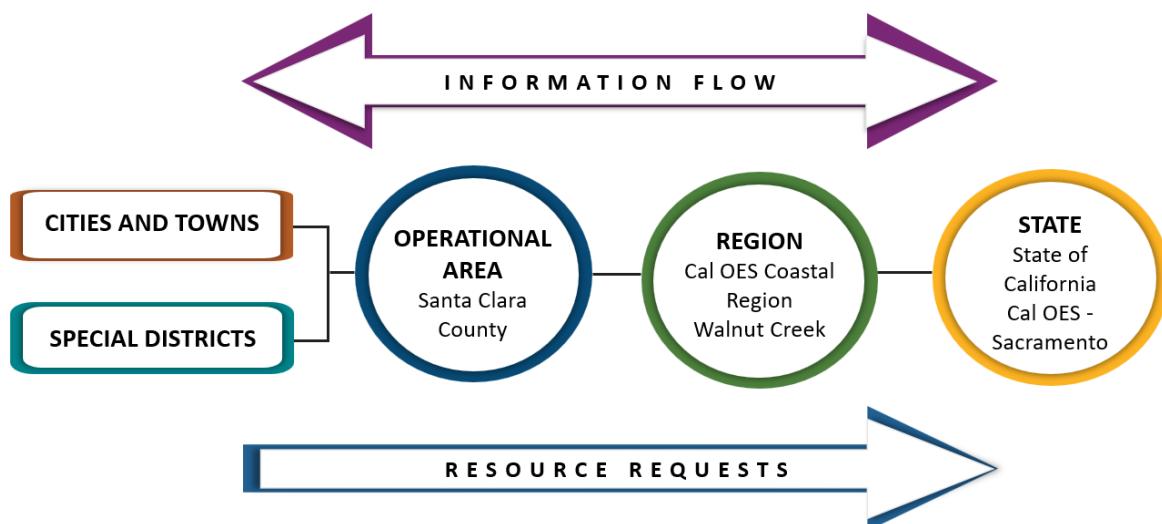
### 3.2 Local, Regional, and State-Level Coordination

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#### 3.2.1 Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS)

SEMS is intended to standardize response in emergencies and is intended to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of the emergency responders. SEMS forms the foundation of emergency management organization throughout the State of California and its use is required by all jurisdictions. SEMS requires agencies use basic principles and components of emergency management including Incident Command System, multi-agency coordinator, operational area concept and established mutual aid systems. Local government must use SEMS to be eligible for state funding of response-related personnel costs. SEMS utilizes five organizational tiers which are activated as need be and they consist of: field response, local government, operational area, regional, and the state. Palo Alto has incorporated the use of SEMS into its emergency management program.

DIAGRAM 3.2.1



### **3.2.2 Multi-Agency Coordination System (MACS)**

The Multi-Agency Coordination System (MACS) is a part of NIMS and provides the basic architecture for facilitating the allocation of resources, incident prioritization, coordination, and integration of multiple agencies for large-scale incidents and emergencies. A MAC group is made up of administrators or designees authorized to represent or commit agency resources and funds. MAC groups do not have direct involvement in the incident(s) and may function virtually. The principal functions and responsibilities associated with MACS include:

Examples of a MAC Group include San Francisquito Multi-Agency Coordination Group (SFC MAC), policy groups (elected or appointed officials), emergency management committees (emergency managers, first responders and allied agencies), or multiagency committees such as Incident Management Teams or Emergency Management Planning Committees.

### **3.2.3 Field Response**

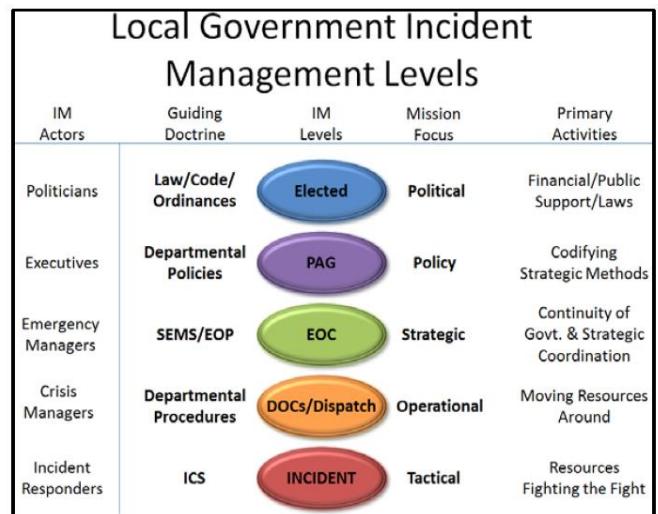
- Situation awareness / assessment
- Incident priority determination
- Critical resource acquisition and allocation
- Anticipating / identifying future resource requirements
- Coordinating policy issues
- Providing strategic coordination
- Joint Information Systems

Field response includes on-scene activities and coordination, consistent with ICS, to make tactical decisions in direct response to the emergency or disaster. The field response is managed through an Incident Command Post (ICP). Resource requests and situation reports are routed from the field to the next SEMS organizational level, either through participating response agencies or the local EOC if activated.

### 3.2.4 Local Government

The City of Palo Alto, as a local government, retains the responsibility and authority for managing response activities within its jurisdiction. To support these efforts, the City may activate its EOC and Departments may activate respective Department Operations Center (DOC). The EOC provides agency coordination, provides logistical support, establishes common operating procedures, identifies overarching priorities, and prioritizes available resources. Additionally, the EOC coordinates with Santa Clara County Operational Area (OA) / County EOC. The Local Government Incident Management Levels graphic derives from the Santa Clara County's Emergency Operation Plan (Santa Clara County OEM Emergency Operations Plan 2017) and describes the local government incident management levels.

DIAGRAM 3.2.4.1



### 3.2.5 Operational Area

The Operational Area (OA) provides response coordination for all political subdivisions within the county's jurisdiction. The OA coordinates response activities within the county's jurisdiction through the County EOC, if activated. The OA serves as a link to the regional level and other OAs within the region.

Palo Alto is part of the Santa Clara County Operational Area and coordinates with the Santa Clara County Office of Emergency Management (OEM). The City participates in Santa Clara County OA planning and during a critical incident, coordinates with the OA, through either the Santa Clara County OEM or the Santa Clara County EOC, if activated.

### 3.2.6 Regional

The State of California is divided into three regions that each maintains Regional Emergency Operations Centers to coordinate resource requests, support mutual aid, and promote situational awareness between their respective OAs. The City of Palo Alto and Santa Clara County are in the Coastal Region.

Coastal Region



### 3.2.7 State

The Governor, through California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) and its Mutual Aid Regions, will coordinate statewide operations to include the provision of mutual aid and other support to local jurisdictions and the redirection of essential supplies and other resources as required. Santa Clara County is part of the OES Coastal Region. Requests that exceed the capabilities of the Operational Area will be forwarded to the Region.

The Cal OES Director, assisted by State agency directors, their staff, and volunteer agency staff will constitute the State emergency management staff.

### 3.2.8 Mutual Aid

The California Mutual Aid System operates within the framework of the California Master Mutual Aid Agreement and under the authority of the California Emergency Services Act. The system allows for the mobilization of resources to and from emergency response agencies, local governments, operational areas, regions, and the state with the intent to provide requesting agencies with adequate resources. Mutual aid is utilized by primary response disciplines:

- Fire and Rescue
- Law Enforcement
- Coroner / Medical Examiner
- Emergency Management
- Medical & Health

Mutual Aid Response Discipline	Coordinating Agency	Mutual Aid Elements Included
<b>Fire and Rescue</b>	Cal OES Fire and Rescue Branch	Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Urban Search and Rescue Mutual Aid Hazardous Material Mutual Aid
<b>Law Enforcement</b>	Cal OES Law Enforcement Branch	Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Search and Rescue Mutual Aid
<b>Coroner/Medical Examiner</b>	Cal OES Law Enforcement Branch	Coroner/Medical Examiner Mutual Aid
<b>Emergency Management</b>	Cal OES Emergency Management	Emergency Management Mutual Aid CalWARN Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network
<b>Medical and Health</b>	California Emergency Medical Services Authority	Disaster Medical and Health Mutual Aid
<b>Public Works</b>	Cal Waste/Wastewater Agency Response Network (CalWARN)	Public Works Mutual Aid
<b>Utilities</b>	California Utilities Emergency Association (CUEA) California Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (CalWARN)	Electric, Natural Gas, Water and Wastewater Utilities Water and Wastewater Utilities

The California Mutual Aid System includes six mutual aid regions to facilitate the coordination and flow of mutual aid requests. As part of the Cal OES Coastal Region, Palo Alto, and the Santa Clara (County) Operational Area are part of Mutual Aid Region II.

The system includes several discipline-specific mutual aid systems that operate through designated mutual aid coordinators at the Operational Area, regional, and State levels. Mutual aid requests are

coordinated within their geographic area before unfilled requests are forwarded to the next level. Mutual aid requests that do not fall into one of the discipline-specific mutual aid systems are handled through the emergency services mutual aid system and by emergency management staff at the local government, operational area, regional, and state levels.

### **3.3 National Incident Management System**

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Issued on February 28, 2003, the Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5 (HSPD-5) requires all Federal departments and agencies to make the adoption of National Incident Management System (NIMS) by State, tribal, and local organizations, a condition for Federal preparedness grants, contracts, and other preparedness activities. NIMS provides a comprehensive national framework for incident management applicable at all jurisdictional levels and across all functional disciplines. Most NIMS requirements are applicable to the City of Palo Alto, including the adoption of Incident Command System (ICS). Additional elements of NIMS outline coordination between federal agencies and the use of federal assets and resources.

NIMS is built on the following three components:

- Resource Management
- Command and Coordination, including the Incident Command System
- Communications and Information Management

### **3.4 National Response Framework**

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The National Response Framework (NRF) is built upon the premise that incidents are typically handled at the lowest jurisdictional level. The NRF provides the framework for federal interaction with state, local, tribal, private sector, and non-governmental entities in the context of domestic incident management to ensure timely and effective federal support.

## **4.0 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION**

The City's Municipal Code (Palo Alto Municipal Code, 2024) outlines the purpose of emergency services for the preparation and carrying out of plans for the protection of people and property within respective city in the event of an emergency; the direction of the emergency organization; and the coordination of the emergency functions with all other public agencies, corporations, organizations, Emergency Operation Centers, Department Operation Centers, city departments, volunteers, and affected persons. "All officers and employees of this city, together with those volunteer forces enrolled to aid them during an emergency, and all groups, organizations and persons who may by agreement or operation of law, including persons impressed into service under the provisions of Section 9.28.060, be charged with duties incident to the protection of life and property in this city during such emergency, shall constitute the emergency organization of the city." (Palo Alto Municipal Code, 2024)

### **4.1 Director of Emergency Services**

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The Municipal Code defines the Office of Emergency Services (OES) as a public safety department. The Director of the Office of Emergency Services (OES Chief) is also the statutory Assistant Director of Emergency Services. By title and code, the City Manager is the Director of Emergency Services. The

Director of Emergency Services assists in coordinating the City's overall response and recovery operations. The Director of Emergency Services also acts as the City government's key representative and lead agent for day-to-day emergency management, with powers delegated through the Municipal Code to:

1. Direct coordination and cooperation of services and staff of the emergency organization of the City, and resolve questions of authority and responsibility that may arise between them; and
2. Represent the City in all dealings with public or private agencies on matters pertaining to emergencies.

To achieve this mandate, OES leads or coordinates planning, intelligence, and coordination, not only internally but also with allied agencies such as Stanford University, the private sector, and the community to promote, coordinate, and advance the four phases of emergency management: preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation.

## 4.2 Emergency Services Council

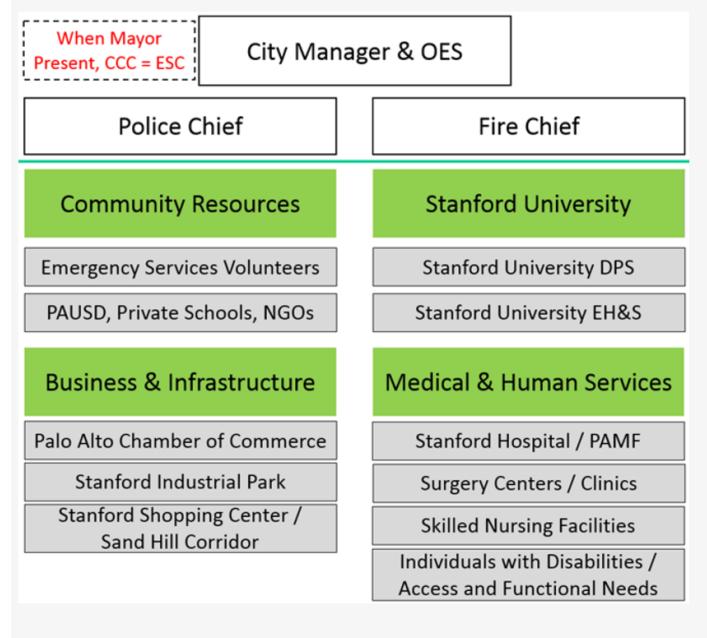
The City's Municipal Code 2.12.030 (Palo Alto Municipal Code, 2024) establishes an Emergency Services Council. The organization chart depicts Palo Alto's Emergency Services Council.

The City's Municipal Code 2.12.040 (Palo Alto Municipal Code, 2024) establishes the powers and duties of the emergency services council. The Emergency Services Council is empowered to develop and recommend for adoption by the City Council such emergency and mutual-aid plans and agreements, ordinances, resolutions, rules, and regulations that are necessary to implement these plans and agreements. The council shall meet when called by the chairman (Mayor) or when absent by the vice chairman (Director of Emergency Services).

General powers and duties of director of emergency services is listed in the City's Municipal Code 2.12.50 (Palo Alto Municipal Code, 2024):

- (a) There is hereby created the office of emergency services. The city manager shall be the director of emergency services.
- (b) There is hereby created the position of assistant director of emergency services who shall be appointed by the director.

**Palo Alto Emergency Services Council Organization Chart**



**DIAGRAM 4.2.1**

(c) The director and assistant director are hereby empowered to:

1. Request the city council to proclaim the existence or threatened existence of a "local emergency" if the city council is in session, or to issue such proclamation if the city council is not in session, subject to ratification by the city council within seven days thereafter or the proclamation shall have no further force or effect.
2. Request the Governor to proclaim a "state of emergency" when in the opinion of the director, the resources of the area or region are inadequate to cope with the emergency upon request by proper authority.
3. Control and direct the effort of the civil emergency organization of the city for the accomplishment of the purposes of this chapter.
4. Direct coordination and cooperation of services and staff of the emergency organization of the city, and resolve questions of authority and responsibility that may arise between them; and
5. Represent the city in all dealings with public or private agencies on matters pertaining to emergencies as defined herein.

**(Ord. 2641 § 1 (part) 1971: Ord. 2146 (part), 1963: prior code § 2.1005)4.3 City Employees**

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One of the greatest resources for the City of Palo Alto is its employees. California Government Code designates that all public employees are Disaster Services Workers (DSW) (State of California, 2013). Any employee of the City of Palo Alto may be assigned to perform activities which promote the protection of public health and safety or the preservation of lives and property within their routine levels of training proficiency. Such assignments may require services at locations, times, and under conditions that are significantly different than normal work assignments and may continue into the recovery phase of emergency.

**4.4 Santa Clara County Office of Emergency Management**

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Santa Clara County Office of Emergency Management provides Operational Area (OA) coordination during disasters and emergencies and assists jurisdictions with preparedness, mitigation, recovery, and response efforts.

Santa Clara County OA is the next SEMS level to provide the City with support and resources during and after an emergency or disaster.

**5.0 WHOLE COMMUNITY APPROACH**

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Palo Alto's ability to respond and recover from significant emergencies and major disasters is highly dependent upon planning for the unique needs and specific requirements of the residents and non-resident, commuters, and visitors. To further identify and meet these needs, a "Whole Community" approach has been adopted to include and integrate community partners, neighbors, and other stakeholders in all phases of emergency management. Through these collaborative efforts, Palo Alto will become more resilient and better prepared to meet the needs of its residents, and any daytime population increase, those with disabilities, access and functional needs and cultural consideration. The

City will include the Whole Community Approach when preparing for, responding to, recovering from, and mitigating against major emergencies and disasters.

## 5.1 Residents

Residents of Palo Alto play a fundamental role in emergency management by ensuring that they are prepared for emergencies and disasters. In most disasters, City residents will be the first to respond—family members caring for one another, neighbor helping neighbor. In a major disaster, residents may not have access to City services for days. Individual preparedness will ensure that the City's limited resources can go where they are most needed.

The City recommends that all residents prepare for disaster by taking first aid and CPR training, maintaining disaster supplies of food and water, and safekeeping personal documentation (e.g., personal identification and individual medical records). These actions will better prepare residents to evacuate or shelter-in-place for up to a week. Those families or residents with disabilities and others with access and functional needs may require additional personal planning before, during, and after an emergency to accommodate their need for assistance with communication, maintaining health and medical supplies, independence, support and safety, or transportation.

## 5.2 Community Organization/ Volunteer Groups

OES develops structures to link non-governmental organizations (NGOs), residents, and businesses to the Incident Command System (ICS). Elements of this include the restructured Emergency Services Volunteers (ESV) program which is a unified structure that includes Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES), Block Preparedness Coordinators (BPCs), and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers. ([Emergency Volunteers – City of Palo Alto, CA](#))

The Block Preparedness Coordinator is a grass roots program that trains volunteers to build social networks in our neighborhoods, deter crimes, and prepare for emergencies. During activation, BPCs check on their neighbors, identify and report critical problems to their Neighborhood Preparedness Coordinators (NPCs), and assist in getting resources on the scene.

CERT Basic Training is a national program designed to help prepare Palo Alto residents to help themselves, their families, and their neighbors in the event of a disaster.

[Community Emergency Response Team – City of Palo Alto, CA](#)

Palo Alto's Auxiliary Communications Services (ACS) supplements emergency communications with volunteer staff. Both licensed and unlicensed volunteers can serve in one or more functions across administrative, management, technical, or operational areas in both ARES and RACES.

[\(Auxiliary Communications Services – City of Palo Alto, CA\)](#)



The Palo Alto/Stanford Citizen Corps Council (CCC) serves to harness the power of individuals, businesses, and organizations through education, training, and volunteer service. Volunteers who assist and/or support emergency efforts may be required to undergo a screening process and/or background check. Volunteer programs determine the policies, procedures, and protocols for functionality and operations during incidents and events.

### **5.3 Private Sector**

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Palo Alto has a vibrant business community that includes traditional retail, recreational, entertainment, and corporate businesses. The City engages with the private sector to better understand their needs, identify resources, and develop partnerships. Many of the City's private sector partners address preparedness planning internally to minimize business disruptions and to support the wellbeing of their employees and offer their resources and technical capabilities to the larger community. The City acknowledges this valuable support and will continue collaborative efforts with the private sector as a component of the overarching emergency management program. In its efforts to engage the private sector, the City may solicit agreements, arrangements, memorandums of understanding and the like with various business and or business groups, such as the Chamber of Commerce. The nature of these relationships and roles and responsibilities will be outlined in any provisions and/or documents.

### **5.4 People with Disabilities**

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People with disabilities often require additional planning and support to ensure they receive equal access and coverage as required under the Stafford Act as well as other state and federal legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. Covered disabilities are not always apparent and may include impairments of mobility, vision, and hearing as well as some cognitive disorders and mental illnesses. For more information on assisting people with disabilities in an emergency scenario please visit the Emergency Preparedness page: [Emergency Preparedness – City of Palo Alto, CA](#). To meet the needs of these individuals, Palo Alto is committed to supporting efforts and activities designed to improve and validate capabilities in support of people with disabilities, including but not limited to:

- Notifications and warning procedures
- Evacuation, transportation and sheltering considerations
- Accommodations for service animals
- Accessibility to information
- Maintaining independence
- Effective communication
- Transportation
- Supervision
- Medical care

## 5.5 Individual with Access & Functional Needs

In addition to people with disabilities, Palo Alto recognize that additional support may be necessary to support those with access and functional needs (State of California , 2019). These are not necessarily related to a specific condition, diagnosis, impairment and are based upon functional areas such as: Individuals with access and functional needs may not have access to support networks outside of their immediate communities or be able to self-evacuate. As a result, they may have additional needs before, during, and after an incident. Those with functional needs often include children, the elderly, tourists, and other segments of the population, such as:

- People with disabilities
- People living in institutionalized settings
- People from other cultures
- People with limited English proficiency
- People without transportation
- People who are economically disadvantaged
- Women who are pregnant

## 5.6 Consideration for Pets and Animals

In 2006, the federal government passed the Pets Evacuations and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act as an amendment to the Stafford Act. The PETS Act directs state and local emergency preparedness plans address the needs of individuals with pets and companion animals during a disaster or emergency. American Red Cross procedures allow for assigned service animals to accompany individuals.

Palo Alto works to include consideration for the needs of pets and companion animals in plans as appropriate. Santa Clara County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) maintains shelters including mobile ones for various pets and can be potentially located near a designated shelter. Throughout Santa Clara County there are numerous individuals and organizations (farms, ranches, and others) with large animals such as horses, cattle, sheep, goats, and/or pigs. Owners should make appropriate preparations (e.g., sheltering, transporting) in advance for their animals before an actual disaster occurs.

## 6.0 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PHASES

Emergency management is divided into various phases with each of these phases bending into the next one. There is no clear demarcation of when one phase starts and another one ends. Elements from each phase may be used to support or augment elements from another phase.



## **6.1 Preparedness Phase**

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The preparedness phase involves activities undertaken in advance of an emergency. These activities develop operational capabilities and effective responses to a disaster. These activities focus on maintaining or improving capabilities that will be used in the response or recovery phases. Preparedness actions might include mitigation activities, emergency/disaster planning, training, exercises, and public education. Preparedness encompasses the whole community and promotes collaboration amongst businesses, residents, agencies, and departments to achieve the common goal of disaster preparedness. Members of the emergency management organization should prepare checklists detailing assignments, notification rosters, resource lists and other useful documents. Personnel should be acquainted with these documents through periodic training and reviews.

### ***6.1.1 Planning***

Emergency planning includes a wide variety of plans at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. Strategic plans include the EOP and many of its associated hazard-specific or functional annexes, while operational and tactical planning includes more detailed information such as standard operating procedures (SOP), checklists, personnel assignments, notification rosters, resource lists, and forms.

All City departments are required to participate in the development of relevant strategic and operational plans while ensuring that internal tactical planning is sufficient to meet the needs of their outlined roles and assigned objectives. This includes the development of department-specific SOPs required to meet the objectives outlined for each department.

### ***6.1.2 Training***

Training is an essential component of preparedness and impacts the ability to respond to and recover from a critical incident.

The City facilitates trainings and regularly communicates opportunities to the whole community, City staff, and fire staff members. Additionally, the City prioritize trainings that promote staff understanding and familiarity with the following concepts:

- Identification and prioritization of essential services
- Establishment, promulgation, and maintenance of orders of succession
- Identification of delegation of authority
- Identification of continuity of communication
- Identification and maintenance of continuity of facilities
- Maintenance of vital records
- Establishment of process of reconstruction
- Development of an effective test, training, and exercise program to support continuity efforts
- Development of a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) – detailed and comprehensive information is contained in the COOP plan; the COOP Plan should be used in concert with the EOP

The City Manager and OES are responsible for ensuring that the staff members assigned to the EOC are adequately trained and competent to fulfill their designated responsibilities. Staff members are encouraged to engage in on-going emergency management training to be familiar with current plans and guidance and capable of fulfilling the EOC role to which they are assigned.

- Incident Command System (ICS)
- California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS)
- National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- California Disaster Service Worker (DSW) [CA Government Code 3101]
- EOC Functions
- EOP Orientation
- Department individual training and certifications

#### **6.1.3 Exercises**

Exercises are a primary tool for assessing preparedness and identifying areas for improvement. They are a valuable method to validate plans and train personnel. Palo Alto incorporates guidance from the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (FEMA, Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP), 2020) in the development of its exercises.

A variety of exercises and trainings are used to assess capabilities and prioritize future planning and training needs. By simulating potential response and recovery scenarios, Palo Alto can validate existing plans and determine where additional training might be needed. The City's Emergency Management Team will develop a Training and Exercise Program that incorporates a building block approach in the development of planned exercises to facilitate increasing awareness and knowledge.

#### **6.1.4 Public Awareness & Education**

The Palo Alto Fire Department, the Palo Alto Police Department, and other City departments and their partners promote public awareness and education to strengthen overall preparedness, awareness, and community resilience. By providing community education, outreach, training, and coordination, the City increases the ability of community members and organizations to adequately prepare for and meet their own needs. By promoting self-reliance and preparedness, the city reduces the overall burden on resources and competing needs that may arise during critical incidents.

Public Education is an essential tool to teach residents how to prepare for, react to and recover from a major emergency or disaster. Residents can visit: [Palo Alto Emergency Preparedness](#); [Be Ready for the Next Big Earthquake](#); and [Stay Informed – City of Palo Alto, CA](#) to learn more about how to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a disaster.

Residents should take advantage of various emergency preparedness information and resources from City, County, State, and Federal governments among other sources and incorporate recommended practices into their regular routines.

## **6.2 Response Phase**

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The response phase includes any actions taken immediately before, during, or directly after a critical incident to minimize the potential or existing impacts of the incident.

### **6.2.1 Pre-Event**

Some incidents may provide sufficient warning to allow for pre-event or precautionary measures. Depending on the likelihood of significant impacts, pre-event response may include:

- Public warning
- Evacuations
- Resource Mobilization
- Staging
- Mutual Aid Requests
- Proclamation of a Local Emergency

### **6.2.2 Emergency Response**

Emergency response activities are actions taken during or immediately after a critical incident to reduce or minimize actual impacts. While these activities are often associated with traditional response units – fire, law enforcement, emergency medical service (EMS), and public works and utilities – the size and complexity may require support from additional governmental agencies, non-government organizations (NGOs), businesses, community and faith-based organizations and other partners.

During emergency responses, some incidents may escalate beyond the capabilities of field operation management that may necessitate the need for additional support and coordination requiring the activation of a Department Operations Center (DOC). When an incident, or multiple incidents exceed the capabilities of a DOC, or when multiple department DOCs have been activated and more coordinated efforts are needed, the EOC should be activated.

When coordinating emergency response activities and prioritizing needs and objectives, the following hierarchy is utilized:

1. Life Safety
2. Incident Stabilization
3. Protection of property and infrastructure and restoration of essential services
4. Reduce impacts to the environment

Emergency response may include activities related to short-term recovery and often overlaps with long-term recovery operations.

### **6.2.3 Prolonged Emergency**

In addition to continuing life and property protection; operations, mass care, relocation, public information, situation analysis, status and damage assessment operations will be initiated.

## **6.3 Recovery Phase**

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The Recovery Phase includes short and long-term activities focused on returning the community to pre-incident or improved conditions. In some situations, when a disaster declaration has been made, recovery activities may include the critical task of identifying, documenting and quantifying response and recovery costs eligible for reimbursement. The City of Palo Alto's Damage Assessment Plan includes more detailed information on recovery operations within the city.

The Recovery Phase may begin during the Response Phase or as directed by the EOC Director. Depending on the incident the recovery process may be short or be a sustained operation lasting several years. A comprehensive recovery plan may provide more detailed actions for a prolonged recovery period. A separate and detailed Recovery Plan would contain specific procedures and protocols, roles, and responsibilities. The EOP is intended to be used mostly during the response phase of an incident; it is not intended to be a comprehensive recovery plan. The following actions may assist and facilitate recovery efforts:

### **6.3.1 Short-term Recovery**

Short-term recovery operations begin during the response phase and may include activities such as the restoration of essential services, rapid debris removal, and the re-establishment of City services.

### **6.3.2 Long-term Recovery**

- Conducting damage assessments
- Assessing housing needs – both support and solutions
- Issuing permits for repairs and demolition
- Debris removal
- Opening roadways and transportation routes
- Restoring utilities – water, electricity, gas, communications, sewer, internet, cable
- Opening local assistance centers (LAC)
- Restart government functions
- Coordinating efforts with Santa Clara County OEM
- Working with local businesses to restore operations
- Coordinating with County, State and Federal officials regarding financial recovery for the City
- Coordinate with County Public Health efforts for disasters that included health issues
- Identify and prioritize essential functions and services

Long-term recovery operations are often required to address extensive damage to infrastructure or widespread devastation. Activities include the restoration and reconstruction of public facilities and disaster response cost recovery.

The recovery period has major objectives that may overlap with other phases of the emergency management cycle, including:

- Reinstatement of family and individuals' autonomy
- Provision of essential public services
- Permanent restoration of private and public property

- Identification of residual hazards
- Plans to mitigate future hazards
- Recovery of costs associated with response and recovery efforts
- Coordination of state and federal, private, and public assistance

As the immediate threat to life, property, and environment subsides, the rebuilding of Palo Alto will begin through various recovery activities. Long-term planning efforts, including public safety and infrastructure sustainability, are included in the Palo Alto General Plan. Recovery activities involve the restoration of services to the public and rebuilding the affected area(s). Examples of recovery activities may include:

- Restoring all utilities
- Establishing and staffing Local Assistance Centers (LACs) and Disaster Assistance Centers (DACs)
- Applying for state and federal assistance programs
- Conducting hazard mitigation analysis
- Identifying residual hazards
- Determining recovery costs associated with response and recovery

Depending on the severity of the disaster, sheltering activities could be short -term or long-term. Palo Alto will open shelters using the American Red Cross-National Survey System (NSS) as well as County guidance.

### ***6.3.3 Damage Assessment***

Damage Assessment activities involve identifying, recording, compiling, and analyzing damage information to determine the type of recovery assistance needed. Following major disasters, Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDAs) are used to determine preliminary eligibility for certain state and federal financial assistance and reimbursement programs. Damage Assessments require the coordination of multiple city departments.

### ***6.3.4 Disaster Assistance Programs***

If the disaster is significant enough to warrant a gubernatorial and a presidential disaster declaration, additional state and federal assistance may become available. A local disaster proclamation does not automatically warrant the provisions of state or federal assistance. The City will have to qualify for these additional resources. If determined to be eligible, the City and its residents may be able to participate in state and federal disaster assistance programs for the following:

- Individuals – may be eligible for loans and grants for housing assistance programs (for homeowners and renters), and uninsured disaster-related necessities (including personal property, medical, dental, and transportation expenses). Other Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) programs include crisis counseling, disaster unemployment assistance, and legal services, may be available.
- Businesses – may be eligible for low-interest loans to assist with uninsured physical damage through the United States Small Business Administration (SBA).
- Government – assistance may be available through state assistance under the California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA), as well as several federal programs including the FEMA Public Assistance (PA) Grant Program, and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP).
- Non-profit Organizations - assistance may be available through the state CDAA, as well as several federal programs including FEMA PA Grant Program for eligible non-profit organizations.

### **6.3.5 Recovery Documentation**

Documentation is the key to recovering eligible response and recovery costs. Damage assessment documentation will be critical in establishing the basis for eligibility of disaster assistance programs. Various state and federal assistance programs require several types of documentation for eligible costs and in addition to structural damage, may include staff time, equipment, and materials utilized in response to the incident. To support the maximum recovery of eligible reimbursement, City departments must identify and support internal mechanisms for tracking and documenting appropriate costs.

### **6.3.6 After Action Report**

As part of the recovery phase, and in accordance with SEMS, the State of California requires any city declaring a local emergency for which the governor proclaims a state of emergency, to complete and transmit an after-action report to the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) within 90 days of the close of the incident period. The after-action report should include the following information:

## **6.4 Mitigation Phase**

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The Mitigation Phase includes actions and measures taken to reduce or eliminate the degree of long-term risk from natural and technological hazards. Whereas preparedness activities increase the City's ability to respond to the impacts of a hazard, mitigation activities reduce the potential for those impacts in the future, thereby reducing overall risk.

Numerous mitigation activities are available and may include the implementation, augmentation, or promotion of the following:

- Building and Safety Codes
- Disaster/Fire/Flood Insurance
- Land Use Planning and Management
- Hazard Research and Analysis
- Land and Repetitive Loss Acquisition
- Monitoring and Inspection
- Public Outreach and Education
- Relocation
- Risk Mapping
- Safety Codes, Statutes, and Ordinances
- Tax Incentives and Disincentives
- Seismic Strengthening or Retrofitting

The City participates in local and regional mitigation activities such as the development of risk assessments and mitigation plans. Further, the City's Comprehensive Plan (General Plan) includes mitigation aspects and elements. This information is located on the City's website.

## **7.0 EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER**

Palo Alto operates an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) that provides a centralized location where emergency management coordination and decision-making occur and can support field operations during

critical incident, major emergency, or disaster. When activated, the EOC provides support for several critical tasks related to communication, coordination, resource management, and executive leadership.

## **7.1 EOC Locations**

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The **primary EOC** location is: 250 Sherman Ave. Palo Alto, CA 94306

The **alternate EOC** location is: 3201 East Bayshore Rd, Palo Alto, CA 94303 (Municipal Services Center)

Alternate locations are used when the primary EOC would or might be unsafe or unusable.

Situations and circumstances may arise in which staffing an in-person EOC fully or partially may be impractical or unwise, such as with the recent COVID-19 pandemic. Alternative staffing options may be considered and implemented and may include remote, virtual, or a combination of in-person and remote. Staff will be provided with appropriate tools, equipment, and training to perform their assigned responsibilities. The City's Director of Emergency Services will determine if alternate options will be implemented.

## **7.2 Activations & Deactivation**

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The EOC equipment is maintained by Palo Alto OES staff and may be used for coordination and monitoring activities at any time without the need for a formal activation. However, depending upon the need and circumstances, an official EOC activation may be appropriate to support several activities, including:

The activation level and significance of the incident/event will determine who assumes the role of EOC Director. The City Manager would usually assume the role of EOC Director during a full activation.

For incidents or events that extend beyond an operational period (e.g., 12 hours) the City Manager may designate an alternate or replacement. This person could be the assistant city manager or one of the emergency services chiefs.

- Field response (disaster or major emergency)
- Pre-planned events (conventions, parade, city-wide event)
- Local proclamation of emergency
- Governor's declaration of emergency
- Presidential declaration of a national emergency
- State of War

### **7.2.1 DOC Activation**

A Department Operations Center (DOC) may activate at the discretion of the senior department decision maker, or the department executive leader based upon current or impending conditions that may alter normal operations for a temporary period of time. DOCs may also activate in support of EOC and field operations during a disaster.

A DOC is a centralized location or hub dedicated to coordinating a specific department or agency's internal incident management and response during emergencies.

### **7.2.2 EOC Activation Authority**

The following municipal positions have the authority to activate the City's EOC:

Individuals serving in an acting role or empowered to act on behalf the above positions may activate the EOC.

As situations and conditions warrant, Director of Emergency Services will communicate appropriate information to the City Council of escalating or anticipated incidents or events which may have a significant impact on Palo Alto and efforts being made to address the situation.

- Palo Alto City Manager, Assistant City Manager, or designee
  - Palo Alto Police Chief or designee
- Palo Alto Fire Chief or designee
- Palo Alto OES Chief, Emergency Services Coordinator, or designee

EOC activation may occur based upon escalating incidents or in anticipation of an incident or event. Activation of multiple DOCs may warrant the activation of the EOC. DOC commanders should be communicating with respective department heads of current and projected situation status.

### **7.2.3 EOC Activation Levels**

When the EOC is activated, the City will notify the Santa Clara County OEM.

The City may also establish Departmental Operations Centers (DOCs) for specific departments (e.g., Utilities, Public Works, or IT) as required to support field operations and coordinate other functions within their respective departments. Activation of multiple DOCs may warrant or necessitate the activation of the EOC.

EOC activation levels are scalable based in the evolving needs and may include full or partial staffing as required. See table below:

**TABLE 7.2.3**

Level	Operational Status (Minimum Positions)	Trigger Event/Situation <i>(examples include but not limited to)</i>	Activities
<b>Level 1</b> Full Staffing as needed	All positions (as required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large Winter Storm</li> <li>• Terrorist incident</li> <li>• Major Earthquake</li> <li>• Regional Disaster</li> <li>• Major Wildland Fire in Urban interface</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Situational Analysis</li> <li>• Public Information</li> <li>• Response Coordination</li> <li>• Resource Coordination</li> <li>• Logistics Support</li> <li>• Recovery Operations</li> <li>• Sustained Operations</li> <li>• Reporting to State</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2</b> Partial Staffing	Management, EOC Section Chiefs Branches/Divisions/Units Liaison/Agency reps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large scale evacuations</li> <li>• 2+ incident sites</li> <li>• Severe Weather Warning</li> <li>• Earthquake with minor damage</li> <li>• Major scheduled event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Situational Analysis</li> <li>• Public Information</li> <li>• Response Coordination</li> <li>• Resource Coordination</li> <li>• Logistics Support</li> <li>• Reporting to State</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3</b> Minimal Staffing	EOC Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small incident or event</li> <li>• One site</li> <li>• Potential threat of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Flood</li> <li>◦ Severe storm</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Escalating incident</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Situational Analysis</li> <li>• Public Information</li> <li>• Response Coordination</li> <li>• Resource Coordination</li> <li>• Reporting to State</li> </ul>

Similarly, the deactivation of the EOC will be scalable based on the decreasing needs of Palo Alto. Appropriate EOC functions and roles will be deactivated as the situation allows and as directed by the EOC Director.

### 7.3 EOC Communication & Coordination

The EOC has the capability to communicate and coordinate with field personnel, incident commanders, DOCs, external stakeholders, volunteer community groups, and other government agencies.

Coordination with field elements from the EOC may be coordinated through relevant DOCs or directly with an Incident Commander. If a DOC is not activated, the Incident Commander may communicate

directly with their department specific representative, sometimes located in the Operations Section of the EOC.

The EOC will communicate and coordinate with the Santa Clara County EOC, when activated, or County OEM, and other cities in the Operational Area. Affected cities will provide situational awareness and relevant resource status to the County EOC.

Communication may be by cell phone, internet, or other viable means.

Additionally, the EOC may communicate with designated volunteer community groups through alternative methods such as amateur radios.

## **7.4 EOC Structure – Hierarchy of Command and Span-of-Control**

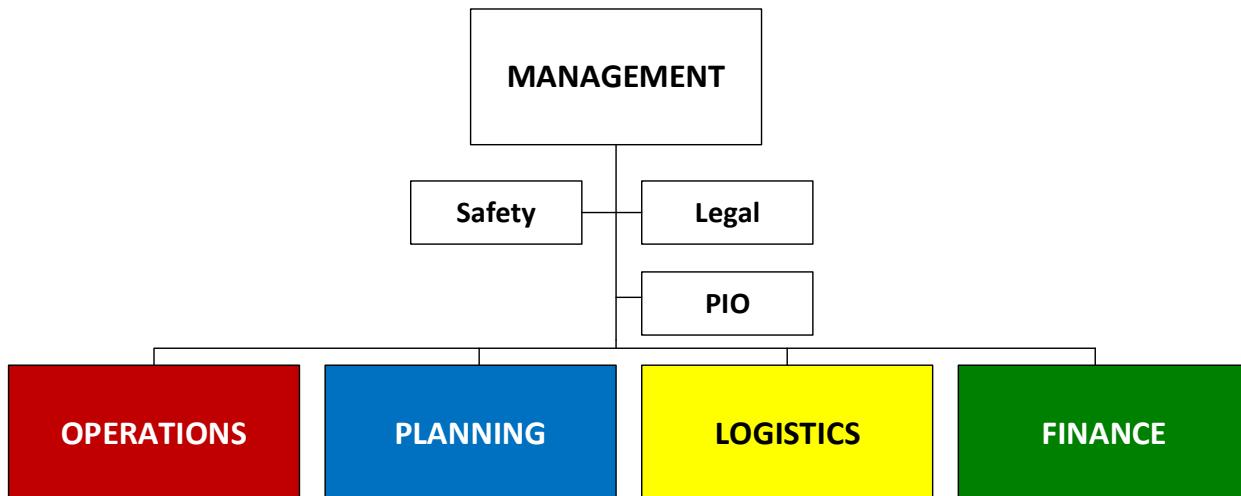
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The essential ICS functions in SEMS and NIMS are identified as “sections” in the EOC:

All other functions are organized as branches, groups, or units within these sections. Only functional elements that are required to meet current objectives will be activated. Below is a sample ICS chart that can be expanded or scaled back based on the size and extent of an incident or event.

- **Management**—Responsible for overall emergency policy and management coordination; other responsibilities of the management staff include public information, EOC safety and security, legal review of proclamations and other similar actions, and liaising with other agencies.
- **Operations**—Responsible for supporting operations, coordinating emergency response efforts and shelter operation support.
- **Planning**—Responsible for collecting, evaluating, and disseminating information; assists in developing emergency action plan; responsible for collecting all documentation material; planning also includes intelligence-gathering such as weather information.
- **Logistics**—Responsible for providing facilities, services, personnel, equipment, materials, and resources.
- **Finance**—Responsible for financial expenditures, records, and other administrative aspects.

**CHART 7.4**



Management of personnel within the EOC will be accomplished through the assignment of section chiefs (general staff) to the operations, planning, logistics, and finance functions. Section chiefs report to the EOC Director in the Management Section. Management staff consists of such positions as safety, legal, public information officer (PIO), liaison, among others. See the Palo Alto EOC Manual for position descriptions.

## **7.5 Emergency Action Plans**

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At local, operational area, regional and state levels, the use of EOC action plans (EAP) provide designated personnel with knowledge of the objectives to be attained and the steps required for achievement. Action plans give direction and provide a basis for measuring achievement of objectives and overall system performance in the EOC. The EOC Director will determine and direct the drafting of EAPs. The Planning Section shall be responsible for overseeing EAPs development and drafting.

# **8.0 EMERGENCY DECLARATIONS**

## **8.1 Local Proclamation**

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California Government Code allows a local emergency to be proclaimed by a city council or designated official by city council.

If the City of Palo Alto determines that the effects of an emergency are, or may become, beyond the capability of local resources, a local emergency can be proclaimed. The Palo Alto City Council has empowered the City Manager and the Director of Emergency Services to issue a proclamation of local emergency when the City Council is not in session. Such a proclamation of local emergency is invalid after seven days, unless ratified by the City Council. Proclamations must be made within ten (10) days of occurrence to qualify for assistance under the California Disaster Assistance Act and must be renewed every 14 days. Palo Alto Municipal Code and the California Disaster Assistance Act specify the requirements for proclaiming and, when necessary, maintaining, a local emergency. Compliance to the California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA) (State of California, 2015) is required for the City to qualify for assistance.

A local proclamation of emergency allows the City Manager and the Director of Emergency Services to take measures necessary to protect and preserve public health and safety and may trigger certain reimbursement opportunities.

## **8.2 State of Emergency**

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After a proclamation of a local emergency, the governing body, having determined that local resources are not sufficient to mitigate the situation, may request by letter or resolution that the Governor proclaim a state of emergency in the area to fully commit state and mutual aid assistance and provide resources to assist local government.

To support its request for a gubernatorial proclamation, it is essential that the City forward an estimate of damage and financial loss to Cal OES through the Santa Clara County OEM as quickly as possible.

Estimates of loss are an important part of the criteria that Cal OES considers when deciding to proclaim a state of emergency and request a Presidential Declaration of Emergency or Disaster. A copy of the request for a Governor's proclamation, with the following supporting data, must be forwarded, to the Santa Clara County OEM Director for transmission to the Cal OES Director:

Cal OES prepares a recommendation as to the action that should be taken by the Governor. If the action recommends a Governor's proclamation, Cal OES prepares the proclamation.

The Governor may also proclaim a state of emergency without a local request if the safety of persons and property in the state are threatened by conditions of extreme peril, or emergency conditions are beyond the emergency response capacity and capabilities of local authorities. Local damage assessment

- Copy of the local emergency proclamation
- Initial damage estimate summary that estimates the severity and extent of the damage

documentation and submission may be required for reimbursement.

## **8.3 State of War Emergency**

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

## **8.4 Presidential Declaration**

Following the proclamation of a state of emergency, the Cal OES Director may recommend that the Governor request a Presidential Declaration of a major disaster under the authority of Public Law 93-288. The Governor's request to the president is submitted through the FEMA. Supplementary justification data may be required to accompany the state and local proclamations and Initial Damage Estimate.

## **9.0 PUBLIC INFORMATION**

During a major emergency, disaster, or significant event providing residents and the public with useful and updated information is essential. The EOC PIO will oversee messaging during an EOC activation. If the EOC is not activated, then either the lead department or City's PIO will be responsible.

### **9.1 Alerts and Notifications**

During an incident, the City will utilize various communication tools to disseminate information and directions to its residents. Notifications may be coordinated with neighboring agencies and/or the County. Recognizing that some residents may have limited access or functional needs, the City will strive to address communication in various forms. Communication tools include but not limited to:

- [City Notification System - ALERTSCC](#)

- A county-wide community alert and notification system that allows the City of Palo Alto to quickly provide critical information and instructions to subscribers using registered cell phones, emails, or landline phones through a reverse 9-1-1 function. Registration can be completed at <http://www.alertscctc.gov/> or by texting your zip code to 888777.



- [Connect With Us – City of Palo Alto, CA](#)

- Palo Alto PD publishes news releases, traffic advisories, urgent updates, community news, power outage notifications, and other important safety information on Nixle.
- Important City updates are shared on Nextdoor, X (Twitter), and Facebook.

- Local news and radio stations participating in the Emergency Alert System.

- Volunteer and neighborhood groups and community or faith-based organizations.

Public education can be a useful tool to prepare residents in advance of incidents – how to prepare for, react to, and recover from various situations.

## 9.2 Joint Information System

The Joint information System (JIS) is the broad mechanism that organizes, integrates, and coordinates information to ensure timely, accurate, accessible, and consistent messaging activities across multiple jurisdictions and/or disciplines with the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It includes the plans, protocols, procedures, and structures used to coordinate and share public information. Federal, State, tribal, territorial, regional, local, and private sector PIOs and established Joint Information

DIAGRAM 9.2

### NIMS Command and Coordination Structures



Centers (JIC) at each level of SEMS are critical elements of the JIS. The County / Operational Area may orchestrate JIS activities for larger or countywide incidents and events.

### **9.3 Joint Information Center**

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The Joint Information Center (JIC) is the central location that facilitates the operations of the JIS during an emergency. This location supports personnel with public information responsibilities from multiple agencies, departments, and other local governments. They perform critical emergency information functions, crisis communications, and public affairs functions.

A JIC is established at a suitable location to provide for effective management of Public Information functions. When activated, the JIC is staffed by personnel trained to conduct Public Information activities, including coordinating inter-jurisdictional media releases and management of rumor control and community communications functions. Regardless of where the JIC is established, Public Information functions will continue to be centrally managed from the EOC, when activated.

## **10.0 CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT**

Continuity of Government (COG) is an essential function of emergency management and is vital during an emergency/disaster situation. Continuity of government is defined as the preservation, maintenance, or reconstitution of the civil government's ability to carry out its constitutional responsibilities. All levels of government share a constitutional responsibility to preserve the life and property of their citizens. The California Government Code and the Constitution of California provide the authority for state and local government to reconstitute itself in the event incumbents are unable to serve.

A major emergency or disaster could result in great loss of life and property, including the death or injury of key government officials. At the same time, there could be partial or complete destruction of established seats of government, and the destruction of public and private records essential to continued operations of government and industry.

In the aftermath of a major emergency, law and order must be preserved and essential government services must be maintained. To this end, it is particularly essential that local units of government continue to function.

### **10.1 Continuity Planning**

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Disasters or major emergencies have the potential to disrupt or interrupt critical and essential City services that are vital to the health and welfare of its residents. Planning for such possibilities addresses the continuation of government and succession of officers.

### **10.2 Line of Succession**

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The lines of succession for essential City positions are listed below. These individuals will assume authority until relieved. This list does not include all City departments.

Primary City Position	Alternate
Mayor	<input type="radio"/> Vice Mayor
City Manager	<input type="radio"/> Assistant City Manager
City Attorney	<input type="radio"/> Assistant City Attorney
Director Planning and Development	<input type="radio"/> Assistant Director Planning & Community <input type="radio"/> Environment Chief Building Official
Police Chief	<input type="radio"/> Assistant Chief of Police <input type="radio"/> Police Captains
Fire Chief	<input type="radio"/> Deputy Fire Chief, Operations <input type="radio"/> Deputy Fire Chief, Administration
OES Chief	<input type="radio"/> Emergency Services Coordinator
Public Works Director	<input type="radio"/> Assistant Director <input type="radio"/> Assistant Director Sustainability Climate Action
Director Information Technology/Chief Information Officer	<input type="radio"/> Manager Information Technology
Chief Financial Officer	<input type="radio"/> Assistant Director Administrative Services
City Clerk	<input type="radio"/> Deputy City Clerk
Director Community Services	<input type="radio"/> Assistant Director Community Services
Director of Utilities	<input type="radio"/> Utilities Chief Operating Officer
City Council	<input type="radio"/> Emergency Standby Council

### **10.3 Essential Facilities-Alternate Government Facilities**

In the event an alternate location is needed to perform the day-to-day governmental functions, staff will be notified to report to one of several identified governmental facility locations, or other remote locations, where those functions can be carried out. Based upon current conditions and situation status, the alternate location will be determined by the department head or senior City official.

## **10.4 Preservation of Vital Records**

City leadership will require certain vital records during a disaster. Vital Records are the documents required to continue the mission of City departments and agencies during and after a disaster. The records will assist in providing services both to internal City departments and external customers, such as citizens, contractors, other government entities. Example documents may include:

- Public Records
- Computer system back-ups/servers
- Order of Succession Ordinances or Resolutions
- Plans, policies, and procedures for critical processes
- Payroll information
- Contracts and leases
- Legal and financial records
- Insurance documents

Protection of, and access to, these and other vital records requires planning and is coordinated by the Palo Alto City Clerk. Each City department is responsible for identifying vital records, coordinating with the City Clerk, and assigning internal responsibility for their preservation. Internet and server/client-based software systems also serve as vital records because of the data they host. These systems also require a similar level of planning for remote access as well as system interruptions.

## **11.0 PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE**

The OES has delegation of authority by City Manager to review, revise, manage, and distribute the EOP. The Chief may delegate this assignment to another public safety staff member or members.

The EOP's Basic Plan is subject to periodic formal approval by the City Council, whereas the Annexes are revised as needed and are not subject to formal review and City Council approval.

The EOP Basic Plan will be reviewed every five years by the City's Office of Emergency Services. The Basic Plan may be modified at any time because of a post-incident or post-exercise evaluation, or changes in responsibilities, laws, guidance, or regulations. Changes to the Basic Plan would require readoption by the City Council.

## GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

**Activate:** At a minimum, a designated official of the emergency response agency that implements SEMS as appropriate to the scope of the emergency and the agency's role in response to the emergency.

**ADA:** American with Disabilities Act

**After Action Report (AAR):** A report covering response actions, application of SEMS, modifications to plans and procedures, training need, and recovery activities. After action reports are required under SEMS after any emergency that requires a declaration of an emergency. Reports are required within 90 days.

**Agency:** An agency is a division of government with specific function, or a non-governmental organization (e.g., private contractor, business, etc.) which offers a particular kind of assistance. In ICS, agencies are defined as jurisdictional (having statutory responsibility of incident mitigation); or assisting by providing resources.

**Agency Representative:** An individual assigned to an incident or to an EOC from an assisting or cooperating agency who has delegated authority to make decisions on matters affecting that agency's participation at the incident or at the EOC.

**American Red Cross:** A nationwide volunteer agency that provides disaster relief to individuals and families.

**Available Resources:** Incident-based resources that are available for immediate assignment.

**Cal OES:** The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services.

**Care and Shelter:** A phase of operations that meets the food, clothing, and shelter needs of people on a mass care basis.

**CBO:** Community based organization

**CDAA:** California Disaster Assistance Act

**CERT:** Community Emergency Response Team – a volunteer group organized by a local government to assist during an emergency and/or disaster.

**Chain of Command:** A series of management positions in order of authority.

**Continuity of Government (COG):** All measures that may be taken to ensure the continuity of essential functions of governments in the event of emergency conditions, including line-of-succession for key decision makers.

**COOP:** Continuity of Operations Plan

**Coordination:** The process of systematically analyzing a situation, developing relevant information, and informing appropriate command authority of viable alternatives for selection of the most effective combination of available resources to meet specific objectives.

**Cultural competence:** The ability to understand, value, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures to ensure that the needs of all community members are addressed, with priority given to "culturally diverse communities." "Cultural competence" includes, but is not limited to, being respectful and responsive to the cultural and linguistic needs of diverse population groups.

**Culturally diverse communities:** Includes, but is not limited to, race and ethnicity, including indigenous peoples, communities of color, and immigrant and refugee communities; gender, including women; age, including the elderly and youth; sexual and gender minorities; people with disabilities; occupation and income level including low-income individuals and the unhoused; education level; people with no or limited or no English language proficiency; as well as geographic location.

**Damage Assessment:** The process utilized to determine the magnitude of damage and the unmet needs of individuals, businesses, the public

sector, and the community caused by a disaster or emergency event.

**Dam Failure:** Part or complete collapse of a dam causing downstream flooding.

**Declaration:** The formal action by the President to make a State eligible for major disaster or emergency assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, PL 3-288, as amended (the Stafford Act).

**Declaration Process:** When a disaster strikes, local authorities and individuals request help from private relief organizations and their State government, which give all assistance possible. If assistance is beyond their capability, the Governor requests a Presidential declaration of a major disaster or an emergency.

**Delegation of Authority:** A statement provided to the Incident Commander by the Agency Executive delegating authority and assigning responsibility. The Delegation of Authority can include objectives, priorities, expectations, constraints and other considerations or guidelines as needed.

**Department Operations Center (DOC):** A location used by a distinct discipline, such as fire, medical, hazardous materials, or a unit, such as Department of Public Works, Department of Health, or local water district to manage and coordinate their departmental response functions in a disaster. Department operations centers may be used at all SEMS levels above the field response level, depending upon the impact of the emergency.”

**Disaster:** A sudden calamitous emergency event bringing great damage loss or destruction.

**DSW:** Disaster Service Worker [CA Gov code 3100 – 3109]

**Emergency:** A condition of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property caused by such conditions as air pollution, fire, flood, hazardous material incident, storm, epidemic, riot, drought, sudden and severe energy shortage, plant or animal infestations or disease, the

Governor's warning of an earthquake or volcanic prediction, or an earthquake or other conditions.

**EOC Action Plan (EAP):** Similar to an IAP; developed by the Planning Section to provide operational planning direction for the EOC.

**EMS:** Emergency Medical Service

**Emergency Operations Center (EOC):** A location from which centralized emergency management can be performed. EOC facilities are established by an agency or jurisdiction to coordinate the overall agency or jurisdictional response and support to an emergency.

**Emergency Operations Plan (EOP):** The plan that each jurisdiction has and maintains for responding to relevant threats and hazards that defines the emergency management organization, structure, and coordination.

**Essential Facilities:** Facilities that are essential for maintaining the health, safety, and overall wellbeing of the public following a disaster (e.g., hospitals, police and fire department buildings, utility facilities, etc.). May also include buildings that have been designated for use as mass care facilities (e.g., schools, churches, etc.).

**Evacuation:** Organized, phased, and supervised withdrawal, dispersal, or removal of people from dangerous or potentially dangerous areas, and their reception and care in safe areas.

**Exercise:** Maneuver or simulated emergency condition involving planning, preparation, and execution; carried out for the purpose of testing, evaluating, planning, developing, training, and/or demonstrating emergency management systems and individual components and capabilities, to identify areas of strength and weakness for improvement of an emergency operations plan (EOP).

**FBO:** Faith based organization.

**Federal:** Of or pertaining to the Federal Government of the United States of America.

**Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):**

This agency was created in 1979 to provide a single point of accountability for all Federal activities related to disaster mitigation and emergency preparedness, response, and recovery.

**First Responder:** This term refers to individuals whose organizations specific and primary responsibility is to respond to life safety incidents.

**Hazard:** Natural or man-made source of danger or difficulty to people or property.

**Hazardous Material (Hazmat):** A substance or combination of substances, which, because of quantity, concentration, physical, chemical, radiological, explosive, or infectious characteristics, poses a potential danger to humans or the environment. Generally, such materials are classed as explosives and blasting agents, flammable and nonflammable gases, combustible liquids, flammable liquids and solids, oxidizers, poisons, disease-causing agents, radioactive materials, corrosive materials, and other materials including hazardous wastes.

**Hazard Mitigation:** A cost-effective measure that will reduce the potential for damage to a facility from a disaster event.

**Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP):** The plan resulting from a systematic evaluation of the nature and extent of vulnerability to the effects of natural hazards, including the actions needed to minimize future vulnerability to identified hazards.

**HSEEP:** Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program

**Incident:** An occurrence or event, either human-caused or by natural phenomena that requires action by emergency response personnel to prevent or minimize loss of life or damage to property and/or the environment.

**Incident Action Plan (IAP):** The plan developed at the field response level that contains objectives reflecting the overall incident strategy and specific tactical actions and supporting information for the

next operational period. The plan may be oral or written.

**Incident Commander (IC):** The individual responsible for the command of all functions at the field response level located at the **ICP** (**Incident Command Post**).

**Incident Command System (ICS):** The nationally used standardized on-scene emergency management concept specifically designed to allow its user(s) to adopt an integrated organizational structure equal to the complexity and demands of single or multiple incidents without being hindered by jurisdictional boundaries. ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure, with responsibility for the management of resources to effectively accomplish stated objectives pertinent to an incident.

**Joint Information Center (JIC):** A facility established to coordinate all incident-related public information activities. It is the central point of contact for all news media at the scene of the incident. Public information officials from all participating agencies should collocate at the JIC.

**Joint Information System (JIS):** Integrates incident information and public affairs into a cohesive organization designed to provide consistent, coordinated, timely information during crisis or incident operations. The mission of the JIS is to provide a structure and system for developing and delivering coordinated interagency messages; developing, recommending, and executing public information plans and strategies on behalf of the IC; advising the IC concerning public affairs issues that could affect a response effort; and controlling rumors and inaccurate information that could undermine public confidence in the emergency response effort.

**Jurisdiction:** The range or sphere of authority. Public agencies have authority at an incident related to their legal responsibilities and authority for incident mitigation. Jurisdictional authority at

an incident can be political/ geographical (e.g., special district city, county, state, or federal boundary lines), or functional (e.g., police department, health department, etc.)

**Local Emergency:** The duly proclaimed existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the territorial limits of a county, city and county, or city, caused by such conditions as air pollution, fire, flood, storm, epidemic, riot, or earthquake or other conditions, other than conditions resulting from a labor controversy, which conditions are or are likely to be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of that political subdivision and required the combined forces of political subdivisions to combat.

**Logistics:** Providing resources and other services to support incident management.

**Mitigation:** Pre-event planning and actions that aim to lessen the effects of potential disaster.

**Mutual Aid Agreement:** Written agreement between agencies and/or jurisdictions in which they agree to assist one another upon request, by furnishing personnel and equipment.

**Mutual Aid Region:** A subdivision of Governor's Office of Emergency Services established to assist in the coordination of Mutual Aid and other emergency operations within a geographic area of the state, consisting of two or more county (operational) areas. Sonoma County is in Mutual Aid Region II.

**National Incident Management System (NIMS):** A system mandated by HSPD-5 that provides a consistent nationwide approach for Federal, State, local, and tribal governments; the private-sector, and nongovernmental organizations to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity. To provide for interoperability and compatibility among Federal, State, tribal, and local capabilities, the NIMS includes a core set of concepts, principles, and terminology. HSPD-5 identifies

these as the ICS; Multi-agency Coordination Systems; training; identification and management of resources (including systems for classifying types of resources); qualification and certification; and the collection, tracking, and reporting of incident information and incident resources.

**National Response Framework (NRF):** A plan mandated by HSPD-5 that integrates Federal domestic prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery plans into one all- discipline, all-hazards plan.

**NWS:** National Weather Service

**Nongovernmental Organization (NGO):** An entity with an association that is based on interests of its members, individuals, or institutions and that is not created by a government but may work cooperatively with government. Such organizations serve a public purpose, not a private benefit. Examples of NGOs include faith-based charity organizations and the American Red Cross.

**Office of Emergency Services:** an office that coordinates emergency response and management and resource support either at the local, county, or state level. This office may also be referred to as Emergency Management Department (EMD) or Department of Emergency Management (DEM) or Office of Emergency Management (OEM).

**Operational Area:** An intermediate level of the state emergency organization, consisting of a county and all political subdivisions within the county's geographic borders. An operational area is defined in law (Section 8559, California Government Code) as an organization (not a jurisdiction) whose boundaries are those of a county. This organization is not necessarily a county government; it could be several cities, or a city and a county, a county government, or several county governments, willing to undertake to coordinate the flow of Mutual Aid and information within the defined area. The operational area concept is the backbone of SEMS.

**Plan:** As used by OES, a document that describes the broad, overall jurisdictional response to potential extraordinary emergencies or disasters.

**Preparedness:** The range of deliberate, critical tasks and activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the operational capability to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents. Preparedness is a continuous process. Preparedness involves efforts at all levels of government and between government and private-sector and nongovernmental organizations to identify threats, determine vulnerabilities, and identify required resources. Within the NIMS, preparedness is operationally focused on establishing guidelines, protocols, and standards for planning, training and exercises, personnel qualification and certification, equipment certification, and publication management.

**Prevention:** Actions to avoid an incident or to intervene to stop an incident from occurring. Prevention involves actions to protect lives and property. It involves applying intelligence and other information to a range of activities that may include such countermeasures as deterrence operations; heightened inspections; improved surveillance and security operations; investigations to determine the full nature and source of the threat; public health and agricultural surveillance and testing processes; immunizations, isolation, or quarantine; and as appropriate, specific law enforcement operations aimed at deterring, preempting, interdicting, or disrupting illegal activity and apprehending potential perpetrators and bringing them to justice.

**Private Sector:** Organizations and entities that are not part of any governmental structure. It includes for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, formal and informal structures, commerce and industry, and private voluntary organizations.

**Public Information Officer (PIO):** The individual at field or EOC level that has been delegated the authority to prepare public information releases

and to interact with the media. Duties will vary depending upon the agency and SEMS level.

**PAFD:** Palo Alto Fire Department

**PAPD:** Palo Alto Police Department

**Recovery:** Activities traditionally associated with providing Federal supplemental disaster recovery assistance under a Presidential major disaster declaration. These activities usually begin within days after the event and continue after the response activities cease. Recovery includes individual and public assistance programs that provide temporary housing assistance, grants and loans to eligible individuals and government entities to recover from the effects of a disaster.

**Resources:** Personnel and equipment available, or potentially available, for assignment to incidents or to EOCs. Resources are described by kind and type and may be used in tactical support or supervisory capacities at an incident or at EOCs.

**Response:** Activities to address the immediate and short-term effects of an emergency or disaster. Response includes immediate actions to save lives, protect property and the environment, stabilize communities, and meet basic human needs following an incident. Based on the requirements of the situation, response assistance will be provided to an affected State under the National Response Framework using a partial activation of selected Emergency Support Functions (ESF) or full activation of all ESF to meet the needs of the situation.

**Risk:** Potential for an unwanted outcome resulting from an incident, even, or occurrence, as determined by its likelihood and associated consequences.

**Special District:** A unit of local government (other than a city, county, or city and county) with authority or responsibility to own, operate or maintain a project (as defined in California Code of Regulations 2900(s) for purposes of natural disaster assistance. This may include a joint

powers authority established under section 6500 et seq. of the Code.

**Stafford Act:** Robert T. Stafford disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, PL 100-707, signed into law June 23, 1988; amended the Disaster Relief Act of 1974, and the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act of 2013.

**Standard Operating Procedures (SOP):** A set of instructions having the force of a directive, covering those features of operations that lends themselves to a definite or standardized procedure. Standard operating procedures support an annex by indicating in detail how a particular will be carried out.

**Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS):** A system required by California Government Code for managing response to multi-agency and multi-jurisdiction emergencies in California. SEMS consists of five organizational levels that are activated as necessary: Field Response, Local Government, Operation Area, Region, and State.

**State of Emergency:** The duly proclaimed existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme

peril to the safety of persons and property within the state caused by such conditions as air pollution, fire, flood, storm, epidemic, riot,

**TEP:** Training and Exercise Plan – a plan that outlines a schedule of emergency management and related training courses for EOC and other support staff as well as a calendar of scheduled EOC and similar exercises.

**THIRA:** The Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment is a three-step risk assessment process that helps communities understand their risks and what they need to do to address those risks (FEMA).

**Threat:** An indication of possible violence, harm, or danger.

**Tsunami:** Also called a seismic sea wave. It is a large oceanic wave generated by earthquakes, submarine volcanic eruptions, or large submarine landslides in which sudden forces are applied to the water mass.

**Vulnerability:** Physical feature or operational attribute that renders an entity open to exploitation or susceptible to a given hazard.



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