EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION (ESF) #15 annex – EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

**[Insert County Name]**

Emergency Operations Plan (EOP)

ESF Annex

[Date]

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# DISCLAIMER

This template was created by the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) to assist Indiana county emergency management agencies (EMAs) and their stakeholders in the development of an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).

This template provides ***SAMPLE*** language based off the State Emergency Operations Plan, but IDHS has tailored it for a more county-specific approach. Included are charts and diagrams to assist county emergency managers with identifying and documenting their specific needs. This template follows Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101 and National Incident Management System (NIMS) guidance.

This template can be scaled up or down and **modified to follow each county’s unique organizational structure, activation protocol, threat and hazard assessments and current capability and capacity gaps.** This template follows all federal, state and Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) guidance.

IDHS welcomes feedback on this template. The goal is to provide county stakeholders with best practices and the most comprehensive product for county EMAs and stakeholders in their planning initiatives.

***REMOVE THIS PAGE PRIOR TO PUBLISHING THE COUNTY DOCUMENT***

# PLANNING AGENCIES

Within each Emergency Support Function (ESF) annex, an agency or organization has been given the designation of primary, supporting, non-governmental or local agency based on their authorities, resources and capabilities. The primary agency identifies the appropriate support agencies that fall under this annex. The primary agency collaborates with each entity to determine whether they have the necessary resources, information and capabilities to perform the required tasks and activities within each phase of emergency management. This includes activations in the county Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and impacted areas. Though an agency may be listed as a primary agency, it does not control or manage those agencies identified as supporting agencies. The agencies listed below are members of the Whole Community Planning Team for this annex.

## PRIMARY AGENCY

**[Insert Name of Primary Agency]**

## SUPPORTING AGENCIES

With coordination from **[Insert County Name]**, supporting agencies will strive to build, maintain, and promote a process of effectively preparing for, protecting against, mitigating against, responding to and recovering from the challenges and demands of hazards which could affect our citizens and communities.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **[Insert name of supporting agencies/ departments/ organizations]** |  |
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|  |  |
| Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) | Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) |

# PURPOSE, SCOPE, SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

## PURPOSE

The purpose of Emergency Support Function #15 (ESF-15) – External Affairs is to support the distribution of accurate, coordinated, timely and accessible information. This information must be available to the whole community including but not limited to affected citizens, the media, private sector, governments, individuals with limited English proficiency and those with access and functional needs. Effective and accurate communication promotes the health, safety and welfare of humans and animals during the response and recovery phases of an incident, as well as ensures credibility and public trust.

## SCOPE

**[Insert County Name]** and the county Emergency Operations Center (EOC) recognize fifteen (15) Emergency Support Functions (ESF). This annex focuses on ESF-15, External Affairs. The ESF-15 Annex is intended to be utilized in conjunction with the **[Insert County Name]** Emergency Operations Plan (EOP).

During an incident, local, state, tribal, and federal authorities share responsibility for communicating information to the public. The Joint Information System (JIS) provides a supporting mechanism to develop, coordinate and deliver messages. County agency communicators develop, coordinate and deliver information and instructions to the public related to:

* County assistance to the incident-affected area
* County emergency response
* State and national preparations
* Protective measures
* Impact on non-affected areas

Dissemination of incident information must be accessible to those with disabilities and other access and functional needs, and individuals with limited English proficiency. These actions are a critical component of incident management and must be fully integrated with all other operational actions.

## SITUATION

ESF-15 may be needed in any of the five (5) phases of emergency management (prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery). In the event the county Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Director determines the need for ESF-15 regarding any of the five (5) phases of emergency management, **[Insert Agency Name]** will act as the primary agency. ESF-15 will be responsible for implementing internal Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and/or Standard Operating Guides (SOGs) and protocols to ensure adequate staffing and administrative support for field operations, as appropriate, and the support of efforts in the EOC. ESF-15 personnel will coordinate with the on-scene Public Information Officer (PIO) and the Joint Information Center (JIC), if established, to initiate and manage the activation of public information assets to fulfill specific mission assignments that support emergency management.

### Mission Areas and Core Capabilities

The National Preparedness Goal (NPG) identifies 32 core capabilities that are essential for the execution of the five (5) mission areas of prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery. ESF-15 supports the overarching core capabilities of Public Information and Warning, Planning and Operational Coordination, which apply to all mission areas. Table 1 describes the core capability actions that ESF-15 most directly supports.

Table . ESF-15 CORE CAPABILITY ACTIONS

| **CORE CAPABILITY** | **ESF #15 – EXTERNAL AFFAIRS** |
| --- | --- |
| **Public Information and Warning** | **External Affairs**   * Gather information from all EOC ESFs and disseminate it to appropriate audiences. * Gather information on the incident. * Monitor news coverage to ensure that accurate information is disseminated. * Provide basic services, such as communications and supplies, to assist the news media in disseminating information to the public.   **Intergovernmental Affairs**   * Implement information sharing with local, state, tribal, territorial and insular area governments. * Inform local, state, tribal, territorial and insular area elected and appointed officials on response efforts and recovery programs. * Disseminate information with the assistance of state municipal leagues, county associations and tribal governments.   **Joint Information Center (JIC)**   * Participate in and support incident information, public affairs activities and media access to information regarding the latest developments. * Serve as a liaison between the EOC and JIC. |
| **Planning** | Conduct a systematic process engaging the whole community, as appropriate, in the development of executable strategic, operational and/or community-based approaches to meet defined objectives. |
| **Operational Coordination** | Assist the on-scene PIO to establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities. |

## PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

For successful preparedness and response operations to take place, the following key assumptions are listed to gauge participation and support provided by **[Insert County Name]** stakeholders and those at the state and federal levels:

* There will be a strong need for the public to obtain disaster assistance information. Timely dissemination of accurate, accessible and well-coordinated emergency public information will reduce the impact to life and property, as well as help maintain public trust and confidence.
* Communication methods and systems relied upon to inform the public are operational and tested on a regular basis.
* Many disasters or emergencies occur rapidly, hampering the ability of response organizations, local and state government to provide comprehensive information to everyone impacted at the onset.
* A disaster or emergency may create a significant demand for information from a wide variety of sources which may exceed local or state capabilities. Some situations may require the provision of enhanced or supplemental public information resources.
* Interest generated by a disaster or emergency may lead to requests for information or visits from public officials, dignitaries or VIPs. Such requests will require coordination and resources.
* A disaster or emergency may impact individuals’ ability to receive public information due to displacement, or limited access to television, phone, newspaper, the internet, social networks, etc.
* Some individuals may require information through different methods and may need more time to process emergency messages before they decide to take protective action.
* Audience factors (i.e., personal perception, language, cultural beliefs, age, etc.) will impact what an individual hears, how they will interpret the emergency information and how they will act on that emergency information.
* Public information efforts will rely heavily upon the cooperation of commercial media organizations.
* Effective response, as well as ongoing support efforts, will be contingent upon the availability of resources and the extent/impact of the incident upon the county.
* In the aftermath of a disaster, information is often erroneous, outdated, vague, difficult to confirm and contradictory.
* Rumors or misinformation may be spread before, during and after a disaster. This can cause unnecessary distress among the public, provoke counter-productive public actions and impede response and recovery efforts.

# CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

## GENERAL CONCEPT

The role of **[Insert County Name]** during emergency response is to supplement local efforts before, during and after a disaster or emergency. Emergency Support Function #15 (ESF-15) shall coordinate with the on-scene Public Information Officer (PIO), incident management teams (IMT) and the other stakeholders within the Joint Information System (JIS) to manage and support the immediate and long-term needs of state and local jurisdictions.

ESF-15 shall ensure and promote a common operating picture (COP) through communicating with ESFs, the county Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Operations Section, the on-scene PIO as well as the Joint Information Center (JIC), if applicable.

## county eoc activation

During an EOC activation, ESFs may be activated depending on the incident and activation level. During a disaster response, each ESF representative in the county EOC will remain under the administrative control of their agency head; however, they will function under the supervision of the county Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Director. Notification of activation will be made via **[EDIT: phone, email and/or text message]**.

The EOC is always activated at a Level IV for Daily Operations; however, the activation level will be elevated for planned events, incidents, disasters or other response operations as needed. Activation level details are outlined in the county Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) Base Plan.

## demobilization of the county eoc

Emergency Support Functions will be demobilized from emergency response as objectives are accomplished and the need for their participation diminishes. During demobilization, it is the responsibility of the ESF primary agency to ensure all paperwork, such as equipment time records, personnel time records, accident reports and mechanical inspections have been completed, are accurate and are submitted to the appropriate EOC personnel.

# organization and assignment of responsibilities

## organization

Emergency Support Function #15 (ESF-15) – External Affairs works under the Operations Section of the county Emergency Operations Center (EOC). This position is staffed by **[Insert Agency Name]**.

Each primary and supporting agency shall maintain internal Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and/or Standard Operating Guides (SOGs) or other documents that detail the logistical and administrative priorities deemed necessary to assist in overall state prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery operations.

Specific roles and responsibilities of primary and supporting agencies during an incident or event are described below. Tasks include but are not limited to:

## ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

### Primary Agency Responsibilities

* Provide county public information resources to assist in critical functions and tasks before, during and after emergency events and disaster situations.
* Provide recommendations for maintaining a Joint Information System (JIS) and, if necessary, establishing a Joint Information Center (JIC) to support gathering, verifying, coordinating and disseminating accurate, accessible and timely information.
* Provide training to essential personnel who may be called upon to work in impacted areas or the EOC.
* Work with other county and local public information sources to determine the impact of the incident and public information resource gaps that may exist.

### Supporting Agency Responsibilities

* Identify new equipment, technologies or capabilities required to prepare for or respond to new or emerging threats and hazards.
* Provide information or intelligence regarding trends and challenges to public information capabilities within **[Insert County Name]**.

### EOC ESF-15 Responsibilities

Please see primary agency responsibilities above and additional responsibilities below:

* Staff the EOC as requested.
* Responsible for developing incident-related messaging strategy and decisions at the county level and approves all messaging and products related to the incident.
* Coordinate with the on-scene PIO regarding county actions to provide the required external affairs support to local, state, tribal, territorial, insular area and federal incident response entities.
* Integrate the components of public affairs, intergovernmental affairs (local, state and tribal coordination) and the private sector.
* Coordinate within the EOC, as well as other incident structures to release information under the joint information system. These structures include the on-scene PIO, incident management assistance teams (IMAT), Incident Management Teams (IMT) and Joint Information Centers (JICs).
* Liaise between the EOC and JIC, if a JIC is established.
* Provide situation reports through WebEOC to the SEOC.
* Participate in briefings, as needed.
* Manage the financial aspects of ESF-15.

### Joint Information Center Responsibilities

At the direction of the **[Insert County Name]** advisory council, a Joint Information Center (JIC) may be established. There are four (4) primary functions of a JIC: gathering information, developing informational products, media relations and community relations.

# EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION GENERAL TASKS

The following tables are comprised of essential tasks that may need to be completed by Emergency Support Function #15 (ESF-15) in all phases of emergency management. These tasks have been created as a guide to follow for the primary and support agencies of ESF-15. They have been developed as a tool to address potential challenges and unique risks that may be faced during times of emergency and disaster in **[Insert County Name]**. It will be the responsibility of ESF-15 to ensure the tasks outlined here are accurate and reflect their overall ability to manage, support and deploy resources.

Table . ESF-15 PREVENTION TASKS

| **ESF #15 – Prevention Tasks** | |
| --- | --- |
| **TASK #** | **TASK SUMMARY** |
| **1** | Initiate a time-sensitive, flexible planning process that builds on existing plans and incorporates real-time external affairs intelligence. |
| **2** | Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports executing core capabilities. |
| **3** | Anticipate and identify emerging and/or imminent external affairs threats through observation and situational awareness. |
| **4** | Make appropriate assumptions to inform decision makers. |
| **5** | Establish and maintain partnership structures among protection elements to support networking, planning and coordination. |
| **6** | Share relevant, timely and actionable information and analysis with local authorities through a pre-established reporting system. |
| **7** | Maintain situational awareness of possible external affairs targets and vulnerabilities. Ensure the security of equipment, facilities and personnel through assessing capabilities and vulnerabilities. |
| **8** | Implement, exercise and maintain plans to ensure continuity of operations. |

Table . ESF-15 PROTECTION TASKS

| **ESF #15 – Protection Tasks** | |
| --- | --- |
| **TASK #** | **TASK SUMMARY** |
| **1** | Develop, validate and maintain SOPs or guidelines for both routine and emergency operations. Key operational concerns include but are not limited to:   * Identifying and assessing equipment, supplies, resources and critical infrastructure. * Alerting and activating personnel for work in the field or EOC. * Emergency communications and reporting procedures. |
| **2** | Develop and conduct training and education programs for ESF-15 personnel. Program considerations include but are not limited to:   * Assessing equipment, supplies and resources. * Working in an EOC during emergency conditions. * WebEOC or other computer applications. * National Incident Management System / Incident Command. * Continuity of Operations. * Mapping, GIS and other computer applications. * Emergency transportation and evacuation planning. |
| **3** | Develop and maintain a roster of essential primary and support agency contacts for ESF-15 to be used in the event of emergency operations. Ensure critical is captured. |
| **4** | Develop and maintain a database or system to collect information on essential resources and equipment. |
| **5** | Develop lists of resource needs and work toward eliminating these shortfalls by funding, partnerships or taking other essential actions. |
| **6** | Coordinate mutual aid agreements, memorandums of understanding or contracts with departments, organizations or private entities that may offer rapid deployment of resources or services as they relate to short and long-term emergency public information needs. |
| **7** | Train ESF-15 personnel on technical standards and specifications for essential pieces of equipment related to short and long-term emergency public information needs. |
| **8** | Train ESF-15 personnel on routine and emergency safety standards for both field operations and SEOC support. |
| **9** | Exercise alternate public information facilities, equipment and assets for continuity of operations and essential public information services statewide. |
| **10** | Train ESF-15 personnel on policies and administrative rules that relate directly to public information, this ESF, and its ability to provide emergency assistance. |

Table . ESF-15 MITIGATION TASKS

| **ESF #15 – Mitigation Tasks** | |
| --- | --- |
| **TASK #** | **TASK SUMMARY** |
| **1** | Provide communication about areas that have been or are currently prone to significant hazards. |
| **2** | Identify public information resources within **[Insert County Name]** and potential shortfalls or gaps that may exist. |
| **3** | Identify potential partnerships or funding sources to reduce or eliminate resource shortfalls or gaps for public information issues and concerns. |
| **4** | Establish partnerships with other federal, state, local and municipal entities that share public information responsibilities. |
| **5** | Identify needs for agreements, memorandums of understanding or contracts with departments, organizations or private entities that may offer rapid deployment of resources or services as they relate to short and long-term emergency public information needs. |
| **6** | Identify, establish and maintain essential pieces of equipment related to short and long-term emergency public information needs. |
| **7** | Identify, establish and maintain routine and emergency safety standards for all deployed public information personnel that comply with federal and state requirements and policies. |
| **8** | Identify, establish and maintain alternate public information facilities, equipment and assets for continuity of operations and essential public information services. |
| **9** | Develop informational messages and materials to share with local, state, public and private sector partners about potential threats and future protective actions. |
| **10** | Make recommendations, if appropriate, for pieces of legislation, policies and administrative rules that relate directly to public information and hinder this ESF’s ability to provide emergency assistance. |

Table . ESF-15 RESPONSE TASKS

| **ESF #15 – Response Tasks** | |
| --- | --- |
| **TASK #** | **TASK SUMMARY** |
| **1** | Activate SOPs or guidelines for emergency operations that consider:   * The assessment, staging, use, status and sustainability of facilities, equipment, supplies and other resources. * Alerting, notifying and activating personnel for work in the field or within the EOC. * Emergency communications and reporting procedures. |
| **2** | In coordination with the incident PIO, assist in activating Joint Information System (JIS) personnel for such mission essential tasks as:   * Assessing equipment, supplies and resources. * Providing representatives to work in the Joint Information Center (JIC), if activated. * Responding to the field for emergency operations. * Working in an EOC during emergency conditions. * Supporting local, district or statewide Incident Command structures. * Activating continuity of operations plans. * Collect, analyze and disseminate critical health, safety and welfare information for the public. |
| **3** | * Support the incident PIO in their mission to provide information to the public through all available means. * Include press releases and press briefings, as deemed appropriate, and regular updates to posts on agency websites and social media. |
| **4** | Evaluate the ability to communicate with ESF-15 personnel and implement alternate communications if primary systems are down. |
| **5** | Communicate with ESF partners as needed, as well as Long-Term Recovery to provide critical information to the incident PIO for distribution to the public. |
| **6** | Work with ESF counterparts at the local, state, regional and national levels, as well as NGO’s and private businesses/industry, as needed. |
| **7** | Post situation reports and critical information in WebEOC during activations. |

Table . ESF-15 RECOVERY TASKS

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ESF #15 – Recovery Tasks** | |
| **TASK #** | **TASK SUMMARY** |
| **1** | Work to aggressively eliminate shortfalls or resource gaps that were identified in response to an emergency or disaster. |
| **2** | Establish partnerships and identify funding sources to address resource shortfalls or gaps for public information issues and concerns. |
| **3** | Maintain open and ongoing communication with other federal, state, local and municipal entities in impacted areas. |
| **4** | Assess agreements, memorandums of understanding or contracts with departments, organizations or private entities that may have been utilized during the response and determine if those agreements need to be updated or revised. |
| **5** | Assess the current technical standards and specifications for essential pieces of equipment related to short and long-term emergency public information needs and update based upon the lessons learned from the most recent emergency response. |
| **6** | Assess the current level of training on emergency safety standards for public information personnel to determine the appropriate application and compliance with federal and state requirements and policies. |
| **7** | Assess the current usage and application of alternate public information facilities, equipment and assets for these essential services countywide to determine if there are issues that need to be addressed for future response operations. |

# COMMUNITY LIFELINES [remove if county is not using lifelines]

**[Insert County Name]** has adopted the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) eight (8) community lifelines into our prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery activities. Lifelines are services that enable the continuous operation of critical government and business functions and are essential to human health and safety or economic security.

Table . COMMUNITY LIFELINES AND SUBCOMPONENTS

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **community Lifeline Components AND SUB-COMPONENTS** | | | |
| Multiple components establish the parameters of and key assessment elements for each of the lifelines; component-level analysis is required to determine if each lifeline is stable | | | |
| **SAFETY AND SECURITY** | **FOOD, HYDRATION, SHELTER** | | **HEALTH AND MEDICAL** |
| * + Law Enforcement / Security   + Fire Services   + Search and Rescue   + Government Service   + Community Safety | * + Food   + Drinking Water   + Shelter     - Agriculture | | * + Medical Care   + Public Health   + Patient Movement   + Fatality Management   + Medical Supply Chain |
| **ENERGY** | **COMMUNICATIONS** | | **TRANSPORTATION** |
| * + Power (Grid)   + Fuel   + Pipeline | * + Infrastructure     - Responder Communications   + Alerts, Warnings, Messages     - Financial Services     - 911 & Dispatch | | * + Highway / Motor Vehicle   + Mass Transit   + Railway   + Aviation   + Maritime |
| **HAZARDOUS MATERIAL** | | **WATER SYSTEMS** | |
| * + Facilities   + Hazardous Debris   + Pollutants   + Contaminants | | * + Potable Water Infrastructure   + Wastewater Management | |

# LIFELINE AND ESF OBJECTIVES AND TASKS TIMELINE

Table . ESF-15 GENERAL TASKS

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **OBJECTIVE** | **SUPPORT NEEDED FROM** | **ESF-15 MISSION-ESSENTIAL TASKS** |
| **TIMELINE: 0-24 HOURS** | | |
| To deploy an ESF-15 representative to the county Emergency Operations Center (EOC) within 2–6 hours of notification. | \_\_ \_\_ | Deploy an ESF-15 representative to the EOC and be briefed. |
| To maintain the common operating picture (COP) and contribute to the incident action plan (IAP). | \_\_ \_\_ | Provide situational information to the EOC. |
| **TIMELINE: 24-72 HOURS** | | |
| To continue maintaining the COP and contributing to the IAP. | \_\_ \_\_ | Communicate the status and existing capabilities of all ESF-15 agencies to prioritize needs. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Participate in developing the incident action plan (IAP) to determine needs and priorities. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | \_\_ \_\_ | Continue to disseminate internal information through appropriate channels. |
| To develop a 7-day JIC schedule within 36 hours. | \_\_ \_\_ | Set initial staffing plan to maintain long-term operations. |
| **TIMELINE: BEYOND 72 HOURS** | | |
| To continue maintaining the COP and contributing to the IAP. | \_\_ \_\_ | Provide situational information to the EOC. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Participate in developing the IAP, based on needs and priorities. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | \_\_ \_\_ | Continue to disseminate internal information. |

Table . ESF-15 TASKS FOR HEALTH AND MEDICAL

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **LIFELINE OBJECTIVE** | **ESF OBJECTIVE** | **SUPPORT NEEDED FROM** | **ESF-15 MISSION-ESSENTIAL TASKS** |
| **TIMELINE: 0-72 HOURS** | | | |
| * To evacuate level 3 casualties * To support temporary health and medical infrastructure in and around the impacted zone within 48 hours | To coordinate with incident PIO to activate public-information plans and assess initial resources within 24 hours. | \_\_ \_\_ | Coordinate with the incident PIO and/or JIC to provide critical health and medical information and provide updates from ESF-2 regarding best remaining communication systems. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Coordinate information distribution from the EOC to the incident PIO and/or JIC regarding where health and medical treatment can be received. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Coordinate information distribution from the EOC to the incident PIO and/or JIC regarding the status of the health and medical infrastructure. |
| **TIMELINE: BEYOND 72 HOURS** | | | |
| To resume health services |  | \_\_ \_\_ | Coordinate information distribution from the EOC to the incident PIO regarding any public-health related issues while moving toward recovery. |

Table . ESF-15 TASKS FOR COMMUNICATIONS

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **LIFELINE OBJECTIVE** | **ESF OBJECTIVE** | **SUPPORT NEEDED FROM** | **ESF-15 MISSION-ESSENTIAL TASKS** |
| **TIMELINE: 0-24 HOURS** | | | |
| To transmit public information and warning messages to survivors in the disaster area within 12 hours of the incident. | To establish contact with ESF-5 for situational assessments and have verified information ready and to the incident PIO for release within 6-12 hours. | ESF-5 | Request information from each ESF and coordinate with the incident PIO to prepare statements to the media and public. |
| Work with the SEOC to gather information for the incident PIO to assist the PIO and joint information system in coordinating a message among local, state and federal public information officers (PIOs) and providing the necessary context for the incident PIO to determine how to best distribute that message within the first 24 hours. | ESF-2 | As ESF 2 (Communications) is assessing the degree and types of communications capabilities available, inquire about the status of the EAS system. If the infrastructure for public-safety communications has been seriously affected or rendered nonfunctional, it is highly unlikely the infrastructure that supports the EAS will have remained functional. |
|  | If the EAS system remains totally functional, use it to the maximum extent. |
| ESF-2 | Contact ESF-2 to determine communications capabilities available. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Develop messages for the public for review by the incident PIO. Using pre-scripted messages will be important but review them closely before dissemination to ensure they fit the “tone” of the incident at the time. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Coordinate with on-scene public information teams as needed and directed by the incident PIO. Consider dispatching on-scene public information personnel to provide frequent communications with the JIC and EOC. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Establish some means of disseminating information to the affected populace during the first 72 hours after the initial incident. This will be the single most important action the state can take to save lives, reduce further injuries and provide some “calm.” |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Establish a schedule for long-term ESF-15 operations. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Disseminate critical lifesaving and life-sustaining information to all affected segments of society necessary, including accessible tools, to expedite delivering emergency services and to aid the public in taking protective actions. |
| To establish a JIC and staff it within 12-18 hours. | \_\_ \_\_ | Set up the JIC. |
| All required departments and agencies. | Request a representative from each supporting agency is sent to the JIC. |
| **TIMELINE: 24-72 HOURS** | | | |
| To ensure public updates are given regularly to reduce fear and provide rumor control | To activate public-information plans and assess initial resources within 24 hours | \_\_ \_\_ | Coordinate with other ESFs to gather information regarding rumors, security, shelters and medical care locations and provide to the incident PIO. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Determine and implement rumor control strategy |
| All ESFs | Coordinate with all ESFs to gather information that should be shared with the public for ingress and egress routes, water fitness and availability, evacuations, government response updates, mass care, health and medical services, food, pet care and availability and restoring utilities, and provide to the incident PIO. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Schedule briefings with local and state news outlets. |
| ESF-7 | Request additional resources through the state, as necessary. |
| **TIMELINE: BEYOND 72 HOURS** | | | |
| To ensure public updates are given regularly to reduce fear and provide rumor control |  | \_\_ \_\_ | Continually gather information on the locations of shelters and medical care. Include other information about survival, first aid and self-help. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Continually update the public on actions the government is taking and how soon they can expect assistance. |
| All ESFs | Continue to request information from each ESF to prepare statements for the media and the public. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Continue to collect media reports regarding the need for rumor control. |
| \_\_ \_\_ | Continue to schedule briefings with local and state news outlets. |
| ESF-7 | Request additional resources through the state, as necessary. |

# direction, control and coordination

**DIRECTION**

**[Insert Agency Name]** is the primary agency for Emergency Support Function #15 (ESF-15); however, the Incident Public Information Officer (PIO) changes depending on the incident. For example, the **[Insert County Name]** Health Department may serve as the incident PIO during an influenza outbreak, while the county Emergency Management Agency (EMA) may serve as the incident PIO for flooding.

If activated, the Joint Information Center (JIC) will be the central point of contact for all news media regarding any subjects related to the incident. If the JIC is not activated, ESF-15 will be the primary point of contact.

**CONTROL**

The county Emergency Management Agency (EMA) typically oversees overall messaging, public information strategy and Joint Information Center (JIC) staff. The EMA also jointly oversees the ESF-15 in the county Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and field PIOs. The incident PIO oversees on-scene public information duties.

**COORDINATION**

ESF-15 will coordinate with internal and external partners to develop a common operating picture. It is best practice for the EOC ESF-15, JIC staff and field PIOs (IMAT or IMT) staff to coordinate and communicate together on unified messaging. The state may support local jurisdictions with public information, as described in the Local Coordination section below.

Local Coordination

All incidents begin and end locally. When an incident occurs, a PIO may be staffed within an Incident Management Team (IMT) or an Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Due to Indiana’s Home Rule, the IDHS Public Affairs Section, Joint Information System (JIS) and Joint Information Center (JIC) cannot regulate local PIO messaging. Therefore, it is important to coordinate, build and maintain a relationship between local PIOs and state-level PIOs. This advanced coordination will better ensure unified messaging when an incident occurs. Local jurisdictions may utilize the state public information officers or the state JIC, if established, for direct PIO support.

# INFORMATION COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND DISSEMINATION

## INFORMATION COLLECTION

The Joint Information System (JIS) provides accessible information that is timely, coordinated and accurate. Emergency Support Function #15 (ESF-15) will coordinate with internal and external partners on information collection. Information to collect may include:

* Assistance provided to the affected area
* Agency response and support
* Protective measures
* Impact on non-affected areas
* Health risks and considerations
* Complete picture of what survivors need to do to recover from the emergency

## ANALYSIS AND DISSEMINATION

Messages should be unified, and rumors should be controlled. Social media and traditional media will be analyzed to ensure information is being conveyed accurately. Released information should be clear and void of any errors that could cause credibility issues such as misspelling and incorrect grammar.

Information must be available to affected citizens, including but not limited to: the media, private sector, governments, individuals with limited English proficiency and those with access and functional needs.

The responsibility to provide information regarding the incident is a shared task among local, state, tribal, territorial and federal authorities. There are multiple means that information can be shared, as listed in the Communications section below.

# COMMUNICATIONS

Effective coordination and efficient usage of all available communications capabilities are critical to ensuring an effective emergency response. **[Insert County Name]** utilizes several forms of primary and alternative communications methods when conducting operations during both daily operations and active emergency situations.

The following is a list of identified potential alternative communications, assuming landline, wireless communication devices and internet are primary sources of communication. Any of these can be primary forms of communication and can be used alone or in conjunction with other communication systems. One, or all, may be operable at any given time within the county.

## COMMUNICATION METHODS [EDIT TO COUNTY CAPABILITIES]

* Data including but not limited to: WebEOC, email, text and social media
* Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS)
* Emergency Alert System (EAS)
* Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)
* National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) All-Hazard Weather Radio
* Highway department signage
* Amateur Radio
* Local Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Website
* Non-traditional avenues: Private Sector Partners and Translation Services
* Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS)
* Wireless Priority Service (WPS)
* Project Hoosier SAFE-T Digital 800 MHz Radio System
* Satellite Radio/Phones
* Runners

# Appendix A – REFERENCES, RELATED PLANS AND PROCEDURES

## references

* [FEMA’s ESF #15 – External Affairs Annex, 2016](https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-07/fema_ESF_15_External-Affairs.pdf)
* State of Indiana ESF #15 – External Affairs Annex, 2025

## related plans

* **[Insert County Name]** Emergency Operations Plan (EOP), year
* **[List related plans]**

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

* **[List related SOPs]**

# Appendix B – ACRONYMS [ADD TO AS NEEDED]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACRONYMS** | **FULL DESCRIPTION** |
| **COP** | Common Operating Picture |
| **EAS** | Emergency Alert System |
| **EMA** | Emergency Management Agency |
| **EOC** | Emergency Operations Center |
| **EOP** | Emergency Operations Plan |
| **ESF** | Emergency Support Function |
| **FEMA** | Federal Emergency Management Agency |
| **GETS** | Government Emergency Telecommunications Service |
| **IAP** | Incident Action Plan |
| **IDHS** | Indiana Department of Homeland Security |
| **IMAT** | Incident Management Assistance Team |
| **IMT** | Incident Management Team |
| **IPAWS** | Integrated Public Alert and Warning System |
| **JIC** | Joint Information Center |
| **JIS** | Joint Information System |
| **NGO** | Non-Governmental Organization |
| **NOAA** | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration |
| **NPG** | National Preparedness Goal |
| **PIO** | Public Information Officer |
| **SEOC** | State Emergency Operations Center |
| **SOG** | Standard Operating Guideline |
| **SOP** | Standard Operating Procedure |
| **WEA** | Wireless Emergency Alerts |
| **WPS** | Wireless Priority Service |
| **WebEOC** | Web-based Emergency Operations Center |