
Mass Care and Shelter

Annex

2025



COUNTY *of* VENTURA
Human Services Agency

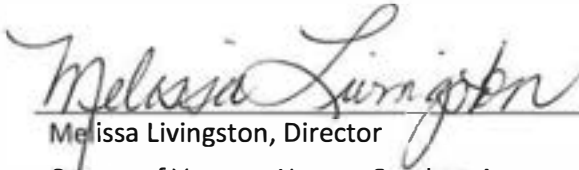
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Plan Approval

This content and accessibility of this plan has been reviewed and approved by the following County of Ventura representatives.


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County of Ventura Human Services Agency

03/18/2025
Date



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Daniel Maguire, Disaster Response and Recovery Officer

County of Ventura Human Services Agency

3/18/2025
Date



COUNTY of VENTURA

Human Services Agency

Plan Maintenance and Distribution

Plan Updates

This plan is an annex to the Ventura County Operational Area (OA) Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). The plan is maintained by the County of Ventura Human Services Agency (HSA) and will be reviewed every three (3) years. Revisions should be made to the plan when the documents are no longer current. Updates may be needed when:

- operating procedures are modified or the concept of operations for emergencies changes;
- there is a change in the organizational structures;
- hazard consequences or risk areas change;
- communications systems are upgraded;
- corrective actions from trainings, exercises, or actual emergencies' after-action reviews are implemented;
- state or federal planning standards are revised; or
- there are changes in policy, procedure, law, or regulations pertaining to care and shelter operations.

Plan Distribution

Upon final approval by the Emergency Services Director and Human Services Agency Director, as well as any time that significant updates are made the Mass Care and Shelter Annex will be distributed to the following departments or agencies:

State Departments/Personnel

- California Department of Social Services, Disaster Services Bureau

County

- Animal Services
- Behavioral Health
- County Executive Office (CEO)
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Agency
- Fire Department
- Human Services Agency (HSA)



- Public Health
- Sheriffs' Office of Emergency Services (OES)

Cities

- Camarillo
- Fillmore
- Moorpark
- Ojai
- Oxnard
- Port Hueneme
- Santa Paula
- Simi Valley
- Thousand Oaks
- Ventura

Other

- American Red Cross
- The Salvation Army

Revision History

Revision Summary	Author	Date
Initial Plan Draft	K. LeClair	5/1/2018
Mass Care and Shelter Committee Revisions	Large Group	6/11/18
Mass Care and Shelter Committee Revisions	Sub Groups	7/31/18
Access and Functional Needs Revisions & Attach DAFN Annex as Appendix 6.6	D. Creadick, J. Garcia, S. Kroth	8/1/18 10/2018
Mass Care and Shelter Committee Revisions	Large Group	8/8/18
Mass Care and Shelter Committee Revisions	Large Group	1/22/18
Final HSA Updates / Timelines	J. Garcia	2/21/19
Final HSA Updates / Timelines	J. Garcia	2/25/19
Final HSA Updates / Legal References	J. Garcia	2/27/19
Final HSA Updates / Mutual Aid Agreements	J. Garcia	2/28/19

Revision Summary	Author	Date
Thousand Oaks initial edits	J. Garcia/City of T.O./CRPD	3/27/19
Thousand Oaks meeting edits added Special Districts to Glossary	J. Garcia	4/24/19
Shelter Coordination Visual updated	J. Garcia	6/26/19
Moorpark City Review Updates	J. Garcia	7/25/19
Oxnard City Review Updates	J. Garcia	8/13/19
Disaster Planning, Response, & Recovery Roadmap Visual Update	J. Garcia	2/1/20
New HSA logo and Training Updates	J. Garcia	1/5/21
Temporary Evacuation Points	J. Garcia	1/6/21
TEP Language minor edit	Leticia Morales	1/7/21
HSA, ARC & 10 Cities Executed MOU	J. Garcia	1/26/2021
Update Response Type Matrix	J. Garcia	5/26/21
Update to Section 4. Added VCAAlert Protocol	J. Garcia	7/6/21
Added MCS Team and CDSS Disaster Service Bureau Roles and Responsibilities	C. Bridges	8/26/2021
Removed DAFN Annex to incorporate AFN considerations throughout plan. Plan updated significantly to reflect current MCS operations. Title changed from Plan to Annex.	J. Hahn	6/26/2024
Accessibility & Inclusivity Review	D. Anderson	11/26/2024
City Emergency Management Review & Input; Medical Shelter definition added to Shelter Types	J. Hahn	7/24/2025

Section 1: Mass Care and Shelter

Overview

Ventura County has experienced several disasters with many resulting in the evacuation of residents. During the 2017 Thomas Fire, the County recognized the need for coordinated mass care and sheltering services. The importance of addressing this issue was confirmed again in the 2018 Woolsey Fire.

While disasters affect everyone, it is recognized that individuals with Access and Functional Needs (AFN) may be disproportionately impacted during response and recovery. These individuals may require more assistance than others to access disaster relief services. The Ventura County model for shelter operations is integrated and inclusive and efforts will be made to meet the needs of all individuals.

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to provide guidance on conducting operations for the care and sheltering of individuals displaced by a large incident. The plan provides details for coordination of local (Cities and County), regional, state, and federal entities as well as nonprofit and other community-based organizations that have a role in mass care and sheltering. This document details shelter service types for an incident, depending upon the complexity of the incident and the number of persons affected. The scale of these services may range from a simple referral to a community social services agency, to complex services including but not limited to local, state, and federal agencies providing emergency grants, housing assistance, food and water, clothing, basic medical necessities, and other basic items necessary to sustain life.

Goals

- Identify options for providing mass care and shelter services to those impacted during a disaster to enable activation of mass care and shelter operations within three hours since time of request.
- Identify the roles and responsibilities of each partner agency involved in care and shelter operations to execute a coordinated response during times of activation.
- Ensure planning is inclusive and services are accessible to all individuals, including those with access and functional needs through thoughtful, ongoing consideration of service integration that meets the needs of all individuals during disasters.

Scope

This plan aligns with federal Emergency Support Function (ESF) #6 – Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing and Human Services and with the State of California Emergency Support Function 6 (CA-ESF 6) – Care and Shelter. Some aspects of ESF #6 and CA-ESF 6, including emergency assistance, temporary housing, clothing, family reunification, and survivor recovery are not covered in detail in this plan as these are areas of responsibility for partner organizations.

Assumptions

Care and shelter planners and operational personnel must keep these assumptions in mind when planning and/or responding to an emergency or disaster:

1. The County of Ventura HSA is the agency with primary oversight responsibility for mass care and sheltering activities for residents and visitors in the County. The HSA Disaster Response and Recovery Officer is responsible for shelter operations, coordination, and oversight. When the Ventura County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated, the HSA Disaster Response and Recovery Officer or their delegate will staff the Mass Care & Shelter Branch Coordinator role. (California State Emergency Plan 14.4.9, 2017, 120; [CA-ESF 6 Mass Care and Shelter Annex, July 2022](#); [Ventura County Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan, 2021](#)).
2. County of Ventura HSA is the lead, ESF 6, Mass Care and Shelter local entity and the American Red Cross (ARC) is expected to serve as a partner organization. HSA collaborates with ARC in developing potential shelter sites and training shelter staff

in the Ventura County Operational Area. The Operational Area has adopted the Red Cross Shelter Fundamentals program as the standard for all shelter operations.

3. In a major disaster, the ARC will require an influx of resources from outside the area to be operational.
4. Coordination of mass care and sheltering is a responsibility of local governments and as such is outlined in plans of local jurisdictions. However, the County of Ventura HSA and the Pacific Coast Chapter of the ARC along with other Community-Based Organizations (CBO) may assist in delivering care and shelter services. City government's coordination and delivery of mass care and shelter services continues should the County assume operational oversight of a mass care shelter facility.
5. City and County government employees are Disaster Service Workers and will be called upon to assist with response and recovery efforts (Government Code Title 1. Division 4. Chapter 8 – Section 3100).
6. Effective January 1, 2019, SB 1152 (Chapter 981, Statutes of 2018) requires General Acute Care Hospitals, Acute Psychiatric Hospitals, and Special Hospitals to include within their discharge policies a written homeless patient discharge planning policy and process. Unless a homeless patient is transferred to another licensed facility, hospitals must prioritize placing the homeless patient at a sheltered location with supportive services. The hospital must identify a post discharge destination for the homeless patient as either a social services agency or provider that has agreed in advance to the placement. If transferring the homeless patient to a social services agency, nonprofit social services provider, or governmental service provider, the hospital must provide the accepting agency or provider written or electronic information about the homeless patient's post hospital health and behavioral healthcare needs (California Department of Public Health, All Facilities Letter 19-01).
7. Facilities licensed by the California Department of Public Health and regulated by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) must develop policies and procedures that provide for the safe evacuation of patients from the facility and include all the requirements of this standard. Facilities must have policies and procedures which address the needs of evacuees. The facility should also consider in development of the policies and procedures, the evacuation protocols for not only the evacuees, but also staff members and families/patient representatives or other personnel who sought potential refuge at the facility. Additionally, the policies and procedures must address staff responsibilities during evacuations. Facilities must consider the patient population needs as well as their care and treatment. For

example, if an evacuation is in progress and the facility must evacuate, leadership should consider the needs for critically ill patients to be evacuated and accompanied by staff who could provide care and treatment enroute to the designated relocation site, in the event trained medical professionals are unavailable by the transportation services (CMS QSO-21-15-ALL).

8. Adult Residential Facilities, Social Rehabilitation Facilities, Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly, and Child Care Facilities licensed by the California Department of Social Services must have a current, written disaster and mass casualty plan of action set forth by Title 22. Such plans address a plan for evacuation which includes: fire safety plan; means of exiting; transportation arrangements; relocation sites which are equipped to provide safe temporary accommodation for residents/clients/children; arrangements for supervision of residents/clients/children during evacuation or relocation, and for contact after relocation to ensure that relocation has been completed as planned; and means of contacting local agencies, including but not limited to the fire department, law enforcement agencies, and civil defense and other disaster authorities (Title 22 Sections 101174, 80023, 81023, 82023, and 87212).
9. Individuals receiving home health or hospice care may present to a shelter. Should road conditions or hazards prevent Home Health Agencies' and Hospice Providers' staff from accessing the shelter, Home Health and Hospice personnel may contact a shelter in an attempt to check in with the client under their care. Mass Care and Shelter personnel will coordinate with the lead, ESF 8 entity, Public Health/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and/or the Ventura County Health Care Coalition as the Home Health Agency and Hospice Provider have requirements to communicate with ESF 8 officials in times of disaster and when a client requires evacuation ([CMS Emergency Preparedness Rule](#)).
10. Medically fragile persons are best sheltered at medical facilities, at a medical shelter, or other environments that can support medically fragile persons and their caregivers. Nevertheless, medically fragile persons may be present at the general population shelter. As the lead, ESF 8 entity, Public Health/EMS will oversee or coordinate care for medically fragile persons until they can be safely transferred to an appropriate facility.
11. A three to five percent planning factor for individuals who will need shelter during a disaster should be considered for shelter planning purposes. A ten percent planning factor for individuals who will need shelter during a catastrophic event should be considered for shelter planning purposes. A 25 percent planning factor for

individuals with disabilities, older adults, and others with an AFN should be considered for shelter planning purposes (CA-ESF 6 Annex, July 2022).

12. Most residents will stay with friends/family, move out of the area or stay in hotels. Some displaced residents may congregate in public parks, parking lots and open spaces as an alternative to using indoor mass care shelters. Some Ventura County residents may choose to stay close to their property, rather than go to a designated shelter. These people may still have needs and expectations for care and other disaster assistance from government.
13. Shelter locations and agreements are reviewed and maintained on a regular basis, understanding that every incident is unique and may result in varying needs and capacity requirements.
14. In many cases evacuation centers or Temporary Evacuation Points (TEP), as opposed to shelters, will be sufficient. Evacuation centers and TEPs provide a more limited level of care, but do not provide overnight food and shelter and thus require significantly less staffing and resources.
15. In a case where local shelters are insufficient, the EOC will coordinate with cities, special districts, its neighbors, and the State concerning the coordination of sufficient shelter destinations for evacuees and will ensure the jurisdictions receiving evacuees from an impacted area agree to accept these individuals prior to evacuation. Coordination with any Federal support will be through the Operational Area and the State.
16. Ventura County will follow State policies and guidelines governing household pets in shelters and will include household pet care and shelter issues into planning. Ventura County Animal Services (VCAS) is the lead agency for animal evacuation and sheltering. VCAS coordinates with County of Los Angeles Department of Animal Care & Control for services in Thousand Oaks and other areas of Ventura County, as needed.
17. Shelters take significant time to identify, activate, establish, and be ready to receive survivors. The goal is to have shelters ready to receive within two hours from time of notice or request. City and County resources should prepare to mobilize prior to an evacuation to ensure that sufficient staffing is in place once the evacuation order is given.
18. All potential shelter sites are effectively Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant. Limited shelter sites with auxiliary electrical power supplies have been identified and may be available.

19. There are interdependencies between shelters and transportation. It is critical to identify shelters that are as close as safely possible. The designation and distance to household pet shelters or shelters that will accommodate pets is also important.
20. It is important to recognize the needs of children during evacuations. In a no-notice event, children could be located away from their parents, such as in schools, childcare facilities, or other locations and resulting in the need for Family Assistance.
21. Essential public and private services will need to continue during shelter and mass care operations. However, for a major disaster, normal activities at schools, community centers, churches and other facilities used as shelter sites may be curtailed.
22. The Ventura County Mass Care and Shelter Plan follows the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Considerations

Shelters in California serve a diverse group of people in need of temporary housing. Everyone is welcome in evacuation shelters and shelter administrators help clients feel safe and secure under extraordinarily challenging circumstances. The Mass Care and Shelter Branch is committed to meeting the basic needs of evacuees but effective action during a disaster implies the preparedness efforts on the part of every individual to the best of their ability, their caretaker, and/or their responsible facility. Preparedness resources can be found on www.ready.venturacounty.gov.

Unaccompanied Minors

In a disaster, unaccompanied minors may present to a shelter. An unaccompanied minor is a child who has been separated from parents, legal guardians, and other relatives and is not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so.

Should this occur, the registration system used in shelters, Disaster Response and Recovery Management System (DRRMS), is equipped with an Unaccompanied Minor module that includes a modified intake process to better serve this population. Additionally, the County of Ventura HSA Children and Family Services Department will be consulted to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of children.

Pre-disaster Homeless Individuals

A large-scale disaster may disrupt the usual sources of food and shelter for persons who were homeless before the disaster. Therefore, pre-disaster homeless persons may make up a significant proportion of the shelter population. Individuals who are chronically homeless often are dealing with pre-existing medical, mental health, and substance abuse issues. Actions may be taken by the County of Ventura HSA Homeless Services Program for integrating individuals experiencing such issues at emergency shelters with other survivors made temporarily homeless by the disaster in a manner that maintains safety, respect, and dignity for all shelter residents regardless of their pre-disaster situation.

Services for Individuals with Access and Functional Needs

During the shelter registration process, the needs of those with AFN will be identified and requests can be made accordingly. The AFN population is defined in the [California Emergency Services Act, Government Code Section 8593.3](#) as

individuals who have:

- Developmental, intellectual or physical disabilities;
- Chronic conditions or injuries;
- Limited English proficiency or non-English speaking;

or, individuals who are:

- Older adults, children, or pregnant;
- Living in institutional settings;
- Low-income;
- Homeless;
- Those who are dependent on public transportation

As a Title II entity, the Ventura County Operational Area shelter planning complies with the ADA and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA). Care and shelter services are provided appropriate to the needs of people in the most integrated setting feasibly possible given the nature and extent of the incident and available resources. To plan and prepare to house people with disabilities in shelters, including those who need some medical care, medication, equipment, and supportive services several steps have been taken, including but not limited to the following:

- Training staff and volunteers to help persons with disabilities with daily living activities through frequently offered Functional Assessment Service Team (FAST) certification.

- Providing a means to keep medications cold, assistive devices charged, etc.
- Ensuring stress-relief options are available for people whose disabilities are affected by stress (sensory kits, disaster behavioral health services).
- Ensuring people with service animals are welcomed in shelters and that food, water, and waste disposal supplies are provided for service animals upon request.
- Ensuring there are accessible cots for persons with disabilities.

Program Access

Pre-identified shelter locations have been assessed by the American Red Cross for physical accessibility. If existing inaccessibility is identified in facilities during shelter activations, every effort will be made to provide accommodations through resources requests to the EOC.

Reasonable Accommodations

Reasonable modifications will be made when necessary to accommodate individuals with disabilities except in circumstances that would pose an undue hardship or fundamentally alter the nature of the program, service, or activity.

Service Animals

Per the ADA, service animals have access to the same facilities as the humans they serve. The ADA defines service animals as any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Tasks performed can include, among other things, pulling a wheelchair, retrieving dropped items, alerting a person to a sound, reminding a person to take medication, or pressing an elevator button. A public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the miniature horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with a disability. Assessment factors outlined in 28 Code of Federal Regulations Section 35.136(i)(2) should be considered in determining whether reasonable modifications can be made to allow a miniature horse into the shelter.

The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. Emotional support animals, comfort animals, and therapy dogs are not service animals under Title II and Title III of the ADA. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not considered service animals either. VCAS manages animal evacuation, shelters, and temporary care for the operational area. VCAS

coordinates with County of Los Angeles Department of Animal Care & Control for these services in Thousand Oaks and other areas of Ventura County, as needed.

Services animals are not required to wear a vest, collar, or other identification indicating they are a service animal. Documentation that the service animal is registered, licensed, or certified as a service animal is not required. Shelter staff must not require the service animal to demonstrate its task or inquire about the nature of the person's disability. When it is not obvious what service an animal provides, only limited inquiries are allowed. Shelter staff may ask two questions:

1. Is this service animal needed because of a disability?
2. What task has the animal been trained to perform?

Under 28 Code of Federal Regulations Section 35.136(b) a public entity may ask an individual with a disability to remove a service animal from the premises if the animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it or the animal is not housebroken. If a public entity properly excludes a service animal under § 35.136(b), it shall give the individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the service animal on the premises (28 CFR §35.136(c)).

Communication

Accessible communication is an essential part of providing service to the public. Good communication between staff, volunteers, and residents at an emergency shelter is critical. The resources covered in this section have been planned with the goal of communicating as effectively as possible with all individuals seeking or presenting to an evacuation shelter.

Effective Communication Solutions. Because the nature of communication differs from person to person, program to program, and from one disaster incident to another, determination of effective communication solutions may be situation dependent. The goal is to find a practical solution that fits the circumstances, taking into consideration the nature, length, and complexity of the communication as well as the person's normal method(s) of communication. Primary consideration to the type of auxiliary aid or service requested by the person with the disability will be given to the extent possible, unless another equally effective means of communication is available or the aid or service requested would fundamentally alter the nature of the program, service, or activity or would result in undue financial and administrative burden. Given the nature of evacuation shelters, advance notice from people requesting aids or services may not be feasible.

Therefore, consideration should be made for the length of time needed to acquire the aid or service requested in times of disaster when service delivery may be impacted.

American Sign Language and Other Language Interpretation. In Ventura County, the non-English language spoken by the largest group is Spanish and is spoken by about thirty percent of the population ([Health Matters in VC](#); [World Population Review](#)). Therefore, evacuation shelters will ensure qualified Spanish translators are available during all shifts. Shelter staff will have access to CyraCom Audio and Video interpreting. This service is available 24/7/365. It offers phone interpretation for over 250 languages and video interpretation for over 35 languages.

Communication aids. Other communication aids may be available at the shelter to assist individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing or who have visual impairments (braille/large print materials, readers, auxiliary aids, show me documents). Key shelter signage is translated in advance and available in large print. Guidance and tools for providing language assistance will be provided to shelter managers and staff to assist with communication.

[Culturally and Medically Appropriate Meals](#)

As part of the registration process, individuals are asked if they have any dietary restrictions or food allergies. This information is shared with the shelter meal providers for accommodation of legitimate dietary needs and restrictions. In widespread incidents, resource and service delivery impacts may influence the timeframe by which meal providers can acquire food products required to meet unanticipated dietary needs.

[Functional Assessment Service Teams](#)

In conjunction with the California Department of Social Services, HSA has oversight and coordination responsibilities for implementing the FAST program locally. A FAST consists of trained government employees ready to respond and deploy to disaster areas to work in shelters. The FAST program provides staff to conduct assessments of shelter clients and facilitate the process of getting essential resources needed by individuals who have disabilities and/or AFN. FAST will be deployed as shelters are opened and remain in the shelters until it is determined that they are no longer needed. FAST may transfer to other shelters and will return to shelters as needed or requested.

A FAST may consist of members with experience in any of the following areas:

- Aging (services/supports, including dietary needs)

- Chronic health conditions
- Developmental and other cognitive disabilities (i.e., traumatic brain injury, intellectual)
- Hearing loss
- Mental health disabilities
- Physical disabilities
- Substance abuse
- Vision loss

Requests to the State for FAST assistance may occur in State or Federally declared disasters through the SEMS/NIMS process and partner agencies will be mission tasked through California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). Cities can make a request for a FAST through the OA EOC.

Section 2: Training, Drills & Exercises

Care and Shelter Preparedness Guidelines

By taking the following steps in preparation for emergencies, care and shelter services can be provided in a timely manner with minimum confusion.

City

- Designate a City Care and Shelter Coordinator. This person will coordinate care and shelter planning and operations for the City. Adopt and operationalize the Ventura County Mass Care and Shelter Annex.
- Identify and survey city-supported shelter facilities. Work with the Ventura County ARC, Recreation and Parks, school districts, local partners, CBOs, and government agencies to compile an up-to-date list of pre-disaster designated shelters, inclusive of information about accessibility of each potential facility to ensure that shelter sites can accommodate people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs. Determination of a shelter site is a collaborative decision with the Emergency Operations Center and impacted jurisdictions and agencies, which will be based on the incident, situation, and the accessibility of the shelter site among other factors.
- Ensure that Memoranda of Understanding/Agreement (MOU/MOA) are in place with special districts, County, and other partners from whom the City plans to request services during emergency activations. It is helpful to have statements of understanding with designated shelter sites to clarify terms of use. In most cities, the ARC chapter accomplishes this.
- Train staff to operate disaster shelters. Work with the ARC to provide shelter training to city employees who will staff and manage disaster shelters. Training should address ways to accommodate and assist people with access and functional needs. The [Shelter Field Guide](#) may serve as a helpful training tool.
- Participate in County and partner agencies' training and exercises. When feasible, design and execute training and exercises in the City and invite partners to participate or observe, including individuals and/or entities representing those with access and functional needs. Functions and services should be tested with consideration to the diverse needs of individuals who may present to a shelter site as described in section 1 of this annex.

County

- Designate personnel to manage mass care and shelter operations so the County may maintain an appropriate level of preparedness. County of Ventura HSA currently has a program dedicated to care and shelter operations.
- Maintain strong working relationships with care and shelter partners.
- Maintain care and shelter plans.
- Maintain an up-to-date list of pre-disaster designated shelters, inclusive of information about accessibility of each potential facility to ensure that shelter sites can accommodate people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.
- Ensure MOU/MOA with shelter sites and partner agencies are in place as appropriate.
- Maintain current contact information for care and shelter partners.
- Provide regular training to HSA staff. Coordinate with CDSS to offer FAST Certification to HSA employees as well as employees and volunteers of partner agencies.
- Design, develop, and execute exercises for internal HSA employees as well as partner agencies. Aim to provide three (3) discussion- or operation-based exercises of varying complexity and capabilities per year.

Training & Education

Disaster Service Worker

In Government Code Section 3100-3109, the California Legislature “declared that the protection of the health and safety and preservation of the lives and property of the people of the state from the effects of natural, manmade, or war-caused emergencies which result in conditions of disaster or in extreme peril to life, property, and resources is of paramount state importance requiring the responsible efforts of public and private agencies and individual citizens,” and required that “[i]n furtherance of the exercise of the police power of the state in protection of its citizens and resources, all public employees are hereby declared to be disaster service workers subject to such disaster service activities as may be assigned to them by their superiors or by law.”

The term "public employees" includes all persons employed by the state or any city, county, state agency or public district, excluding aliens legally employed. Under California law, all public employees are designated as Disaster Service Workers (DSW). This means that public employees can be assigned to provide support to response and/or recovery



operations, if needed during a proclaimed or declared emergency, disaster, or catastrophic event. There may be a need for employees to work outside of the general scope of their typical duties and responsibilities, but employees will never be asked to perform any duty or function they do not know how to perform or have not received adequate training to complete. A public employee may be asked to assist during a disaster with little or no notice. Under these circumstances, the employee should be assigned duties that most closely align with their current job classification. Employees should consult their supervisor and/or reporting agency human resources regarding DSW deployment hours and compensation.

City Disaster Service Worker

Cities manage their respective DSW programs to ensure appropriately trained personnel are available for extended emergency duty in the City Department Operations Center (DOC), County EOC, or out in the field, such as at shelters or other sites providing mass care services.

County Disaster Service Worker

All County employees adhere to the County of Ventura Administrative Policy Manual, County Employees as Disaster Service Workers, Policy No. Chapter VIII(A)-18. All HSA employees are assigned DSW Awareness and shelter training videos annually via the agency's e-learning platform. All HSA employees are encouraged to take Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Independent Study courses 100 and 700 while those serving in upper management roles and mutual aid deployable positions may be required to complete these courses.

Functional Assessment Service Team

FAST was established in 2007 with the purpose of training and deploying volunteers to emergency shelters. FAST members work with shelter personnel to ensure that individuals with disabilities and/or AFN obtain the resources needed to remain safe and live as independently as possible while at the shelter.

FAST Responsibilities include:

- Meet with shelter clients to determine the support and services they require to remain safe and independent in a shelter.
- Assess the need for personal assistance services, durable medical equipment, consumable medical supplies, and prescription medication.

- Communicate and coordinate with shelter management and shelter medical support services to ensure client needs are met.

FAST Qualifications:

- A minimum of two (2) years of professional or lived experience with disabilities or access and functional needs.
- Desire to serve children and adults in need of FAST services.
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate clearly and effectively, both orally and in writing with diverse populations.
- Ability to work in challenging and rapidly changing environments.
- Completion of FAST Certification course.

The California Department of Social Services hosts FAST Certification courses monthly. Individuals interested in attending must receive prior approval from the local FAST coordinator.

Exercises

County of Ventura HSA conducts exercises pertaining to hazards listed on ready.venturacounty.gov which pose the greatest risk to the OA. Care and shelter partners are invited to participate in exercises to test services and clarify roles and responsibilities. The goal is to host three exercises per year – either discussion-based (such as a tabletop exercise) or operation-based (such as a drill, functional exercise, or full-scale exercise). Areas of opportunity identified in real world incidents or exercises help to guide the focus and scope of subsequent exercises.

Exercises are designed to be inclusive. Functions and services are tested with consideration to the diverse needs of individuals who may present to a care and shelter site as described in section 1.5 of this annex. Individuals and/or entities representing those with access and functional needs are invited to participate in exercises.

In addition to exercises, County of Ventura HSA conducts monthly tests of the notification system used for shelter staff availability polling and coordination call facilitation. Disaster Service Workers who participate in the shelter exercises are added to the HSA Mass Care Ready team and receive these test alerts to maintain familiarity with the shelter availability request process. Similar, availability request tests are sent to FAST members. Separate test notifications are sent to partners who participate in shelter coordination calls.



After-Action Review

In compliance with the FEMA Homeland Security and Exercise Evaluation Program, reviews are conducted after exercises or real events and an After-Action Report (AAR) and Improvement Plan (IP) is compiled.

Section 3: Concept of Operations

Initial Activities

Coordination of mass care and sheltering – including but not limited to personnel, resources, and shelter management – is a responsibility of local governments with support from partner organizations. The HSA, ARC, and Cities adhere to a MOU. These protocols should be outlined in the Cities' respective emergency plans to ensure adequate preparation for shelter management and staffing. Additionally, the ARC may be requested to manage and staff a shelter as detailed in the Health Services Integration Protocol. In shelters managed by a City or the ARC, HSA provides coordination and oversight. HSA support (supplies, personnel, and other resources) may be provided upon request, subject to availability or procurement ability.

Shelter Operations

To provide consistent service delivery and a smooth transition in shelter management, Cities and the County generally follow mass care and sheltering standards, guidelines, and procedures set forth by the ARC and FEMA. Therefore, whether shelter sites are opened and operated by the County or Cities they should operate according to the same set of principles.

Shelter Models

Mass Care and Shelter operations are provided by Cities, County departments, and community-based organizations within the Ventura County OA via traditional and non-traditional models. During the selection of sites for both models every effort will be made to ensure sites meet accessibility standards.

Traditional Shelter Models

Congregate Sheltering

Short-term sheltering for evacuees who need a temporary place to stay until other housing arrangements can be made. Shelter facilities are ADA-compliant or can be made compliant through modification. Typically, emergency shelters will provide fully accessible showers and restrooms, food, first aid and basic physical health, behavioral health, and other support services based on need.

Medical Sheltering

The intent of a Medical Shelter is to address the medical needs of individuals who have been displaced from their residence as a result of a disaster and require temporary housing and medical support. The medical needs of these individuals require medical care beyond what can be accommodated in a general population, congregate shelter, but not complex or severe enough to necessitate hospitalization. Medical Shelter activation, coordination, and oversight is managed by the Medical Health Operational Area Coordinator (MHOAC)/EMS Agency Duty Officer.

Non-traditional Shelter Models***Temporary Evacuation Point***

A centralized location used as a gathering point for individuals required to leave their residence during a disaster. In many cases, TEPs may also have emergency congregate shelters established at the same location. Every disaster is different, as are the logistical challenges posed by road closures, fires, flooding, any many other variables. At the onset of a disaster, emergency managers will determine the best TEP to activate within a safe proximity to the incident. The selected location will be posted on VCEmergency.com and included in all emergency messaging shared with the public.

Non-Congregate Shelter

Provides resources and technical assistance when traditional sheltering is not available or feasible or when the impact of the disaster is of such magnitude that extended shelter operations are required. Such shelters may include: Hotels, Motels, Single-use facilities, Dormitories, and Campgrounds.

Outdoor Sheltering

Some persons displaced from their residence may converge on public parks or open spaces as an alternative to using indoor mass care shelters. Since these “open shelter areas” will generally emerge spontaneously, the ARC, County, and incorporated cities must consider whether to take a role in managing the sites from the start to head-off potential health and sanitation problems. A decision to support selected outdoor congregate sites will involve providing comparable level of mass care services as provided to indoor sites. Due to the complications of outdoor sheltering, it will remain a secondary option to establishing a network of fully serviced, indoor shelter sites.

Recreational Vehicles

Some persons may evacuate from their residence in their Recreational Vehicles (RV). Some shelter locations can support limited RV parking, but further coordination of services provided to residents at a RV designated evacuation location may be necessary should the number of RVs exceed the TEP or shelter location RV parking. Shelter services (i.e., food, FAST assessments, etc.) will be available to clients choosing to reside temporarily in their RV at a designated evacuation location and these individuals would be included in shelter counts.

Spontaneous / Unaffiliated Shelters

In a larger-scale disaster, it is assumed that community shelters, run by organizations other than the ARC, Cities, or the County will open spontaneously. These sites may be run by community-based or faith-based organizations. For example, it is assumed that many congregations (churches, parishes, synagogues, etc.) will open their doors to people within that neighborhood needing shelter. Other spontaneous shelters may be run with no formal sponsorship.

Shelter Services

Ensuring shelters are open and resources to address basic needs are met is essential. Coordination of care and shelter operations as detailed in the HSA/ARC/Cities MOU prevents the duplication of services and allows for proper allocation of scarce resources.

Services Provided by City Government *(subject to capacity/availability)*

- Access to city-owned facilities/sites for use as shelters or other service delivery functions
- Shelter staffing and management
- Site security and traffic control
- Stock or have access to operational supplies (cots and blankets, hygiene kits, signage, etc.)
- Sanitation facilities (e.g., portable toilets, showers, hand washing stations)
- Support for individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs as defined in the [Mass Care & Shelter Annex to the CA State Emergency Plan](#).

Services Provided by County Government

- The County of Ventura maintains a catalogue of sites with which MOU's have been established, in addition to ARC shelter agreements. During incidents, usage of sites without agreements in place may be necessary.

- Shelter staffing and management
- Support with health and behavioral health services
- Site security
- Operational supplies (cots and blankets, hygiene kits, signage, etc.)
- Sanitation facilities (e.g., portable toilets, showers)
- Support for individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs as defined in the [Mass Care & Shelter Annex to the CA State Emergency Plan](#).
- Transportation resources, including accessible vehicles
- Housing relocation assistance for shelter residents
- Household pet sheltering and support
- Communications support as detailed in Section 1 of this annex

Services Provided by the ARC

- Services outlined in the HSA/ARC/Cities MOU

Services Provided by State & Federal Government

- Resource request fulfillment, if necessary and attainable
- CDSS Disaster Services Branch resources
- Deployment of FAST or VEST
- Deployment of California Conservation Corps or CalFire Mobile Kitchen Unit

Roles & Responsibilities

This section of the plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of local, regional, State, and Federal agencies that are involved in Mass Care and Shelter operations in Ventura County.

Cities

All disasters begin and end at the local level. Cities have responsibility for mass care and shelter operations within their jurisdiction as detailed in the HSA/ARC/Cities MOU. If a City determines the need to request assistance from the OA EOC, the City shall utilize SEMS. Cities should keep all existing shelters open unless closure is coordinated with the OA EOC.

County

The role of care and shelter expands to several County of Ventura entities as described below.



[Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services](#)

The Office of Emergency Services (OES) is tasked with activating the OA EOC – at level 1 Full Activation, 2 Partial Activation, 3 Enhanced Operations, or 4 Normal Operations – and directing the operations of government staff, NGO representatives, and other personnel assigned to EOC operations in support of the incident (Ventura County OA EOP). OES oversees transportation services through the OA EOC Transportation Branch such as those required during an evacuation and any accessible transportation services to and from care and shelter locations. During all levels of activation OES receives and verifies situation reports from a variety of sources. This situational awareness is shared with the Mass Care and Shelter (MCS) Duty Officer or MCS Coordinator who in turn estimates needs for mass care services, identifies the potential resources for providing mass care, and requests assistance from support agencies. Request for resources and services – such as sanitation facilities and site security – will be made through the EOC Logistics Section. Further detail regarding the structure of the OA EOC is found in the [Emergency Operations Plan](#).

[Human Services Agency](#)

County of Ventura HSA is the lead, local agency for mass care and sheltering and is responsible for staffing the MCS Branch in the OA EOC per California ESF-6. As such, County of Ventura HSA may be responsible for:

- Mass Care
 - o Coordination for shelter feeding services
 - o Human services at congregate and non-congregate shelters
 - o Support for distribution of humanitarian supplies
 - o Support for Local Assistance Centers (LAC) and/or Family Assistance Center (FAC)
- Emergency Assistance
 - o Support for individuals with disabilities, older adults, and others with AFN as defined in the [Mass Care & Shelter Annex to the CA State Emergency Plan](#).
 - o Support for household pets and service animals
 - o Sheltering support
- Human Services
 - o Registration and secondary assessments within general population shelters utilizing the DRRMS
 - o Client casework within general population shelters; performed only by departments and programs authorized to perform these duties
 - o Wellbeing checks for clients who may be impacted

- o Referral to recovery services available through governmental agencies (local, state, and federal) and CBOs at shelters, LACs, and Disaster Recovery Centers (DRC)
 - o Transitional sheltering programs and resources may be available to assist affected individuals during the transition from response to recovery
 - o Support CDSS efforts with repatriation and emergency repatriation plans, which include planning and preparedness efforts to support US citizens and dependents when returning to the US
 - o Support CDSS Supplemental Grant Program, which provides financial and direct services to eligible individuals and households affected by a disaster, once federal funding has been exhausted
- Homeless Services Program
 - o Coordinate with Service Providers to keep pre-disaster homeless shelters operational
 - o Make referrals to pre-disaster homeless shelters and transitional housing
 - o Provide services outlined in the Health Services Integration Protocol

Public Health Nursing & Emergency Medical Services Agency

- Perform routine Public Health Assessments of shelters conducted by a California State certified Public Health Nurse
- Provide nurses from Public Health and Medical Reserve Corps volunteers to triage medically fragile individuals, provide limited medical care, and maintain hazardous waste repositories in an enhanced general population shelter
- Provide oversight for Medical Shelters and establish Alternate Care Sites at the discretion of the Medical Health Operational Area Coordinator
- Establish Point of Dispensing sites, if mass distribution of pharmaceuticals or vaccines is needed based on available resources
- Coordinate with Health Care Coalition Partners to maintain situational awareness and share relevant information with the MCS Branch
- Provide services outlined in the Health Services Integration Protocol

Ambulatory Care

- Expand or contract operations of County Operated Clinics as necessary
- Assess status of outpatient care in affected community and coordinate needed outpatient care as necessary
- Support health care services in the shelter(s) and when necessary, deploy mobile medical unit / clinical personnel to provide basic medical care

Behavioral Health

- Maintain continuity of Behavioral Health operations across the operational area during disasters
- Provide disaster mental health services at shelters
- Utilize Psychological First Aid to provide support for community members
- Provide services outlined in the Health Services Integration Protocol

Animal Services

- Evacuate domestic animals and coordinate large animal evacuations throughout Ventura County
- Establish and manage animal shelters co-located with general population shelters when possible
- Provide temporary animal care such as food, water, shelter, and medical care when necessary and available
- Manage activation of the Emergency Volunteer Rescue Team and coordinate with non-profit animal rescue and shelter groups
- Coordinate with County of Los Angeles Department of Animal Care & Control for above services in Thousand Oaks and other areas of Ventura County, as needed

Fire Department

- Provide a point of contact to HSA to coordinate use of volunteers in mass care, sheltering responses, training, and other support services
- Provide HSA with a list of trained volunteers who are available to assist in mass care and sheltering responses
- Ensure volunteers sign waivers/statements of release. The wording in the statement shall cover the release from all liability from any issue under any department/activity
- Share information and serve as a resource to provide the best possible services to Ventura County residents

Transportation Commission

- Evaluate the need for transit service coordination, request interagency coordination, as appropriate, and provide transit recommendations to OA EOC
- Coordinate with transit providers to support transportation needs identified in the OA EOC (e.g., assistance with evacuation, modified routes from evacuation pickup points to shelters, accessible vehicles, etc.)

- Share intel pertaining to transit operators' and riders' status and needs to enhance situational awareness in the OA EOC and aid in the deployment of resources to individuals who are disproportionately impacted in disasters

Resource Management Agency

- Assist shelter operations in incidents that impact code compliance, such as living in recreational vehicles or building and land use
- Conduct inspections of shelter locations post-earthquake or other incidents that impact building and safety

General Services Agency

- Assist with procuring materials, supplies, and equipment
- Implement emergency procurement and supply procedures and dedicate personnel to support MCS procurement activities as well as ESF #6 resources to meet the needs of the affected population
- Provide for and/or negotiate leased emergency facilities
- Acquire and manage resources, supplies, and services from contracts, mission assignments, interagency agreements, and donations
- Support the prioritization, coordination, and communication of mass care resource requirements
- Supports requirements for physically accessible sheltering as well as related activities to support survivors of disasters

Office of Education

- May provide resources such as facilities, equipment, and supplies to support MCS operations
- Coordinate with local school districts on resource support use
- Coordinate with the OA EOC to ensure continuation of educational programs and track incident related school closures

Non-government / Nonprofit / Community-based Organizations & Faith-Based Organizations

Community- and Faith-based Organization members may support cities with mass care and sheltering, language and cultural sensitivity needs, and serve as a conduit for unmet needs and providing information to people that governments may have difficulty reaching. Organizations that provide direct and on-going services to people with disabilities and

others with cultural and access and functional needs during non-disaster times are in the best position to support the recovery of more people with AFN following a disaster.

American Red Cross, Pacific Coast Chapter

In the case of sheltering, the United States Congress has designated the ARC as a direct partner with City/County/State government in helping to fulfill government's legal responsibility of providing care and shelter for its citizens in a disaster. During OA EOC activations, the ARC:

- Works with the MCS Coordinator / Duty Officer to identify facilities that are available to provide shelter utilizing an up-to-date list of designated shelters
- Identifies quantities and availability of supplies to support shelters
- Provides individual disaster assistance to clients that are not in shelters. This includes assistance with emergency food, humanitarian supplies, rent/temporary housing, critical medicines, and other essentials of life
- Provides staff and resources for recovery planning and client casework
- Provides services outlined in the HSA/ARC/Cities MOU and the Health Services Integration Protocol

The Salvation Army

- Aid in donation management
- Coordinate with the Cities/County and the ARC to provide staff to support shelter operations
- Coordinate with the Cities/County and the ARC to provide resources, such as feeding, to support shelter operations

United Way of Ventura County

- Provides resources to address needs
- Mobilizes volunteers
- Provides 2-1-1 services under guidance of the 2-1-1 Steering Committee

Team Rubicon

- Deploy personnel to provide shelter support duties
- Participate in care and shelter exercises

Ventura County Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VC-VOAD)

VC-VOAD is a collaborative of local non-profit agencies, faith-based organizations, volunteer groups, public institutions, and private entities dedicated to improving outcomes



for people affected by disasters. Through pre-disaster planning VC-VOAD helps to ensure an effective response and recovery for people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs in Ventura County.

VC-VOAD helps communities respond to and recover from major disasters by facilitating cooperation, communication, coordination, and collaboration amongst its [member organizations](#); serving as the link between requests for emergency help and the community-based organizations available to provide help. Additionally, VC-VOAD plays a vital role in jumpstarting long-term recovery of communities experiencing harm through the creation of long-term recovery groups, which often comprise of the same organizations and government agencies.

Regional & State Agencies

All activities related to mass care and sheltering must be synchronized and integrated across the governmental entities at the County, region, and State; as well as between the private-sector organizations, CBOs, and other groups working in support of this plan. The regional and State agencies that have roles and responsibilities in mass care and sheltering are discussed below.

California Governor's Office of Emergency Services

Cal OES coordinates emergency operations and mutual aid for the State in accordance with SEMS. Cal OES is the lead agency for coordinating the State's emergency activities related to fire and rescue, incident management, search and rescue, law enforcement and public information. As such, it is responsible for:

- Coordinating the delivery of services under the California Disaster Assistance Act
- Maintaining a care and sheltering supply inventory
- Facilitating coordination between local, State, and Federal agencies, particularly FEMA, to ensure the smooth delivery, receipt, and processing of Federal assistance resources
- Activating its regional- and State-level response functions
- Coordinating the provision of mutual aid and mission task State agencies to provide resources to support response and relief operations
- Coordinating with local governments to open LAC / DRC that provide a single location for local government, local service programs, and State government assistance programs to help residents recover from the incident and transition out of shelters to homes or interim housing
- Information and resource requests between OA and the State

California Health and Human Services

In accordance with the State Emergency Plan, the California Health and Human Services Agency is the lead agency for CA-ESF 6, Mass Care and Shelter. In this role, it is the primary agency for providing State support for local care and sheltering operations.

California Department of Social Services

- Serve as the lead agency for the State Care and Shelter Branch
- Provide initial State relief services at evacuation points and within shelters through FAST when response has exceeded local capacity
- Provide limited quantities of equipment to support shelter residents with access and functional needs
- Coordinate with County of Ventura HSA for State-provided care and sheltering support such as:
 - o DOC/EOC MCS Branch support
 - o Mass Care Coordinators
 - o Community Care License Facility Coordination
 - o State Supplemental Grant Program (SSGP)
 - o Transitional Sheltering Assistance (TSA) Program
 - o Disaster Case Management Program (DCMP)
 - o Cost Recovery/Reimbursement

California Department of Public Health

- Coordinates with Ventura County Public Health on monitoring infection prevention and control within shelter sites. Upon request from local public health, the Healthcare Associated Infections Rapid Response Team may be deployed to support outbreaks occurring within shelters.
- In accordance with the California Public Health and Medical Emergency Operations Manual, Public Health will help coordinate services for people with medical needs beyond those that can be handled in a general population shelter. This may be done through the Medical/Health Branch at the OA EOC, if activated. If additional resources, such as staffing, are needed which cannot be obtained from within the Ventura County OA, the Medical/Health Operational Area Coordinator will work through the statewide medical/health mutual aid system to obtain those resources.

California Department of Food and Agriculture

- Provides food supply lists and emergency food assistance programs
- Coordinates with private sector organizations dedicated to providing food, water, shelter, and care to animals/livestock
- Provides farmworker resources



California Conservation Corps

- Provides personnel to assist with set-up and maintenance of care and shelter facilities
- Provides personnel for mass care facilities, California Animal Response Emergency System, and for other animal related emergencies

Federal Agencies

Federal Emergency Management Agency

Under a Presidential declaration of emergency or disaster, FEMA provides financial resources and direct Federal assistance in response to requests from the State. In accordance with the National Response Framework, FEMA organizes its resources according to ESF, each of which is led by a federal agency.

As the ESF #6 coordinator and primary agency, FEMA coordinates and leads Federal resources as required to support local, tribal, and State governments and community-based organizations in the performance of the following missions:

- Mass care: Sheltering, feeding operations, emergency first aid, bulk distribution of emergency items, and collecting and providing information about survivors to family members
- Emergency assistance: Meeting needs of individuals, families, and communities beyond traditional “mass care” services; may include support for evacuation; reunification of families; pet evacuation and sheltering; support to specialized, medical, or non-conventional shelters; coordination of volunteers and donated goods and services
- Housing Assistance or providing rental assistance, repair, replacement, manufactured housing, semi-permanent and permanent construction, and access to other sources of housing assistance, all under the housing components of the Stafford Act
- Human services: Helping disaster survivors to recover their non-housing losses, replace destroyed personal property, and obtain disaster loans, foods stamps, crisis counseling, disaster unemployment, case management, and other State and Federal benefits

United States Department of Health and Human Services

The Office of Human Services Emergency Preparedness and Response (OHSEPR) promotes the resilience of individuals, children, families and communities impacted by

disasters and public health emergencies by providing disaster human services expertise to Administration for Children & Families (ACF) grantees, partners, and stakeholders during preparedness, response, and recovery operations for emergency and disaster events. OHSEPR coordinates with ACF Program Offices, FEMA, federal departments, and nongovernmental partners that comprise Emergency Support Function #6 — Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services of the National Response Framework to promote the inclusion of human services in emergency preparedness planning, training, and exercises. OHSEPR develops situational awareness on impacts to ACF-supported programs, provides technical assistance on ACF program disaster waivers and flexibilities, and provides deployable liaison officers and subject matter experts on human services and the needs of children and youth to support communities that have been impacted by Presidentially declared disasters and emergencies.

Section 4: Direction, Control & Coordination

This section of the plan outlines communication, operational control, and coordination between local, regional, state, and federal agencies that are involved in mass care and sheltering in Ventura County. Government and non-governmental organizations will coordinate services and resources among shelters, which may expand in number soon after the event, may consolidate as the need diminishes, and will close over time. Organizations responsible for providing mass care and sheltering, and related services – transportation, animal care, medical care, etc. – must coordinate with each other during an incident.

Notification

The ARC Disaster Action Team responds to smaller, personal disasters such as home fires 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. When smaller disasters reach the threshold of four (4) households and/or twenty (20) individuals, the ARC notifies the HSA MCS Duty Officer for potential coordination and oversight.

In an event that requires some level of anticipated or actual care and shelter response within the Ventura County OA that exceeds the capacity of incorporated cities, the County - in coordination with the ARC and impacted cities - will determine MCS activation needs. Notification will be issued to all relevant supporting partner organizations.

Operational Area EOC

Depending on the nature, scale, and timing of an incident the below OA EOC activities may transpire during any level of activation – 1 Full Activation, 2 Partial Activation, 3 Enhanced Operations, or 4 Normal Operations. In events with ample warning, such as possible weather events, OES and HSA remain in communication regarding the hazard and the possible need for central coordination of mass care and sheltering. Communication should always begin with the HSA MCS Duty Officer who is available 24/7. As the lead, local agency for mass care and sheltering HSA is responsible for staffing the MCS Branch in the OA EOC per California ESF-6.

MCS Branch Coordination

The MCS Branch Coordinator and/or HSA MCS Duty Officer provide central coordination and oversight of mass care and shelter operations. The Mass Care & Shelter Branch Coordinator will respond to the OA EOC when activated at a level 1 or 2 when staffing permits (Ventura County OA Emergency Operations Plan, 2021; California State Emergency Plan 14.4.9, 2017). In incidents warranting MCS coordination in a level 3 or 4 OA EOC activation, the HSA MCS Duty Officer will oversee the MCS Branch activities.

MCS Branch Activities

The general role of the MCS Branch is to coordinate support for care and shelter field activities. Successful delivery of care and shelter services requires close coordination with ARC and Cities. When the OA EOC is activated the MCS Branch Coordinator will perform duties included in the MCS Branch position checklist (Ventura County OA EOP).

Shelter Activation

The following triggers have been identified for assessing the need for the County to open a shelter or additional shelters. Requests to activate County-managed shelters must be sent to the OES Duty Officer. Upon determination by OES that a County-managed shelter will likely be needed, HSA will host a coordination call with partner organizations.

- A city requests the County support or provide shelter.
- An evacuation order has been issued.
- A City or ARC has identified they do not have the capability to meet the sheltering needs of the affected population.
- Shelter managers have communicated that a shelter is at or nearing capacity.
- A neighboring jurisdiction has requested care and shelter support.

Site Selection

Every disaster is different, as are the logistical challenges posed by road closures, fires, flooding, any many other variables. Situational awareness provided at the time will be used to determine the best shelter location to activate within a safe proximity to the incident. The selected location will be posted on VCemergency.com and included in all emergency messaging shared with the public.

Resource Requests

Mass care and shelter capacity for responding to a large disaster is dependent on the coordinated sharing of resources between city, county, state, and non-governmental partner agencies. Additionally, the Ventura County OA maintains the ability to supplement available resources by purchasing, leasing, or obtaining mutual aid support through state and federal partners. The [CalOES Office of AFN Web Map](#) may be referenced for help in locating accessible sheltering resources. Should resources need to be requested from outside of the OA, the [Commonly Used Sheltering Items \(CUSI\) Catalog](#) should be referenced. The MCS Branch may also coordinate resource sharing directly with the CDSS Disaster Services Branch. The MCS Branch should be prepared to provide the type and quantity of equipment or supply needed as well as any specific item details.

Regardless of the size of the emergency, requests may be made to the OA EOC for shelter services that exceed capabilities of city-run shelters. For the most efficient coordination and allocation of resources, there must be direct communication among care and shelter partners.

Mutual Aid

The mutual aid system is designed to facilitate the rendering of aid to agencies/jurisdictions stricken by an emergency whenever its respective resources are overwhelmed or inadequate. The OA EOC coordinates mutual aid requests.

California Emergency Management Mutual Aid

The purpose and goal of Emergency Management Mutual Aid (EMMA) is to provide emergency management personnel and technical specialists to support the disaster operations of affected jurisdictions during an emergency to assist with response and recovery for the whole community without imposing additional financial burden on the impacted jurisdiction.

Requests for mutual aid will follow normal mutual aid channels, consistent with the Emergency Management Mutual Aid system and the SEMS. To request mutual aid, the MCS Branch Coordinator informs the OA EMMA Coordinator of the need to request mutual aid. The MCS Branch Coordinator should be prepared to provide situation reports, specify the number of persons along with their type of assistance needed, specific classifications if necessary, reporting location, and estimated length of utilization. The MCS Branch will

coordinate with the OA EMMA Coordinator as needed to address mutual aid travel and lodging needs.

Southern Area Consortium of Human Services

The Southern Area Consortium of Human Services (SACHS) Disaster Preparedness Emergency Management Mutual Aid Standard Operating Procedures provides human service agencies in Ventura, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Riverside and Imperial counties with guidance for submitting or fulfilling an EMMA request. Awareness of the EMMA Plan procedures aids in supporting the agencies' ability to maintain services in times of disaster or emergency.

Section 5: Information Collection, Analysis,

Dissemination & Reporting

Collection

Information collection includes the tracking and documentation of all emergency shelters operated in the Ventura County OA. The MCS Branch Coordinator collects information related to shelter status and services through direct communication with the shelter manager(s), access to DRRMS, and via other intelligence sources.

Analysis

Disaster Response and Recovery Management System

Shelters operate in a manner that creates a physically and programmatically accessible environment. DRRMS is a real time operational tool that helps to achieve this level of integration through efficient information gathering, service delivery integration, and data retention. The system is used to register individuals at TEPs or shelters through streamlined scanning methodology and allows for the gathering of needs and services via a secondary assessment. Information collected includes but is not limited to food allergies, disaster medical and mental health needs, assistive devices and durable medical equipment, means to facilitate effective communication or physical access, and service animal data. For those consenting, their information is analyzed and shared with partner organizations who aid in providing shelter residents with the appropriate service(s) or accommodation(s). Additional analysis of DRMS shelter data performed by the MCS Branch Coordinator in the OA EOC enhances situational awareness and reporting.

Dissemination

As an integral component of the overall public information effort, communications internal and external to shelters should strive to be fully inclusive so that all individuals may access the information.

Internal to Shelters

Within the shelter, when communicating with shelter residents, the shelter Public Information Officer (PIO) should consider the following:



- Regular briefings and posting of information are a valuable tool in reducing the impact of rumors.
- Communications needs of residents should be considered. These needs may include sign language interpreting for those who are Deaf, increased volume for those who are hard of hearing, audio description for those who are Blind or low vision, alternate language interpretation, etc.
- Shelter residents should be informed as much as possible about the status of the disaster or incident that has resulted in the need for evacuation and sheltering.
- Shelter residents should be informed about shelter status, including the anticipated date of closure if available.

External to Shelters

During an emergency, affected local jurisdictions disseminate information about the immediate impact of the emergency to keep the public informed about what has happened, the actions of emergency response agencies, and to summarize the expected outcomes of the emergency actions. When the OA EOC is activated, information related to the incident is managed by OES and posted to [VC Emergency](#).

The lead for all public information related to a care and shelter operation is the PIO. All public communications should be coordinated with the PIO and OES. Communication about location and access to shelters – both physical and programmatic – should be directed to the public and should keep in mind the functional needs of members of the public.

Emergency Operations Center Hotline

During Level 1 Full Activation of the OA EOC, a hotline may be staffed by trained personnel for one or more operational periods, up to the duration of the incident. The EOC hotline functions as part of the Joint Information System to provide current incident information in English and Spanish with operators having access to interpretation services for a multitude of other languages. It serves as a dedicated communication line to provide critical information to the public during an incident, a disaster or major event. Live operators enhance access to current incident information for residents who do not have access to web-based technology and/or who require assistance navigating the information and GIS mapping products available on [VC Emergency](#). During Mass Casualty Incidents, the hotline may be utilized to assist incident responders in gathering information about missing individuals and connect concerned callers with information about loved ones impacted by the incident.

Disaster Preparedness Database

HSA is responsible for the implementation and maintenance of cost-effective services that safeguard the physical, emotional, and social wellbeing of the people of the County. HSA maintains the Disaster Preparedness Database (DPD) of individuals receiving services from the following programs: Area Agency on Aging, Adult Protective Services, CalFresh, California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids, Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants, Children and Family Services, General Relief, In-Home Supportive Services, Medi-Cal, Public Administrator, Refugee Cash Assistance, and Welfare to Work.

During emergencies, the DisasterBridge may be accessed to perform an analysis of clients and their proximity to the current threat or hazard. This intel is shared with the HSA Critical Incident Group. For advisories such as PSPS or heat events, the MCS Duty Officer or Branch Coordinator will send a notification via DisasterBridge with information to aid in HSA client preparedness. During incidents resulting in evacuation warnings or orders, direct contact with clients included in the HSA Critical Incident Group reports may be warranted as determined by the respective program leadership. The intel may also be used to inform the MCS Branch Coordinator of potential needs of individuals who could present to shelters.

Reporting

The MCS Branch Coordinator should ensure the information collected from DRRMS, shelter managers, and other intelligence sources is reported to the OA EOC and/or the CDSS Disaster Services Branch every 24 hours. Information in reports should include but not be limited to shelter status, type and number of services provided to shelter residents, and mutual aid status.

Appendix A: Acronyms

ACRONYM	DEFINITION
AAR/IP	After-Action Report / Improvement Plan
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADAAA	ADA Amendments Act
AFN	Access and Functional Needs
ARC	American Red Cross
CAL OES	California Office of Emergency Services
CALSAWS	California Statewide Automated Welfare System
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CDSS	California Department of Social Services
CMS	Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
DOC	Department Operations Center
DPD	Disaster Preparedness Database
DRC	Disaster Recovery Center
DRRMS	Disaster Response and Recovery Management System
DSW	Disaster Service Worker
EMMA	Emergency Management Mutual Aid
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EOC	Emergency Operations Center

EOP	Emergency Operations Plan
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FAC	Family Assistance Center
FAST	Functional Assessment Service Team
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
HSA	Human Services Agency
LAC	Local Assistance Center
MCS	Mass Care and Shelter
MOU/MOA	Memoranda of Understanding/Agreement
NIMS	National Incident Management System
OA	Operational Area
OES	Office of Emergency Services
OHSEPR	Office of Human Services Emergency Preparedness and Response
PIO	Public Information Officer
SACHS	Southern Area Consortium of Human Services
SEMS	Standardized Emergency Management System
TEP	Temporary Evacuation Point
VCAS	Ventura County Animal Services
VOAD	Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

Appendix B: Regulations and Authorities

Local

- Ventura County Emergency Operations Plan

State

- California Government Code
 - o Title 2, Division 1, Chapter 7, Sections 8550-8668, California Emergency Services Act
 - o Title 2, Division 1, Chapter 7.5, Sections 8680 - 8692, California Disaster Assistance Act
 - o Title 2, Division 3, Part 1, Chapter 1, Article 9.5, Section 11135
 - o Title 1, Chapter 8, Sections 3100-3109, Oath or Affirmation of Allegiance for Disaster Service Workers and Public Employees
- California Code of Regulations
 - o Title 19, Division 2, Chapter 1, Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS)
 - o Title 22 Sections 72551, 80023, 81023, 82023, 87212, and 101174, Disaster and Mass Casualty Plan
- California Health and Safety Codes
 - o Division 2, Chapter 2, Article 1, Section 1262.5
 - o Division 2, Chapter 2, Section 1336.3, Duties of facility in event of emergency
- California State Emergency Plan
- California Disaster and Civil Defense Master Mutual Aid Agreement
- California Emergency Managers Mutual Aid (EMMA) Plan

Federal

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and ADA Amendment Act (ADAAA) of 2008
- Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006, as amended (H.R. 5441, PL 109-295, § 689)
- Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006
- Homeland Security Act of 2002
- Sections 504 & 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, P.L. 93-288, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 5121-5206)
- National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- National Response Framework, Emergency Support Function (ESF) #6.
- Congressional Charter of the American Red Cross (36 U.S.C. §§300101-300113)
- Executive Order 13347 – Individuals with Disabilities in Emergency Preparedness