



COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA COUNTYWIDE POLICY MANUAL

SUBJECT:	EMPLOYEE SHELTERING DURING EMERGENCIES	ITEM NUMBER:	XX-XXXX
RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT:	FIRE (OEM)	APPROVAL DATE:	JANUARY 9, 2024
APPROVER(S):	BOARD OF SUPERVISORS	REVIEW DATE:	JANUARY 2027
VERSION:	1	PAGE:	PAGE 1 OF 3

1. PURPOSE

To establish clear guidance on sheltering for employees who are unable to return home due to emergencies in order to provide equitable and safe accommodations without impacting public access to lodging. Historically, emergencies have impacted County employees from being able to return home requiring arrangements to be made, which varied widely from department to department.

2. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all County departments and is applicable to all employees both assigned to the emergency response efforts or impacted as a result of the emergency.

3. DEFINITIONS

Define terms specific to this policy.

TERM	DEFINITION
CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLAN (COOP)	WRITTEN PLANS THAT OUTLINE HOW EACH DEPARTMENT AND THE COUNTY WILL ADAPT DURING EMERGENCIES TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES DESPITE DISRUPTION(S). THESE PLANS INCLUDE STEPS FOR RESUMING ESSENTIAL SERVICES SAFELY AND QUICKLY POST EMERGENCY.
DISASTER SERVICE WORKER (DSW)	ALL PUBLIC EMPLOYEES, CITY, COUNTY, STATE, SPECIAL DISTRICT, AND OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL OR PUBLIC AGENCIES, SUBJECT TO SUCH DISASTER SERVICE ACTIVITIES AS MAY BE ASSIGNED TO THEM BY THEIR SUPERIORS OR BY LAW.
EMERGENCY	ANY INCIDENT, EMERGENCY, DISASTER, OR OCCURRENCE REQUIRING COUNTY STAFF TO SUPPORT THE PREPAREDNESS FOR, RESPONSE TO AND RECOVERY OF THE COUNTY, THE OPERATIONAL AREA, OR THE PROTECTION OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY AND PRESERVATION OF THE LIVES AND PROPERTY OF SANTA BARBARA COUNTY RESIDENTS FROM SERIOUS INCLEMENT WEATHER, NATURAL, OR MANMADE DISASTER, OR AN INCIDENT REQUIRING THE ACTIVATION OF THE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (EOC) OR ASSOCIATED FIELD RESPONSE AND SUPPORT ACTIVITIES (I.E. EVACUATION SHELTER).
EMERGENCY RESPONSE STAFF	ALL COUNTY EMPLOYEES ARE DSWs, HOWEVER SOME ARE ALSO DESIGNATED AS "EMERGENCY RESPONSE" STAFF IN THEIR DAILY

	DUTIES, SUCH AS SHERIFF OR CUSTODY DEPUTIES, FIREFIGHTERS, PROBATION OFFICERS, ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS, AND OTHER DESIGNATED STAFF.
EXTREME WEATHER	INCLUDES NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICES ANNOUNCEMENTS THAT CREATE A SAFETY RISK FOR EMPLOYEES, ESPECIALLY ON ROADWAYS. THIS INCLUDES BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO FLOOD ADVISORIES/WARNINGS AND WINTER STORM WATCHES/WARNINGS.

4. POLICY

It is the policy of the Board of Supervisors that:

1. Department Heads shall have a plan in place to allow for employees to work remote or at the departmental facility closest to the employee's home, or to adjust their work schedule, when extreme weather is predicted or other forecasted events could impact employees from getting home from their designated work location.
 - a. Employees identified and assigned to an essential function within their Department's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) may be required to report and should do so prior to the period of concern.
 - b. Department Heads are responsible for being aware of potential risks and notifying employees that they are authorized to adjust locations or schedules as planned.
2. In the event employees are unable to get home due to disaster impacts, such as unsafe road conditions or road closures, Department Heads shall notify the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Personnel Unit EOCstaffing@countyofsb.org and the EOC Safety Officer EOCMgtSafety@countyofsb.org of such conditions.
 - a. The notification should include which of the following options are being utilized, general information about the employee(s), and the locations that are being used.
 - b. The Department Head should include whether congregate sheltering is being requested for their employees, the number of employees and what area the employees are in.
3. The following are options for employee sheltering during emergencies:
 - a. The County will provide congregate shelter options to employees upon request by the Department Head.
 - b. Employees are encouraged to be self-sufficient by checking with coworkers, friends, and family that may be able to provide temporary lodging.
 - c. Employees may choose to secure a hotel room at their own expense; the county bears no fiscal responsibility should the employee choose this option.
 - d. Department Heads may authorize employees to shelter in a County facility as a last resort if a pre-approved sheltering plan has been established.
 - i. Ideally the location will have an area or room within the facility that locks, restroom access within the building, and is an area that the employee already has security access should they need to come and go for any reason (i.e. meals.)
 - ii. If the office is a shared space with external agencies, prior coordination should be facilitated by the department.
 - iii. In the event staff are staying at a County facility, the Department Head or their designee may request security support through the EOC.
4. Payments by County Departments for hotels rooms is not allowed given the other options

above. Exceptions may be approved by the County Director of Emergency Services.

5. REFERENCED DOCUMENTS

Santa Barbara County Disaster Service Worker Policy for Employees

EOC Finance Unit Manual

6. REVISION HISTORY

VERSION	CHANGE	EDITOR	DATE
1.0	Describe the changes made.		Approval date