

**CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL SERVICES**

**744 P Street
MS 19-43
Sacramento, CA
95814**

916-324-4363

*David Kupper, Chief
Management & Staff Services
Branch*

*Margie Glaviano, Chief
Disaster & Safety
Services Bureau*

*Bill Vogel, Chief
Disaster Services
Section*

*D. Jeanne Bish, Sr. Planner,
Emergency Response*

*John Driemeyer, Sr. Planner,
Individual Recovery
Programs*

*Mira Lukoskie, Administrative
Support*

Sharon Macias, Planner

*J. Shawn Ortiz, Sr. Planner,
Emergency Response*

Jaimie Porter, Planner

David Purnell, Planner

*Ellen Yount, Sr. Planner, MIS
and Technical Support*



BEST STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE MASS CARE & SHELTER PLANNING

APRIL 2003 UPDATE

BEST STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE MASS CARE AND SHELTER PLANNING

INDEX

I.	Basic Best Practices	2
II.	Writing a Care & Shelter Plan	3
III.	Overcoming Geographic Barriers	6
IV.	Meeting the Needs of Sheltered Populations With Sensitivity and Respect	7
V.	Sheltering Minors in the Absence of Parents	8
VI.	Overcoming Communication Barriers	9
VII.	Special, Non-medical Dietary Needs	11
VIII.	Sheltering Animals (Domestic Pets & Livestock)	12
IX.	Strategies for Meeting Ongoing Needs without Long Term Sheltering	13
X.	Build a Resource Directory	14
XI.	Maximizing Shelter Capacity	15
XII.	Identifying the Special Needs and Considerations of Vulnerable Populations	16
XIII.	Strategies for Sheltering Vulnerable Populations	18
XIV.	Paying for Planning & Preparedness Activities	21

BEST STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE MASS CARE AND SHELTER PLANNING

I. Basic Best Practices

A written Mass Care and Shelter (MCS) Plan in place.

Plans include “job aids” or “checklists,” by function, within the SEMS Care and Shelter Branch.

Responsibility for developing, exercising and maintaining the MCS Plan is shared by all responders in the Operational Area (usually the American Red Cross [ARC], the County Office of Emergency Services [OES], the County Human or Social Services Agency [HSSA], the Public Health Officer or Department, and The Salvation Army [TSA]).

The MCS Plan is exercised, either as part of an overall county response exercise, or by itself.

County employees responsible for staffing shelters have received training from the ARC in Shelter Management.

Trained Shelter Managers have received ARC CPR and First Aid certification.

Basic SEMS and RIMS training is provided to all county employees with MCS responsibilities.

Duty statements for each emergency assignment are included in the MCS Plan. The duty statements clearly delineate emergency-related duties as opposed to duties performed every day. “Disaster Worker” duty statements permit easy assignment of an “activity code” to track direct costs, which can assist the county in any effort to claim reimbursement for costs incurred.

II. Writing A Care and Shelter Plan

Obtain a copy of California's Care and Shelter Plan Template from the California Department of Social Services (CDSS).

Don't remake the wheel; check existing emergency plans for other programs in your county.

Review your county's event-specific plans for ideas or inclusion in the overall MCS Plan. For example, most counties have "Y2K" and "Energy Crisis" Plans.

Network. What counties face similar obstacles? Request a copy of their MCS Plan. Request permission to adapt another county's plan to your purposes. Be generous with your own.

Keep up with changing demographics. Do the current demographics in your county present care and shelter issues not yet addressed in your Plan?

Consider alternative sheltering methods.

Resources:

Start with the Federal government.

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
www.fema.gov

Most California State agencies have Web sites, and many include access to emergency plans and related documents.

- Office of Emergency Services (OES)
www.oes.ca.gov
- Care and Shelter Plan Template (California)
"Care and Shelter Guide for Cities & County Departments of Human or Social Services" (California)
California Department of Social Services
916-323-3145
Shawn.Ortiz@dss.ca.gov
- California's Medical Sheltering Plan Guides (available documents include: "Shelter Medical Group Report," "Shelter Medical Group Toolkit – Local Emergency Preparedness Planners Guide for the Care and Sheltering of the Medically Fragile," and a PowerPoint presentation)
Emergency Medical Services Authority
www.emsa.ca.gov

- California Animal Response Emergency Sheltering System (CARES) Plan
Cdfa.ca.gov

Many counties have excellent plans. Reviewing these plans can be most helpful. You can focus your search on counties with similar demographics, or to see how another county is addressing a specific need. The following plans cover the same topics. However, they offer the reader an opportunity to look at the different approaches that can be taken to fit the specific needs of one county as opposed to another.

- Bea Christian
Fresno County
Beachristian@fresno.ca.gov
- Mike Madden
Butte County
Mmadden@buttecounty.net
- Kathy Norton
Sacramento County
Nortonk@sacounty.net

Your counterparts in other states often have well-written emergency plans on the Web, as well as helpful links. Some we have found useful include:

- South Carolina
Includes an excellent library
www.state.sc.us/emd
- Louisiana
Includes a model daycare plan, regional evacuation and sheltering plans, plans for the care of pets and animals, including lists of pet-friendly hotels and motels for evacuees.
www.loep.state.la.us/
- Florida
Has numerous, comprehensive plans related to evacuation, care and shelter.
www.floridadisaster.org/internet_library.htm#response
Click on "Year 2002 Statewide Emergency Shelter Plan"
- Washington
Includes sites on sheltering in place, WMD. Their Military Department is the oversight agency for state emergency management.
http://emd.wa.gov
Click on "Other Plans and Publications," and "Shelter in Place"

There are private organizations offering guides and suggestions on plan development.

- American Red Cross
www.redcross.org
- The Salvation Army
www.salvationarmyusa.org
- National Organization on Disability
“Guide on the Special Needs of People with Disabilities for Emergency Managers, Planners and Responders”
www.nod.org
- Volunteer Organized Initiative for Community Emergencies (VOICE)
Located in Coastal Region, VOICE works with public service agencies in disaster preparedness planning for vulnerable populations.
“How to Write an Agency Disaster Plan in Six Weeks”
“Disaster Preparedness Workbook for Service Providing Agencies”
510-939-1916
- North Bay Regional Center
Linked to disaster preparedness websites such as *Prepare Now*, the website for the Bay Area Emergency Preparedness Coalition for Seniors and People with Disabilities.
“Sonoma County Disaster Planning Guide for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities, Their Families, and for Those Who Serve Individuals with Developmental Disabilities”
www.nbrc.net

Other Resources:

Alternative Sheltering

- Terry Gitlin
Santa Clara County Emergency Manager
Terry.gitlin@oes.co.santa-clara.ca.us
- James Godfrey
Office of Emergency Services, Coastal Region
James.godfrey@oes.ca.gov

Care and Shelter for Mass Casualty/Fatality Events

- Bea Christian
Fresno County Human Services System
Beachristian@fresno.ca.gov

III. Overcoming Geographic Barriers

For counties with geographic barriers, including flooded rivers or mountains impassable during snow storms:

Develop geographic teams composed of employees who live and sometimes work within those specific geographic areas.

- The teams are the first to be called when a shelter is required. A team member has supplies, ARC signage, etc. stored within that team's geographic area.
- Each area has its own alerting or communications system for contacting the responsible employees.
- Oversight of countywide MCS activities occurs in the County OES, HSSA, or both.

Resources:

- Pat Evens and Steve Marshall
Sutter County
pevans@co.sutter.ca.us
smarshall@co.sutter.ca.us
- Dave Hessler
El Dorado County Department of Social Services
dhessler1@co.el-dorado.ca.us
- Jim Aldrich
San Francisco Mayor's OES
415-558-2702
jim_aldrich@ci.sf.ca.us
- Marilyn Berg
Mono County DSS
530-495-1262 (Walker Office)
760-932-7291 (Bridgeport Office)

IV. Meeting the Needs of Sheltered Populations with Sensitivity and Respect

Does your MCS Plan include a basic statement regarding confidentiality laws and regulations as they relate to the shelter population?

Some counties have such significantly diverse population groups they have developed methods to address the needs of each group as a separate entity.

Consider developing formal diversity and/or cultural awareness training for all county employees involved in mass sheltering.

Consider contracting with a consultant to develop and/or implement a curriculum for diversity and sensitivity training for responders.

Resources:

- Jim Aldrich
San Francisco Mayor's OES
415-558-2702
jim_aldrich@ci.sf.ca.us
- Linda Shelton
Alameda County
lshelton@co.alameda.ca.us
- Gary Adair
Santa Cruz County
831-454-4890

V. Sheltering Minors in the Absence of Parents

In many counties it is common for a significant percentage of working adults to commute outside of their local community or county to the work site. In the event of an emergency or disaster affecting transportation arteries, it is possible those with children might experience delays in returning home well beyond 24 hours.

Consider including a plan to address sheltering unsupervised minors in the event of a disaster that would clearly impede the return of commuters to your county for an extended period.

References:

Your County Child Protective Services Agency may have a plan that could become an annex to your MCS Plan.

Your County Board of Education may have a plan or template for evacuating and sheltering children during school hours.

- Louisiana
Model daycare plan.
www.lope.state.la.us

VI. Overcoming Communication Barriers

Use Census data and other demographic tools to identify communities within the county where English is not the primary language spoken.

Identify bilingual (including ASL) county employees for deployment in emergencies.

When insufficient bilingual employees are available to meet the potential need, seek mutual aid agreements with adjoining counties, performance agreements or contracts within the local community.

Sources may include various community-based organizations serving these populations, area churches, or area colleges.

Develop signage displaying basic activities, such as eating, drinking, restrooms, etc., for use in the shelters. In the event interpreters are not immediately available, the signs can facilitate communications.

Resources:

- Your local chapter of the American Red Cross may already have developed contacts in the local community who can assist with translation needs.
- Anne Henson (Lecturer on deaf access and communications during disasters)
San Bernardino County Sheriff's Office
909-477-2868.
- Your Deaf Access Assistance Program Region may be able to assist you.
Your Regional office may be reached at:
 - Region I (Imperial and San Diego Counties)
Tom Galey, Chief Executive Officer
619-398-2441 V or 619-398-2440 TTY
dcsofsd@aol.com
 - Region II (Inyo, Mono, Riverside and San Bernardino Counties)
Seymour Bernstein, Executive Director
909-359-5200 V/TTY
ssbcodie@aol.com
 - Region III (Orange County)
Ed Kelly, Executive Director
714-826-9793 V/TTY
edkocdeaf@aol.com

- Region IV (Kern and Los Angeles Counties)
Sheri Farinha-Mutti, Interim Chief Executive Officer
323-478-8000 V/TTY
sfmxo@aol.com
- Region V (San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties)
Mark Splittstoesser, Executive Director
805-487-4523 V/TTY
splittz@aol.com
- Region VI (Fresno, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, Monterey, San Benito and Tulare Counties)
Rosemary Diaz
559-225-3323 V or 559-225-0415 TTY
dhhsc@aol.com
- Region VII (Alpine, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, El Dorado, Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Sierra, Siskyou, Sutter, Tehama, Tuolumne, Yolo and Yuba Counties)
Sheri Farinha-Mutti, Chief Executive Officer
916-921-1045 V/TTY
sfmxo@aol.com.
- Region VIII (Alameda, Contra Costa, Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz and Sonoma Counties)
Rob Roth, Chief Executive Officer
510-483-6914 V/TTY
rob.roth@dcara.org.

VII. Special, Non-medical Dietary Needs

When immigrant populations eat the foods typical to their native lands on a daily basis, a sudden switch to basic American foods can cause a severe upset in the digestive system, particularly among the elderly and small children. The same effects may occur in those who are vegetarian or vegan.

Use demographic information, and experience, to identify target populations.

Work with local ARC to meet the special, non-medical dietary needs of the resident immigrant populations.

Work with ARC to establish MOUs or contracts with local restaurants, specialty markets, churches or CBOs serving the target population(s).

Resources:

- Your local chapter of the American Red Cross may already have contacts and a plan in place.
- Your County Board of Education may have a nutritionist assigned to work with the local immigrant communities to assure healthy, appropriate food is served to their children within the public education environment.
- Your County Agricultural Commissioner's office may have specialists who can assist in planning for any special dietary needs in your community.

VIII. Animal Shelters (Domestic Pets & Livestock)

Has your county included the evacuation and sheltering of both family pets and livestock in your MCS Plan?

Failure to develop such plans can increase response costs.

- Failure to plan for the evacuation and sheltering of livestock can pose a public health hazard to the entire region.
- Family pets can also pose a public health threat, but more importantly, can impede an orderly evacuation. Many pet owners will not evacuate without their pets, presenting a potential threat to the safety of not only themselves, but also rescue workers.

ARC centers cannot accommodate domestic pets; but will accommodate service animals.

Consider a PR campaign, stressing the importance of each individual or family having a plan for the evacuation and subsequent care of their pets.

Pets need identification, the same as their owners. Call name, owner, address, telephone, shot records, any medications currently being taken. Include the site in which the pet-owners will be sheltered in the pet registration and identification process.

Livestock require large facilities and consideration of veterinary needs. Contact your local veterinary association, Agriculture Commissioner or College regarding availability of volunteer veterinarians.

Resources:

- Rita Witucki
California Department of Food and Agriculture
916-651-6517
rwitucki@cdfa.ca.gov
- Mike Ford
El Dorado County Sheriff's Department (Animal Control)
3057 Briw Road
Placerville, CA 95667
- Local ASPCA, Animal Control Officers, Public Health Officers, in conjunction with private non-profits, can help develop excellent plans.

IX. Strategies for Meeting On-going Needs Without Long-Term Sheltering

Several counties have found it to their advantage to begin working on long-term solutions to all of an individual's or family's needs as soon as they enter a shelter. These counties report such programs may reduce the duration necessary for on-going assistance by looking at different sheltering methods.

County employees involved in MCS receive ARC training and certification in ARC's Family Services programs.

- Some counties have only those employees holding a Masters Degree trained to work with ARC Family Services.

Develop teams, consisting of representatives from CPS, Adult and Family Services, Licensing, Welfare to Work, and local ARC.

- These teams work with the shelter population in their area.
- The teams conduct a comprehensive review to identify the needs of every evacuee as soon as they enter the shelter (some called "triage teams"). They then develop and implement a plan to meet the identified needs.

Resources:

- Bea Christian
Fresno County
beachristian@fresno.ca.gov
- Sacramento County
Kathy Norton
Nortonk@saccounty.net

X. Build a Resource Directory

Develop a resource directory.

- Include all county emergency resource needs, or just social services needs.
- Include mutual aid arrangements in place in your county.
- Include county contracts for goods or services.
- Have available to all those assigned to your SEMS organization's Care and Shelter Branch.

Resources:

- John Kelsey or Alicia DeWoody
Yuba County
jkelsey@ychsa.org or adewoody@ychsa.org
- Kelly J. Purdom
Yuba County Emergency Director
530-749-7520
kpurdom@yuba.org

XI. Maximize Shelter Capacity

- Train county HHSa employee volunteers to assist with the shelter operation when ARC resources are no longer available.
- If the districts in your county cannot allow ARC to operate shelters in the schools without an on-site school official, each school may execute an MOU with the ARC for Shelter Manager Training.
- Develop a program to have your county's school principals trained as Certified Shelter Managers.
- Gain the support of local school districts and develop agreements with schools to utilize school staff in sheltering operations such as food service workers when food for those in shelter is prepared on school grounds.
- Contact your City or County fair manager(s) regarding availability of fair sites for large, mixed capacity sheltering, and/or sheltering pets and livestock. A contract specifying cost per each day's use as well as use limitations during fair or other scheduled events may be required.

Resources:

- Mr. Ron Ward
Assistant Superintendent of Categorical Programs
Yuba County
530-741-6138.
- Mr. Jonathan Pike
Division of Fairs & Expositions
California Department of Food and Agriculture
916-263-2935
jpik@cdfa.ca.gov
- J. Shawn Ortiz, Sr. Planner
CDSS – Disaster Services Section
916-323-3145
shawn.ortiz@dss.ca.gov

XII. Identifying the Special Needs and Considerations of Vulnerable Populations

In many counties, the county Public Health Department or Officer is responsible for planning for the evacuation and care of some of the identified vulnerable populations.

Use demographics, including the 2000 Census data, to identify your vulnerable populations.

Decide how “vulnerable populations” will be defined. Those with special needs or considerations may be included in the term.

Develop a program to identify those living independently that may need evacuation assistance (voluntary). Include contact information for family, neighbors or others who are willing to assist resident.

- Develop an individual identification card, containing 1) emergency information numbers; 2) personal information; 3) special medical needs; and 4) required medication. The card can be placed in plastic and be pinned to clothing or hung around the neck at the time of evacuation. IHSS may be a good assist agency.
- Consider a Plan that incorporates a ready identifier of the dwellings where individuals needing evacuation assistance reside. For example, a plastic, letter-sized, high-visibility colored placard that is placed in a front window so responders can more easily locate dwellings with residents who need assistance with evacuation.

Work with your County Public Health Department, In-Home Support Services (IHSS), Department of Aging or other programs to develop an awareness program to address vulnerable populations (educational materials).

Pre-identify licensed facility populations, including special individual medical needs and prescriptions.

- Develop a computer database listing the above information.
- Develop an individual identification card for each resident of a licensed facility, such as the one described above for those living independently.

Resources:

National Organization on Disability
“Guide on the Special Needs of People with Disabilities for Emergency Managers, Planners and Responders”
www.nod.org

Shelter Manager Identification Tool and Shelter Manager Guide
Template
California Department of Social Services
Jeanne Bish
Jeanne.bish@dss.ca.gov

XIII. Strategies for Sheltering “Vulnerable” or “Special Needs” Populations

Your Public Health Department or Officer may have primary responsibility for developing an MCS Plan for some members of this population. In some counties an MCS Plan for sheltering the medically fragile, or other vulnerable populations is an Annex to the county’s general MCS Plan.

Identify shelter needs that do not fall under ARC’s capabilities or Charter.

Identify agencies within the county and state with statutory or other legal requirements for assuring the safe evacuation and care of those with special needs.

Work with licensing agencies to educate the management and staff of licensed facilities regarding their emergency response and recovery responsibilities.

Consider developing MOUs with skilled nursing facilities to provide shelter for residents of like facilities.

If you have a planning group that works on the care and shelter of vulnerable populations, you may want to consider inviting a representative from any local facility manager’s or owners’ association to serve on your planning committee. If there is no association in your county, invite the owners or managers of licensed facilities to attend your meetings.

Assist in educating skilled nursing facility licensees regarding the procedures for requesting emergency waivers to permit facilities already at capacity to exceed their licensed capacity to accept emergency evacuees from like facilities. Encourage them to have a package setup and ready for rapid completion and submission in the event a waiver is needed.

Identify large facilities that may be used for both general and special needs populations; develop an MOU with ARC for use of the facility.

Work with local and state resources on ADA issues.

Resources:

- Mike Paravagna
California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)
Specialist on ADA issues
916-263-8663
mparavag@dor.ca.gov

- Stephanie Davis
California Department of Social Services
Community Care Licensing
Stephanie.davis@dss.ca.gov
- Nancy Lapolla
Santa Barbara County
805-681-5274
- Dr. Michael Kinnison
Sutter/Yuba Counties
530-822-7215
- Rob Petrucci
Santa Clara County
408-885-4252
- John Pritting
Imperial County
760-482-4468
- Troy Peterson
Marin County
415-499-6871
- Mike Madden
Butte County
530-538-7373
mmadden@buttecounty.net
- Carolyn Gordon
Lake County
707-995-4200.

The State Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) contracts with the designated staff below to coordinate medical/health issues with the counties in their region. Each has a contract objective that requires them to be the conduit for medically fragile and sheltering information for their counties.

- Regional Disaster Medical Health Specialist, Region I
Los Angeles, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura and Orange
Mr. Jim Eads
323-890-7519
jeads@dhs.co.la.ca.us

- Regional Disaster Medical Health Specialist, Region II
 Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, Lake, Sonoma, Napa, Marin, Solano,
 Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Alameda, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz,
 San Benito and Monterey
 Ms. Barbara Center
 Contra Costa County EMS Agency
 1340 Arnold Drive, #126
 Martinez, CA 94553

- Regional Disaster Medical Health Specialist, Region III
 Siskiyou, Modoc, Shasta, Lassen, Trinity, Tehama, Plumas, Butte, Glen,
 Colusa, Sutter, Yuba and Sierra
 Larry Masterman
 530-229-3979

- Regional Disaster Medical Health Specialist, Region IV
 Nevada, Placer, El Dorado, Alpine, Amador, Sacramento, Yolo, San Joaquin,
 Calaveras, Tuolumne and Stanislaus
 Randy Linthicum
 209-468-6818

- Regional Disaster Medical Health Specialist, Region V
 Mariposa, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and Kern
 Vacant
 Contact: Lee Adley
 559-445-3387
ladley@fresno.ca.gov

- Regional Disaster Medical Health Specialist, Region VI
 Imperial, Inyo, Mono, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego
 Stuart Long
 909-388-5823
 slong@ph.co.san-bernardino.ca.us

XIV. Paying for Planning and Preparedness Activities

Take advantage of the low and no cost training available through the American Red Cross and CDSS.

Find out if “CPR Saturday” events (ARC) are scheduled in your geographic area. The training is generally free. Publicize the availability of the training.

Consider multi-county exercises for types of events common to all players; i.e., when you exercise your MCS Plan for floods, do so with nearby counties who share your flood problems.

Take advantage of funding tied to specific programs. If you must exercise a plan used to meet a licensing program requirement, make that plan an annex to your county’s generic care and shelter plan. That assures your MCS Plan also gets exercised and you can share the associated costs.

Resources:

- Shawn Ortiz, Sr. Planner
CDSS – Disaster Services Section
Shawn.ortiz@dss.ca.gov
- Your local chapter of the ARC is an excellent source of ideas.
- IHSS or your Area Board on Aging may have resources to assist you in training.
- Talk to your Area Board on Aging about reduced cost or “loaner” dummies for CPR training.

**California Department of Social Services
Disaster & Safety Services Bureau
Disaster Services Section
744 P Street, Mail Station 19-43
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-324-4363
FAX: 916-441-0373**