

# FOR COMMENT AND REVIEW ONLY

## EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION-15- PUBLIC INFORMATION

### PRIMARY AGENCY

Kentucky Division of Emergency Management

### SUPPORT AGENCIES

All State Cabinets, Agencies and Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) that may require Public Information support or whose public affairs assets may be deployed during an emergency incident.

Office of the Governor  
Department for Public Health  
Department for Environmental Protection

### MISSION

The mission of ESF-15 is to keep officials and the citizens of the Commonwealth informed of the developing emergency situation, to give instructions for protective actions in the event of a threatened or actual natural, man made, technological or terrorist incident, to control rumors and speculation, and to provide recovery operations instructions.

### ASSUMPTIONS

ESF-15 may provide emergency management information to the general public and news media during both crisis and non-crisis periods .

The Kentucky Division of Emergency Management (KyEM), through its Public Information Officer (PIO) will coordinate the dissemination of all official public information from state, local and private emergency services and disaster response agencies providing support during the emergency or disaster.

During an emergency or disaster, ESF-15 will disseminate information working with representatives from all participating parties to provide an accurate and uniform picture of response and recovery efforts for the event. ESF-15 will also coordinate the dissemination of information pertaining to health and safety concerns related to the event.

The scope of information that must be provided in the event of a disaster will exceed the resources of a single state agency. Support from state agency communicators is critical and all information must be disseminated from a central source.

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Local communities will designate a spokesperson to provide a factual, uniform message of the events in their community. If a County has not designated an individual to serve in this role, the County Emergency Management Director will have this responsibility.

State and local officials and information specialists will work together to provide a uniform and accurate picture of emergency management operations.

## DIRECTION AND CONTROL

Upon activation of the Commonwealth Emergency Operations Center (CEOC) to Level 3 or a higher level of severity and when multiple jurisdictions and multiple agencies are involved, the KyEM PIO will establish a Commonwealth Joint Information Center (CJIC) and serve as its coordinator .

The KyEM PIO will request support from outside agencies and deployment of agency PIOs to the CJIC. The CJIC may be either a physical or virtual location. Information to be distributed to the media and public is provided through the CJIC composed of PIOs from each participating agency with a lead role in the response. Additional personnel may be requested if deemed necessary.

The CJIC Manager will brief incoming PIOs of the situation and will assign reporting PIOs to key positions such as, Incident Lead PIO, CJIC PIO Team, Media Monitor, Media Liaison, Phone Team and News Writers as needed to properly staff ESF-15 for the event. In the event the CJIC Manager is unavailable, the KyEM PIO will appoint a substitute CJIC Manager.

The KyEM PIO will coordinate with the CEOC and the Commonwealth Unified Command.

If the KyEM PIO is absent, the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) PIO or Kentucky National Guard (KyNG) PAO shall assume this responsibility. All information will be approved by the UC and coordinated through the CJIC before dissemination.

The KyEM PIO will take the lead in coordinating information with the CJIC Team and the release of information to the Governor's Office and media outlets through the Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs Officer (KYNG PAO).

During CJIC activations, the KyEM PIO and CJIC PIO Team will determine the appropriate spokesman for all state agencies under ESF-15.

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## CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

### Operational Phases

#### Preparedness

ESF-15 will review and update disaster procedures as they relate to the collection and dissemination of public information on the local, state and federal levels.

ESF-15 will assist city, county and state officials and organizations in establishing procedures, policies and formats to be used for the provision of emergency management information during a disaster or emergency.

The KyEM PIO, along with any additional state agency or non-profit organization's PIO will implement a public information program which includes planning and directing public awareness campaigns for such items as severe weather, earthquakes, flooding, tornados and hazardous material incidents.

The KyEM PIO will maintain the agency's website and provide a link to the FEMA's website where the public can read the most up-to-date information on disaster preparedness activities.

#### Response

ESF-15 will coordinate the uniform release of public information regarding emergency management response activities. These activities may include: shelter and feeding locations, road closure information, school closings, injury and fatality statistics, boil water advisories, physical and mental health information, information on environmental hazards and any other type of information that may be required to assist citizens during an emergency.

ESF-15 will assist in the preparation and dissemination of external situation reports documenting on-going response operations and provide updates to the Governor's office and other key agencies

#### Recovery

ESF-15 will coordinate the dissemination of information regarding recovery efforts including information on the location of Disaster Response Centers established by FEMA, and information on public assistance and individual assistance available to citizens through various agencies and non-profit organizations.

ESF-15 will coordinate the dissemination of information regarding recovery efforts and FEMA's Public Assistance Program to officials and eligible non-profit organizations.

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## ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

### Primary Agency-Kentucky Division of Emergency Management (KyEM)

KyEM is responsible for the activation and operation of ESF-15 for the Commonwealth

KyEM is responsible for assignment of an ESF-15 Coordinator to work in the CEOC.

KyEM is responsible for the notification of agencies to provide PIOs to the CJIC

When required, KyEM is responsible for the assignment of an ESF-15 Coordinator to the Federal Joint Field Office ESF-15 as described in the National Response Plan.

KyEM is responsible for developing and maintaining Standard Operating Procedures for ESF-15.

### Support Agencies-General

All designated support agencies shall provide an individual(s) to serve in the CJIC in a capacity assigned by the KyEM PIO.

All supporting agencies for this ESF will provide information and resources as required by the ESF Coordinator to ensure the proper functioning of ESF-15.

Supporting Agencies will ensure their representatives to ESF-15 are properly trained and exercised on the plans and procedures relating to their work.

When required, Supporting Agencies will assign ESF-15 Coordinators to the Federal Joint Field Office ESF-15 as described in the National Response Plan.

### Support Agencies – Specific

#### Office of the Governor

Coordinate information between the Governor's Office and the CJIC and assist the CJIC in the preparation of public statements regarding the Governor's response to a disaster or emergency. Recognize the CJIC is the official source during declared CJIC operations.

Respond to questions concerning the Governor's responses to the disaster/emergency situation and expected activities including Declarations of Emergency or Disaster.

#### Cabinet for Health and Family Services – Department for Public Health

Provide an individual(s) to the CJIC who shall coordinate the preparation and dissemination of information regarding human health conditions, concerns and threats.

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Prepare public health awareness and warning materials for dissemination through the CJIC. Such materials may include food and water health-safety advisories and information on mold concerns in flooded homes.

Coordinate preparation of public health statements between the Department for Public Health Department Operations Center (DPH-DOC) and the CJIC.

Provide technical spokespersons to assist the lead PIO for specific incidents such as a radiological emergencies.

Assist the CJIC in the preparation and dissemination of public information regarding special needs sheltering.

Disseminate information to special needs populations the Kentucky Outreach Information Network (KOIN).

## **Department for Environmental Protection**

Provide information on environmental degradation resulting from a disaster or emergency, possible destruction of environmentally sensitive areas, sanitary and water treatment plant issues, and environmental impacts from hazardous materials releases and other public safety issues.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

This ESF will be reviewed annually by the Kentucky Division of Emergency Management Planning Branch and the ESF-15 CEOC Coordinator.

KyEM will develop and review ESF-15 Standard Operating Procedures and provide an updated copy to the KyEM Planning Branch no later than December 1st of each year.

## **REFERENCES**

KRS 39A-F

The National Response Plan

The National Incident Management System

Kentucky Division of Emergency Management, State Emergency Operations Center, Standard Operating Procedures

ESF-15 Standard Operating Procedures