



Executive Order

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Governor's Office

Executive Order 2026-04 – Modernizing Emergency Management in Pennsylvania

Date: August 4, 2026

A blue ink signature of Josh Shapiro, the Governor of Pennsylvania.

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

WHEREAS, Sections 501 and 502 of The Administrative Code of 1929, 71 P.S. §§ 181–182, require administrative departments and the several independent and departmental administrative boards and commissions to coordinate their work and activities with other departments, boards, and commissions.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Josh Shapiro, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and other laws, do establish the Emergency Readiness Advisory Group (Advisory Group) and, further, order and direct as follows:

1. Purpose.

To ensure that the Commonwealth remains at the forefront of disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation by maintaining policies, plans, procedures, and resources necessary to be ready to efficiently assume additional responsibilities as the federal government shifts more emergency management duties to the states.

2. Ensuring PEMA Remains a Leader in Emergency Management.

In response to the changing roles and responsibilities of the federal government set forth in the Final Report of the President’s Council, PEMA shall:

a. Prepare an action plan that:

- (1)** Identifies proposed amendments to the Emergency Management Services Code, other relevant state laws, and relevant Commonwealth policies that will be necessary for the Commonwealth to maintain its emergency preparedness and response capabilities in light of the Final Report of the President’s Council.
- (2)** Recommends steps needed to modernize emergency management and strengthen coordination among federal, state, county, and local governments to permit maximizing use of available resources and identifies what actions will be needed to accomplish each recommendation.
- (3)** Assesses the financial impacts that the changes described in the Final Report of the President’s Council will have on PEMA and recommends how to align PEMA’s financial resources with statutory requirements and anticipated future operational needs.
- (4)** Clarifies roles and responsibilities for planning, administration, technical support, and oversight of federal disaster assistance, hazard mitigation funding, the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), and functions such as environmental and historical preservation reviews that were traditionally performed by the federal government.

- (3) A list of personnel, equipment, and additional assets that meet the criteria described in Paragraph (3)(a)(3) and could be included in a mission-ready package that can be made available when the Commonwealth receives a request through the EMAC or another mutual aid request.
- c. Agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction shall, in coordination with PEMA, update the following where possible to support the Commonwealth's emergency response capabilities:
 - (1) Policies for the registry of duly enrolled emergency management volunteers pursuant to 35 Pa.C.S. § 7706.
 - (2) Policies to facilitate employee participation in training and exercises to ensure readiness for activations and deployments as a member of the IMT.
 - (3) Policies to facilitate the efficient and timely deployment of personnel and resources to or from Pennsylvania to fulfill a mutual aid request through EMAC or any other interstate agreement.
 - (4) Policies needed to supplement a state employee surge workforce when needed through options such as the use of annuitants or contract support in case a disaster exceeds the existing surge workforce.

4. Unifying and Streamlining the Commonwealth's Emergency Management.

- a. The Department of General Services (DGS), in coordination with PEMA, shall establish statewide requirements contracts for the timely delivery of emergency management-related equipment, materials, supplies, and services, including debris removal, debris monitoring, emergency transportation, emergency sheltering and housing, and other needs as identified by the Advisory Group. The statewide requirements contracts should clearly define service-level agreements to support efficient preparedness, response, and recovery for disaster emergencies. This section shall not limit executive agencies with authority to procure certain supplies, services, or construction independent of DGS under 62 Pa.C.S. § 301(c). These agencies may utilize established statewide requirements contracts and shall coordinate with DGS and PEMA to ensure that their processes support efficient preparedness, response, and recovery for disaster emergencies.
- b. The Department of Human Services, the Department of Community and Economic Development, the Department of Agriculture, DOH and DGS shall, in coordination with PEMA, update the Pennsylvania Volunteer and Donations Management Framework to optimize capabilities of government and non-government resources after a disaster emergency by:
 - (1) Compiling and maintaining an inventory of volunteer, faith-based, and non-profit organizations capable of supporting disaster response and recovery.

- (2) Establishing policies and procedures to document activities by volunteer organizations that may be used by the Commonwealth to support a request for a federal Major Disaster Declaration or assist with meeting non-federal match requirements for federal disaster assistance programs.

5. Maximizing Disaster Preparedness and Response Funding.

- a. Agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction that receive federal funding for disaster assistance or hazard mitigation or that administer state disaster relief programs shall:
 - (1) Collaborate with PEMA to identify efficiencies in the administration of those programs and maximize the use of the federal funds to accomplish the programs' goals.
 - (2) Collaborate with OA and PEMA to evaluate supporting technology and, where appropriate and feasible, implement upgrades to simplify the administration of disaster recovery assistance programs or enhance coordination between programs.
 - (3) Coordinate with PEMA to review proposed changes in federal hazard mitigation programs and funding and identify strategies and make recommendations to optimize state and federal risk reduction programs to lessen the impacts of future disasters in the Commonwealth and enhance community resilience.
- b. The Office of the State Inspector General shall review state program procedures designed to prevent fraud or waste of disaster assistance funds and, if applicable, provide recommendations to agencies that have a disaster relief program to further enhance detection and prevention of fraud or waste of public resources.
- c. Agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction shall coordinate with OA Geospatial Services and DGS to maximize operational efficiencies and minimize duplication of efforts for any future remote sensing procurements, including for aerial imagery, satellite imagery, or unmanned aerial systems (UAS) and associated supporting technology.
- d. The Pennsylvania Insurance Department shall evaluate proposed changes to the NFIP described in the Final Report of the President's Council to identify opportunities for expanding parametric or index-based insurance coverage, options for lowering insurance premiums for policy holders through community risk reduction programs, and other options to protect homeowners and businesses from the disasters most likely to occur in the Commonwealth.

6. Sustaining Emergency Management Readiness Through an Interagency Advisory Group.

a. Purpose of the Emergency Readiness Advisory Group.

To review roles and responsibilities of agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction as they relate to emergency management within the Commonwealth and advise agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction about how to implement actions needed to address increased state and local responsibilities for the management and execution of disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation specified in the Final Report of the President's Council.

b. Composition of the Advisory Group.

The Advisory Group shall consist of the following:

- (1)** Director of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency,
- (2)** Executive Deputy Director of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency,
- (3)** Director of the Governor's Office of Homeland Security,
- (4)** Secretary of the Office of Administration or the Secretary's designee,
- (5)** Chief Information Officer (CIO) or the CIO's designee,
- (6)** Secretary of the Department of General Services or the Secretary's designee,
- (7)** Secretary of the Department of Labor and Industry or the Secretary's designee,
- (8)** Secretary of the Department of Community and Economic Development or the Secretary's designee,
- (9)** Secretary of the Office of the Budget or the Secretary's designee,
- (10)** Commissioner of the Pennsylvania State Police or the Commissioner's designee,
- (11)** Secretary of the Department of Corrections or the Secretary's designee,
- (12)** The Adjutant General of Pennsylvania and head of the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs or the Adjutant General's designee,
- (13)** Secretary of the Department of Transportation or the Secretary's designee,
- (14)** Secretary of the Department of Human Services or the Secretary's designee,
- (15)** Secretary of the Department of Health or the Secretary's designee,
- (16)** Secretary of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources or the Secretary's designee,

- (17) Secretary of the Department of Environmental Protection or the Secretary's designee,
- (18) Secretary of the Department of Agriculture or the Secretary's designee,
- (19) Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission or the Executive Director's designee,
- (20) Commissioner of the Pennsylvania Insurance Department or the Commissioner's designee, and
- (21) The State Fire Commissioner or the Commissioner's designee.

c. Chair, Vice Chair, and Committees.

The Director of PEMA shall serve as the Chair of the Advisory Group. The Executive Deputy Director of PEMA shall serve as the Vice Chair. The Advisory Group shall convene at least quarterly and, as needed, at the call of the Chair. The Advisory Group may establish standing or ad hoc committees as necessary to assist it in fulfilling its responsibilities, each of which shall be chaired by a member of the Advisory Group.

d. Responsibilities of the Advisory Group. The Advisory Group, at a minimum, shall:

- (1) Make recommendations to agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction about how they can fulfill their obligations under Sections 2–5 of this Executive Order.
- (2) Recommend amendments to the SEO Plan, the Emergency Management Services Code, and any other relevant state laws needed to respond to the changing roles and responsibilities described in the Final Report of the President's Council or as required by other changes to federal emergency response programs and funding.
- (3) Develop and recommend policies, standard operating procedures, directives, agreements, training requirements, and resource alignment to ensure that emergency response personnel remain equipped and ready to respond to future disasters and emergencies throughout the Commonwealth.
- (4) Recommend standards-based resource management that would support detailed planning, effective coordination, and efficient use of Commonwealth resources that includes:
 - (a) Identification of deployable or shareable resources.
 - (b) Qualification, certification, and credentialing of deployable incident personnel.
 - (c) Resource planning and logistics.

- (d) Evaluation of a strategic state stockpile of medications and medical products necessary for health emergencies or local infectious disease outbreaks and opportunities to collaborate with the regional Health Care Coalitions and Pennsylvania health care systems to identify available medical resources.
- (5) Compile an inventory of current remote sensing contracts, such as aerial and satellite imagery contracts, held by agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction and recommend to OA Geospatial Services and DGS opportunities for interagency contracting efficiencies.
- (6) Evaluate existing and emerging technologies and recommend changes to policies and procedures for collecting, integrating, displaying, and distributing information, including geospatial data and analysis, to create an accurate shared awareness of critical considerations in support of strategic, operational, and tactical decision making for disasters and other emergencies. OA Geospatial Services shall provide advice and guidance for any geospatial analysis or data integration recommendations.
- (7) Recommend how agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction can optimize use of the IMT and statewide specialized response teams.
- (8) Evaluate the sustainability of current plans, capabilities, and strategies for mass care, sheltering, temporary and long-term housing, and emergency response support and identify proposed solutions necessary to further support Commonwealth residents harmed by disasters.
- (9) Recommend changes to policies, procedures, supporting technology, and data sharing agreements that would permit agencies that administer disaster relief programs to streamline access to programs for eligible applicants recovering from disasters and reduce duplicative processes by efficiently sharing applicant data with other agencies or non-governmental organizations consistent with applicable law.
- (10) Coordinate with the Commonwealth Interagency Unmanned Aerial System Working Group to develop and recommend plans, policies, and procedures for UAS capabilities and aerial imagery acquisition, sharing, and analysis before, during, and after disasters.

7. Reporting.

PEMA shall provide updates to the Governor's Office every 90 days on its and the agencies' efforts to implement this Executive Order until directed that updates are no longer required. PEMA, as part of its update, shall also cover progress made by the Advisory Group.

8. Cooperation by State Agencies.

All agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction shall cooperate fully with and provide assistance and support to the above-listed agencies, as needed, regarding the implementation of this Executive Order.

9. Implementation.

This Executive Order shall be implemented consistent with and to the extent permitted by applicable law and shall not be construed to contravene or supersede any state or federal law or any collective bargaining agreement. This Executive Order is not intended to and does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the Commonwealth, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other persons. This Executive Order shall not be construed to impair or otherwise affect the authority granted by law to an executive department, agency, or the head thereof.

10. Effective Date.

This Executive Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until amended or rescinded by the Governor.