



Connecticut Housing Finance Authority

Resource Template
For Housing Authorities

Emergency Operations
Plan

2018

Resource Template for Housing Authorities
Emergency Operations Plan

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Resource Template for Housing Authorities Emergency Operations Plan

The Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) provides the following as a resource template for use by Housing Authorities with properties in the State-Sponsored Housing Portfolio (SSHP). It is intended to provide a framework. This material is provided solely as a reference; it should not be used or construed as legal advice or as a legal document or legally binding. CHFA assumes no liability or responsibility for any use of this document beyond its intended purpose as a general reference tool/template. Housing Authorities should coordinate their efforts with local emergency management authorities.

Introduction, Scope, and Limitations

Each municipality in Connecticut, as required by Connecticut General Statute 28-7 and regulations promulgated thereto is required to implement and maintain an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). While Housing Authorities are not required by statute to maintain an EOP, a Housing Authority-specific EOP (the Plan), properly constructed, can facilitate a Housing Authority's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a large scale emergency impacting housing authority staff, residents, and facilities. It is also important for Housing Authorities to engage with the local Emergency Management Director (EMD) to assure open lines of communication and a mutual understanding of needs and resources. This relationship should be established and maintained as a normal course of business; attempting to establish these relationships when an emergency is forecast or imminent is contrary to best practices. In other words, Housing Authorities should be viewed as a stakeholder in the local emergency management process. The Plan should be reviewed by the EMD.

This template can be customized as needed to fit the needs or size of a particular Housing Authority. References to various committees, policy approval processes, resources, etc. should be adjusted as needed to align with local policies or practices. Similarly, specific planning steps listed in this template are not mandates, but rather areas to be considered as a Housing Authority develops its own Plan.

The Plan, once approved, is for use by the local Housing Authority and is not meant to enlarge the Housing Authority's responsibilities or civil liability in any way. It should not be construed as creating a higher standard of care with respect to third-party claims. Failure to follow the approved Plan can only serve as a basis for an administrative review by the Housing Authority for improvements such as additional staff training.

1. Statement of Purpose and Executive Summary

The purpose of the Plan is to enhance the Housing Authority's ability to effectively prepare for and respond to emergencies and disasters by establishing policies and procedures that facilitate the:

- Protection of life and property.
- Effective use of Housing Authority resources.
- Effective and timely communication between staff, residents, and local emergency services and support agencies.
- Identification of vulnerable residents requiring specialized assistance.
- Rapid return to normal operations.

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The Housing Authority will establish an emergency preparedness Committee (Committee) comprised of key personnel who will meet on a regular basis (as determined by the Committee) to oversee plan implementation, review, and training. The Executive Director shall cause an After Action Review (AAR) to be completed after any incident involving an implementation of any component of the Plan. The Committee will review the AAR to measure the effectiveness of the response and take action on any recommended updates to the Plan. Should modifications to the Plan be warranted, the Executive Director shall draft recommendations for changes to the Plan and present same for approval by the Board of Commissioners or Town (approving authority).

The Plan shall be reviewed no less than annually by the Executive Director and reauthorized by the approving authority and a record made thereof. Any changes to the Plan should be reviewed by the local EMD to ensure alignment and coordination with local resources, best practices and local, state, and federal requirements. Any modifications to the Plan shall be presented to the approving authority for review and approval. All changes to the Plan shall be noted on the form provided with this Plan; the updated Plan shall then be distributed to relevant personnel as needed.

Discussion

An “emergency” is any unplanned event that poses a threat of injury or death or a risk of damage or destruction to property and infrastructure. Emergencies include disasters, generally defined as a large-scale, natural events. In Connecticut, these generally include hurricanes, blizzards, winter storms, flooding and to a lesser degree, tornadoes and earthquakes. Sustained power outages can be a by-product of these events. Emergencies also include events caused by humans, such as fires, explosions, hazardous materials incidents, radiological incidents, active shooter(s), civil unrest, or widespread illness.

Each municipality in Connecticut maintains a designated EMD; additionally, each municipality is required, under Connecticut General Statute 28-7, to have, consistent with guidelines established by the State, an EOP. While the required plan covers specific tasks by various agencies and disciplines, it does not specifically address public housing. To that end, this Plan is intended to augment, and not supplant, the local EOP. In the event of an operational conflict between a municipality’s EOP and the Housing Authority Plan, the municipality’s EOP shall control. It is therefore essential that the Plan is reviewed by the local EMD to ensure proper alignment and coordination in the event of an emergency.

2. Assumptions / Responsibility and Control

- The Housing Authority is vulnerable to emergencies as defined above.
- An emergency may occur at any time, with or without warning.
- An emergency may require the rapid deployment of resources, some of which may not be under the control of the Housing Authority.
- The Housing Authority must remain ready to respond quickly to emergencies.

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The Executive Director of the Housing Authority is tasked overall responsibility for emergency operations consistent with this Plan and shall designate appropriate staff to discharge as directed specific aspects of the Plan. The Executive Director shall designate a suitably experienced and trained staff member to act in the event the Executive Director shall be unavailable.

3. Implementation and Training

The successful implementation of the Plan depends on the Housing Authority staff understanding the Plan and their respective roles in it. Training on the Plan should take place on a no less than annual basis or whenever a substantive change to the Plan occurs. Designated staff members should be trained in, or at a minimum be familiar with, the *National Incident Management System (NIMS) Incident Command System (ICS)*. NIMS and ICS are essential command and control components of any local EOP; your local EMD can provide further guidance and information on available training resources. Additionally, a fundamental understanding of the municipality's EOP and the resources available therein will be beneficial.

The Housing Authority should ensure that residents are aware of the existence of the Plan and residents should also be made aware of the notification protocols established to alert residents in the event of a disaster or other emergency.

4. Communications and Contact Information [TAB 1](#)

The Plan should, at all times, contain current contact information for all staff reasonably expected to have a role in Plan implementation. Primary and secondary phone numbers should be maintained and responsibility assigned for designated personnel to initiate contact in the event of Plan implementation. Group email can facilitate the dissemination of official information.

Additionally, current contact information for local emergency service directors, EMD's, social service providers, health department, relief agencies, and service providers such as fuel suppliers should be maintained. *****Non-public and personal contact information should be treated as confidential.*****

5. Residents Needing Accommodation and/or Assistance [TAB 2](#)

Information on residents who may require specialized assistance in an emergency should be maintained. This information and emergency contact information is furnished **voluntarily** by residents. People with access and functional needs must be considered. This can include, but not be limited to, residents who have disabilities, or require ongoing medical therapy such as oxygen. Service animals, emotional support animals or general pets must also be considered in emergency planning. Options for animal care and/or sheltering should be discussed with your local emergency management authority and be part of your emergency preparedness planning.

6. Designation of Command Center

There should be a Housing Authority-designated Command Center to coordinate the response of the staff during any activation of the Plan. The Command Center should be located in a structure suitably constructed for continued operations under severe conditions and should be equipped with standby generator power. To the extent possible, ample workspace, communications infrastructure, restrooms, and staff respite areas should be contemplated within the Command Center. The Housing Authority should consult with the EMD on available town facilities designated as Command Centers for better coordination of efforts.

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7. Pre-Emergency Considerations [TAB 3](#), [TAB 4](#)

Some emergencies may occur suddenly and without warning. It is essential that Housing Authority staff maintain a vigilant state of readiness – including up-to-date contact information and resident files – along with a sound working knowledge of the Plan to allow for a coordinated and competent response to these types of emergencies.

The Housing Authority Executive Director should establish a set meeting schedule with staff responsible for activities within the Plan, whether monthly, quarterly or annually as appropriate. The local EMD can be invited to participate to enhance coordination efforts.

Other emergencies, particularly some weather events, afford advance notifications and forecasts of impending events. These advance notifications and forecasts must be used to prioritize and prepare for the event. Depending on the length of preparation time afforded, the Executive Director/designee should use this pre-event time to confirm assignments of staff responsible for the following activities:

Staffing and Resident Outreach

- Ensure that all staff contact information is current and confirm availability of staff within the time frame of the event.
- Ensure individual staff is aware of their assigned responsibilities pre-event, during, and post event.
 - Staff should be prepared for extended work hours consistent with policies. Changes of clothes, toiletries, required medication, phone chargers and ample food should be contemplated.
 - Staff should prepare their own family and home for an extended absence of the staff member.
 - Ensure that ample bottled water is available for staff throughout the event.
 - For a potentially prolonged event, arrangements should be made for sheltering and providing meals to staff.
- Ensure that staffing and protocols related to the operation of the Command Center are understood.
- Coordinate with the local EMD to identify potential areas of concern relative to the specific type of event.
 - Ensure that evacuation protocols, including transportation to shelters, are clearly identified.
- Ensure that all resident files and emergency contact information is updated.
- Ensure that all residents potentially requiring specialized assistance are identified.
- Outreach to residents who should be encouraged to make contact with family or other “in case of emergency” contacts to confirm availability to assist if needed.
- Notification to residents of recommended pre-event steps and notification procedures relative to the event.
 - Residents should be advised of evacuation protocols.
 - Distribution and posting of event-specific information should take place via web site, community room boards, email or other means typically used in resident engagement.
- Ensure that some petty cash is available to purchase necessary supplies should power outages disable credit card transactions.
- In the event the Housing Authority has limited resources or staff, consider mutual assistance agreements with contiguous or nearby Housing Authorities or providers.

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Preparation of Physical Plant and Equipment (including Communications Systems)

- Review existing preventative maintenance plans and update/address outstanding items.
- Accomplish high-priority repairs subject to worsening or posing enhanced risk during the event, e.g., loose roofing, windows, doors, gutters, loose signage, etc.
- Safely stow and secure outdoor items that could pose a projectile hazard during the event, e.g., chairs, tables, recreation equipment, patio umbrellas, outdoor grills, etc.
- Ensure all emergency lighting and exit signs are in working order.
- Ensure that all fire alarm and fire protections systems are in working order.
- Ensure that all Housing Authority vehicles are fueled, positioned and appropriately equipped for the event.
- Ensure that all necessary hand tools and equipment are inspected as ready-for-use and located for easy deployment.
- Ensure that all standby and emergency generators are tested for proper working order and fully fueled. Portable generators should be positioned for ease of deployment with all necessary power cords. Refueling protocols and fuel deliveries from a supplier should be arranged.
- Ensure all sewer ejector and water supply pumps are functioning properly and are part of the emergency power plan.
- Ensure that all Uninterrupted Power Supply (UPS) systems are functioning properly.
- Ensure that other power equipment, e.g., snow blowers, tractors, chain saws, etc. are in proper working order with ample fuel supplies and spare parts.
 - Ensure that related safety equipment, e.g., eye protection, hearing protection, headgear, and safety gloves needed for the power equipment is readily available in sufficient supply.
 - Staff assigned to outside activities should wear high visibility vests, shirts or jackets to aid in safety and identification.
- Ensure that supplies needed for emergency response, e.g., flashlights/batteries, barricades, cones, salt/sand, sandbags, tarps, plywood, basic lumber framing, etc. are readily available in ample supply.
- Ensure that the emergency medical supplies and fire extinguishers are ready for use and staff is made aware of the location(s) of same.
- Ensure that all telephone equipment and cellular telephones are in good working order and that staff is furnished with an up-to-date telephone list including a list of all staff, Command Center and related numbers, and local emergency contact numbers. To ensure coordination of effort, staff should be instructed that, to the extent possible, all contact with external agencies be coordinated through a designated person at the Command Center. In the event of a true emergency, staff should call 911.
- If using a Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP), aka wireless telephone system, determine if a non-VOIP phone line is maintained in the Command Center in the event of a VOIP failure.
- Ensure that all radios, whether portable or vehicle mounted, are tested for proper operation. Staff should be made aware of any special radio protocols to be used related to event. Portable radio charging stations should be located for ease of access and accountability.
- Ensure that charging locations for cellular telephones, with related power supplies and cords, are identified.
- Ensure that external annunciators, beacons, and voice communication systems are in proper working order.

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Information and information systems

- Ensure all sensitive electronic equipment is properly protected from power surges.
- Ensure all computerized data is properly backed up. The Housing Authority should routinely be doing a backup of data on a set schedule daily or some other frequency.
- Ensure critical paper records are secure and safe from flooding.

8. Plan Activation Considerations [TAB 5](#)

The Executive Director, or in the absence of the Executive Director the person designated to act in his/her absence, shall be authorized to activate the Plan. Upon the activation of the Plan, the Executive Director or designee shall direct all staff to be contacted and assembled for direction and deployment. The Executive Director or designee shall:

- Activate the Command Center.
- Maintain a roster of all staff reporting for work, including cellular phone number and assigned radio, if any.
- Maintain a log of each staff member's designated responsibilities.
- Coordinate to the extent needed with the local EMD, emergency services, and local government and other service agencies.
- Maintain responsibility for public information and media releases.
- Monitor potential hazards to residents, particularly those identified as potentially requiring specialized assistance.
- After the event, when safe to do so, carefully and completely document and photograph any damage or injury caused by the event.

9. Evacuation Protocols Considerations [TAB 6](#)

Evacuation of residents may be ordered by an official charged with that responsibility or may be of necessity due to damage to the facility rendering it hazardous or uninhabitable. Coordination of and responsibility for transportation of residents ordered evacuated is the responsibility of the local jurisdiction. Should an evacuation be ordered or become necessary, the Executive Director or designee should:

- Identify and record the title and name of the official initiating the evacuation.
- Identify residents who may require specialized assistance and/or specialized transportation.
- Notify residents of impending evacuation as soon as possible, with input from the official who will initiate the evacuation; ensure necessary medical equipment, prescription medications, walkers, etc. are prepared to accompany the resident.
 - Residents should notify family and "in case of emergency" contacts of impending evacuation.
 - Consider using resident identification tags, similar to hospital wrist bands, to list the resident's full name and critical medical information and emergency contact information. These can be printed in advance to be readily available.
- Assist local resources in coordinating evacuation efforts.
- Ensure that a log is maintained of each resident evacuated and the location to which they were evacuated.

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- Establish protocols for responding to family inquiries.
- Ensure that each resident is accounted for.
- Service animals, emotional support animals and pets must also be considered.

10. Recovery Considerations

Once deemed safe to do so, the Executive Director or designee shall coordinate a return to normal operations. This should include:

- Identifying and isolating immediate hazards such as downed or compromised utility lines, compromised sidewalks or parking areas, broken doors and windows, etc.
- A physical inspection of each unit to ensure suitability for return of the resident(s). Damage should be carefully documented and photographed. **If the emergency qualifies for Federal disaster relief, specific reporting requirements apply. Consult the local EMD for guidance. **
- Maintaining a log of residents returning to the facility and ensuring that medical equipment and prescriptions accompanying them from the facility upon evacuation have been returned with the resident.
- Coordinating with local authorities and service agencies alternate housing arrangements as needed.
- Identifying and posting available counseling and recovery resources for residents and staff.
- Notifying the insurance carrier, and oversight agencies such as CHFA, HUD or DOH promptly regarding damage.

11. After Action Review (AAR) and Documentation Considerations

The Executive Director should complete a written AAR of the Housing Authority response to the emergency. The AAR should include:

- A summary of the emergency, including type, date, duration, and total staff responding and total staff hours expended.
- A detailed accounting of injuries and damage/loss of Housing Authority facilities, vehicles, and equipment.
- An analysis of the effectiveness of the plan in response to the emergency with specific identification of gaps and deficiencies and recommended plan adjustments to remediate those gaps and deficiencies. The AAR should be forwarded to the Committee for consideration and further action.
- A debriefing with the local EMD is suggested for on-going coordination and improvement to processes.
- Detailed reports of the above will be necessary for any insurance claims or federal/state emergency assistance.

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TAB 1
XXX HOUSING AUTHORITY
Emergency Operations Plan
Contact and Call Down List
FOR FIRE, POLICE, AND MEDICAL EMERGENCIES, DIAL 9-1-1

(Executive Director) (work phone) (mobile phone) (email)		
Housing Authority Chair (Name) (Phone) (Email)	Maintenance Supervisor (Name) (Phone) (Email)	Resident Services Coordinator (Name) (Phone) (Email)
Housing Authority Members (Name) ((Phone) (Name) (Phone) (Name) (Phone) (Name) (Phone)	Maintenance Staff (Name) (Phone) (Name) (Phone) (Name) (Phone) (Name) (Phone)	Administration/Senior Staff (Name) (Phone) (Name) (Phone) (Name) (Phone) (Name) (Phone)

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Housing Authority Main Number _____

Housing Authority Command Center _____

Town/City Emergency Management Director (NAME) _____

Local Emergency Operations Center _____

Police/Fire/EMS Communications Center _____

(XXX) Electric Utility _____

(XXX) Gas Company _____

(XXX) Water Company _____

Town/City Hall Main Number _____

Town/City Health Director (NAME) _____

Town/City Social Services _____

Town/City Senior Center _____

Town/City Sewer Department _____

Town/City First Selectman/Mayor (NAME) _____

Town/City Emergency Shelter _____

Local American Red Cross _____

Emergency Transportation Services _____

Local Hospital Main _____

Local Electrician _____

Local Plumber _____

Local Carpenter/Contractor _____

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TAB 2
(NAME OF HOUSING SITE)
XXX Housing Authority
Emergency Operations Plan
Resident Assistance Roster

Name	Unit	Physical Disability/Mobility Impairment	Sensory Impairment	Oxygen/Medical Device	Other	Emergency Contact

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TAB 3
(NAME OF HOUSING SITE)
XXX HOUSING AUTHORITY
Emergency Operations Plan
Pre-Emergency Checklist

Staff

<i>Task</i>	<i>Name</i>
Contact information current?	_____
Staff availability verified?	_____
Assigned responsibilities verified?	_____
Staff ready for prolonged event?	_____
Command Center protocols reviewed?	_____
Coordinate with local EMD?	_____
At-risk residents identified?	_____
Residents contacted emergency contact?	_____
Residents aware of emergency protocols?	_____
Residents aware of evacuation protocols?	_____
Ready.gov information distributed?	_____

Physical Plant

High priority repairs made?	_____
Outdoor items stowed/secured?	_____
Life safety systems in working order?	_____
Heating and cooling systems checked?	_____
Heating fuel adequate?	_____
Emergency lighting checked?	_____
CO detectors checked?	_____
Fire detection/protection systems checked?	_____

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TAB 3 (cont.)

Equipment

<i>Task</i>	<i>Name</i>
Vehicles fueled and positioned?	_____
Hand tools ready for use?	_____
All generators fueled?	_____
All power equipment ready?	_____
All safety equipment ready?	_____
All emergency supplies ready?	_____
All medical supplies ready?	_____
All fire extinguishers ready?	_____

Communications

Phone system in working order?	_____
Contact info given to staff?	_____
All radios in working order and charged?	_____
Radio protocols reviewed?	_____
Radio chargers accessible?	_____
Cell phone chargers available?	_____
Back up phone lines working?	_____

Information and Information Systems

Surge protection in working order?	_____
All data backed up?	_____
Paper files secured and protected?	_____

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TAB 4
XXX HOUSING AUTHORITY
Emergency Operations Plan
Resource Guides

Ready.gov provides up-to-date and easy to understand resource material to better prepare residents to respond to an emergency. Arranged by event type, these pages will afford access to the most current information available.

The home page for www.ready.gov

For individuals with disabilities: <https://www.ready.gov/individuals-access-functional-needs>

For seniors: <https://www.ready.gov/seniors>

For pets and animals: <https://www.ready.gov/animals>

To prepare for an evacuation: <https://www.ready.gov/evacuating-yourself-and-your-family>

Sheltering guidelines: <https://www.ready.gov/shelter>

Snowstorms, extreme cold, and winter weather preparedness: <https://www.ready.gov/winter-weather>

Hurricane preparedness: <https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes>

Power outages: <https://www.ready.gov/power-outages>

Severe weather events: <https://www.ready.gov/severe-weather>

Thunderstorms and lightning: <https://www.ready.gov/thunderstorms-lightning>

Tornadoes: <https://www.ready.gov/tornadoes>

Hazardous materials incidents: <https://www.ready.gov/hazardous-materials-incidents>

Home fires: <https://www.ready.gov/home-fires>

Household chemical emergencies: <https://www.ready.gov/household-chemical-emergencies>

Emergency alerts: <https://www.ready.gov/alerts>

For additional language translations: <https://www.ready.gov/languages>

CT Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security: www.ct.gov/demhs

****Please note that items listed are all found on FEMA online emergency listings****

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TAB 5
XXX HOUSING AUTHORITY
Emergency Operations Plan
Activation Log

Date of Event ____/____/____

Type of Event _____

Command Center Opened _____ **Closed** _____

Staff Roster of Activity

Name	Assignment	Radio #	In	Out

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TAB 6
XXX HOUSING AUTHORITY
Emergency Operations Plan
Evacuation Log

Date of Event ____/____/____

Type of Event _____ Evacuation Ordered By _____

****MAINTAIN A LOG OF ALL ADDITIONAL EVACUATION ORDERS****

Resident Evacuation Log

Resident Name	Unit #	Evacuated To	Date/Time Evacuated	Date/Time Returned*

***Note Returning Resident Issues Here:**

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**Emergency Operations Plan
Approval Tracking Sheet**

Initially Adopted: Month/Day/Year

Annual Review Date: _____ Completed by: _____ Approved: _____

Annual Review Date: _____ Completed by: _____ Approved: _____

Annual Review Date: _____ Completed by: _____ Approved: _____

Annual Review Date: _____ Completed by: _____ Approved: _____

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**Emergency Operations Plan
Record of Changes**

Change Number	Page and Section	Detailed Description of Change	Date	Date Approved	Inserted by (name/ title)