

GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING HIGH-QUALITY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANS FOR INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION



FEMA



Introduction and Purpose

- **Our nation's institutions of higher education (IHEs) are entrusted:**
 - to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for students, faculty, and staff who live, work, and study on campus
 - to plan ahead to help ensure the safety and general welfare of all members of the campus community
- **In collaboration with their local government and community partners, IHEs can:**
 - plan for these potential emergencies
 - create a higher education Emergency Operations Plan (higher ed EOP).
- **The guide will assist planning teams responsible for developing and revising a higher ed EOP in their efforts.**

IHEs Face Unique Challenges

IHEs face unique challenges in planning for potential emergencies in terms of:

- **Geography** (span large areas, have satellite locations, include complex enterprises, such as hospitals, athletic venues)
- **Environment** (open campuses integrated into surrounding community, visitors coming and going)
- **Governance** (house sensitive information, sponsor activities that increase vulnerability, like research and government contracts, have decentralized organizational structures)
- **Population Served** (campus population in flux, varied)

Guide's Four Sections

1. **Principles** of emergency management planning for IHEs.
2. **Process** for developing, implementing, and continually refining a higher ed EOP with community partners.
3. **Discussion** of the content of higher ed EOPs.
4. **“A Closer Look”** which considers key topics that support emergency management for IHEs, including:
 - the *Clery Act*,
 - information sharing,
 - international students,
 - psychological first aid,
 - campus climate,
 - campus law enforcement officers,
 - and *active shooter situations*.

Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) 8

PPD-8 describes the nation's approach to preparedness and **defines** preparedness around **five** mission areas:

- **Prevention** means the capabilities necessary to avoid, deter, or stop an imminent crime or threatened or actual mass casualty incident.
- **Protection** means the capabilities to secure IHEs against acts of terrorism and man-made or natural disasters.
- **Mitigation** means the capabilities necessary to eliminate or reduce the loss of life and property damage by lessening the impact of an event or emergency.
- **Response** means the capabilities necessary to stabilize an emergency once it has already happened or is certain to happen in an unpreventable way.
- **Recovery** means the capabilities necessary to assist IHEs affected by an event or emergency in restoring the learning environment.

Planning Principles

Planning

- must be supported by IHE senior leadership.
- uses assessment to customize plans to the individual institution.
- considers all threats and hazards.
- provides for the access and functional needs of the whole IHE community.
- considers all settings and all times.
- considers the individual preparedness of students, faculty, and staff.
- meets the requirements of all applicable laws.

Creating and revising a model emergency operations plan is done by following a collaborative process.

The Planning Process

- Is **flexible** and can be **adapted** to accommodate an IHEs' unique characteristics and situation.
- Requires that IHEs work with their **community partners**, including first responders, emergency managers, public health officials, mental health officials, other local governmental officials and community organizations.

Steps in the Planning Process



- **Identify Core Planning Team:** The core planning team should include representatives from across the IHE, be small enough to permit close collaboration, yet large enough to be representative of the campus and its broader community, and be large enough to not place an undue burden on any single person.
 - The planning team is strongly encouraged to include a local or regional emergency planning representative among local or regional, state, tribal, and federal agency to promote coordination.

- **Form a Common Framework:** All team members need to take time to learn each other's vocabulary, command structure, and culture to facilitate effective planning.

- **Define and Assign Roles and Responsibilities:** Each person involved in the development and refinement of the plan should know his or her role and responsibilities in the planning process.
- **Determine a Regular Schedule of Meetings:** IHE emergency management planning is an ongoing effort that is reinforced through regularly scheduled planning meetings.

Identify Threats and Hazards:

- The planning team first needs to understand the threats and hazards faced by the IHE and the surrounding community.

Assess the Risk Posed by the Identified Threats and Hazards:

- Once an initial set of threats and hazards have been identified, the planning team should select suitable assessment tools to evaluate the risk posed by the identified threats and hazards.

Assessments will be used not only to develop the initial plan but also to inform updates and revisions to the plan on an ongoing basis.

Type:

Site Assessment

Description:

A site assessment examines the safety, accessibility, and emergency preparedness of the buildings, facilities, and grounds.

Purpose:

- Increased **understanding** of the potential impact of threats and hazards on the buildings, facilities, and grounds.
- Increased **understanding** of risk and vulnerabilities of the buildings, facilities, and grounds when developing the plan.
- **Knowledge** of which facilities are physically accessible to individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs and can be used in compliance with the law.

Type:

Climate Assessment

Description:

In a nurturing, inclusive environment, members of a community are more likely to succeed, feel safe, and report threats. If a student survey is used to assess culture and climate, student privacy must be protected.

Purpose:

- **Knowledge** of students' and staff's perceptions of their safety.
- **Knowledge** of problem behaviors that need to be addressed to improve climate.

Type:

Threat Assessment Teams

Description:

A campus threat assessment analyzes campus members' communications and behaviors to determine whether or not a member may pose a threat.

Purpose:

- Students, staff, or other persons that may pose a threat are identified before a threat develops into an incident and are referred for services.

Type:

Capacity Assessment

Description:

A capacity assessment examines the capabilities of students, faculty, and staff as well as the services and material resources of community partners.

Purpose:

- An increased understanding of the resources available.
- Information about staff capabilities will help planners assign roles and responsibilities in the plan.

- One effective method for organizing information is to create a table with a range of information about each possible threat and hazard, including any new threats or hazards identified through the assessment process. The table should include:
 - Probability of frequency of occurrence;
 - Magnitude;
 - Time available to warn staff, students, and visitors;
 - Duration; and
 - Follow-on and cascading effects of threat or hazard.

Prioritize Threats and Hazards

- Next, the planning team should use the information it has organized to compare and prioritize risks posed by threats and hazards.

Hazard	Probability	Magnitude	Warning	Duration	Risk Priority
Fire	4. Highly likely 3. Likely 2. Possible 1. Unlikely	4. Catastrophic 3. Critical 2. Limited 1. Negligible	4. Minimal 3. 6–12 hrs. 2. 12–24 hrs. 1. 24+ hrs.	4. 12+ hrs. 3. 6–12 hrs. 2. 3–6 hrs. 1. < 3 Hours	High Medium Low
Hazmat spill on campus	4. Highly likely 3. Likely 2. Possible 1. Unlikely	4. Catastrophic 3. Critical 2. Limited 1. Negligible	4. Minimal 3. 6–12 hrs. 2. 12–4 hrs. 1. 24+ hrs.	4. 12+ hrs. 3. 6–12 hrs. 2. 3–6 hrs. 1. < 3 hrs.	High Medium Low

After completing Step 2, the planning team has a prioritized (high, medium, or low risk) list of threats and hazards based on the results of the risk assessment.

The planning team

- Decides ***which of the threats and hazards identified in Step 2 will be addressed*** in the higher ed EOP
- Develops ***goals and objectives*** for each
- Develops ***at least three goals*** indicating desired outcome for
 - (1) ***before***,
 - (2) ***during***, and
 - (3) ***after*** the threat or hazard

For a fire, for instance, three possible goals include

- Hazard Goal Example 1 (***before***): Prevent a fire from occurring on campus grounds.
- Hazard Goal Example 2 (***during***): Protect all persons from injury and property from damage by the fire.
- Hazard Goal Example 3 (***after***): Provide necessary medical attention to those in need.

- Often, planners will need to identify multiple objectives in support of a single goal.
- After the team has finished compiling the objectives for the prioritized threats and hazards, it will find that certain critical ***“functions”*** or activities apply to more than one threat or hazard.
- After identifying these functions, the planning team should develop three goals for each function. These commonly occurring functions will be contained in a ***“Functional Annex”*** within the higher ed EOP.

Identify Courses of Action

- Courses of action address the what, who, when, where, why, how for each threat, hazard, and function.
- Courses of action include criteria for determining how and when each response will be implemented under a variety of circumstances.
- Subsequently, the planning team develops response protocols and procedures to support these efforts.

Possible courses of action are typically developed using the following steps:

- Depict the scenario.
- Determine the amount of time available to respond.
- Identify decision points.
- Develop courses of action.

Select Courses of Action

- After developing courses of action, planners compare the costs and benefits of each proposed course of action against the goals and objectives.
- Based on this comparison, planners select the preferred course or courses of action to move forward in the planning process.

After selecting courses of action

- The planning team identifies resources necessary to accomplish each course of action without regard to resource availability.
- Once the planning team identifies all of the requirements, it begins matching available resources to requirements.

Format the Plan

- An effective higher ed EOP is presented in a way that makes it easy for users to find the information they need and that is compatible with local and state plans.

Write the Plan

- As the planning team works through the draft, the members add necessary tables, charts, and other supporting graphics.

Review the Plan

- Planners should check the written plan for compliance with applicable laws and for its usefulness in practice.

Approve and Share the Plan

- After finalizing the plan, the planning team should present it to the appropriate leadership and obtain official approval of the plan.
- The team should then share the plan with all community partners and all other entities that have a role in the plan, including relevant local, regional, and/or state agencies with which the plan will be coordinated.

Train Stakeholders on the Plan and Their Roles

- Everyone involved in the plan needs to know their roles and responsibilities before, during and after an emergency.

Key training components include:

- Hold a meeting.
- Visit evacuation sites.
- Give involved parties appropriate and relevant literature on the plan, policies, and procedures.
- Post key information throughout the building.
- Familiarize the campus community with the plan and community partners.
- Train members of the campus community on the skills necessary to fulfill their roles.

Exercise the Plan

- The more a plan is practiced and stakeholders are trained on the plan, the more effectively they will be able to act before, during, and after an emergency to lessen the impact on life and property.

Review, Revise, and Maintain the Plan

- This step closes the loop in the planning process. It focuses on adding the information gained from exercising the plan to the research collected in Step 2, starting the planning cycle over again.
- The planning team should ensure that all first responders, local emergency management, and all community partners have the most current version of the higher ed EOP.

The Basic Plan

*The **Basic Plan** section of the higher ed EOP provides an overview of the IHE's approach to operations before, during, and after an emergency.*

Introductory material

- can enhance accountability with community partners, including first responders, local emergency managers, and public and mental health officials, and make a higher ed EOP easier to use.

Purpose

- sets the foundation for the rest of the higher ed EOP. The basic plan's purpose is a general statement of what the higher ed EOP is meant to do.

Situation Overview

- explains why a higher ed EOP is necessary.

The Basic Plan, cont.

Concept of Operations

- explains in broad terms the authorized IHE administrator's intent with regard to an operation.

Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

- provides an overview of the broad roles and responsibilities of IHE faculty and staff, students, families, first responders, local emergency management, and community partners, and of organizational functions *during* all emergencies.

Direction, Control, and Coordination

- describes the framework for all direction, control, and coordination activities.

Information Collection, Analysis, and Dissemination

- addresses the role of information in the successful implementation of the activities that occur before, during, and after an emergency.

The Basic Plan, cont.

Training and Exercises

- describes the critical training and exercise activities the IHE will use in support of the plan.

Administration, Finance, and Logistics

- covers general support requirements and the availability of services and support for all types of emergencies, as well as general policies for managing resources.

Plan Development and Maintenance

- discusses the overall approach to planning and the assignment of plan development and maintenance responsibilities.

Authorities and References

- provides the legal basis for emergency operations and activities.

Functional Annexes Content

- Functional annexes focus on **critical operational functions** and the courses of action developed to carry them out.
- This section of the guide describes **functional annexes** that IHEs should address in developing a comprehensive, high-quality higher ed EOP.
- Also included in this section are issues the planning team should consider as it develops **goals, objectives, and courses of action** for these functions.

Functional Annexes Content, cont.

Evacuation Annex

- focuses on the courses of action that IHEs will execute to evacuate buildings, facilities, and grounds.

Lockdown Annex

- focuses on the courses of action IHEs will execute to secure IHE buildings, facilities, and grounds during incidents that pose an immediate threat of violence in or around the IHE, such as a crime or bomb threat.

Shelter-in-Place Annex

- focuses on courses of action when students, faculty, and staff are required to remain indoors, potentially for an extended period of time, because it is safer inside a building or a room than outside.

Functional Annexes Content, cont.

Accounting for All Persons Annex

- focuses on developing courses of action for accounting for the whereabouts and well-being of students, faculty, staff, and visitors, and identifying those who may be missing.

Communications and Notification Annex

- includes communication and coordination during emergencies and disasters , as well as the communication of emergency protocols before an emergency and communication after an emergency.

Continuity of Operations (COOP) Annex

- describes how an IHE will help ensure essential functions continue during an emergency and its immediate aftermath.

Recovery Annex

- describes how IHEs will recover from an emergency.

Functional Annexes Content, cont.

Public Health, Medical and Mental Health Annex

- describes the courses of action that the IHE will implement to address emergency medical (e.g., first aid), public health, and mental health counseling issues.

Security Annex

- focuses on the courses of action that IHEs will implement on a routine, on-going basis to secure the IHE from criminal threats originating from both inside and outside the IHE.

Rapid Assessment Annex

- focuses on the courses of action that IHEs will implement when it is notified of or becomes aware of an occurring or impending emergency situation.

Threat- and Hazard-Specific Annexes

- The Threat- and Hazard-specific annexes describe the courses of action unique to particular threats and hazards.
- Courses of action already outlined in a Functional annex need not be repeated in a Hazard-Specific annex.
- IHEs will develop these based on the prioritized list of hazards determined in the assessment process.
- As planning teams develop courses of action for threats and hazards, they should consider the federal, state, and local regulations or mandates that often apply to specific hazards.

Threat- and Hazard-Specific Annexes

Natural Hazards	Technological Hazards	Biological Hazards	Adversarial, Incidental, and Human-caused Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Earthquakes ➤ Tornadoes ➤ Lightning ➤ Severe wind ➤ Hurricanes ➤ Floods ➤ Wildfires ➤ Extreme Temperatures ➤ Landslides or mudslides ➤ Tsunamis ➤ Volcanic eruptions ➤ Winter precipitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explosions or accidental release of toxins from industrial plants ➤ Accidental release of hazardous materials from within the school, such as gas leaks or laboratory spills ➤ Hazardous materials releases from major highways or railroads ➤ Radiological releases from nuclear power stations ➤ Dam failure ➤ Power failure ➤ Water failure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Infectious diseases, such as pandemic influenza, extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis, <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>, and meningitis ➤ Contaminated food outbreaks, including <i>Salmonella</i>, botulism, and <i>E. coli</i> ➤ Toxic materials present in school laboratories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fire ➤ Active shooters ➤ Criminal threats or actions ➤ Gang violence ➤ Bomb threats ➤ Domestic violence and abuse ➤ Cyber attacks ➤ Suicide

A Closer Look, The Jeanne Clery Act

“The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act”

- The Clery Act applies to IHEs that participate in the **Title IV HEA** federal student financial assistance programs.
- IHEs must provide **timely warning and emergency notification**, maintain a campus crime log and in the annual security report provide a statement of policy regarding the IHE’ s emergency response and evacuation procedures.
- The Clery Act does not prescribe a particular type of testing for IHE EOPs, but stresses that **annual tests are critical** to the successful course of action during an emergency.

A Closer Look, Information Sharing-FERPA

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

- A federal law that protects the privacy of student education records and has implications on information sharing in the emergency planning process.
- Records created and maintained by the institution's law enforcement unit are not protected by FERPA.
- Treatment records, made or maintained by a physician or other medical professional used only in connection with treatment of the student, are also not protected by FERPA.
- IHE Officials with a legitimate educational interest and parents may access FERPA-protected education records.

ED will not find an institution in violation of FERPA for disclosing FERPA-protected information under the health or safety expectation as long as the institution had a rational basis.

A Closer Look, Information Sharing-HIPPA

Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA)

- HIPPA *Privacy Rule* and the HIPPA *Security Rule* protect the privacy and security of individually identifiable health information called protected health information (PHI).
- *The Privacy Rule* establishes national standards to protect the privacy of individuals' health information.
- *The Security Rule* establishes national standards for protecting health information that is held or transferred in electronic form.
- Generally HIPPA does not apply to health information in student records maintained by an IHE.

A Closer Look, Incorporating International Students into IHE Emergency Management and Planning

- As members of a campus community, international students are affected, as all students are, during crises.
 - They also present a set of unique needs for IHEs to consider in planning for and responding to crises.
- There may be instances in which an international student is a victim of an event or an alleged perpetrator.
 - IHEs may have to coordinate with local, state, and federal law enforcement officials on administrative or criminal matters.

Understanding the IHE 's role and accompanying rules for communication can lead to swifter and more efficient resolution by the appropriate authorities.

A Closer Look, Campus Public Safety

- The characteristics of security and police services on the nation's college and university campuses vary considerably.
- **Most common types of campus public safety services:**
 - campus police department
 - security department or operation
 - contract security personnel
 - local, state, or tribal police
- Campus public safety officials should be intricately involved in the creation of the higher ed EOP, as they have critical responsibilities **before, during, and after** an emergency.
- Many IHEs are **decentralized**, with remote centers and facilities located away from the main campus.

A Closer Look, Active Shooter Situations

Planning

- As with any threat or hazard that is included in a higher ed EOP, the planning team will establish goals, objectives, and courses of action for an annex.

Sharing Information With First Responders

- The planning process
 - is not complete until the higher ed EOP is shared with first responders.
 - must include preparing and making available to first responders an up-to-date and well-documented site assessment as well as any other information that would assist them.

Exercises

- To be prepared for an *active shooter* incident, IHEs should train their staff, students, and families, as appropriate, in what to expect and how to react.

A Closer Look, Active Shooter Situations

Warning Signs

- No profile exists for an *active shooter*; however, research indicates there may be signs or indicators.
- IHEs should learn the signs of a potentially volatile situation that may develop into an *active shooter situation* and proactively seek ways to prevent an incident with internal resources, or additional external assistance.

Threat Assessment Teams

- Research shows that perpetrators of targeted acts of violence engage in both covert and overt behaviors preceding their attacks.
- They consider, plan, prepare, share, and, in some cases, move on to action.
- One of the most useful tools an IHE can develop to identify, evaluate, and address these troubling signs is of a multidisciplinary threat assessment team (TAT).

A Closer Look, Active Shooter Situations

Responding to an Active Shooter Situation

- Higher ed EOPs should include courses of action that will describe how students and staff can most effectively respond to an *active shooter situation* to minimize the loss of life, and teach and train on these practices, as deemed appropriate by the IHE.
- Train staff and students to overcome denial and to respond immediately. For example, train students and staff to recognize the sounds of danger, act, and forcefully communicate the danger and necessary action.

A Closer Look, Active Shooter Situations

Run

- If it is safe to do so for yourself and those in your care, the first course of action that should be taken is to run out of the building and far away until you are in a safe location.

Hide

- If running is not a safe option, hide in as safe a place as possible.
- Students and staff should be trained to hide in a location where the walls might be thicker and have fewer windows.

Fight

- If neither running nor hiding is a safe option, as a last resort when confronted by the shooter, adults in immediate danger should consider trying to disrupt or incapacitate the shooter by using aggressive force and items in their environment, such as fire extinguishers, and chairs.

A Closer Look, Active Shooter Situations

Interacting With First Responders

- Staff should be trained to understand and expect that a law enforcement officer's first priority must be to locate and stop the person(s) believed to be the shooter(s); all other actions are secondary.

After an Active Shooter Incident

- Once the scene is secured, first responders will work with IHE officials and victims on a variety of matters. This will include transporting the injured, interviewing witnesses, and initiating the investigation.

A Closer Look, Psychological First Aid (PFA)

PFA

- is an evidence-informed modular approach used by mental health and disaster response workers to help individuals of all ages in the immediate aftermath of disaster and terrorism.
- is designed to reduce the initial distress caused by traumatic events and to foster short- and long-term adaptive functioning and coping.
- does not assume that all survivors will develop mental health problems or long-term difficulties in recovery.
- is based on an understanding that disaster survivors and others affected by such events will experience a broad range of early reactions

Questions?

The REMS TA Center

For additional information, resources, training, and technical assistance, please contact the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance (TA) Center:

Phone: (855) 781-7367 (REMS)

Email: info@remstacenter.org

Website: <http://rems.ed.gov>