Jackson County, North Carolina

Emergency Operations Plan

June 2018

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Introduction

The Jackson County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) establishes a comprehensive framework of policy and guidance for emergency and disaster response operations. This plan details capabilities, authorities, and responsibilities for specific individuals, offices, divisions, departments, agencies, and organizations within Jackson County.

Jackson County officials understand that, in an emergency or disaster, a broad range of individuals, agencies, organizations, and other engaged whole-community stakeholders will provide the most effective response for all who live, work, and travel in the county.

The Jackson County EOP draws on the system described within the National Response Framework (NRF), which establishes vertical integration and effective coordination across local, State, and Federal resources, as well as private-sector capabilities, as necessary, to preserve the health, safety, and welfare of those persons affected during emergency or disaster situations. The Jackson County EOP establishes responsibilities for County departments; addresses the role of the private-sector, volunteer, and nonprofit organizations; and engages other whole-community stakeholders for emergency preparedness actions.

This plan is drawn from an operational approach consistent with the organization and function of Jackson County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), which follows the Incident Command System (ICS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS). These functions are all assigned lead and support departments and agencies that maintain responsibility to establish and carry out plans developed for accomplishing assigned tasks.

Plan Organization

This plan is organized intuitively to align with the operational structure and makeup of the Jackson County EOC. This plan and its components progress in detail from public policy and overview content in the Basic Plan to specific, operational roles and responsibilities for specific Jackson County EOC sections and functions and specific emergency operations for specified hazard events that Jackson County has identified as either highly prevalent, holding elevated risk to Jackson County, or both.

Basic Plan

The Basic Plan is a public-policy document that provides an overview of Jackson County's approach to emergency operations. It details emergency response authority, policies, and response organization and outlines general tasks. The Basic Plan is intended as an orientation document for the whole community, specifically Jackson County EOP stakeholders and residents of Jackson County.

Functional Annexes

This plan includes functional annexes to identify and further specify emergency operations for each function identified in the Basic Plan and as typically represented from and coordinated by the EOC.

Annex A: Command Staff

The Command Staff Annex describes the responsibilities and general concepts for response activities and obligations maintained by the EOC Manager and Public Information Officer. These responsibilities include ensuring overall effectiveness of EOC operations, aligning efforts of assisting and support agencies, coordinating responder safety and security practices, and managing the county's public information strategy and activities.

Annex B: Operations Section

The Operations Annex describes the responsibilities and general concepts for response activities and obligations maintained by the Jackson County EOC Operations Section. These responsibilities include reduction of the immediate hazard event, saving lives and property, establishing situational control, and restoring normal operations.

Annex C: Planning Section

The Planning Annex describes the responsibilities and general concepts for response activities and obligations maintained by the Jackson County EOC Planning Section. These responsibilities include collection, evaluation, and dissemination of intelligence and information; message flow; information and resource tracking; damage assessment; short and long-term disaster planning; and data analysis.

Annex D: Finance/ Administration Section

The Finance/Administration Annex describes the responsibilities and general concepts for response activities and obligations maintained by the Jackson County EOC Finance/Administration Section. These responsibilities include procurement, cost projections, tracking of financial resources, personnel and equipment timekeeping, and records management to support compensation and claims.

Annex E: Hazard/Event-Specific Checklists

This plan includes hazard-specific checklists to specify emergency operations for hazards identified as prevalent to or having a significant impact on Jackson County:

I.   *Emergency Operations Center*
II.   *Aircraft Incident*
III.   *Civil Disorder*
IV.   *Dam Failure*
V.   *Earthquake/ Landslide*
VI.   *Explosive Incident*
VII.   *Flood Incident*
VIII. *HAZMAT – Fixed Facility*
IX.   *HAZMAT - Transportation*
X.   *Hurricane/Tropical Weather*
XI.   *Major Fire*   `
XII.   *Nuclear / Radiological Incident*
XIII. *Major Utility Outage*
XIV. *Terrorism Incident*

Appendices

This plan includes supplementary information as appendices, including: Acronyms, Definitions, Table of Support Functions/Responsibilities/Lines of Succession, and general EOC Information.

Approval and Implementation

The approval of this document will be through Jackson County's Board of Commissioners adoption process. The document will be presented to County Commissioners during a regular Board of Commissioners meeting. After adoption, the document shall become the official Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) for Jackson County.

This plan supersedes all previously dated versions of the Jackson County Emergency Operations Plan.

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Promulgation of the Jackson County Emergency Operations Plan

Chair
Jackson County Board of Commissioners

Jackson County Emergency Operations Plan
Promulgation

The primary role of government is to provide for the welfare of its citizens. Said welfare and safety is never more threatened than during disasters. The goal of Jackson County Emergency Management is to ensure that measures for protection, prevention, mitigation, response, and recovery exist so that public welfare and safety are preserved.

The Jackson County Emergency Operations Plan provides a comprehensive framework for county-wide emergency management. It addresses roles and responsibilities of government organizations and maintains a vertically integrated and aligned link, engaging local, State, Federal, private, and other whole-community stakeholders, organizations, and resources that may be obligated to address disasters and emergencies in the Jackson County.

The Jackson County Emergency Operations Plan ensures consistency with current policy guidance and describes the interrelationship with other levels of government. The plan will continue to evolve, responding to lessons learned from actual disasters and emergency experiences, ongoing planning efforts, training and exercise activities, and Federal guidance.

Therefore, in recognition of emergency management responsibilities of the Jackson County government and with the authority vested in the Jackson County Board of Commissioners, the Jackson County Emergency Operations Plan is hereby promulgated.

Jackson County Board of Commissioners
Attest: Approved:

_____   By: _____
Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board   Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman

Statement of Approval

I the undersigned agree to the responsibilities assigned to their named agency or jurisdiction in the Jackson County Emergency Operations Plan. By signing this Statement of Approval, I agree to implement the roles and responsibilities outlined in this plan with the equivalent departments within my jurisdiction or organization. Any revisions to emergency operations plans within my jurisdiction or organization should be consistent and allow integration with this plan.

Jackson County Board of Commissioners

Attest: Approved:

_____ By: _____
Angela M. Winchester, Clerk to Board Brian Thomas McMahan, Chairman

Date: _____

_____ Date_____
County Manager, Jackson County

_____ Date_____
Emergency Management Director, Jackson County

Record of Changes

Jackson County's EOP has undergone numerous revisions since its adoption. A complete rewrite of this plan was completed in 2018. This plan, including all annexes, shall be reviewed at least annually, or more often when one of the following takes place:

- A formal update of planning guidance or standards;
- A change in elected officials;
- A plan activation or major exercise;
- A change in the jurisdiction's demographics, hazards, or threat profile; or
- The enactment of new or amended laws, ordinances, and/or policy changes.

Change Number	Date of Change	Page or Section Changed	Summary of Change	Name of Person Authorizing Change
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				

Record of Distribution

This record is the required distribution at the time any update or revision is made to the EOP. The EOP should be made available to all stakeholders with an interest in emergency operations within Jackson County.

Group	Agency/Department	Title of Recipient	Distribution Method
Jackson County	Board of Commissioners	Chairman	Electronic
Jackson County	County Manager's Office	County Manager	Electronic
Jackson County	Emergency Management	Director	Hardcopy
Jackson County	Sheriff's Department	Sheriff	Electronic
Jackson County	Emergency Operations Center Staff	Team Members	Electronic
Jackson County	Fire Marshal's Office	Fire Marshal	Electronic
Jackson County	Department of Social Services	Director	Electronic
Jackson County	Health Department	Director	Electronic
Jackson County	Permitting and Code Enforcement	Director	Electronic
Jackson County	Finance Office	Director	Electronic
Jackson County	Public Works	Director	Electronic
Jackson County	Animal Shelter	Director	Electronic
Jackson County	Medical Examiner	Medical Examiner	Electronic
Jackson County	Schools	Superintendent	Electronic
Jackson County	Transit	Director	Electronic
Jackson County	Communications	Coordinator	Electronic
Jackson County	Emergency Medical Services	Chief	Electronic

Town of Sylva	Town Council	Mayor	Electronic
Town of Sylva	Town Manager's Office	Town Manager	Electronic
Town of Sylva	Police Department	Chief	Electronic
Town of Sylva	Fire Department	Chief	Electronic
Town of Sylva	Public Works	Director	Electronic
Town of Dillsboro	Town Council	Mayor	Electronic
Town of Webster	Town Council	Mayor	Electronic
Village of Forest Hills	Village Council	Mayor	Electronic
State of NC	Emergency Management	Western Branch Manager	Electronic

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Table of Contents

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Purpose, Scope, Situation Overview, and Assumptions

Purpose

The EOP outlines the legal and organizational framework necessary to effectively and efficiently manage the county's response to emergencies and disasters. Specifically, this plan provides for:

- Reduction of the county's vulnerability to natural, technological, and/or human-caused emergencies or disasters that could cause loss of life, injury, illness, and damage to property, the environment, and/or the economy;
- Guiding strategic organizational behavior before, during, and following a significant emergency or disaster;
- Defined roles, responsibilities, and needed actions to execute prevention, protection, response, and recovery activities;
- Compliance with Federal, State, and local homeland security and emergency management requirements; and
- Recognition and adoption of best practices in emergency management.

The EOP serves as an overall guide for all emergency management activities conducted by, or on behalf of, Jackson County. All planning, training, and exercise activities conducted by the county must be consistent with the definitions, concepts, roles, and responsibilities identified in this EOP.

Scope

The EOP provides the concept of operations and organizational roles and responsibilities for government and non-governmental organizations that participate in mitigation, prevention, preparedness, protection, response, and recovery in Jackson County. These roles and responsibilities are aligned with functions routinely performed by these organizations. As a result, trained personnel familiar with local resources are used to manage emergency response functions.

The EOP establishes authority for direction and control of emergency operations. The EOP is primarily intended for Jackson County personnel, however, it may also be used by other jurisdictions to plan, implement, and coordinate emergency management activities that span multiple jurisdictions. It can be activated in support of local emergency situations, major disasters, and planned events.

The EOP is not intended as a detailed operational document. Rather, this EOP is designed to achieve integrated, County-wide coordination of emergency management activities among all departments and with outside agencies. The EOP guides the work described in related procedural documents, such as hazard-specific annexes, individual department plans, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), job aids, and various other operational documents that should be consulted for operational detail. Some existing departmental plans and procedures may require revision to reflect policies or practices described in this plan.

Situation Overview

Jackson County's emergency management goals are to anticipate community threats and vulnerabilities, prevent or mitigate their effects when possible, and adequately respond and recover from emergencies and disasters that may occur. This section describes the county, the hazards that may threaten the county, their potential impacts to people, property, the environment, and the economy.

Geography

Jackson County is in the Mountain region of Western North Carolina in the Blue Ridge Mountain physiographic region. It is bordered on the north by Swain County, on the west by Swain and Macon Counties, on the east by Haywood and Transylvania Counties, and on the south by Oconee County, South Carolina. It spans an area of 494 square miles, 4 of which are covered by water.

Topography

Jackson County contains almost 4 square miles (2,560 acres) of water. Elevations range from less than 2,000 feet above sea level to more than 6,000 feet on mountaintops in the Plott Balsam and Great Balsam ranges. Some topographic markers include Lake Glenville, the Tuckasegee River, Bear Creek Lake, Richland Balsam, Whitewater Falls, and Whiteside Mountain.

Population

Jackson County is home to 42,973 people according to the 2017 Census estimate. The anticipated peak population is 50,000. This number represents the year-round population plus the maximum anticipated summer tourists in the summer. The county has gained an average of 2 new residents every day since 2014 due to net migration and is expected to grow to more than 53,000 residents by 2030.

Transportation

Jackson County is serviced by three main roads. The Great Smoky Mountain Expressway runs across the northern half of the county and connects Sylva to Waynesville and Asheville in the east and to Cherokee, Andrews, and Murphy in the west. NC 64 also traverses from east to west but across the southern portion of the county, connecting Cashiers to Brevard in the east and to Highlands in the west. The third road, NC 107, runs from north to south across the county, connecting Sylva to Cashiers.

There is one small airfield, Jackson County Airport, located in the county. This airport is a public airport that is owned and operated by the county.

Norfolk Southern Railway operates a portion of the Murphy Branch through Jackson County, providing a rail connection with the rest of the country. In Sylva, Norfolk Southern connects with the Great Smoky Mountains Railroad. Great Smoky Mountains Railroad operates the rest of the Murphy Branch from Dillsboro to Andrews.

Government and Industry

Education and healthcare represent the largest industries in Jackson County, accounting for more than one-third of total employment. Other major industries are leisure and hospitality, trade, transportation, utilities (16.0%), and public administration.

Climate

Jackson County's climate varies based on the time of year and elevation. The lowest temperature on record was -19 degrees (January 21, 1985). In summer, the average temperature is 71.3 degrees. The highest temperature was 99 degrees (July 28, 1952).

The average annual total precipitation is about 51.03 inches. Of this, about 24.60 inches, or 48 percent, usually falls in May through October. Precipitation across Jackson county is quite variable depending on elevation and location. The southern portion of the county, particularly at higher elevations, receives as much as 100 inches of precipitation annually, and is one of the wettest spots in the United States east of the Pacific Northwest. Thunderstorms occur on about 45 days each year, and most occur between May and August.

The average seasonal snowfall is 11.8 inches. The greatest snow depth at any one time during the period of record was 19 inches (March 14, 1993). On an average, 3 days per year have at least 1 inch of snow on the ground. The heaviest 1-day snowfall on record was 17.0 inches recorded on March 13, 1993.

Hazard Analysis Summary

Jackson County is subject to many natural, technological, and human-caused threats. Jackson County Emergency Management maintains a Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) survey that identifies many of the hazards and associated risks within the county. It is important to understand that one type of hazard (e.g., hurricane) can also initiate secondary hazards (e.g., hazardous materials release) and cascading effects such as contamination of water supplies and power outages. Brief descriptions of potential hazards identified in the county's HIRA are presented below.

Atmospheric Hazards

Avalanche

A rapid fall or slide of a large mass of snow down a mountainside.

Drought

Drought is a deficit in normal precipitation for a region over an extended period. There are three types of drought that have historically affected Jackson County: meteorological, agricultural, and hydrological. Current drought conditions are understood through a range of drought indicators, including precipitation over defined time periods, impacts to water supply as measured by stream flow, reservoirs and groundwater levels, impacts to agriculture and forest health, and impacts to utilities. High temperatures, high winds, and low humidity can worsen drought conditions and make the region more susceptible to wildfire.

Hailstorm

Any storm that produces hailstones that fall to the ground; usually used when the amount or size of the hail is considered significant. Hail is formed when updrafts in thunderstorms carry raindrops into parts of the atmosphere where the temperatures are below freezing.

Heat Wave

A heat wave may occur when temperatures hover 10 degrees or more above the average high temperature for the region and last for several weeks. Humid or muggy conditions, which add to the discomfort of high temperatures, occur when a "dome" of high atmospheric pressure traps hazy, damp air near the ground. Excessively dry and hot conditions can provoke dust storms and low visibility. A heat wave combined with a drought can be very dangerous and have severe economic consequences on a community.

Hurricane and Tropical Storm

Although the North Carolina coast is the most vulnerable to direct hurricane impacts, inland jurisdictions such as Jackson County are susceptible to high winds and flooding from tropical storms. These storms have historically caused significant damage to property, critical infrastructure, utilities, crops, and built structures due to associated strong winds, falling trees, and flooding.

Lightning

The action of rising and descending air in a thunderstorm separates positive and negative charges, with lightning the result of the buildup and discharge of energy between oppositely charged areas. Water and ice particles may also affect the distribution of the electrical charge. In a few millionths of a second, the air in a lightning strike is heated to 50,000˚F. The heated air expands rapidly and causes a shockwave which can be heard as thunder. In the United States, after floods, lightning kills the most people on average each year.

Severe Thunderstorm

Thunderstorms are caused by air masses of varying temperatures meeting in the atmosphere. Rapidly rising warm moist air fuels the formation of thunderstorms. Thunderstorms may occur singularly, in lines, or in clusters. They can move through an area very quickly or linger for several hours. Thunderstorms may result in hail, tornadoes, or straight-line winds. Windstorms pose a threat to lives, property, and vital utilities primarily due to the effect of flying debris, downed trees and power lines.

Tornado

A tornado is a violently rotating column of air extending between and in contact with a cloud and the surface of the earth. Tornadoes develop suddenly and vary in intensity. The most violent tornadoes are capable of wind speeds exceeding

250 miles per hour. The entire Jackson County population is vulnerable to the impacts of a tornado regardless of the measured magnitude.

Winter Storm and Freeze

Because severe winter storms involve frigid temperatures, heavy snow, ice, and gusting winds in all combinations, their severity is usually determined by duration, temperature extremes, and accumulation of precipitation. The primary threat is the ability of such storms to completely immobilize large areas, disrupt services, threaten public health and safety, and cause injury or death. In Jackson County, snow and/or sleet occur once or twice annually, on average. In North Carolina, snowfall ranges from 1 inch to about 24 inches across the State.

Geologic Hazards

Earthquake

Earthquakes result when stress forces build up along fractures or fault lines in the earth's crust over extended periods of time. There are two fault lines that affect North Carolina region, the Charleston Fault in South Carolina and the New Madrid Fault in Tennessee.

Landslide

Landslides occur along steep slopes when the pull of gravity can no longer be resisted (often due to heavy rain throughout the Appalachian Mountain region). Human development can also exacerbate risk by building on previously undevelopable steep slopes and constructing roads by cutting through mountains. Landslides are possible throughout Jackson County.

Hydrologic Hazards

Dam Failure

Dam failure as a hazard is described as the uncontrolled and unintentional release of impounded water caused by collapse, breach, or other failure resulting in downstream flooding that can impact life and property. Prolonged rainfall that produces flooding is considered the most common cause of dam failure. Currently, there are 59 actively impounding and regulated dams within Jackson County, including several federally regulated dams. Of that group, 28 are classified as "High Hazard" dams, meaning a failure would pose a significant threat to human life, cause major property damage, and impact roads and bridges.

Flood

Flash flooding, river flooding, and areal flooding are the most common flood types that affect Jackson County. Recorded incidents include flash floods and urban small-stream floods. Floods tend to be concentrated in low-lying areas near rivers and streams with damage ranging from negligible to costing millions of dollars.

Other Hazards

Hazardous Materials Release—Fixed Site

A hazardous material (HazMat) is a substance or material that may pose an unreasonable risk to safety, health, or property. A HazMat release, whether intentional or accidental, from a fixed-site facility has the potential to pose a significant threat to populations, property, and the environment throughout Jackson County. There is currently one site in Jackson County that meet hazardous materials reporting thresholds.

Hazardous Materials Release—Transportation

HazMat transportation incidents can occur while loading, unloading, or in transit. A HazMat release, whether intentional or accidental, during transport has the potential to pose a significant concern to health and safety for the population, property, and the environment throughout Jackson County, particularly along a major roadway or waterway.

Wildland Fire

A wildland fire is an uncontrolled burning of grasslands, brush, or woodlands. Wildland fires have the potential to substantially burn forested areas as well as private residences. Major losses attributable to wildland fires include damage and destruction to State, County, private, and municipal structures and facilities. Private residences and communities that are located within the wildland-urban interface are particularly susceptible. In Jackson County, wildland fires mainly occur due to high winds, low humidity, and dry vegetation.

Human-Caused Hazards

Cyber-security

Cyber events, commonly referred to as cyber-terrorism or cyber-attacks, are premeditated criminal acts by an individual or individuals using computers and telecommunications capabilities to disrupt and/or destroy services to public and private critical infrastructure, such as financial, energy, or transportation networks. Cyber-attacks, particularly those caused by malicious code, denial of service, and theft of devices and those that are web-based, are very common and result in costly recovery measures for institutions.

School Violence

School violence is violence that occurs on school property, on the way to or from school or school-sponsored events, or during a school-sponsored event. There are 9 public and 5 non-public (private, charter, faith-based, etc.) schools within Jackson County.

Capability Assessment

Jackson County offers many governmental services and programs to its residents and visitors. The agencies and organizations (public, private, and non-governmental) are well equipped to provide the essential services to County residents and visitors for day-to-day emergency incidents. Nonetheless, due to its geography, population, climate, and other factors, the county is at risk of a single large-scale incident or cascading series of incidents resulting in a disaster, which overwhelms the capabilities of local emergency response systems. During a disaster, the county will utilize mutual aid agreements and private sector partnerships to ensure the best possible outcome of response and recovery efforts.

Mitigation Overview

Mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. It includes actions taken before the next disaster to reduce human and financial consequences later (analyzing risk, reducing risk, and insuring against risk). Opportunities to reduce potential losses through mitigation practices may include acquisition of flood prone properties, the elevation of flood prone structures, or the continuous enforcement of policies that prevent and regulate development that is vulnerable to hazards due to its location, design, or other characteristics. Mitigation opportunities will also be presented during immediate preparedness or response activities, such as installing storm shutters in advance of a hurricane, and certainly during the long-term recovery and redevelopment process following a hazard event. Jackson County participates and is included in the *Smoky Mountain Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan* and is specifically addressed in Annex D of that plan.

Planning Assumptions

This plan incorporates the following assumptions:

- Local governments in the State of North Carolina are primarily responsible for the protection of people, property, and the environment within their respective jurisdictions.
- Response to emergencies and disasters will occur in accordance with the authorities described in this EOP.
- Local government will implement and retain control of emergency management activities when resources external to local government are requested and deployed, except where policy is superseded by State or Federal law.
- Local governments expect to operate without the aid of external resources for a minimum of 72 hours after the onset of an emergency or disaster.
- It is assumed that any emergency or disaster individually or in combination with other emergencies may cause a grave situation within the county. It is also assumed that these incidents will vary in size and intensity. For this reason, planning efforts are made as general as possible so that great latitude is available in their application and considering the potential for simultaneous occurrence of emergencies or disasters in multiple locations.

- It is the responsibility of officials under this plan to save lives, protect property, relieve human suffering, sustain survivors, and protect the environment.
- The primary role of Federal, State, and County emergency management organizations is to provide resource support for local emergency management operations.
- Command, control, and coordinating mechanisms described in this plan may be implemented but not limited to:
  - The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated during or in advance of an event;
  - A State of Emergency is declared within the county;
  - Municipal resource capabilities are exceeded and mutual aid assistance is required; and/or
  - As needed and determined by the county.
- The county has chosen to use the Incident Command System (ICS) in a manner consistent with National Incident Management System (NIMS) for the on-scene management of incidents.
- The county has chosen to organize the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in a functional manner, similar to the State of North Carolina EOC organization structure.
- Where emergency or disaster threats are known to exist, mitigation strategies and methods are developed and employed as documented in existing plans and procedures.
- The EOP will be used to guide the overall emergency management efforts of Jackson County and its departments.
- Each department or partner agency with responsibilities described in this EOP will endeavor to achieve and maintain a state of readiness necessary to carry out activities contained in this plan.

Concept of Operations

Jackson County's EOP is based on the premise that primary responsibility for emergency operations lies at the local level and that outside assistance will be requested only when an emergency or disaster exceeds local capabilities. Situations in which several localities are threatened or impacted concurrently usually involve the county and State from the onset. If the State is overwhelmed, the Governor may request Federal assistance.

This section provides a clear methodology to realize goals and objectives for execution of this EOP. It describes a general sequence of response concepts employed by Jackson County, the process for declaring an emergency, and who has authority of activation.

General

- As provisioned by North Carolina General Statute § 166A-19.15, Jackson County will, to the maximum extent possible, provide initial emergency management and facilitate prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery actions for presenting emergency or disaster situations.
- The Chairman of the County Commissioners, assisted by the County Manager, has overall responsibility for the county's response to an emergency or disaster situation.
- The Emergency Management Director is delegated the responsibility to coordinate and manage county resources and advise the County Manager of needs and progress.
- If the emergency or disaster situation warrants, the Board of Commissioners Chairman may declare a State of Emergency to order emergency procedures and restrictions. Municipal Mayors or designated governing body may request or provide consent to inclusion in the county's State of Emergency in accordance with § 166A-19.22.
- The Jackson County EOC will be staffed and operated as the situation dictates and serve as a clearinghouse for disaster-related information, requests for and deployment of resources, and recovery operations.
- Jackson County will obtain assistance by executing mutual aid agreements, activating standby contracts, and/or requesting assistance from the State, if necessary.
- The State of North Carolina may coordinate additional requests for assistance beyond its capabilities, including requests for Presidential Declarations of Emergency to facilitate supplemental Federal response, financial, and technical assistance.
- Planning for recovery will be implemented at the same time Jackson County begins emergency response actions necessary to protect the public.

Phases of Emergency Management

Jackson County recognizes that most emergencies occur with little or no warning, requiring immediate activation of this plan and the commitment and deployment of all obligated resources and personnel. The coordination of this response is achieved through four emergency management phases. While not every emergency or disaster will require coordination through

all four phases, general response activities and emergency operations are accomplished through phase-specific objectives.

Preparedness (Prevention and Protection)

The preparedness phase includes activities to develop operational capabilities and effective responses to emergency situations or disasters. Jackson County's goal under preparedness is to increase readiness and resiliency. Preparedness activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Hazard mitigation planning;
- EOC activation, training, exercises, and updates;
- Public information, education, and outreach; and
- County- and department-level policies, procedures, operating instructions, and resource lists

Response

Coordination and response actions are transitioned from the preparedness to the response phase when a hazard is recognized as active or imminent. The goals of response actions for the county surround protection of life, property, the environment, and the economy. All response phase decisions are designed as protective measures and are made via execution of a decision process that is outlined below.

Pre-Impact Response Phase: Hazard Control and Assessment. The county will act to monitor the approach and assess the threat or hazard and begin to select control and mitigation strategies. Primary operational priorities may include any of the following:

- Dissemination of accurate and timely emergency public information, warnings, and recommendations for pre-impact protective actions;
- Intelligence gathering and assessment of the evolving situation;
- Resource allocation and coordination; or
- Incident access and control.

Impact Response Phase: Protective Action Implementation. In this phase, the county will select protective action(s) appropriate to the evolving situation and deploy additional primary and support resources. Operational priorities may include any of the following:

- Dissemination of accurate and timely emergency public information, warnings, and voluntary or mandatory protective action instructions;
- Law enforcement and security;
- Emergency medical services (EMS), fire services, search, and HazMat;
- Evacuation,
- Public health and medical care;
- Determination of need for mutual aid; and
- Utility control, shutdown, and /or diversion.

Assessment and Fulfillment of Short-term Needs. Short-term operational needs are determined and dependent upon actions and assessment during the Impact Response Phase. These operations often transcend the response and recovery phases. Examples of short-term needs may include any of the following:

- Dissemination of accurate and timely emergency public information and warnings;
- Temporary Reception Centers;
- Shelter operations;
- Mass Feeding;
- Commodity Distribution (Ice, Water, Tarps, MREs);
- Continued medical treatment;
- Access and security adjustments;
- Determination of need for (continued) mutual aid; and
- Temporary Utility Restoration.

Recovery

Following stabilization of the emergency or disaster situation and resolution or establishment of life-safety issues, the county will shift operational focus to recovery. Recovery priorities may include the following:

- Physical restoration of essential services, facilities, and infrastructure;
- Facilitating search for funding sources;
- Making recommendations on restoration priorities;
- Coordinating and assisting with recovery of other whole community and social services; and
- Assisting, as appropriate, with economic recovery.

Mitigation

The Mitigation Phase transcends all phases of emergency management, as it involves actions that occur prior to, during, and after an emergency or disaster event. Mitigation focuses on eliminating or reducing the impact of hazards which exist and are a threat to life, property, the environment, and the economy. Many mitigation actions and the mitigation planning process are detailed in the ***Jackson County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan.***

EOC Activation Process and Levels

Process

When an incident appears to be, or is already, beyond the capacity of a single jurisdiction or County agency, the Incident Commander of that incident shall make notification to Jackson County Emergency Management. The Emergency Management Director, or designee, in coordination with the current Incident Commander will determine the appropriate level of Emergency Operations Center (EOC) activation based upon the following identified scopes. Once the decision has been made to activate the EOC, notifications will be made to the County Manager and key EOC personnel utilizing the most efficient means available (mass notification system, call down list, etc.).

Activation

The level of activity within the EOC typically grows in size, scope, and complexity as the incident grows. If the incident necessitates additional support and coordination, the EOC Manager may activate additional staff to involve more disciplines, mobilize additional resources, inform the public, address media inquiries, involve senior elected and appointed officials, and request outside assistance. The table below lists the scale of activation levels along with criteria for determining the appropriate level. Any of these levels can involve both in-person and off-site personnel coordinating remotely.

EOC Schedule

The first few hours of any event are usually hectic with priorities focusing on life safety, incident stabilization, and gathering situation information. During this time, it is often difficult to set a schedule for the EOC as it takes some time for the center to become fully operational. No notice events that require activation of the EOC will be fluid with the EOC opening as soon as possible with an initial operational period lasting until a time in which the first set of incident objectives has been completed or a shift change is practical.

Additional operational periods will establish and follow a routine Planning Cycle and schedule to the extent possible. Each operational period will be dictated in duration by the extent to which the incident or event is escalating or de-escalating and the completion of identified objectives.

EOC Activation Level	Activation Scope	Activation Example
Level 3	Emergency Management and public safety agencies remotely monitor conditions and share situation information. The EOC facility is prepared for activation, but not staffed. Departments are encouraged to fuel vehicles and make final checks in the event an EOC activation is required.	A tropical storm with uncertain track threatens coastal North Carolina. Impact to western North Carolina is at least 48 hours out, and only if it deviates significantly from its forecast path. Emergency Management prepares the EOC for activation, considers cancelling EOC room reservations, and begins remotely monitoring conditions and sharing information with appropriate departments and personnel.
Level 2	Enhanced Steady-State/Partial Activation Certain EOC team members/organizations are activated to monitor a credible threat, risk, or hazard and/or support the response to a new and potentially evolving incident.	A road race has been permitted in the county that includes closing or curtailing traffic along a 12-mile route, a pre-race street festival, and participation by a famous athlete. The EOC is activated prior to the festival with an EOC Manager, Resources Tracking Unit Leader, Fire, Law Enforcement, EMS, and Communications Unit Leaders, and the race organization. The EOC is only staffed during predefined Operational Periods in accordance with an Incident Action Plan developed several weeks in advance.
Level 1	Full activation EOC team is activated, including personnel from all assisting agencies, to support the response to a major incident or credible threat	Wind and rain from Hurricane Susan caused widespread power outages, blocked roadways, and flooding. Residents in one neighborhood have climbed onto their roofs awaiting rescue. Pressure zones serving Dillsboro and Sylva are without water. Emergency workers are reporting that they can't make it into work, or they can't make it home due to flooding and debris. The EOC is activated and all positions staffed 24/7. An IAP is generated for each Operational Period. Most response activities are focused on life-safety and rescue activities. Emergency response operations will continue to for several days, after which they will transition to damage assessments and recovery.

Planning Cycles

The EOC Planning Cycle is useful during any incident or event. The outcome of the EOC Planning Cycle is an Incident Action Plan (IAP). IAPs are plans that contain incident objectives reflecting the resource assignments for a given operational period. The Planning Cycle can be adjusted to fit the timeline of achieving incident objectives, rapidly evolving priorities, and/or levels of situational awareness achieved.

The Planning P diagram in Figure 1 is a visual guide to the planning steps involved in response to an incident. The leg of the P represents initial response period when Emergency Management is notified of an incident, a decision is made to activate the EOC, and initial activities are coordinated.

Deactivation

The EOC Manager deactivates EOC staff as circumstances allow and the EOC returns to its normal operations/steady state condition. Deactivation occurs when the incident no longer requires the support and coordination functions provided by the EOC staff or those functions can be effectively managed by individual organizations or by using steady state coordination mechanisms. DOCs and/or Command Posts may remain activated for continued response support after the EOC has demobilized. All resource demobilization and ongoing incident support/recovery responsibilities are completed or transferred prior to deactivation. A Hot Wash will occur as part of deactivation and an after-action review and/or corrective action plan may be developed based on its outcome.
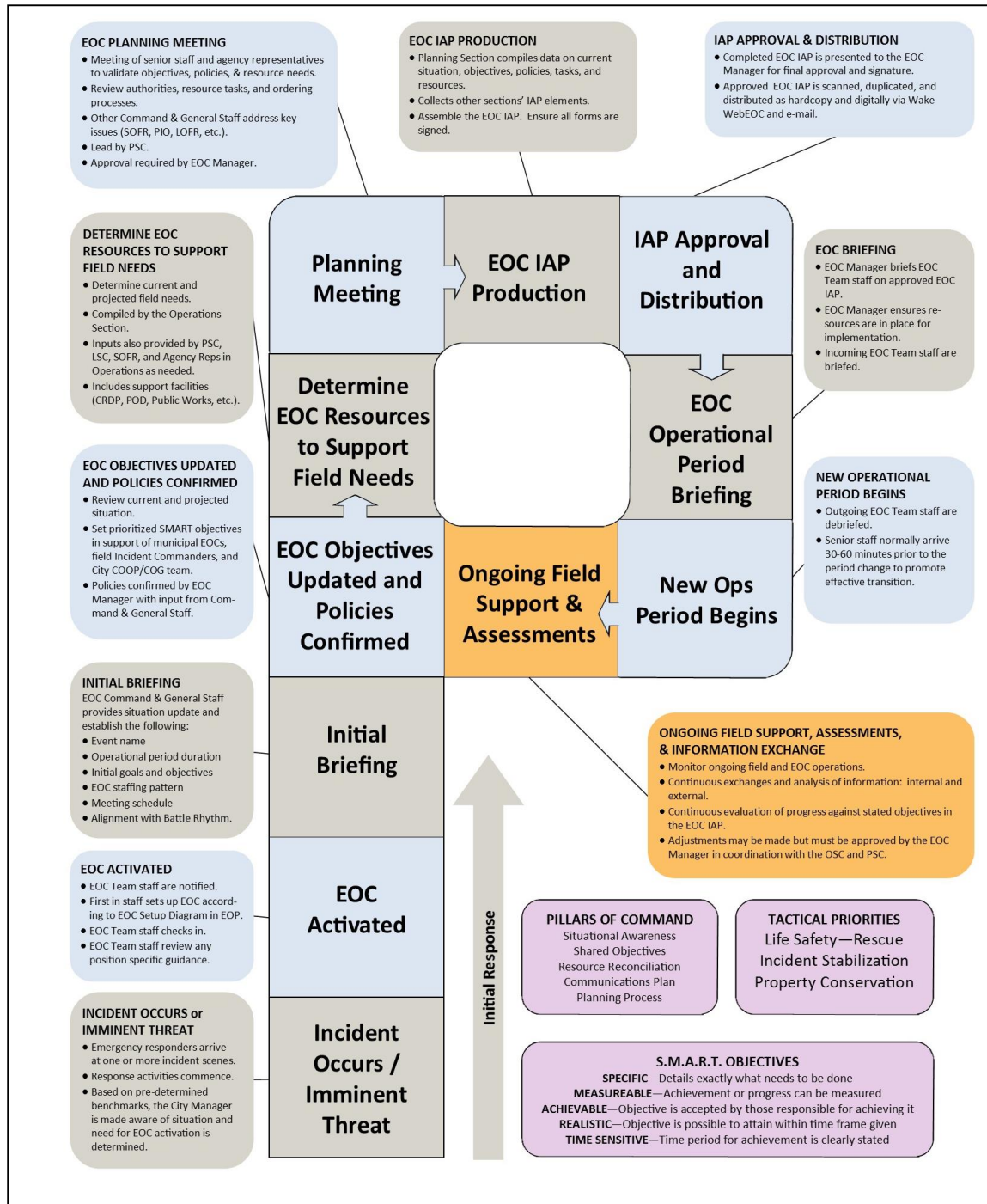
EOC PLANNING MEETING
- Meeting of senior staff and agency representatives to validate objectives, policies, & resource needs.
- Review authorities, resource tasks, and ordering processes.
- Other Command & General Staff address key issues (SOFR, PIO, LOFR, etc.).
- Lead by PSC.
- Approval required by EOC Manager.

EOC IAP PRODUCTION
- Planning Section compiles data on current situation, objectives, policies, tasks, and resources.
- Collects other sections' IAP elements.
- Assemble the EOC IAP. Ensure all forms are signed.

IAP APPROVAL & DISTRIBUTION
- Completed EOC IAP is presented to the EOC Manager for final approval and signature.
- Approved EOC IAP is scanned, duplicated, and distributed as hardcopy and digitally via Wake WebEOC and e-mail.

DETERMINE EOC RESOURCES TO SUPPORT FIELD NEEDS
- Determine current and projected field needs.
- Compiled by the Operations Section.
- Inputs also provided by PSC, LSC, SOFR, and Agency Reps in Operations as needed.
- Includes support facilities (CRDP, POD, Public Works, etc.).

EOC BRIEFING
- EOC Manager briefs EOC Team staff on approved EOC IAP.
- EOC Manager ensures resources are in place for implementation.
- Incoming EOC Team staff are briefed.

EOC OBJECTIVES UPDATED AND POLICIES CONFIRMED
- Review current and projected situation.
- Set prioritized SMART objectives in support of municipal EOCs, field Incident Commanders, and City COOP/COG team.
- Policies confirmed by EOC Manager with input from Command & General Staff.

NEW OPERATIONAL PERIOD BEGINS
- Outgoing EOC Team staff are debriefed.
- Senior staff normally arrive 30-60 minutes prior to the period change to promote effective transition.

INITIAL BRIEFING
EOC Command & General Staff provides situation update and establish the following:
- Event name
- Operational period duration
- Initial goals and objectives
- EOC staffing pattern
- Meeting schedule
- Alignment with Battle Rhythm.

EOC ACTIVATED
- EOC Team staff are notified.
- First in staff sets up EOC according to EOC Setup Diagram in EOP.
- EOC Team staff checks in.
- EOC Team staff review any position specific guidance.

INCIDENT OCCURS or IMMINENT THREAT
- Emergency responders arrive at one or more incident scenes.
- Response activities commence.
- Based on pre-determined benchmarks, the City Manager is made aware of situation and need for EOC activation is determined.

ONGOING FIELD SUPPORT, ASSESSMENTS, & INFORMATION EXCHANGE
- Monitor ongoing field and EOC operations.
- Continuous exchanges and analysis of information: internal and external.
- Continuous evaluation of progress against stated objectives in the EOC IAP.
- Adjustments may be made but must be approved by the EOC Manager in coordination with the OSC and PSC.

Cycle diagram nodes:
- Planning Meeting
- EOC IAP Production
- IAP Approval and Distribution
- Determine EOC Resources to Support Field Needs
- EOC Operational Period Briefing
- EOC Objectives Updated and Policies Confirmed
- Ongoing Field Support & Assessments
- New Ops Period Begins
- Initial Briefing
- EOC Activated
- Incident Occurs / Imminent Threat
- Initial Response

PILLARS OF COMMAND
Situational Awareness
Shared Objectives
Resource Reconciliation
Communications Plan
Planning Process

TACTICAL PRIORITIES
Life Safety—Rescue
Incident Stabilization
Property Conservation

S.M.A.R.T. OBJECTIVES
SPECIFIC—Details exactly what needs to be done
MEASUREABLE—Achievement or progress can be measured
ACHIEVABLE—Objective is accepted by those responsible for achieving it
REALISTIC—Objective is possible to attain within time frame given
TIME SENSITIVE—Time period for achievement is clearly stated

Figure 1: EOC Planning Cycle

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Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

In addition to routine day-to-day responsibilities, all departments and divisions of Jackson County Government have obligations for emergency roles during disasters to ensure effective and efficient of the county's essential functions. Each department is responsible for understanding these obligations, as well as maintaining workforce development practices, training, and plans (as necessary) to maintain its own emergency preparedness. In addition, certain departments and divisions must appoint representatives to serve in the Jackson County EOC. It is critical that these representatives have the ability and authority to make decisions that affect emergency operations on behalf of their respective organizations. Delaying decisions, such as allocation of resources and personnel or providing additional services to the public, can lead to profound consequences to the county, residents, and visitors.

Organization

The organizational structure used in Jackson County during emergencies originates from four sources: The State of North Carolina Emergency Operations Plan, Jackson County Emergency Operations Plan, National Incident Management System (NIMS), and current County departmental organization. The organizational structure is configured this way to maximize compatibility with State assets, as well as incident commanders in the field. This functional format is compatible with State, and Federal organizational structures.

In an emergency requiring full activation of Jackson County EOC, the following groups are designated to divide responsibilities and accomplish the activities and tasks that lead to successful outcomes for the public and ultimately restore Jackson County:

- Jackson County Policy Group
- EOC Command Staff
- EOC General Staff/Sections
- Functional Branches and Agency Representatives

During an activation of the EOC, personnel will fill positions according to the needs of the current or impending disaster or event. Each of these positions is unique and might be apart from the regularly assigned duties of the person filling that position. Some of the key positions and their duties are listed below, but it is paramount to remain flexible in any disaster and ensure the organization fits the current needs of the incident or event.
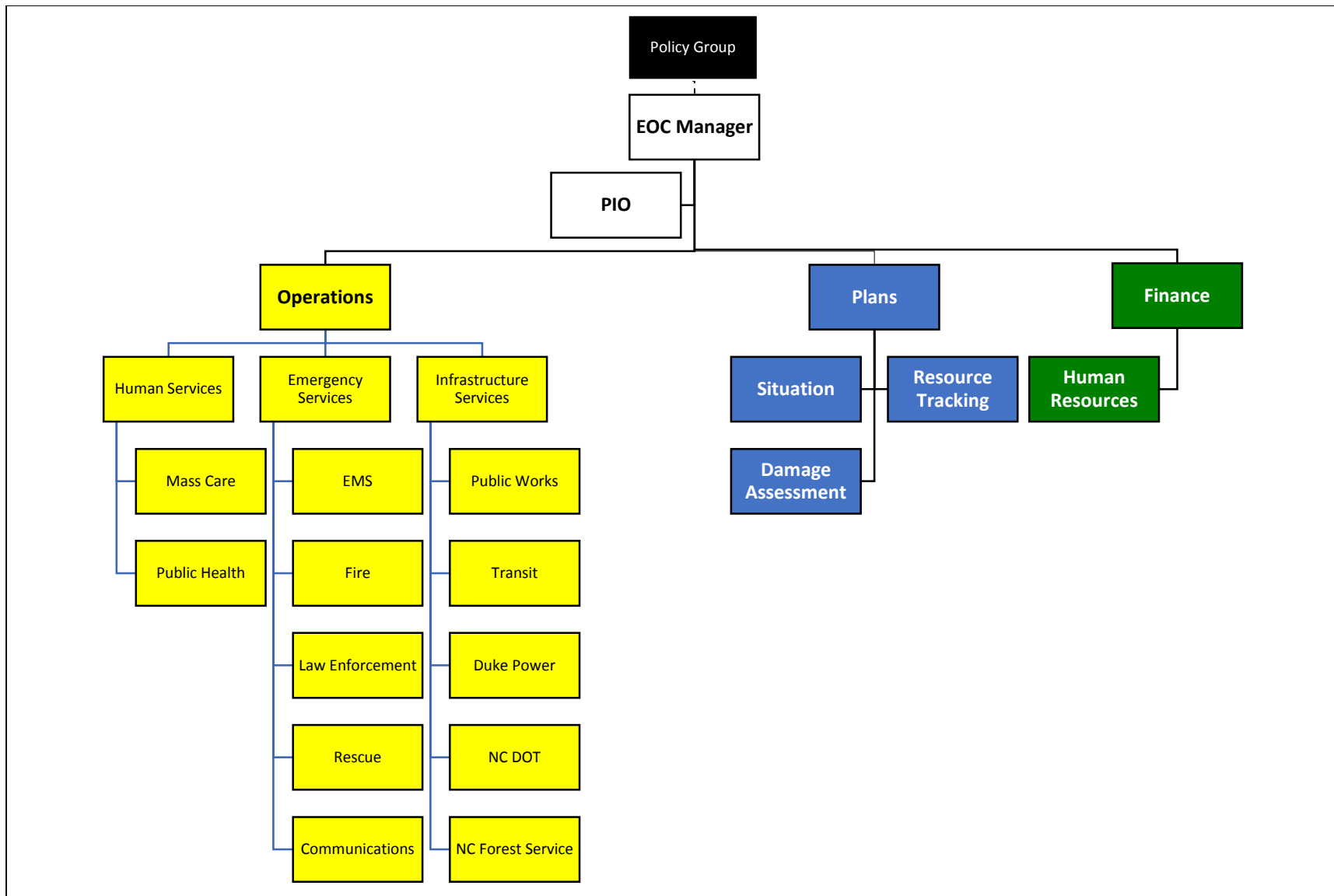
Figure 2: Fully Activated Jackson County Emergency Operations Organization

Jackson County Policy Group

The Jackson County Policy Group is responsible for oversight of all county operations, including emergency operations. The Policy Group is fulfilled by the Chairman of the County Commissioners, County Attorney, County Clerk, municipal mayors, and led by the County Manager. Others may advise or be added to the Policy Group as needed and dictated by the collective Policy Group and as an incident requires. This group sets policies and advises the EOC Manager. The Policy Group also maintains final control over fiscal decisions during a disaster. The Board of County Commissioners Chairman has the authority to declare a State of Emergency within the county and is granted the associated powers as determined by State statute.

Board of County Commissioners Chairman
- Issues emergency proclamations declaring States of Emergency and imposing restrictions and prohibitions, such as curfews or evacuation;
- Terminates or modifies States of Emergency proclamations.

County Attorney
- Advises the Policy Group on pertinent regulations and laws required for acquisition and/or control of critical resources;
- Advises the Policy Group on the necessary ordinances and regulations to provide the legal basis for imposing restrictions and prohibitions;
- Commences civil proceedings, as necessary and appropriate to implement and enforce emergency actions and in cooperation with the Jackson County District Attorney; and
- The county Attorney, or designee, will act as the lead legal decision maker for the county during a disaster. While not always physically present in the EOC, the county Attorney or designee shall always remain on call during a disaster.

County Clerk
- Assures resolutions and notices of public hearings are prepared and published, as required by law;
- Attends all meetings of the Board of Commissioners and records official actions; and
- Acts as custodian of all legal documents pertaining to the county.

County Manager
- Assures that members of the Policy Group are aware of situation updates;
- Serves as the liaison between the Board of Commissioners and the EOC Command Staff for State of Emergency declarations and terminations, as well as situation updates;
- Ensures county agencies develop and continually update emergency plans and Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG's) to respond to emergencies or disasters;
- Ensure that exercises and tests of the emergency systems are conducted on a periodic basis;
- Reports to the EOC upon activation and assist the EOC Manager in the direction and control;

- Ensures that department representatives designated to serve in the EOC (e.g. Finance Director, Health Director, Public Information Officer, etc.) report to the EOC upon activation;
- Function as the official county spokesperson and Public Information Officer (PIO), until delegated;
- Ensures means are available within the jurisdiction to gather necessary information, e.g. fuel storage facilities, major distributors, and end user status;
- Ensure timely and equitable implementation of incident objectives;
- Provide general assistance to the state in minimizing the adverse social and economic aspects of energy supply disruptions by encouraging recommended conservation programs both in the public and private sectors;
- Implement direction, control, coordination, and policy making functions as necessary to provide for optimum protection of the public's health and safety within the jurisdiction;
- Implements emergency policies as appropriate on behalf of the county; and
- Assures the protection of public documents and public facilities during the emergency or disaster.

Municipal Mayors

- Issues emergency proclamations declaring States of Emergency and imposing restrictions and prohibitions, such as curfews or evacuation for their Towns;
- Serves as liaison between the Policy Group and their Town Governments; and
- Terminates or modifies States of Emergency proclamations for their Towns.

Jackson County EOC Command Staff

The EOC Command Staff coordinates the overall county effort and operates in conjunction with neighboring municipal resources and Federal and State assets that may be involved in emergency activities. Activities overseen by the EOC Command Staff are reported to Jackson County Policy Group. The EOC Command Staff includes the EOC Manager and PIO.
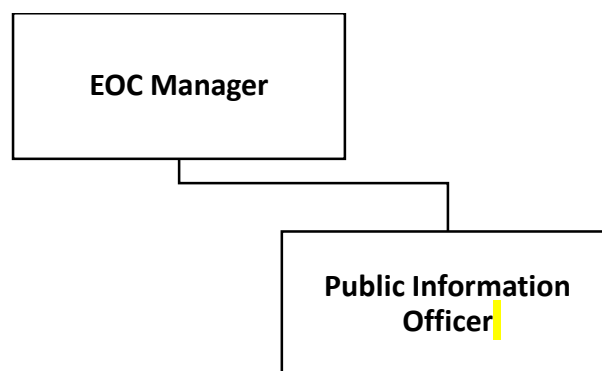
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Figure 3: Jackson County Command Staff

EOC Manager

The EOC Manager is responsible to the Policy Group for all EOC-related and resource coordination activities. The EOC Manager will establish objectives for the assigned operational period. An EOC Manager should be designated for each operational period. The EOC Manager position will be staffed by Jackson County Emergency Management. A Deputy EOC Manager may be assigned to manage span of control and/or functional specialization of the hazard presented. Additional responsibilities of the EOC Manager include:

- Evaluates incoming information and coordinates response efforts;
- Keeps the Policy Group and the EOC staff updated on current situations and ongoing operations;
- Prioritizes emergency efforts and resource tasking across the county when limited resources are available;
- Approves Incident Action Plans (IAPs) for each operational period; and
- Delegates and designates responsibilities appropriate to the size and scope of the presenting emergency or disaster situation, including:
    - Serving as liaison to local, State, and Federal agencies, cooperating agencies, and stakeholders participating in response and recovery efforts;
    - Maintaining coordination with appropriate governmental, public, and private enterprises to ensure their cooperative support in the event it is needed;
    - Ensuring necessary narrative and operational journals and essential records are maintained during emergencies; and that appropriate information and reports are provided to higher, adjacent, and support jurisdictions;
    - Approving any activation and deployment of emergency response assets under Jackson County jurisdiction; and
    - Appoints a Deputy EOC Manager, as necessary to:
        - Perform specific tasks as requested by the EOC Manager;
        - Perform the EOC Manager function in a relief capacity; and
        - Serve as the EOC representative for an assisting entity that shares jurisdiction but does not maintain or cannot provide an EOC representative.
- Unless delegated, performs tasks associated with incident and event safety. EOC safety activities include:
    - Monitors incident operations at an EOC level, including life safety protective actions, including suspending operations, for the incident;
    - Makes general recommendations on the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and special safety practices for uncommon incidents;
    - Assumes responsibilities for safety of the EOC facility and directs EOC staff and other personnel as to appropriate actions in the event of an emergency at the EOC location; and
    - Works in conjunction with Public Works and/or appropriate location facility managers.

Public Information Officer

The Public Information Officer is responsible to the EOC Manager for all incident or event related public information. The Public Information Officer position will be staffed by the County Manager, fulfilled by the EOC Manager, or designated by the incident. Additional responsibilities of the Public Information Officer include:

- Collects and distributes the most accurate and timely information regarding emergency events, as approved by the EOC Manager, to the public and media;
- Monitors broadcast media outlets and social media for message accuracy, effectiveness, and rumors;
- Assumes responsibilities for public communications in the EOC, in designated Joint Information Centers (JICs), or as part of a Joint Information System (JIS);
- Arranges for tours and other interviews or briefings, as required;
- Establishes and maintains ground rules with the media and serves as the central clearinghouse for public communications and releases; and
- Appoints Assistant Public Information Officer(s) as needed.

Jackson County General Staff/Sections

The EOC General Staff/Sections is comprised of incident management personnel responsible for three functional sections within the ICS framework: Operations, Planning, and Finance/Administration Sections. Incident Logistical support requirements will be fulfilled individually by each agency represented within the Operations Section, through each agency's own predefined processes or contracts. In addition to the responsibilities outlined below, each section maintains a detailed Annex of the functions outlined in the EOP Basic Plan.
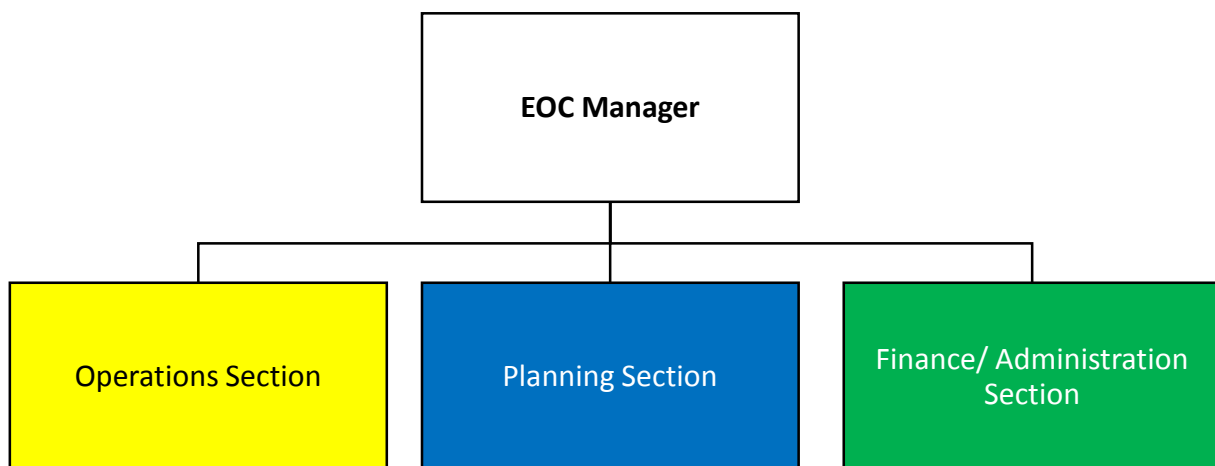

Figure 4: Jackson County General Staff/Sections

Operations Section

The Operations Section is generally the largest of all sections and includes twelve functional units, organized into three branches with related disaster response roles. All activities within the Operations Section are coordinated by the Operations Section Chief. The Operations Section Chief position may be filled by a dedicated individual, or by a functional unit leader assigned dual roles at the EOC Manager's discretion. Branches within the Operations Section are used to group similar activities, and generally will not be staffed with Branch Directors.
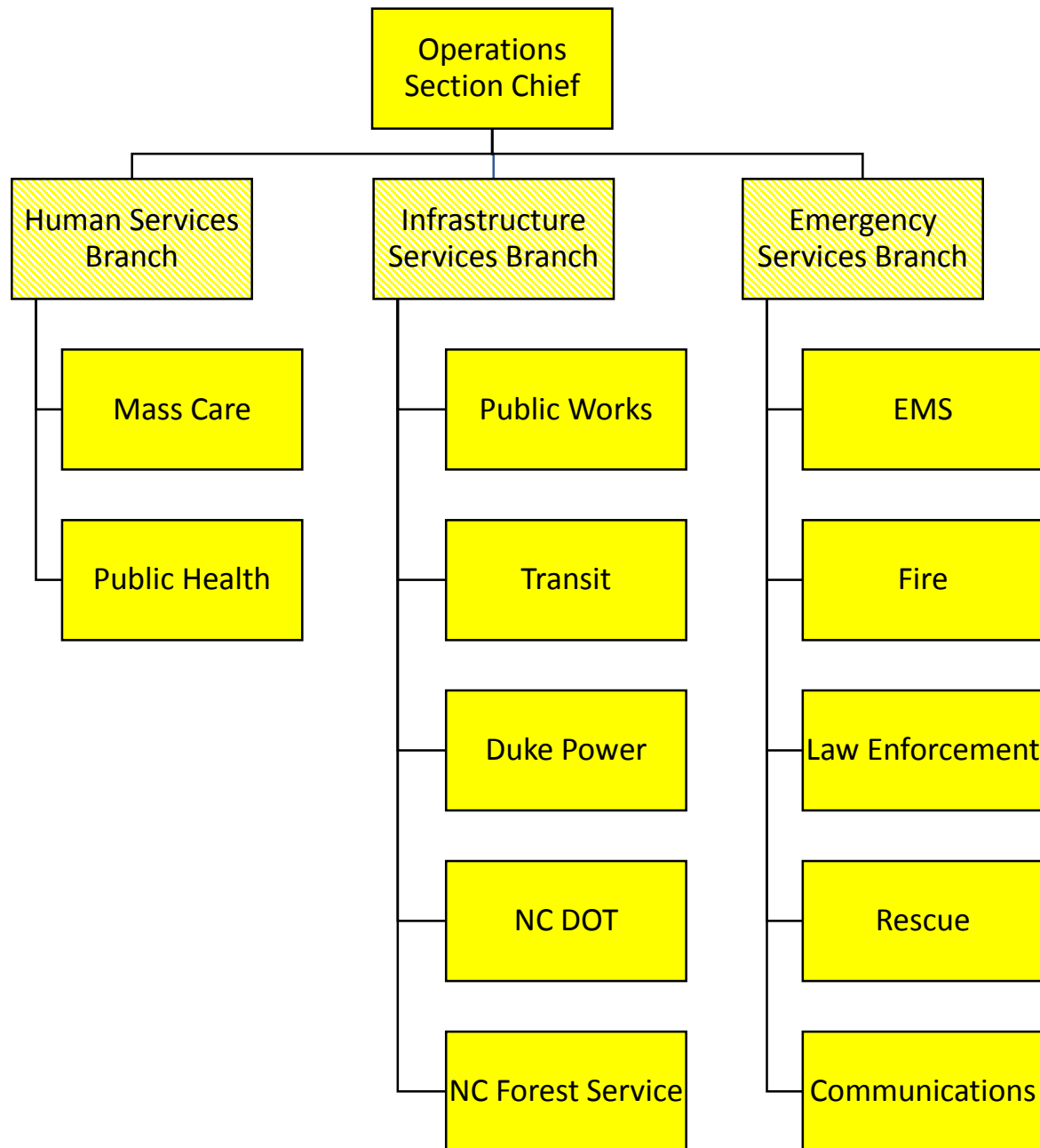
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Figure 5: Jackson County Operations Section

Operations Section Chief

The Operations Section Chief is responsible to the EOC Manager for the direct management of all incident-related tactical activities. The Operations Section Chief will establish tactics for the assigned operational period. An Operations Section Chief should be designated for each operational period, and responsibilities include direct involvement in development of the Incident Action Plan. The Operations Section Chief position will be assigned by the EOC Manager. Typically, the Operations Section Chief will also have responsibilities of a functional Unit Leader. A Deputy Operations Section Chief may be assigned to manage span of control and/or functional specialization of the hazard presented.

Operations Section Functional Organization

The following functions comprise the Operations Section. Designated County departments will provide qualified personnel to fulfill functional group positions, as requested, to coordinate the unique responsibilities of each branch and to support the overall mission and actions of the Operations Section.

The following functions are grouped within the Operations Section's **Human Services Branch**:

Mass Care Unit
- Provides and coordinates reception centers (short-term) and congregate care shelters (long-term) for the evacuating public; and
- Maintains communication with Jackson County EOC to determine need, availability, and status of shelters.

Public Health Services Unit
- Monitors and augments community medical capability and response, health surveillance, food and drug device safety, public health information, vector control, and potable water/wastewater and solid waste disposal.

The following functions are grouped within the Operations Section's **Emergency Services Branch**:

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Unit
- Coordinates pre-hospital emergency medical services operations during an emergency;
- Serves as a link between the EOC, EMS system operations, EMS related mutual aid resources, and Incident Commands under the management of an EMS agency;
- Obtains situation reports from field resources and hospitals;
- Requests resource support outside of the automatic mutual aid system; and
- Supplies EMS agencies and Incident Commanders with relevant information and directives developed in the EOC.

Fire Unit

- Coordinates firefighting and hazardous materials response resources to ensure the safety of life and property;
- Serves as a link between the EOC, local fire departments, firefighting related mutual aid resources, and incident commands under the management of a fire department;
- Obtains situation reports and status from fire departments and incident commanders;
- Requests resource support outside of the automatic mutual aid system; and
- Supplies fire departments and Incident Commanders with relevant information and directives developed in the EOC.

Law Enforcement Unit

- Coordinates activities related to law and order, security, and traffic control during an emergency;
- Assist with notifying the public of an impending or existing emergency;
- Coordinates movement and evacuation of the public during an emergency;
- Serves as a link between the EOC, law enforcement agencies, law enforcement related mutual aid resources, and Incident Commands under the management of local law enforcement;
- Obtains situation reports and status from law enforcement agencies and incident commanders;
- Requests resource support through statewide mutual aid system; and
- Supplies law enforcement agencies and Incident Commanders with relevant information and directives developed in the EOC.

Rescue Unit

- Coordinates search and technical rescue resources to ensure the safety of life and property;
- Provides support for activities to track, locate, rescue, and extricate lost, missing, and/or entrapped persons as a result of the event;
- Serves as a link between the EOC, local rescue squads, search & rescue related mutual aid resources, and Incident Commanders coordinating rescue-related operations;
- Obtains situation reports and status from rescue squads and incident commanders;
- Requests resource support outside of the automatic mutual aid system; and
- Supplies rescue squads and Incident Commanders with relevant information and directives developed in the EOC.

Communications Unit

- Serves as a link between the EOC and the Jackson County Communications, and other Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP) serving agencies with jurisdiction in or near Jackson County (NC State Highway Patrol),
- Coordinates with Jackson County Communications on temporary modifications to standard dispatch protocols for County resource dispatching, radio channel/talkgroup assignment, and call assignments as related to the emergency event; and

- Supplies PSAPs serving local agencies with relevant information, priorities and objectives developed in the EOC.

The following functions are grouped within the Operations Section's **Infrastructure Services Branch**:

Public Works Unit

- Facilitates timely restoration of safe access, emergency power, water, sanitation, and essential support systems for vital county-owned infrastructure following an emergency or disaster situation;
- Develops and maintains resource lists with source, location, and availability of equipment, fuel, and operational personnel to support response/recovery operations;
- Coordinates backup electrical power to the Emergency Operations Center and Emergency Shelters;
- Coordinates providing sufficient fuel supplies to emergency response organizations and areas along evacuation routes;
- Coordinates emergency protective activities to protect, assess, and restore the county's storm water systems, facilities, and vehicle fleet;
- Provides transportation coordination for county-operated special service vehicles if requested by the local Emergency Management Coordinator during any major emergency or disaster;
- Assists in damage assessment operations and relay damage assessment information to the Emergency Operations Center; and
- Inspects emergency or disaster shelter sites for serviceability.

Transit Unit

- Coordinates public and private resources to move critical supplies and equipment to shelters and transport key emergency workers to and from the hazard areas;
- Provides vans, buses, and trucks to assist with for emergency or disaster evacuation;
- Obtains additional transportation resources, as needed from adjacent jurisdictions, state and private resources; and
- Manages contracts for debris removal from utility easements.

Duke Power Agency Representative

- Maintains communication with Duke Power to determine their emergency response and recovery status;
- Assists the Emergency Operations Center with making high priority restoration requests to Duke Energy; and
- As available, makes the Emergency Operations Center aware of customer outages, restoration priorities, and restoration time estimates.

NC DOT Agency Representative

- Maintains communication with NCDOT County Maintenance Engineer to determine their emergency response and recovery status;
- Assists the Emergency Operations Center with making requests to the NCDOT for high priority road closures, bridge damage, debris clearance, and highway cleanup; and
- As available, makes the Emergency Operations Center aware of road closures, damaged bridges, and other NCDOT operations.

NC Forestry Agency Representative

- Maintains communication with NC Forestry Service resources to determine their emergency response and recovery status;
- Assists the Emergency Operations Center with making requests to the NC Forestry Service for heavy equipment, overhead staff/teams, and interpreting Fire Weather predictions and behavior; and
- Assists the Emergency Operations Center with coordination and support of Forestry mutual aid.

Planning Section

The Planning Section collects, evaluates, and disseminates event situation information and intelligence for the EOC Manager and incident management personnel. This Section then prepares status reports, displays situation information, maintains the status of resources assigned to the incident, and prepares and documents the Incident Action Plan, based on Operations Section input and guidance from the EOC Manager. The Planning Section generally focuses on short-term (up to 24-hours in advance) planning for EOC activities during emergencies and disasters.
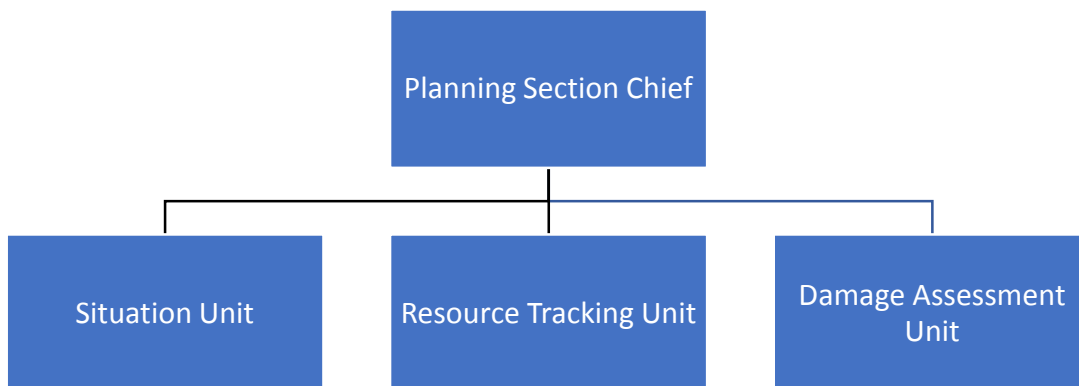

Figure 6: Jackson County Planning Section

Planning Section Chief

The Planning Section Chief is responsible to the EOC Manager for the management of all activities within the Planning Section. They are responsible for the collection, evaluation, dissemination, and use of information in the development of the incident documents and status of resources.

Such documents include, but are not limited to, Situation Reports and Incident Action Plans. The Planning Section Chief position will be filled by Jackson County Emergency Management. The Planning Chief is responsible for incident planning activities and overseeing the reconnaissance and damage assessment activities.

Planning Section Functional Organizational

The following functions comprise the Planning Section. Designated County departments will provide qualified personnel to fulfill the roles listed, if required by the event. Jackson County EOC's functions within the Planning Section include:

Situation Unit
- Coordinates collection, processing, and organizing of all incident information;
- Request and facilitate use of technical specialists, including meteorologists and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Technical Specialists;
- Request and assign Field Observers as necessary;
- May prepare future projections of incident growth, maps, and other intelligence information;
- Works closely with agency representatives to collect and share incident information; and
- Develop displays to support Emergency Operations Center activities (maps, weather reports, incident status summaries, and live video/data feeds).

Resource Tracking Unit
- Coordinates status tracking for all assigned and resources arriving at an incident; including check-in of all resources and maintaining a status-keeping system; and
- Maintains a master list of all personnel, resources, and specific equipment/apparatus assigned to the incident.

Damage Assessment Unit
- Coordinates Damage Assessment Teams and processes in the field;
- Gathers information from damage assessment teams and provides updates to the Planning Section Chief and Situation Unit; and
- Coordinates with GIS Technical Specialists to update and analyze damage assessment maps.

Jackson County Finance/Administration Section

The Finance/Administration Section is responsible for comprehensive management of fiscal resources and allocation of funds for emergency management activities during times of emergency and disasters. Some of the functions that fall within the scope of this section are recording personnel time, maintaining vendor contracts, compensation and claims, and conducting an overall cost analysis and projections for the incident.
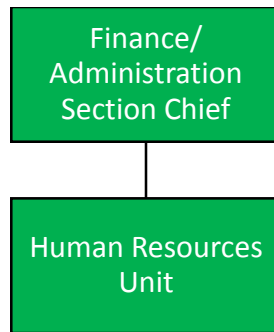
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Figure 8: Jackson County Finance/Administration Section

Finance/Administration Section Chief

The Finance/Administration Section Chief oversees activities related to tracking, invoicing, and projection of disaster-related costs, disaster purchasing, documentation of costs and expenditures, including personnel time, overtime, mileage, equipment hours, and fuel usage. They will work closely with the Planning Section so that operational records can be reconciled with financial documents.

Finance/Administration Section Functional Organization

The Finance/Administration Section is organized to support the EOC with large, complex incidents involving significant funding originating from multiple sources. Designated County departments will provide qualified personnel to fulfill the positions, as requested, to coordinate the unique responsibilities of each function and to support the county's overall mission. One functional unit assists the Finance Section Chief:

Human Resources Unit
- Assists with tracking of financial expenditures resulting from property damage, responder injuries, or responder fatalities at the incident, and
- Ensures proper recording of time for incident personnel, owned equipment, and hired equipment, in coordination with the Logistics Section.

External Agencies

State of North Carolina

The North Carolina Department of Public Safety (NCDPS) through the North Carolina Emergency Management Division (NCEM) maintains responsibility for statewide emergency operations coordination, including mutual aid requirements and needs as well as the coordination and communication link between the State and Federal disaster response systems.

Federal Government

Federal assistance will be provided to Jackson County via the State through a Unified Coordination Group assigned to a Joint Field Office, as described in the North Carolina EOP.

Non-governmental, Private-sector, and Volunteer Organizations

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private-sector businesses, and volunteer organizations represent a vital component to emergency response operations. Businesses and industry own or have access to substantial support resources. Community-based organizations, volunteer networks, and other NGOs provide valuable resources before, during, and after a disaster.

Assignment of Responsibilities

The role of each individual county department, agency, and organization is to maintain the highest level of continued service as possible, while also filling any emergency specific duties as needed. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Developing and maintaining detailed emergency plans, standard operating procedures (SOPs), Guidelines, and Checklists;
- Identifying sources of emergency supplies, equipment and transportation;
- Negotiating and maintaining mutual aid agreements and pre-position contracts for emergency services;
- Maintaining records of disaster related expenditures, including appropriate documentation;
- Protecting and preserving vital records essential for the continuity of government and delivery of essential functions;
- Developing and maintaining elements of the county's Continuity of Operations Plan that describes the succession of leadership necessary to carry out emergency management assignments, the resources and processes necessary to carry out emergency functions, and the way continuity of these functions, including the personnel, facilities and equipment that support them, will be protected during disasters and emergencies; and
- Maintaining training records for each employee, indicating compliance with all federal and state mandates, including National Incident Management System (NIMS), Incident Command System (ICS), and other emergency-based training.

In addition to the roles and responsibilities listed here, all departments may be assigned additional roles and responsibilities by the EOC Manager to aid in response and recovery operations.

Department on Aging

The Jackson County Department on Aging is a one-stop resource center dedicated to providing services and support to the aging population of Jackson County. Older adults and caregivers can meet social, physical, mental, and some financial needs through programs offered at the Department on Aging.

Specific Emergency Management roles assigned to the Department of Aging include but are not limited to:

- Providing facilities and personnel to support shelter operations during an emergency or disaster.

Animal Control

Jackson County Animal Control manages the animal shelter and protects public health by enforcing state rabies laws. Additional services include: Providing adoption and animal reunification services, picking up stray and unwanted animals, quarantine of biting animals, investigation of cruelty and nuisance complaints, conducting annual reduced costs clinics for

rabies vaccinations, routine patrolling of the community for violations, and educating the community about proper pet care and animal control ordinances.

Specific Emergency Management roles assigned to Animal Control include but are not limited to:

- Maintain current notification / recall rosters for the Jackson County Animal Response Team;
- Identify and survey animal shelter sites to be used in the event of an emergency;
- Secure cooperation of property owners for use of shelter space;
- Establish public information and education programs regarding animal response;
- Assign a liaison individual to report to the Emergency Operations Center, upon activation, to assist in animal response operations;
- Establish animal shelter sites during animal response operations; and
- Coordinate with the State Animal Response Team, Health Department and other agencies to provide technical and logistical support during animal response operations.

Board of Commissioners

The Board of Commissioners is Jackson County's governing body, consisting of five members who are elected for four-year terms. All members are elected at large. The Board of Commissioners set county policy, enact ordinances, and adopt the county budget each year.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to the Board of Commissioners include, but are not limited to:

- Declare and terminate an emergency or disaster declaration for the County;
- Provide oversight and guidance of the overall response to a disaster;
- Assure continuity of government during an emergency and/or disaster;
- Appropriation of funding for disaster preparation, response, recovery and mitigation; and
- Communication with constituents.

Communications Center

The Jackson County Communications Center provides consolidated communications for public safety agencies in Jackson County, including the Jackson County Sheriff's Office, seven fire departments, two rescue squads, two ambulance services, the Emergency Management Office, and the Fire Marshal's Office. The Communications Center operates 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Initial emergency alert and notification for Jackson County per established protocols;
- Providing staff for the Emergency Communications Function within the EOC;

- Receiving and disseminating emergency communications between first responders and the EOC staff;
- Coordinate communications with surrounding counties and the state; and
- Providing an individual and Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) computer to staff the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in coordination with the EOC Manager.

County Attorney

The County Attorney's Office provides legal advice to the County Commissioners, the County Manager, and to each of the County's departments. The Office advocates on the County's behalf in Federal and State Courts, the General Assembly, and before quasi-judicial bodies. The office reviews each of the contracts that the County enters each year and advises employees administering those contracts as issues arise. The County Attorney represents the County's interests in working with property owners, contractors, private citizens, and others who raise concerns about the County's actions. The County Attorney also helps to enforces certain provisions of the County Ordinances.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this office include, but are not limited to:

- Advises County officials concerning legal responsibilities, powers, and liabilities regarding emergency operations and post-disaster assistance,
- Assists the County Manager and Board of Commissioners with maintaining continuity of government,
- Prepares or reviews emergency ordinances and proclamations,
- Assists in assessing and developing responses to emergency-related liabilities,
- Provides guidance on public records issues and, upon request, review documents to be released in response to public records requests,
- Advises on environmental laws relating to certain emergencies,
- Assists with the preparation of applications,
- Issues legal interpretations and opinions,
- Assists in obtaining waivers and legal clearances,
- Represents the county in legal proceedings,
- Provides guidance on emergency and post-emergency contracts including those needed to dispose of debris and materials resulting from an emergency or disaster, and with inter-local or mutual aid agreements, and
- Coordinates during emergencies with legal representatives from other agencies, Courts, and with private attorneys.

County Clerk

The role of the County Clerk is to attend all meetings of the Board of Commissioners and its committees and record official actions, act as custodian of all legal documents pertaining to the county, publish county ordinances, resolutions, and notices of public hearings as required by law, assist in preparation of the Board of Commissioners agenda, prepare and distribute committee meeting agendas, notify persons scheduled to appear before Board of Commissioners and

committees, codify the county Code of Ordinances, administer oaths of office, serves as notary public for the county, and track and coordinate Board of Commissioners appointments to their advisory boards.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this position include, but are not limited to:

- Assures emergency resolutions and notices of public hearings are prepared and published, as required by law;
- Attends all emergency meetings of the Board of Commissioners and records official actions; and
- Formally certifies and files emergency proclamations.

County Manager's Office

The County Manager is the Chief Executive Officer of Jackson County. In addition to the coordination and oversight of activities of all county departments, the County Manager also provides staff assistance to Board of Commissioners members. The County Manager also leads the financial and budget management process for the county and directs the county's efforts to plan for the future. Staff members perform research, suggest public policy development and direction for Board of Commissioners and evaluate potential public programs.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this office include, but are not limited to:

- Act as the intermediary between the Board of Commissioners, town mayors, and the EOC;
- Guide and inform implementation of policy directives and financial goals;
- Serve as the County and EOC Public Information Officer, or delegate; and
- Communicate with Board of Commissioners on staff actions.

Economic Development

The Economic Development Department provides various business programs, resources to help facilitate Startups and Innovation & Entrepreneurship, and promote Business Advocacy.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to Economic Development include, but are not limited to:

- Provide advice, guidance, and data on economic impacts of the emergency.

Emergency Management

Jackson County Emergency Management assist the county's preparation for major disasters by coordinating disaster planning efforts and the training of county employees; assisting with the integration of emergency plans in a collaborative environment; ensuring information flow to the public and business community to assist in their emergency preparation and response; interface with County, State and Federal jurisdictions; and secure and manage grants from federal and State agencies related to Homeland Security.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to Emergency Management include, but are not limited to:

- Develop and maintain the Emergency Operations Plan;
- Ensure the EOC is maintained in a state of readiness;
- Liaise with all Jackson County departments, as well as outside private and public partners;
- Fulfill the role of EOC Manager;
- Maintain overall command and control of the county's disaster preparation and response;
- Delegate direction and coordination of the EOC during disaster operations;
- Oversee the collection, evaluation, and dissemination of operational information related to the incident;
- Prepare and disseminate Incident Action Plans, as well as track the status of all incident resources; and
- Ensure responders have accurate information and provides resources such as maps and floor plans.

Emergency Medical Services

Harris EMS Services provides ambulance and emergency services to residents of Jackson County, North Carolina, in cooperation with other emergency agencies throughout the region.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to Emergency Medical Services include, but are not limited to:

- Plan for coordination of ambulance activities throughout the county during a major emergency or disaster;
- Develop mutual aid agreements with other ambulance services for a major emergency or disaster response;
- Coordinate with the hospital disaster coordinators on use of medical facilities within the county for mass casualty incidents;
- Maintain a patient tracking system during a major emergency or disaster; and
- Provide staff for the EMS function in the EOC, when activated.

Finance Department

The Finance Department coordinates the allocation of county financial resources in line with strategic priorities and in accordance with state law. The department supports the Board of Commissioners, County Manager and county departments as they provide quality public services to Jackson County residents. The department provides leadership in the following areas: Development and execution of the county's annual operating and capital budgets; Countywide strategic plan development and implementation; Conducts ongoing program and policy analyses to inform Board of Commissioners and executive decisions; and Countywide grants program administration.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Assist in the creation of budget accounts for disaster spending;
- Ensure funding for county department disaster expenditures is readily accessible;
- Develop guidelines for the procurement and delivery of essential resources and supplies during an emergency or disaster;
- Ensure proper coding of disaster expenditures;
- Report to the EOC upon activation and serve in the Finance Section, and
- Assist with applications for federal reimbursement.

Fire Departments

There are seven (7) fire departments serving Jackson County. These departments provide fire suppression, emergency medical, and rescue services in their respective jurisdictions and for mutual aid as requested.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Perform firefighting operations during any major emergency or disaster;
- Provide firefighting and technical rescue resources, as appropriate, during an emergency or disaster;
- Assist with rapid damage assessment;
- Ensure that fire stations serve as places of refuge for field staff throughout the disaster process;
- Assist in debris clearance of major and secondary roadways; and
- Document all activities and expenditures that occur as a result of a major emergency or disaster.

Fire Marshal

The Fire Marshal's Office is responsible for planning, coordinating and administering the countywide fire service programs involving inspections, plan reviews, fire code enforcement, fire prevention, and fire safety education programs. The Fire Marshal is responsible for the investigation of fires in cooperation with local and state law enforcement agencies. The Fire Department Chief may also request the Fire Marshal's assistance in determining the cause and origin of fires.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to the Fire Marshal's Office include, but are not limited to:

- Develop fire department and rescue mutual aid agreements for major emergencies and disaster events;
- Prepare inventories of all fire / rescue equipment and personnel resources;
- Report to Emergency Operations Center upon activation and direct and control support/coordinate firefighting and hazardous materials operations;

- Assist in warning and notifying affected populations of an existing or impending emergency or disaster;
- Assist in deploying fire personnel, apparatus and equipment during major emergencies or disasters;
- Request firefighting mutual aid from municipalities and other counties to the emergencies or disaster site within the county;
- Ensure designation of adequate staging areas for firefighting mutual aid and volunteer forces responding from other areas;
- Alert all emergency support services to the dangers and hazards associated with the emergency or disaster operations;
- Advise decision makers on the hazards associated with hazardous materials;
- Ensure fire protection for emergency or disaster shelters when opened;
- Provide staff for the county's Emergency Operation Center,
- Prepare Standard Operations Guidelines for coordination of firefighting and operations during major emergencies and disasters, and
- Advise the Emergency Management Office when any type of fire service members or equipment leaves their jurisdiction to assist in any major emergency or disaster outside Jackson County.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

The Jackson County GIS Department provides software, training, database development, application development, and technical support to county departments. GIS also provides updated data to the Jackson County Tax Administration's website.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Provide Geographic Information Services for response and recovery operations and mitigation;
- Assist with providing emergency mapping products (including data, maps, and digital mapping services); and
- Ensure that technical support is available to the EOC continuously during activations.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Department is responsible for the formulation and administration of personnel policies; recruitment, referral, and selection of applicants to fill county jobs; administration of the position classification and pay plan; coordination of organizational developmental training and career development programs; administration of employee benefit programs; and direction of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Affirmative Action efforts. The department also administers the safety, employee relations and Health and Wellness programs.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Providing support to the Compensation and Claims Function within the Finance and Administration Section.

Information Technology

The Information Technology Department integrates the technological needs of county staff, including: Planning, acquisition, installation, and management of information system infrastructure; planning, developing, and implementing information systems; telecommunication regulatory and compliance activities; Intranet and Internet maintenance; and software training and user support.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Ensure landline and mobile phones, computers, and network and data services essential to emergency operations are maintained;
- Ensure emergency backup communications systems are available in the event normal communications are disrupted;
- Assist with recovery management of electronic records which support computer production operations;
- Ensure that technical support is available to the EOC continuously during activations; and
- Provide support for non-social media related digital communication platforms (Web, Emergency Notification Systems, Email/Text subscription messaging).

Permitting and Code Enforcement

Permitting and Code Enforcement administers and enforces all State building and fire codes, the flood damage prevention ordinance, sediment control ordinance, and other Jackson County Ordinances that regulate new development.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Conduct damage assessments and determine habitability of structures throughout the county; and
- Identify opportunities to mitigate the effects of further disaster damage in subsequent disasters.

Planning Department

The Planning Department assists county departments and citizens in programs for growth and development and its responsibilities include maintenance of the Comprehensive Plan, land-use planning, historical studies, economic planning and development, data information system development, mapping, and zoning within the county.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Cooperate with appropriate departments to prepare actions which require the passage of an ordinance or regulation; and
- Identify opportunities to mitigate the effects of further disaster damage in subsequent disasters.

Public Health

The Jackson County Department of Public Health functions to enhance, promote, and protect the health of all Jackson County residents with an overall effort to enhance their health status through prevention and education. The department consists of clinic services, nutrition services, environmental health, health education, and public health preparedness.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Develop and implement health awareness and public information programs regarding emergency or disaster personal health and safety;
- Provide staff to the Public Health Function of the EOC, upon activation;
- Coordinate health care at emergency facilities including shelters and congregate care/reception centers;
- Coordinate self-directed medical care for individuals with access and functional needs;
- Coordinate and provide environmental health activities and services for waste disposal, refuse, food, water, vector control, and sanitation to prevent and control communicable diseases;
- Coordinate the distribution of exposure inhibition or mitigating pharmaceuticals, vaccines, and/or other preventable medications; and
- Provide triage, assessment, disease surveillance, health education, basic first aid, and assistance with ambulation.

Public Works

The Public Works Department is responsible for the county's garage, grounds & facilities maintenance, solid waste and housekeeping. The role of the Public Works Department in emergencies and disasters is largely seen as an extension of normal, day-to-day department responsibilities.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Prepares guidelines to provide public / maintenance works functions during emergencies or disasters (e.g. roads, streets, sewer, water, and utility services);
- Assists in large-scale debris removal operations;
- Operates sites capable of receiving and, if possible and as warranted, processing debris;

- Develops and maintains resource lists with source, location, and availability of equipment, fuel, and operational personnel to support response / recovery operations;
- Works jointly with NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) Agency Representative in EOC, or NCDOT County Maintenance Yard, to direct and dispatch public works mutual aid from other county / city jurisdictions;
- Conducts emergency debris clearance operations when requested by the local Emergency Management Coordinator during a major emergency or disaster;
- Stores, conserves, and provides fuel for emergency vehicles if requested by the local Emergency Management Coordinator during a major emergency or disaster;
- Prepares emergency maintenance or public work required reports and forward to the Emergency Operations Center;
- Maintains emergency power, water and sanitation resources at vital facilities in the County during emergencies or disasters;
- Provides coordination for special service vehicles if requested by the local Emergency Management Coordinator during any major emergency or disaster;
- Assists in damage assessment operations and relays damage assessment information to the Emergency Operations Center; and
- Inspects emergency or disaster shelter sites for serviceability.

Recreation Department

The Recreation Department maintains and operates parks, recreation, and cultural resources facilities, athletic facilities, community and neighborhood centers, river access parks, nature preserves, dog parks, playgrounds, swimming pools, open spaces, and greenways. It administers beautification programs, secures park land, and offers innovative, inclusive programs for all populations. Currently, the department manages 8 parks, 2 recreation centers, 1 greenway trail, 6 river access parks, 1 campground, and 2 aquatic facilities.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Responsible for the assessment of all parks, open space, and greenways to identify and communicate damage locations;
- Coordinate debris removal for parks, community centers, cemeteries, and greenways;
- Provide short-term temporary reception centers and shelters locations for affected populations; and
- Ensure the security and protection of department owned parks, greenways, aquatic facilities, and community centers.

Rescue Squads

The Jackson County Rescue Squads provide technical rescue services to the county including vehicle machinery rescue, swiftwater rescue, confined space rescue, dive rescue, rope rescue, wilderness search and rescue, and high angle rescue.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Perform search and rescue during any major emergency or disaster within their jurisdiction;
- Assist in evacuation of areas throughout the county during any major emergency or disaster;
- Support the Emergency Medical Service in the form of personnel and transport units;
- Provide Emergency First Responder service when required during any major emergency or disaster;
- Assist in opening major and secondary roadways by removing fallen debris; and
- Assist with public warning and traffic control, when needed.

Public School System

Jackson County Public Schools has 9 schools between 2 districts serving nearly 3,700 students with over 600 employees. The Transportation Department of Jackson County Public Schools operates 38 school buses over 2,500 miles on a daily basis. The department also operates 15 activity buses.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Support transportation operations during evacuation and return;
- Provide buses and/or fuel as requested;
- Provide support personnel, as requested; and
- Provide school facilities for shelter and receptions centers.

Sheriff's Office

The Sheriff's Office and municipal Police Departments protect lives and property and enforce state and local laws. The Sheriff and Police Chiefs provide oversight of their respective departments. The role of the law enforcement in emergencies and disasters is largely seen as an extension of normal, day-to-day department responsibilities.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Develops Standard Operation Guidelines for major emergency and disaster response for law enforcement officers;
- Maintains law and order;
- Initiates on-scene warning and alerting;
- Assists in evacuation of the emergency or disaster area and movement to shelters;
- Limits access to the evacuation area during emergency or disaster response and recovery operations;
- Relocates and house prisoners in alternate facilities when necessary during periods of evacuation;

- Provides crowd control;
- Coordinates law enforcement mutual aid requests with outside municipalities, counties, and the state to the major emergencies or disasters;
- Provides security and protection for the damaged area and critical facilities and control access to affected areas;
- Directs reentry traffic into the evacuated area during recovery;
- Provides security of emergency sites, evacuated areas, shelter areas, vital facilities, and supplies, including the Emergency Operations Center;
- Plans for conducting traffic control and other law enforcement operations throughout the county / cities / towns / villages during any emergencies or disasters;
- Coordinates ground search and rescue;
- Conducts law enforcement investigations in accordance with Federal, State, and local ordinances, statutes, and regulations;
- Coordinates with state and federal law enforcement agencies during any major National Security Event (Terrorism, etc.) which might occur within their jurisdiction in the county / cities / towns / villages; and
- Assigns a senior law enforcement officer from each agency to report to the Emergency Operations Center upon activation.

Social Services

The Jackson County Department of Social Services provides essential human services that protect, strengthen, and improve lives in Jackson County. The department provides a variety of economic and social services to the community.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- The operation of shelters and reception centers throughout the county during a major emergency or disaster;
- The operation of access and functional needs shelters to include special medical shelters during a major emergency or disaster;
- Make arrangements for and coordinate shelter supplies and feeding;
- Manage reception activities including lodging arrangements for displaced residents; and
- Coordinate emergency or disaster operations with the local chapter of the American Red Cross.

Tax Collector

The Jackson County Tax Collector's Office is responsible for the timely collection and disposition of real and personal property taxes within Jackson County.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Assist damage assessment teams, as necessary.

Transit

Jackson County Transit is a fully coordinated, public transportation system that operates as a branch of Jackson County Government. Services are provided for human service agencies, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and the general public.

Specific emergency management roles and responsibilities assigned to this department include, but are not limited to:

- Provide vans, buses, and trucks for emergency or disaster evacuation; and
- Provide vans, buses, and trucks for the movement of emergency workers and supplies during a major emergency or disaster.

External Agencies

Numerous agencies play a role in disaster response and recovery in Jackson County. They include:

State of North Carolina
The North Carolina Department of Public Safety (NCDPS) through the North Carolina Emergency Management Division (NCEM) maintains responsibility for statewide emergency operations coordination, including mutual aid requirements and needs as well as the coordination and communication link between the State and Federal disaster response systems.

Federal Government
Federal assistance will be provided to the Jackson County and/or the State through a Unified Coordination Group assigned to a Joint Field Office, as described in the North Carolina EOP.

Non-governmental, Private-sector, and Volunteer Organizations
Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private-sector businesses, and volunteer organizations represent a vital component to emergency response operations. Businesses and industry own or have access to substantial support resources. Community-based organizations, volunteer networks, and other NGOs provide valuable resources before, during, and after a disaster.

American Red Cross
- The Western NC Region (local) and national American Red Cross Chapters will assist in shelter operations in the county.
- Rules, regulations and policies for American Red Cross shelters and American Red Cross staff/volunteers are established and administered and monitored by the American Red Cross.
- The local chapter and national American Red Cross will provide trained volunteers and Shelter Managers (trained to American Red Cross guidelines) to support Jackson County shelters.

- The local chapter and national American Red Cross may also active American Red Cross operated and managed shelters in Jackson County, in coordination with the Emergency Operations Center.
- The American Red Cross will assist the county with inquiries and family notifications for individuals injured or missing in accordance with established national American Red Cross guidelines.
- In a major / catastrophic disaster, the American Red Cross will provide tracing services to reconnect families who are the victim of a disaster. Depending on the nature of the incident there may be up to a 24-hour period before tracing calls can by accepted by American Red Cross Chapters. In addition, American Red Cross' Safe & Well website may be activated to support this activity.

ARES
- Coordinate and provide communications for outlying areas and local shelters with the Communications Center.
- Provide backup communications via the ARES network for communications between other adjoining county EOCs and/or the State EOC.
- Provide other communications services as requested if within the scope or capability of ARES personnel to do so.

Hospital
- Maintain a listing of medical facilities and their capabilities.
- Provide direction and control for hospital staff during emergencies, coordinating the receipt of casualties and medical resources to health care facilities.
- Identify facilities that could be expanded into emergency treatment centers.
- Prepare guidelines for reducing patient populations (e.g. discharge of less critically ill patients).
- Implement hospital emergency or disaster plan.
- Maintain liaison with EMS Director and provide medical guidance as needed to field units.
- Establish and maintain inter-hospital medical communications.
- Report to the EOC upon the request of the local Emergency Management Agency to assist in the direction and control between the hospital and emergency or disaster operations.

Mental Health Provider
- Develop guidelines to provide mental health services during emergencies or disasters.
- Provide crisis intervention training for personnel assigned to mental health teams.
- Implement emergency or disaster plans for mental health facilities.
- Provide mental health professionals for treatment of emergency or disaster victims.
- Maintain a 24-hour Crisis Line during periods of evacuation.

- Identify evacuees in reception centers and shelters who have experienced mental stress and provide them with Mental Health Services.
- Provide crisis counseling to professionals and support staff working with the relocated population.
- Arrange for debriefings or psychological support for emergency workers and disaster victims.
- Provide 24-hour staffing for emergency or disaster shelters.

Direction, Control, and Coordination

General

Coordinating response and recovery activities through one central location provides for an effective and efficient response to disaster. When activated during an emergency, Jackson County's EOC acts as the base of direction, control, and coordination of emergency management operations and coordination for the county.

Authority to Initiate Actions

Jackson County's EOP serves as a policy document and references and/or indicates authority related to the following:

- Jackson County EOP is the official source of operational tasking for Jackson County and governs all disasters related to administrative and operational tasks of the county.
- Jackson County EOP is authorized by and promulgated under the authority contained by those local, State, and Federal statutes listed herein.
- Jackson County's Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, under the authority provided by North Carolina statute, has the responsibility for identifying and minimizing the effects of the dangers to the county through promulgation of a State of Emergency declaration authorizing emergency restrictions and prohibitions.
- The Policy Group, in conjunction with the Jackson County EOC Manager, establishes priorities and is responsible for providing accurate and timely information to the public, especially in times of emergency.
- The EOC Manager, or designee, acts as the chief advisor to the Policy Group during any state of emergency affecting the people and property of Jackson County.
- Various County agencies and departments under the direction of the EOC Manager will conduct emergency operations.
- The County Manager has delegated command, strategic and operational control of county resources at their disposal to the Emergency Management Director.
- The county will coordinate response efforts with Municipal and neighboring county resources as needed using mutual aid agreements.
- County, State and Federal officials will coordinate their operations through the Jackson County EOC, via the EOC Manager, or another designated representative.

All county government departments and agencies are an integral part of this plan. The departments and agencies that do not have specific responsibilities outlined in this plan constitute a large reserve of manpower and material resources. At the direction of the County Manager, these departments may be requested to perform previously unassigned tasks or may be requested to supplement specifically assigned disaster response roles.

Incident Command System

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a standardized, on scene, all-hazards incident management approach designed to enable effective and efficient domestic incident

management by integrating a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure. ICS is flexible and can be used for incidents of any type, scope, and complexity at all levels of government.

ICS establishes common terminology that allows diverse incident management and support organizations to work together across a wide variety of incident management functions and hazard scenarios. When practical, the span of control of any individual with incident management supervisory responsibility should be adequate for the activities and acuity of work being performed.

Jackson County adopted a resolution in June 2005 (Resolution R05-18) endorsing the National Incident Management System and the county's commitment to using NIMS during emergencies and disasters.

Information Collection, Analysis, and Dissemination

The collection and sharing of timely, accurate, and actionable information is paramount to the success of Jackson County's emergency response. When information arrives at the EOC, it will be verified for accuracy and, as appropriate, disseminated to partner agencies, stakeholders, residents, and the media. Jackson County will actively seek out and collect information regarding the magnitude of the threat/event, its potential/actual impact, progress of ongoing operations, likelihood of cascading events, political sensitivities, and overall prognosis. Coordination of disaster intelligence may require the following activities:

- Identification of types of information needed for a particular event,
- Determination of where information is expected to come from,
- Identification of what sections will need and use the information, and
- Establishing how the information will be disseminated.

Situation and status intelligence updates are received from first responders, county staff, calls from the public, the State EOC, utility and organization websites, social media, and traditional broadcast media. This information is collected by the EOC, documented, verified, and updated (as appropriate) in Common Operating Picture displays, lists, maps, or other diagrams. The following items have been identified as the most critical information required for a successful response and recovery by the county:

- Status of critical business functions of each County department,
- Number of injured and dead,
- Number of power outages,
- Number of damaged structures,
- Cost estimates for response and recovery,
- Property damage estimates, and
- Major transportation disruptions.

Disaster information is managed primarily within the Planning Section but may come into the EOC through any function or a Policy Group representative. Functional Position Guides and EOC procedures dictate specific handling requirements and accountability for all information received involving an existing emergency or disaster situation.

Communications

Communications requirements in emergency or disaster situations are supported through the protocols and coordination procedures that Jackson County executes as part of routine, day-to-day operations. The Communications Unit Leader will develop procedures to activate additional EOC communications support personnel and to expand the EOC communications capability, as required. These procedures will address the provisions for EOC message handling to include record keeping/documentation, distribution/internal message flow, and coordination of incoming/outgoing information.

Public Information

Public information will be managed by the PIO operating out of either the EOC or a Joint Information Center (JIC), if established. The PIO will ensure information will be coordinated through the EOC to ensure accuracy, quality, consistency, and efficiency in dissemination. The public information function maintains responsibility for all actions and efforts surrounding the following:

- Media management,
- Public relations strategy,
- Videography and photography, and
- Public information administration and multi-agency/department coordination.

Administration, Finance, and Logistics

Agreements and Understandings

Any agreements and/or contracts must be entered into by duly authorized officials and, where practical, formalized in writing prior to performance.

Should Jackson County resources prove to be inadequate during emergency operations, requests for assistance may be made to other governmental jurisdictions, volunteer agencies, and the private sector in accordance with existing contracts or negotiated emergency agreements.

Jackson County is a signatory of the North Carolina Statewide Emergency Management Mutual Aid Agreement and will attempt to accommodate needs of other jurisdictions within, as well as outside, the State of North Carolina.

A list of all current and active mutual-aid agreements (MAAs) between Jackson County and a third party is available from Jackson County Emergency Management.

Resource Management

Resource management includes seven interactive activities:

1. Determining resource needs - Identifying tactical, support, and relief resources on hand, and those needed to be ordered to manage the incident.
2. Ordering resources - Authorized EOC personnel mobilizing county resources, activating standby contracts, or requesting mutual aid from outside the county.
3. Resource check-in - Establishing accountability for resources supporting the county's response efforts.
4. Utilizing resources - Managing resources and maintaining accountability.
5. Tracking resources - Maintaining personnel safety, accountability, and fiscal control.
6. Evaluating resource effectiveness - Evaluation of performance and appropriateness of all resources.
7. Demobilizing resources - Determining when assigned resources are no longer required to meet incident objectives.

Jackson County resources, as well as mutual aid and donated resources and services, will be managed by their assigned functions. Jackson County EOC will utilize a combination of tools to account for all resources, personnel, and other support to emergency operations. This may include a combination of software-based systems (i.e. NCSPARTA WebEOC information management system, Computer Aid Dispatch software) and manual systems (i.e. T-Cards, magnetic boards).

Emergency Purchasing and Acquisition

Emergency purchases, acquisitions, and other procurements may be authorized by the EOC Manager or their designee to support and facilitate objectives of Jackson County emergency operations. In most cases County, State, and Federal purchasing and bidding policies and requirements will continue to be followed during a State of Emergency. Exceptions to competitive bidding requirements for purchases or construction contracts costing over $30,000 may be allowed by NCGS § 143-129(e)(2), but only in "cases of special emergency involving the health and safety of the people or their property." However, Federal regulations may still apply, and expenditures may be determined to be ineligible for reimbursement through FEMA Public Assistance or other Federal funds.

Records and Reports

Expenditures and obligations of public funds during emergency operations must be recorded by the responsible agencies in accordance with Jackson County policies and procedures.

The Finance/Administration Section has responsibility for distributing approved forms for this purpose and for collecting and processing them during and after an emergency.

Narratives and operational journals of response actions will be kept by all agencies with emergency responsibilities. This will include records of Force Account Labor (personnel rates, regular and overtime hours, benefits rates), Force Account Equipment (per day equipment hours

while in use), Materials (supplies, fuel), Rented Equipment (type, dates and hours, rate, invoiced cost), and Contract Work (dates worked, invoiced cost, nature of work).

Assistance Stipulations

Consumer Protection

Consumer complaints concerning alleged unfair or illegal business practices during emergencies will be referred to the North Carolina Attorney General's Office.

Nondiscrimination

There will be no discrimination on grounds of actual or perceived age, mental or physical disability, sex, religion, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial or marital status, economic status, veteran status or national origin in the execution of emergency preparedness, response, or relief and assistance functions.

Continuity of Government/Operations

Continuity of Government

Continuity of Government is critical to the successful execution of emergency operations. Therefore, lines of succession are specified in anticipation of any contingency in which the ranking member of County leadership is not available. Jackson County maintains a detailed Continuity of Government (COG) Plan that further describes these functions.

Orders of Succession

The order of succession for emergency actions by the Board of Commissioners is as follows:

1. Chairman, Board of County Commissioners
2. Vice Chairman, Board of County Commissioners
3. A quorum of County Commissioners
4. Emergency Management Coordinator

Continuity of Operations

The County Manager has the delegated authority for the daily operations of the county. Should the County Manager be unavailable, the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners will have responsibility for the operation of the county, as outlined in the Jackson County Continuity of Operations Plan.

The possibility that emergency and disaster occurrences could disrupt government functions necessitates that all Jackson County departments develop and maintain procedures to ensure continuity of operations capabilities. These procedures will designate who will make decisions if an elected official or department head is not available. Jackson County departments are charged with developing and maintaining Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) at their department level that specify and detail departmental lines of succession and delegations of authority.

Plan Development and Maintenance

Plan Development

This plan has undergone multiple revisions based on changes to Jackson County, lessons learned from previous events, and revised planning guidance. Development of this version of the plan was overseen by Jackson County Emergency Management in coordination with departmental representatives forming a collaborative stakeholder planning team.

Operational Plans and Supporting Standard Operating Procedures

Operational plans and supporting Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) will be developed in conjunction with department heads, emergency services representatives, and various supporting organizations.

Maintenance

Jackson County Emergency Management is responsible for maintaining the EOP through an annual review. The EOP may need to be revised more frequently if there are changes to the county's capabilities, resources, hazards, organization of departments or agencies, or Jackson County's Concept of Operations for emergency or disaster response. In addition, each exercise and activation of the EOC will be discussed in a Hot Wash and summarized in an After-Action Report (AAR), if needed, that will include recommendations for program improvement. Additional requirements set forth by local ordinance, state requirements, or federal planning standards may require additional review. In such cases, Jackson County Emergency Management will coordinate efforts to update this plan.

All revisions to this EOP will be disseminated according to the policy listed in the Approval and Revision sections of this plan.

Training

Jackson County Emergency Management, in cooperation with designated EOC personnel, will schedule and conduct required training activities to ensure emergency response capabilities and certification. Training calendars will be provided periodically to inform interested personnel.

Authorities and References

The North Carolina Emergency Management Act (NCGS § 166A) establishes emergency management authorities and responsibilities for State, County, and Municipal governments. Pursuant to this statute, the governing body of each county is responsible for the management of emergencies within the geographical limits of each county, and each incorporated municipality is authorized to establish and maintain emergency management agencies subject to coordination by the county.

The following listed Authorities and References support and/or were consulted during the drafting and subsequent revisions and updates to this plan.

Authorities

Federal

Sandy Recovery Improvement act (SRIA) of 2013, Pub. L. 113-2, January 29, 2013.

Post Katrina Emergency Reform Act, Pub. L. 109-295, October 4, 2006.

Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Pub. L. 93-288, as amended August 2016.

The Homeland Security Act of 2002, Pub. L. 107-296, November 25, 2002.

Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5: Management of Domestic Incidents, February 28, 2003.

Presidential Policy Directive 8: National Preparedness, March 30, 2011.

National Response Framework, 3rd ed., June 16, 2016.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 2010, Pub. L. 101-336, as amended August 11, 2016.

National Security Decision Directive Number 259, U.S. Civil Defense, February 4, 1987.

Nuclear Attack Planning Base, 1990 (NAPB 90), April 1987.

Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA), Title III, The Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act of 1986.

International Fire Code with North Carolina Amendments, 2018 Edition; Fire Prevention Code, North Carolina Building Code, Volume 5.

State

North Carolina General Statute (NCGS) § 166A, North Carolina Emergency Management Act.

NCGS § 14-36A Riots, Civil Disorders, and Emergencies.

NCGS § 95-18 Hazardous Chemicals Right-to-Know Act.

NCGS § 14-36A, § 58-9; § 115C-242(6), § 118-38; § 143-166.1, § 143-507 through 517, § 153-A, and § 160-A.

NC Executive Order 43, North Carolina Emergency Response Commission (NCERC), April 7, 1987.

County

Jackson County, North Carolina, Code of Ordinances, Emergency Management Ordinance for the County of Jackson.

Volunteer, Nongovernmental, Other

Act 58-4-1905, American National Red Cross Statement of Understanding, December 30, 1985.

References

Federal

Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101: Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plans, ver.; Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101 v.2, November 1, 2010. Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP), April 1, 2013.

State

North Carolina Emergency Operations Plan, June 2016.

County

Smoky Mountain Region Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Draft Plan, August 2017.
Smoky Mountain Region Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2012.
Jackson County Continuity of Government Plan 2018.
Jackson County Continuity of Operations Plan 2018.

Volunteer, Nongovernmental, Other

Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) EM 4-2016: Emergency Management Standard, 2016.
National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1600: Standard on Disaster/Emergency Management and Business Continuity/Continuity of Operations Programs, 2016.
University of North Carolina School of Government. County and Municipal Government in North Carolina. 2nd edition. 2014.

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