Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Josh Shapiro, Governor

Executive Order 2026-04 – Modernizing Emergency Management in Pennsylvania

NEMA 2026 Annual Forum | Little Rock, AR



Executive Order
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Governor's Office

Executive Order 2026-04 – Modernizing Emergency Management in Pennsylvania

Date: August 04, 2026

By Direction of: Josh Shapiro, Governor

WHEREAS, to assure the Commonwealth remains prepared for current and future threats and hazards and can maximize available resources to respond to and recover from emergencies, it is critical to continually review, evaluate, and modernize the plans, procedures, and operational capabilities of the agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction to ensure a coordinated whole-of-state approach that meets the evolving emergency management landscape; and

WHEREAS, as described in the May 7, 2026, Final Report of the President's Council to Assess the Federal Emergency Management Agency (Final Report of the President's Council), the federal government, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency in particular, will push greater administrative, operational, and financial responsibility for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery to state and local governments, which requires the Commonwealth to be ready to assume a greater role in preparing for, responding to, and recovering from disasters; and

WHEREAS, this Administration seeks proactively to position the Commonwealth to remain resilient and respond effectively and efficiently when disasters and emergencies impact Pennsylvania by modernizing and streamlining emergency preparedness, response, and recovery through innovation, efficiency, and collaboration; and

WHEREAS, *Executive Order 2015-06, State Emergency Operations Plan*, directs each Commonwealth agency under the Governor's jurisdiction to participate in the State Emergency Operations Plan (SEO Plan) and maintain standard operating procedures to execute its responsibilities under the SEO Plan, including training agency personnel, conducting periodic exercises, and providing other support to the Commonwealth during disaster emergencies and significant planned events within the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the SEO Plan was updated in September 2023, and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) is currently working with Commonwealth agencies to review the SEO Plan and corresponding annexes for any necessary changes; and

Section 2 - Ensuring PEMA Remains a Leader in Emergency Management

Prepare an Action Plan

- Identify proposed amendments to the Emergency Management Services Code
- Recommend steps need to modernize emergency management
- Assess financial impacts to state based on federal changes
- Clarify roles and responsibilities for several functional areas in anticipation of increased state and local responsibility
- Create a technology modernization roadmap

Update Administrative and Operational Polices of the AHIMT

- Ensure continued alignment with NIMS
- Prepare for potential expanding roles
- Identify types of personnel, equipment and assets needed to carry out functions and responsibilities

Advance Statewide Education and Outreach

- Focus on General Assembly, county leadership and municipal leadership
- Education on roles and responsibilities of emergency management
- Provide opportunities for engagement

Section 3 – Surge Workforce

Within 60 Days of EO Signing PEMA Shall:

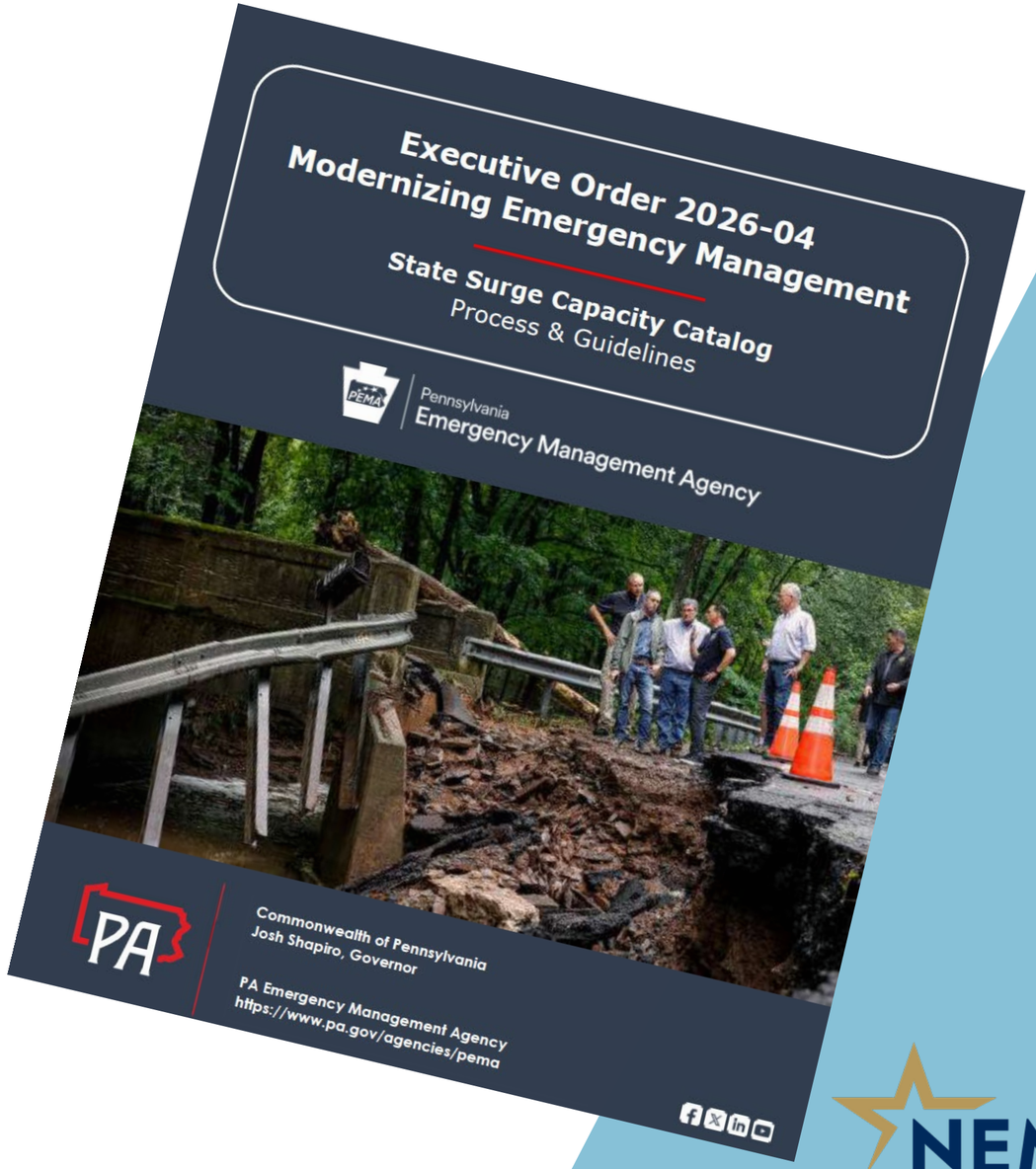
- Create and provide to the Office of Administration (OA) and other agencies, as appropriate , a list of responsibilities, duties, positions, equipment, and additional assets that:
  - Would be suitable to serve as surge workforce for emergency management functions (includes public health for DOH)
  - Can support the AHIMT
  - Can support response and recovery functions and fulfill mutual aid requests through EMAC

Within 75 Days of EO Signing Each Agency Under the Governor's Jurisdiction Shall Prepare:

- A list of personnel, equipment and additional assets that could be temporarily reassigned to support disaster emergency operations
- A list of personnel who are willing to be trained to meet the qualification requirements for the AHIMT
- A list of personnel, equipment and additional assets that can be made available for EMAC requests

Agencies Under the Governor's Jurisdiction Shall Update:

- Polices for registry of **Duly Enrolled Volunteers**
- Policies to facilitate employee participation with the AHIMT
- Policies to facilitate efficient and timely deployment of personnel for mutual aid/EMAC requests
- Policies need to supplement surge workforce such as annuitants and contract support



Section 4 – Unifying and Streamlining Emergency Management

Statewide Contracts

- Work with the Department of General Services to review existing state contracts and establish new contracts, as required, for the timely delivery of emergency management-related equipment, materials, supplies and services
- Ensure all contracts supporting emergency response have clearly defined service level agreements

Update Volunteer and Donations Management Framework

- Compile and maintain an inventory of volunteer, faith-based, and non-profit organizations capable of supporting disaster response
- Establish policies and procedures to document activities by volunteer organizations that may be used by the Commonwealth to support requests for federal aid or assist with meeting non-federal match requirements

Section 5 – Maximizing Funding



Agencies That Receive Federal Funding for Disaster Assistance or Hazard Mitigation or That Administer State Disaster Relief Programs Shall:

- Collaborate with PEMA to identify efficiencies and maximize the use of federal funds to accomplish goals
- Collaborate to evaluate supporting technology and implement upgrades to simplify the administration of disaster recovery programs
- Coordinate with PEMA to review proposed changes in hazard mitigation programs and funding and identify strategies to optimize state and federal risk reduction programs

Office of the State Inspector General

- Review state program procedures to prevent fraud or waste and provide recommendations to further enhance detection and prevention of fraud

Maximize Operational Efficiencies and Minimize Duplication of Efforts – Remote Sensing/Aerial Imagery

- Agencies shall coordinate with Office of Administration Geospatial Services for any future remote sensing procurements and associated technology

National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

- PA Insurance Department shall evaluate proposed changes to NFIP, identify opportunities for expanding parametric or index-based coverage, options for lowering premiums through risk reduction programs and other options to protect homes, renters and businesses

Section 6 – Sustaining Readiness and the Emergency Readiness Advisory Group

Responsibilities

- Make recommendations to agencies about how they can fulfill obligations of EO
- Recommend amendments/changes to state EOP
- Develop and recommend policies, SOPs/SOGs, directives, agreements, training requirements and resource alignment
- Recommend standards-based resource management practices
- Compile inventory of current remote sensing contracts
- Evaluate existing and emerging technologies and make recommendations to policies and procedures for collecting, integrating, displaying and distributing information
- Recommend how agencies can optimize the AHIMT
- Evaluate sustainability of current plans, capabilities and strategies for mass care, sheltering, temporary and long-term housing, and identify solutions necessary to support Commonwealth residents
- Recommend changes to policies, procedures, supporting technology, and data sharing that would permit agencies to streamline recovery
- Coordinate with the Commonwealth Interagency UAS Working Group to develop and recommend plans, policies and procedures for UAS capabilities in support of aerial imagery acquisition, sharing and analysis before, during and after disasters

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What we've accomplished

Resource Category	Function/Resource Name	Description
Agricultural and Animal Emergency Response: Resources that help protect, rescue, shelter, and care for household pets, service animals, livestock, agricultural products, and wildlife during emergencies, disasters or outbreaks.	**Animal Sheltering**	Personnel, equipment, and supplies to provide animal care during disasters, including shelters, and capabilities to register, track, and reunite animals with their owners. Related Commonwealth Job Titles may align with the *Animal & Wildlife Sciences* Job Family, the *Human and Social Services* Occupational Group, or other Commonwealth Job Titles that may support animal care or sheltering.
	Veterinary Care	Veterinarians, Veterinary Technicians, Veterinary Assistants or similar personnel to provide medical care to animals during emergencies.
	Agricultural Facilities	Property, buildings, laboratories, and associated facilities that may provide logistical, administrative, diagnostic, or technical support during agricultural and animal-related emergencies, disasters, or outbreaks.
	Agricultural Inspection and Assessment Personnel	Technical personnel with expertise in agricultural inspections, animal health, food safety, plant health, and related assessment functions who may support emergency response, agricultural damage assessments, and recovery operations.
Emergency Management - Staff, tools, and capabilities that support coordination, planning, operations, and decision-making across all phases of emergency management.	**Disaster Assistance Program Support - Artificial Intelligence**	Information Technology personnel who specialize in artificial intelligence to support disaster assistance programs in areas such a program administration and compliance. For example, provide support to leverage AI-technology and enhance the prevention of fraud or waste of public resources, or assist with evaluating the scope and cost of public infrastructure or hazard mitigation projects against program guidelines.
	Disaster Assistance Program Support - Programmatic	Personnel who provide administrative support to disaster survivors by helping them register for assistance, guiding them through the completion of disaster assistance applications, answering questions about available programs, performing clerical work to enter applications into Commonwealth systems, or performing other related administrative tasks needed to ensure individuals can successfully access disaster aid. Related Commonwealth Job Titles may align with the *Administrative, Clerical and Office Support,* and *Human and Social Services* Occupational Groups, or other Commonwealth Job Titles that may support human services, emergency management, or Commonwealth grant duties.
	Disaster Recovery Center & Multi-Agency Resource Center Personnel	Personnel from any Commonwealth Occupational Group within your agency who are knowledgeable about the agency's services and functions, possess strong verbal and interpersonal skills, and can work effectively in fast-paced environments to provide in-person support to survivors by delivering information, guidance, and assistance related to the agency's programs and resources.
	Environmental and Historic Preservation Reviews	Personnel with experience completing environmental and historic preservation reviews to ensure mitigation and disaster recovery projects comply with federal law. Related Commonwealth Job Titles may align with the *Museum and History* and *Environmental Sciences* Job Families, or other Commonwealth Job Titles that may support environmental and historic preservation reviews.
	Continuity of Operations Support	Personnel with experience planning for and executing continuity of operations in all phases of emergency management. Support may include archivists and records managers capable of preserving or restoring critical files, records, and information.
	Multilingual Personnel	Multilingual personnel from any Commonwealth Occupational Group to assist individuals with limited English proficiency with understanding disaster assistance applications, or providing in-person support at Disaster Recovery Centers, Multi-Agency Resource Centers, or serve as part of a Disaster

Held First Meeting of Emergency Readiness Advisory Group on September 16

- Governor kicked off meeting and provided opening remarks
- Discussed changes in federal approach to disaster assistance and recommendations in FEMA Review Council Report
- Provided overview of EO and responsibilities of the advisory group
- Discussed next steps

Developed Initial Surge Workforce Catalog and Solicited Input from State Agencies

- Catalog contains broad categories of resources and personnel/job classifications
- State agencies added additional categories that would be needed to support their functions during large scale disasters

Next Steps

- Distribute surge workforce survey to state agencies to collect date on personnel and resources available to assist with disaster operations
- Meet individually with state agencies to answer questions and provide guidance
- Completed survey due on or about December 18

Concurrent Effort

Senate Resolution 177 – Title 35 Emergency Management Services Code Legislative Reform

- Lead by Joint State Government Commission
- Advisory group comprised of legislators, county and municipal associations, KEMA, and representatives from local, county and state emergency management
- Final report due November 30th

Questions?