

Brevard County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

Executive Summary

The Brevard County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) establishes the structure by which the County prepares for, responds to, recovers from, and mitigates against the impacts of disasters. This executive summary provides a detailed overview of the contents of CEMP and its supporting plans. This update to the CEMP cements Brevard County's transition over the past years from hazard-specific planning to an all-hazards planning and response structure.

The hazard-specific strategy addresses each hazard and threat individually, developing detailed plans that outline their unique risks, characteristics, and protective actions. The limitation of this approach is the emphasis on isolated planning for specific hazards rather than coordinated planning across all agencies.

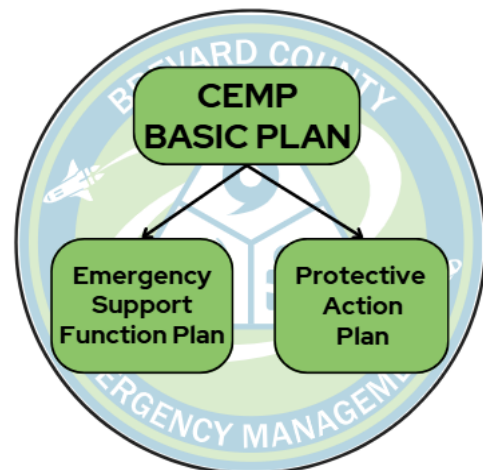
All-hazards planning identifies those core actions that are common to all disasters, regardless of scope or severity, and consolidates them into a single, comprehensive plan. Designed to be adaptable and scalable, each section of the plan outlines the organizational structure, triggers, and considerations for activation of the plan, and the coordination of operations and resources. This structure allows agencies to continue their day-to-day functions and easily scale up their coordination and response efforts based on the actual or anticipated impacts. The flexibility built into the plan ensures the County is able to meet the primary purpose of the CEMP:

- Establish an emergency response framework that ensures operations are adaptable and scalable, regardless of incident severity
- Coordinate disaster operations to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of residents and communities; minimize damage to property; protect the environment; and ensure the continuity of government operations
- Build community resilience through emergency preparedness training, effective communication, and strong community connections

Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

Brevard County's CEMP is designed to be comprehensive, adaptable, and scalable. It meets local, state, and federal requirements and is organized into three components: the Basic Plan, the Emergency Support Function Plan, and the Protective Action Plan.

- The Basic Plan outlines the overarching disaster response framework with a focus on vulnerable areas and populations, agency roles and responsibilities, public information, alert and warning systems, logistics, finance, and administration
- The Emergency Support Function (ESF) Plan organizes emergency response operations into key functional areas. The ESFs facilitate coordination and communication between multiple stakeholders with similar capabilities during disasters, including mass care, medical services, and fire and law enforcement operations. Each ESF is staffed by



Brevard County Emergency Management, 2024

agencies with the resources and capabilities to coordinate disaster operations and delivery of critical services

- Protective actions are measures implemented by local governments to reduce disaster impacts and safeguard residents. The Protective Action Plan details specific actions taken to safeguard people and property before, during, and after disasters, including evacuations, sheltering, and government operating status. This plan outlines the roles, responsibilities, resources, coordination, and operating triggers and is designed to be adaptable for all disasters, regardless of type, scale, or severity

Authorities

The Brevard County CEMP is continually updated to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal laws and regulations. While the CEMP is shaped by numerous legal authorities, Florida Statute Chapter 252 and the Brevard County Emergency Management Ordinance constitute the primary legal foundations for disaster operations.

Brevard County 2024-10 § 3, 5-21-24 - Emergency Management Ordinance:

- Delegates the authority to declare a local state of emergency and enact emergency protection measures from the Board of County Commissioners to the Chair, then the Vice Chair, other commissioners by district order, and finally the County Manager if no commissioners are available. The Board retains the authority to terminate a local state of emergency by majority vote
- Defines the role of emergency management, outlines emergency powers and decision-making processes
- Defines the debris management process, stating that when debris poses an immediate threat to life, public health, safety, community welfare or access for emergency vehicles; Brevard County may collect and remove disaster debris from all property, including public lands, public or private roads, and gated communities
- Temporarily suspends zoning regulations allowing individuals participating in a non-congregate sheltering program to expedite permitting for placement of temporary housing such as a recreational vehicle or trailer

Florida Statute Chapter §252.31 - 252.90:

- Establishes Brevard County Emergency Management's jurisdiction over the entire county and requires the County conduct activities pursuant to §252.31 - 252.90
- Directs Brevard County to appoint a qualified Director responsible for the organization, administration, and operation of Brevard County Emergency Management
- Outlines the County's power to coordinate with emergency organizations, appropriate funds, make contracts, acquire resources, and provide aid to victims
- Outlines the process to request state or mutual aid assistance and waive standard procedures for public works, contracts, employment, volunteer use, equipment rental, and public fund expenditures
- Directs Brevard Public Schools to support emergency response as requested by the Director of Emergency Management

Basic Plan Overview

The CEMP Basic Plan defines the plan's purpose and scope, legal authorities and references, hazards and assumptions, and the overarching concept of operations. In addition, the plan outlines partner agencies roles and responsibilities, organizational structures, and administrative and logistical procedures.

Geography and Topography

Brevard County spans 72 miles along Florida's east coast and is home to diverse communities, vital natural resources, and industry leaders for space and defense operations. The County's eastern border is defined by the Atlantic Coastal Ridge, with naturally elevated dunes that help buffer inland areas from storm surge. The western border is marked by the St. Johns River Valley, Florida's longest river and one of the few in the United States that flows north. The Indian River Lagoon makes up the heart of the county, a 156-mile-long estuary that includes the Banana River, Indian River, and Mosquito Lagoon. It is among the most biologically diverse in North America and serves as a vital ecological asset for the region.

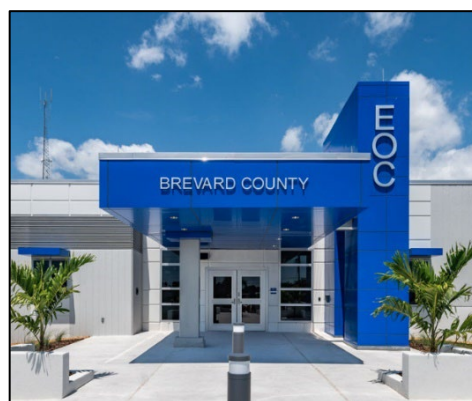


St. Johns River Water Management District, 2025

Brevard County Emergency Operations Center

The Brevard County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is the primary coordination point for disaster response within the County. Located in Rockledge, the EOC plays a critical role in maintaining continuity of operations during disasters by providing a secure, centralized location for response partners to coordinate disaster operations. The building is designed to withstand 150+ mph winds, has two generators capable of providing power for over 100 hours, and the space to support up to 300 personnel for multiple days or weeks.

The primary function of the EOC is to facilitate the collection, verification, and distribution of information, resource allocation, facilitation of interagency communication, and support for disaster operations. The EOC also provides strategic oversight, ensuring compliance with emergency management plans, and coordinating public information dissemination.



Brevard County Emergency Operations Center, 2025

Emergency Coordination Group

The Emergency Coordination Group (ECG) is the team of senior leaders and key stakeholders that provide strategic leadership to ensure coordinated, consistent, and efficient disaster response across agencies. The ECG supports unified decision-making and clear public communication to strengthen response efforts and build trust. The ECG members are:

- County Commission Chairperson
- County Manager
- Brevard County Sheriff
- Brevard County Emergency Management Director
- Brevard County Fire Chief
- Brevard County Public Safety Director
- Brevard County Attorney
- Brevard Public Schools Superintendent
- Florida Department of Health Brevard County Health Administration
- City Manager from Space Coast Public Management Association

EOC Activation and Notification

The EOC may be activated for a variety of incidents that require multi-agency coordination, exceed the capacity of day-to-day operations, or pose a significant threat to life, property, or critical infrastructure. Brevard County Emergency Management coordinates closely with partners to be notified of new or evolving incidents within the County.

The Director of Emergency Management, in coordination with County leadership and partners, will make the determination to activate the EOC. The level and scope of activation will be determined based on the actual or anticipated disaster impacts. Notice events will provide some degree of advance warning, allowing time to prepare and activate protective actions. While no-notice events are sudden, unexpected incidents that occur with little or no advance warning, requiring an immediate response. The EOC has three activation levels to ensure the right resources are available to match the need.

- **Level III – Monitoring**

The monitoring phase is the EOC's normal day-to-day operations

- **Level II – Partial Activation**

Partial activation is a heightened alert for smaller or routine incidents managed by Emergency Management staff and select ESFs and Liaisons

- **Level I – Full Activation**

Full activation is the highest EOC level, requiring all Emergency Management staff, ESFs, Liaisons county departments, and partner agencies

Logistics and Resource Management

The EOC is the primary coordination point for logistics and resource management. During disasters, municipalities will use their own resources first. If needs exceed local capacity, they submit requests to the Brevard County Emergency Management. The County may then provide additional support or, if necessary, request assistance through the Florida Division of Emergency Management. At each level, requests are validated, prioritized, and coordinated. Departments and agencies responding under the CEMP will ensure financial operations are conducted in accordance with appropriate policies, regulations, standards, sound financial management, and accountability.

Public Information, Alert and Warnings

Effective communication is essential during disasters to provide life-safety information, counter misinformation, and communicate essential recovery resources. The Public Information Network (PIN) is a team of Public Information Officers from government agencies, non-profits, and private organizations who work together to deliver the right message to the right people at the right time. Through a unified message, the PIN builds trust, enables timely action, and empowers residents to take informed steps.

Brevard County uses multiple, redundant communication methods to reach both partners and the public, including:

- Print media, radio, television stations and social media
- County-wide mass notification system
- Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS)



Short- and Long-Term Recovery

Disaster recovery is a coordinated, whole community operation involving local, state, and federal agencies, non-profits, businesses, industry leaders, and residents. It encompasses a broad range of activities, from repairing infrastructure and restoring the local economy to providing medical and mental health support for survivors.

County and Municipal damage assessments will identify the scope, type, and extent of the damage. The total damages will be calculated to determine if the County has met the minimum levels of damage and recovery costs to qualify for federal aid.

- FEMA's Public Assistance program provides funding to state and local governments and certain nonprofits, to support emergency response efforts and the repair, replacement, or restoration of damaged public infrastructure and services
- FEMA's Individual Assistance program provides financial help and direct services to eligible individuals and households affected by a federally declared disaster. Support may include temporary housing, home repairs, personal property replacement, and disaster-related medical, childcare, or transportation costs

Short-Term recovery will last for the first few weeks. The primary focus will be:

- Infrastructure repair and restoration, including clearance of primary transportation routes, debris removal operations, and expedited post-disaster permitting
- Mass care operations, including sheltering, food and water distribution, and facilitation of accessible interim housing solutions
- Emergency medical care, health surveillance, and identification of survivors needing behavioral health support
- Recovery services and programs for residents

Long-Term recovery will continue for months or years following a disaster. The primary focus will be:

- Coordination of resources, recovery services, and continuity of healthcare, counseling, and case management
- Restoration of damaged infrastructure, protection of impacted natural resources, and recovery of the agricultural sector
- Short- and long-term housing recovery strategy to support temporary and permanently displaced residents
- Strategies to boost economic recovery and support local businesses and industries



FEMA National Disaster Recovery Framework, 2024

Emergency Support Function Plan Overview

The Emergency Support Function Plan organizes the multitude of agencies with similar roles and capabilities together in functional teams during disaster response and recovery operations. Emergency Support Functions (ESF) are an organizational framework that brings together agencies, departments, and organizations with common roles and responsibilities to ensure coordinated and efficient response and recovery operations. Brevard County's ESFs provide the crucial link between the EOC and field operations.

ESF Activation

The Emergency Management Director will activate the Emergency Support Functions to conduct response and recovery operations in accordance with all relevant policies and procedures. Upon request by the EOC, ESF agencies will:

- Assign a representative to the EOC and establish a staffing schedule consistent with the expected workload for the duration of the response and recovery phases
- Take feasible steps to protect staff, resources, and assets from impacts of the hazard
- Establish priorities and tasks for the operational period, including:
 - Receive assignments, advise on resource requirements and capabilities, exchange information, and attend all appropriate briefings and coordination meetings
 - Activate appropriate procedures, checklists, personnel rosters, agreements, equipment, facilities, and consumables for the event

ESF Roles and Responsibilities

Brevard County has 19 Emergency Support Functions. All agencies assigned to an ESF will work together on tasks, resource management, and prioritization of objectives. They are also responsible for coordinating with partners, supporting EOC requests, making timely decisions, and documenting all response activities and resource needs. The lead agency will provide additional administrative support for the ESF, including the authority to direct operations, manage staff, and prioritize resources. The 19 ESFs and their lead agencies are:

- **ESF 1 Transportation** **Space Coast Area Transit**
Coordinate transportation resources to support state, local, federal, and volunteer agencies conducting disaster operations
- **ESF 2 Communications** **800MHz Radio – Emergency Management**
Coordinate with EOC partners and telecommunication representatives to establish, maintain, troubleshoot and restore communication equipment
- **ESF 3 Public Works** **Brevard County Public Works**
Coordinate emergency response and engineering services for the technical evaluation and inspection of impacted areas, debris removal, restoration of roadways, flood control systems, and other key public infrastructure components
- **ESF 4 Firefighting** **Brevard County Fire Rescue**
Coordinate fire suppression and related emergency services for an emergency in Brevard County that exceeds the capabilities of local emergency fire services
- **ESF 5 Information and Planning** **Brevard County Planning and Development**
Coordinate the collection, verification, and dissemination of incident information
- **ESF 6 Mass Care** **Brevard County Health and Human Services**
Coordinate sheltering, community feeding, disaster case work, housing, bulk distribution of emergency relief supplies, and long-term recovery

- **ESF 7 Resource Support** **Brevard County Central Services**
 Coordinate disaster procurement policies as well as locate, procure, and track incident resources and contracted services and materials
- **ESF 8 Health and Medical Services** **Florida Department of Health – Brevard County**
 Coordinate local, state and federal health and medical capabilities including support for field operations, hospital support, mortuary services and distribution of medical supplies
- **ESF 9 Search and Rescue** **Brevard County Fire Rescue**
 Coordinate Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) operations, ensuring effective management and communication between local, state and federal agencies
- **ESF 10 Hazardous Materials** **Brevard County Fire Rescue**
 Assist the coordination of county and municipal emergency response operations for an actual or potential discharge and/or release of hazardous materials that poses significant risk for human health and safety or valuable environmental resources
- **ESF 11 Food and Water** **Brevard Public Schools – Food Services**
 Identify, secure, and arrange for the acquisition, transportation, and distribution of food and water for disaster survivors and emergency workers
- **ESF 12 Utilities Support** **Brevard County Utility Services**
 Coordinate emergency power, water, wastewater, and energy operations before, during and after a disaster
- **ESF 13 Military Support** **Brevard County Emergency Management**
 Coordinate military resources to support the needs of local governments, voluntary organizations, and other emergency support functions
- **ESF 14 Public Information** **Brevard County Communications**
 Coordinate the procedures and concepts for developing and disseminating information to the public regarding emergency situations, as well as to assist and support the print, electronic and broadcast media in obtaining information regarding the event
- **ESF 15 Volunteers and Donations** **Brevard County Office of Human Resources**
 Coordinate the use of volunteer support from organizations and individuals at the time of a disaster and to provide for the receipt, storage, and distribution of donated goods to meet the needs of disaster survivors within the impacted areas of the county
- **ESF 16 Law Enforcement** **Brevard County Sheriff's Office**
 Coordinate the procedures, policies, and responsibilities for the command and control of all law enforcement personnel, their equipment, and their activities
- **ESF 17 Animal Services** **Brevard County Sheriff's Office – Animal Services**
 Coordinate the policies, procedures, and responsibilities for animal service operations during disasters, including the protection of domestic animals and pets, and control of wildlife displaced by the impacts of the events
- **ESF 18 Business and Industry** **Brevard County Emergency Management**
 Coordinate the response actions and responsibilities of local organizations able to provide immediate and short-term assistance for economic stabilization
- **ESF 19 Damage Assessment** **Brevard County Planning and Development**
 Coordinate post-disaster damage assessments to measure the impact of a disaster on people, property, and infrastructure and determine if the County has met the minimum levels of damage or recovery costs to qualify for federal aid

Protective Action Plan Overview

Protective actions are measures implemented by local governments to reduce disaster impacts and safeguard residents. This details specific actions taken to safeguard people and property before, during, and after disasters, including evacuations, sheltering, and government operating status. This ensures critical services continue, resources are used efficiently and coordinated response efforts.

Protective Action Decision-Making Process

The Protective Action Plan is a tactical plan that provides response and recovery partners the decision-making triggers, communication channels, and coordination to effectively conduct operations. This plan outlines the key decision-making considerations including the identification of potential hazards, timing, type and scale of protective actions needed, costs, and operational requirements.

- **Triggers** – Are predefined conditions, events, or thresholds that prompt specific action that support timely and coordination response
- **Agency Coordination** – Outlines how agencies will coordinate the operations, including resources, timelines, meeting schedules, and decisions required at each step
- **Information Sharing** – Outlines the how disaster information will be shared with the public

Roles and Responsibilities

Each potential protective action has key partners responsible for the planning, implementation, and management of operations including:

- **Brevard County Emergency Management** – Provides strategic recommendations for operations, incorporating subject matter expertise and the situational assessment of the incident
- **Emergency Coordination Group (ECG)** – Makes the final decision on the recommended actions
- **Emergency Support Functions (ESF) and Liaisons** – Executes disaster operations in the field

Protective Action Operations

Protective actions are implemented and coordinated by local, state, and federal government agencies to reduce impacts and safeguard residents. Examples include:

- **Local State of Emergency** - Provides local governments the legal and fiscal authority to respond to disasters, allows for prompt actions by governments to protect life and property
- **Evacuation** - Reduces the risk of injury or death by relocating residents from high-risk areas such as the barrier islands, mobile/manufactured homes, and low-lying areas
- **Sheltering** - Provides a safe location for residents to seek shelter, food, and water before, during and after the disaster
- **Sandbags** – Reduces the impacts of flooding on personal property
- **Search and Rescue** – Coordinates operations with County, State, and Federal agencies to safely locate and rescue survivors



*Image Courtesy of Craig Bailey, Florida Today
Hurricane Milton Shelter at Wickham Park Community Center*

Summary

As a living document, the Brevard County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan is continually evaluated to ensure up-to-date response strategies and best practices identified using stakeholder feedback, training and exercises, real-world events, and lessons learned. This plan is reviewed every four years by the State of Florida to ensure it meets statewide standards.

Planning, Training, and Exercise

Planning, training, and exercising are the foundation of effective emergency management.

- **Planning** - Establishes the strategies, roles, and procedures needed to manage to disasters. Brevard County Emergency Management continually assesses and improves the plans based on real-world incidents, exercises, and professional best practices
- **Training** - Ensures personnel understand those plans and can carry out their responsibilities. All agencies with an emergency response role will participate in appropriate training and coordination hosted by the EOC
- **Exercises** - Provide a safe environment to test plans, practice skills, and identify gaps for improvement. Brevard County Emergency Management regularly conducts exercises, including an annual hurricane exercise
- **Community Outreach** – Brevard County Emergency Management and municipalities provide community-based training and outreach to improve the resiliency of residents by increasing awareness of county-specific hazards and protective actions



*Brevard County Emergency Operations Center,
2025 Hurricane Exercise*

Together, planning, training, and exercises build the coordination, confidence, and readiness to ensure all partners can respond to and recover from disasters effectively.

More Information

Brevard County's Emergency Management website provides residents with essential information on alerts and warnings, emergency plans, community resources, evacuation and shelter information, and preparedness checklists [brevardfl.gov/EmergencyManagement](https://www.brevardfl.gov/EmergencyManagement)

Sign up for AlertBrevard

- Sign up for location-based alerts to receive weather watches and warnings, missing persons, boil water notices, recovery information.
Go to: <https://www.brevardfl.gov/EmergencyManagement/AlertSignup>
- **Text BrevardEOC to 888-777** to sign up for text alerts including launch updates, prescribed burn notices, and community reports

