

ARAPAHOE COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN 2025



ARAPAHOE COUNTY

In cooperation with the cities, municipalities, jurisdictions, and special districts within Arapahoe County

Promulgation

This document serves as the formal declaration and announcement of the issuance of the **Arapahoe County Emergency Operations Plan** (EOP).

This plan is designed to help county officials and key community members work together to manage disasters effectively. Its main goals are to protect lives, property, and natural resources while reducing the disaster’s impact on the community. It also aims to restore normal county operations and community life as quickly as possible.

All offices of elected officials, departments, agencies, and organizations in the county must create and keep updated internal procedures, training programs, and exercise plans. They are also responsible for managing these plans to support the overall EOP.

Working together to improve emergency plans and procedures is an ongoing process. This should be encouraged by holding meetings between agencies, creating mutual aid agreements, and taking part in emergency training exercises with multiple agencies and jurisdictions.

X

Chair, Board of County Commissioners

X

Clerk and Recorder

Approval and Implementation

In Colorado, the elected leaders of each area are responsible by statute for managing emergencies and disasters. If a situation requires more resources than the county's emergency agencies usually have, the decision-making will follow a chain of command based on the highest-ranking public official available.

1. Board of County Commissioners
2. Arapahoe County Sheriff

In Arapahoe County, the Board of County Commissioners has delegated statutory responsibility for the Director of the county's Emergency Operations and Disaster Agency to the county Sheriff.

This document (Version XXXX issued in 2025) replaces all previous versions of this plan.

Major changes to this document must be approved by the Board of County Commissioners before they can be used or shared. However, the Arapahoe County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) can make minor changes without the Board's approval.

All changes to this document must be recorded in the Record of Changes.

This plan is approved and implemented effective upon adoption by the Board of County Commissioners on XXXX by Resolution No. 25-XXX, which authorizes the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners to sign the Emergency Operation Plan for a period of three (3) years from 2025 to 2028.

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Purpose

The Arapahoe County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is a guide that helps Arapahoe County agencies plan, manage, and work together before, during, and after significant events, emergencies, or disasters. It provides general rules and steps to follow to keep people safe and help the community recover.

This is a plan, not a step-by-step instruction procedure. The EOP is meant to help organize and manage the kinds of emergencies and disasters that are most likely to happen in the county. It doesn't give exact details on how to respond but brings together important policies and ideas that help create those detailed procedures. In simple terms, this plan explains "what" needs to be done, not "how" to do it. Other documents with specific instructions are referenced when needed.

This EOP follows the rules and guidelines of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), as mandated by Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5) and Presidential Policy Directive 8 (PPD-8). Using NIMS helps make sure the County's emergency response and recovery efforts match the national system. This allows different agencies, organizations, and experts to work together smoothly during all kinds of emergencies and disasters.

This plan uses an all-hazards approach, meaning it prepares for all types of emergencies and disasters. It follows federal guidelines like NIMS, the National Response Framework (NRF), the National Preparedness Goal, and the Core Capabilities List. While every disaster is different, the key steps for responding and recovering stay the same.

The plan is divided into three parts:

- 1- **Basic Plan:** This section introduces the EOP, explains its purpose, and outlines the general responsibilities of county agencies. It also lists the laws and references that give the plan its authority.
- 2- **Emergency Support Function (ESF) Annexes:** Each annex describes a specific function, the main responsibilities for responding and recovering from emergencies, and which agencies are involved. These are planning guides, not step-by-step instructions, and are usually available to the public. Some related documents may have different rules for public access.
- 3- **Annexes:** These sections provide more detailed information and instructions for emergency operations. They explain what needs to be done and who is responsible. Unlike the Basic Plan, annexes focus on specific tasks, such as emergency maps, contracts, phone lists, county programs, and response guidelines. Because they contain sensitive information, annexes are not public documents.

Scope

The EOP applies to any incident or event that happens within Arapahoe County. It also applies to events outside the county if they have an impact on the county. This includes emergencies in nearby communities, large disasters in Colorado, or situations where Arapahoe County is asked to help through Mutual Aid. Cities within the county may have their own emergency plans, which they will use for local incidents unless they formally delegate to Arapahoe County. When that happens, this EOP will take effect.

The EOP is designed to be flexible, so it can be adjusted to fit any emergency, big or small, including major disasters. It is not meant for handling everyday emergencies, but it can be useful if multiple routine events happen at the same time and put a strain on Arapahoe County’s resources.

The towns and communities in Arapahoe County are listed in Table 1. How much Arapahoe County works with each local government depends on their emergency plans and abilities. Some towns receive extra emergency support through intergovernmental agreements.

Table 1. Jurisdictions in Arapahoe County

Jurisdiction	Government Type
Aurora ^{1,2}	City
Bennett ¹	Town
Bow Mar ¹	Town
Byers	Unincorporated Town
Centennial ³	City
Cherry Hills Village	City
Columbine Valley	Town
Deer Trail	Town
Englewood ⁴	City
Foxfield	Town
Glendale	City
Greenwood Village	City
Littleton ^{1,3}	City
Sheridan	City
Strasburg ¹	Unincorporated Town
Watkins ¹	Unincorporated Town

¹ Located in multiple counties

² Statutorily required to maintain Emergency Management Program

³ IGA for Emergency Management Program

⁴ IGA for Emergency Management Technical Assistance

Situation Overview

Arapahoe County is the third-largest county in Colorado, with a population of 656,061 people, according to the 2023 Census. About 98,430 of those people live in unincorporated Arapahoe County. The county stretches 12 miles from north to south at its widest point and 72 miles from east to west, covering a total of 805 square miles. Most of the county is rural and unincorporated, but the western part is highly developed and part of the Denver Metro Area. Even though this area has most of the county population, it only makes up 19% of the county's land.

Arapahoe County has several major roads, including Interstate 25, Interstate 225, Interstate 70, Highway E470, and State Highway 83. There is also a light rail system operated by Regional Transportation District (RTD). Most commercial trains travel north to south along tracks near U.S. Highway 85 and in the eastern part of the county. The county has two airfields: Centennial Airport and Buckley Air Force Base. Major bodies of water include Aurora Reservoir, Quincy Reservoir, Cherry Creek Reservoir, Cooley Lake, Centennial Reservoir, McLellan Reservoir, and Bow Mar Lake. Maps of the county can be found through ArapaMap.

Hazard and Threat Analysis Summary

The Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan focuses on the hazards most likely to impact the county. This plan includes a detailed analysis of possible dangers in Arapahoe County and should be used for specific information.

In the plan, risk is defined as the chance of a hazard happening and how much damage it could cause to people, services, buildings, and the community. The most common natural hazards in Arapahoe County include severe winter storms, summer storms (such as flash floods, lightning, hail, and tornadoes), extreme temperatures, wildfires, and drought.

The county is also at risk for pandemics, which are handled with local health authorities. Technological risks, like dam failures or hazardous material spills, could be very dangerous but are considered unlikely. Human-caused threats, such as terrorism or civil unrest, are also possible but are generally low risk. If the county receives information that a threat is increasing, it acts by increasing awareness and adjusting safety plans.

Mitigation Overview

Like the Hazard Analysis Summary, this section is explained in detail in Arapahoe County's Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan. That plan should be used to learn more about mitigation projects, how they work, what progress has been made, and future plans.

Arapahoe County uses several methods to reduce risks, including public education, regular training and practice drills for staff, and raising awareness in the community. Expanded details on mitigation projects are available in the county's Community Master Plans, Community Wildfire Protection Plan, Open Space Use Plan, Fire Operations Plan, and other planning documents.

Assumptions

The planning assumptions in this section outline key facts used to create an effective emergency plan. This list is not complete or exclusive, and only critical assumptions are included for clarity. Basic and reasonable assumptions are understood but not listed.

- 1- This EOP follows the State of Colorado Disaster Emergency Act and meets both state and federal emergency management requirements.
- 2- The plan was developed using the guidelines from the Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101 Version 3.0 (CPG 101).
- 3- All county and city government offices, departments, agencies, and municipalities mentioned in this plan must create and maintain up-to-date procedures, checklists, or materials for their assigned duties. They are also responsible for training their employees on these procedures.
- 4- The Arapahoe County Sheriff is the Director/Coordinator of Emergency Operations for the county.
- 5- Arapahoe County OEM is responsible for keeping the plan updated, practiced, and revised as needed.
- 6- Arapahoe County follows NIMS and NRF for all emergency responses. ICS will be used for handling incidents, and for larger emergencies, the Arapahoe County EOC will be activated.
- 7- Emergency response and recovery efforts will be flexible and scalable, following ICS, NIMS, and NRF guidelines.
- 8- If an emergency affects multiple areas or agencies, a Unified Command (UC) will be set up. If there are multiple incident locations, an Area Command (AC) will be established to manage them.

CONOPS

The Concept of Operations (CONOPS) section explains how Arapahoe County plans to handle all types of emergencies. This section is designed to be flexible and can be used for any disaster or major event in the county. However, it does not include step-by-step procedures. This section also explains how Arapahoe County fits into the larger emergency response system. The county will take the lead in emergencies where it has jurisdiction. In other cases, it may support other agencies that are responsible for managing the emergency.

All emergencies in Arapahoe County will be handled using NIMS, including the use of Incident Command System (ICS). This system helps organize both the response at the emergency scene and the coordination efforts happening elsewhere in the county, as well as preparation before an incident happens.

Emergency response will start at the scene. If needed, an Incident Command Post (ICP) will be set up, and the area may be adjusted depending on the situation. If the emergency grows and more resources are needed, the Arapahoe County EOC will open to support the ICP.

When an emergency happens in Arapahoe County, alerts will go out through normal dispatching procedures. Sometimes, the county may also be asked to help nearby counties through Mutual Aid. In these cases, the agency in charge of the emergency will follow the proper steps to request help.

When an Arapahoe County department is in charge of an emergency, the first responders on the scene will set up ICS. An Incident Commander (IC) will take control and assign roles as needed while the situation develops.

If Arapahoe County is helping another agency, its responders will join the existing ICS structure. For larger or more complicated emergencies, the IC may be replaced by UC to include multiple agencies. If there are multiple emergencies happening at the same time that need a lot of resources, an Area Command (AC) may be set up to manage everything.

When emergency conditions are assessed by the designated command structure the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and city leaders may be informed and given updates on the situation. If needed, the BOCC and other key leaders will form a Policy Group, which may meet at the Sheriff's Administration and Coroner's Facility, another suitable location, or even virtually. The exact location of county or city leaders will depend on the type of emergency and the command structure in place.

If Arapahoe County is in charge of the response, it will manage the event wrap-up, keep track of financial records, and start the process of getting reimbursement for county resources used in the response and recovery. If Arapahoe County is assisting another agency, it will make sure all county resources are properly checked out and that financial records are collected.

After every emergency, there will be a debriefing for responders, and an After-Action Report – Improvement Plan (AAR-IP) will be created to review what happened and how to improve future responses.

All departments in Arapahoe County maintain an up-to-date Continuity of Operations (COOP) or Continuity of Government (COG) plan. These plans include details on responsibilities, resources, logistics, emergency procedures, leadership succession, and regular updates to ensure they stay relevant as situations change.

Mutual Aid

Emergency response agencies in Arapahoe County request help from each other through mutual aid agreements, which are usually specific to each type of emergency service. Local governments and special districts in the county are responsible for working together and providing mutual aid based on their abilities and written agreements.

There are different types of aid agreements, including Mutual Aid Agreements (MAA), Memorandums of Agreement (MOA), and Memorandums of Understanding (MOU). Some areas or special districts may also make Inter-Governmental Agreements (IGA).

Requests for resources should go through dispatch or the Arapahoe County EOC depending on the situation. These requests must be recorded on the proper ICS form. In some cases, statewide resource databases may need to be used. The original aid agreements are kept on file with the agencies involved, and details about mutual aid are included in the incident appendices when needed.

Activation of Operations Centers

The Arapahoe County EOC is the main facility used to coordinate consequence management operations and support first responders in the field. County officials with the authority to manage county resources, along with representatives from other agencies and organizations (including volunteers and private groups), staff the EOC. Their main jobs include supporting command post actions, coordinating extra help from other governments, collecting and documenting disaster information, assessing damage, and helping with recovery efforts.

Depending on the type of emergency and the needs of the IC or UC, different command or coordination centers may be activated. Arapahoe County may also use a Mobile Command Post (MCP), activate either the main or backup EOC, or request support from another jurisdiction, Incident Management Teams (IMT), or the state.

Besides the EOC, certain county departments may also activate their own operations centers during emergencies. These are called Department Operations Centers (DOCs) and are used when a department needs to manage its own emergency response or provide extra support to the EOC. Some DOCs may handle an entire ESF, while others may send a representative to the EOC to keep communication and coordination running smoothly.

Public Alerting

Arapahoe County OEM is the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) collaborative operating group (COG) for all Arapahoe County 911 Authority members. Emergency alerts follow the guidelines in the County Public Alert and Warning Annex. Landline phones in the county are automatically registered to receive emergency notifications. Residents who don't have landlines or

want to receive alerts on other devices—like cell phones, text messages, or emails—can sign up online.

It's important to know that OEM and the EOC are not staffed 24/7/365. While the EOC may be active around the clock during certain emergencies, these situations are unpredictable. If an emergency alert needs to be sent through IPAWS, and the alerting Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) needs OEM to issue the alert, there could be a delay of up to an hour and a half in some cases.

Intergovernmental Relationships

Following HSPD 5, emergencies are handled at the lowest level possible. Help from the state or federal government is only requested when local resources run out. Arapahoe County expects to assist all areas within its borders, but the amount of help needed will depend on the type of emergency and the affected locations. This plan also understands that individual cities and towns within counties can be important sources of aid and that they may request or provide help without involving county officials.

Incident Types

The seriousness of an incident determines how much emergency response is needed and whether the Arapahoe County EOC should be activated. To help emergency responders decide on the right level of response and resources, incidents are classified using a standard system. Arapahoe County follows the incident types from ICS guidelines but has made some adjustments to fit the county's specific needs. An incident complexity analysis chart is used to help determine the type of incident. This chart considers 13 different factors, each assigned a point value. These factors include things like threats to life, property, and the environment, as well as population impact, weather, and evacuation numbers. Once the chart is completed, an incident type is assigned. You can find the different Incident Types in Table 2.

Table 2. Incident Types in Arapahoe County

Incident Type	Description	ICP/EOC Active?	Examples
Type 5	Single incident with no activation of command/general staff	No formal ICP required, no EOC activation	Daily activities
Type 4	Single incident requiring several different resources for mitigation, but typically limited to a single operational period. The command and general staff functions are activated as needed.	ICP may be small scale, EOC may be partially activated	Arapahoe High School Shooting 2013, State Land Fire 2018, Arapahoe County Fair
Type 3	Single or multiple incidents requiring multiple resources and may extend into multiple operational periods. Some or all the command and general staff are usually activated, and division/group supervisors and/or unit leader level positions may be required.	ICP often required, EOC may be partially or fully activated for multiple operational periods	Christmas Blizzards of 2006, Arapahoe/Weld County Floods 2013, State Massive Hazmat/Fire 2021, June Floods 2023
Type 2	A disaster that exceeds local resources and may exceed regional resources, requiring state-level assistance. Likely extends into multiple operational periods. Most or all the command and general staff positions are filled. Typically, operational personnel do not exceed 200 per operational period and the total incident personnel do not exceed 500, although this may vary.	Sophisticated ICP and on-site staging required, EOC fully activated for prolonged staffing periods	Windsor Tornado 2008, Boulder/Larimer/El Paso County Floods 2013, Buffalo Fire 2018, Bomb Cyclone 2019
Type 1	The most complex type of incident, which requires federal resources for incident management. Local agencies may require additional staff for office administrative and support functions. If Arapahoe County is not directly affected, the emergency management team may be activated in support of other jurisdictions, including state governments.	ICP at most sophisticated set up, EOC fully activated and staffed for extended periods	Democratic National Convention 2008, Waldo Canyon Fire 2012, Black Forest Fire 2013, Hurricanes Harvey and Irma 2017, 416 Fire 2018, COVID-19

Organization

Arapahoe County handles disasters by following the rules of ICS. The response is split into two parts: on-scene response, which focuses on tactical and operational efforts, and off-scene coordination, which focuses on strategy. In every situation, the chain of command, span of control, and ICS principles are followed. Key areas that affect emergency operations are grouped into ESFs, which assign lead and support agencies to each function. This helps make sure responsibilities are clearly organized and assigned.

On-Scene Incident Management

At the scene of an emergency, Arapahoe County uses ICS to organize response teams and carry out tactical priorities. These guidelines follow the latest ICS protocols from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

ICS is a flexible management system that helps safely coordinate all emergency response actions, especially during large-scale events that involve multiple agencies. Trained ICS personnel can quickly bring in resources, work with different agencies, and manage efforts to prevent confusion or wasted resources. Emergency operations are usually directed from the on-scene ICP, where teams handle communications, planning, public information, resource management, and command decisions.

If the emergency becomes too big for the ICP to handle alone, the IC may request help from the Arapahoe County EOC. In more complicated situations, command may shift to a UC or an Area AC, depending on the needs of the incident.

Off-scene Incident Coordination System

The Arapahoe County EOC follows a hybrid model, combining ESFs with the ICS. While its structure may differ from on-scene operations, it follows ICS protocols, Annex procedures, and NIMS guidelines.

The Arapahoe County EOC manages incident response and coordination. It is staffed by Arapahoe County OEM, trained agency personnel, and mutual aid staff when needed. The EOC can be partially or fully activated based on the situation, adjusting as needed. It follows ICS principles, integrating ESFs only when necessary or requested by the EOC Manager.

Agency roles and responsibilities

Arapahoe County uses the Emergency Support Function (ESF) for planning and preparedness responsibilities. Refer to the appropriate ESF for more detail on each functional area of responsibility. A list of the current Arapahoe County ESFs and the ESF owners is listed below in Table 3.

Table 3. ESFs and owners

ESF	Owner
ESF 1 – Transportation	Arapahoe County Public Works & Development/Arapahoe County Facilities & Fleet Management
ESF 2 – Communications	Arapahoe County Sheriff’s Office Communications/Office of Emergency Management
ESF 3 – Public Works	Arapahoe County Public Works and Development
ESF 4 – Firefighting	Fire Protection District with jurisdiction of the event
ESF 5 – Emergency Management	Arapahoe County Office of Emergency Management
ESF 6 – Mass Care and Sheltering	Arapahoe County Community Resources/Arapahoe County Human Services/American Red Cross/Animal Control
ESF 7 – Logistics	Arapahoe County Finance Department – Purchasing/City and Municipality Finance Department - Purchasing
ESF 8A – Public Health	Arapahoe County Public Health
ESF 8B – Fatalities Management	Arapahoe County Coroner’s Office/Area hospitals, emergency care centers, EMS providers and healthcare networks
ESF 8C – Public Mental Health Services	AllHealth/Aurora Mental Health
ESF 9A – Urban Search and Rescue	Arapahoe County Office of Emergency Management/Arapahoe Rescue Patrol/South Metro Fire Rescue Authority/Denver Fire Department
ESF 9B – Search and Rescue	Arapahoe County Office of Emergency Management/Arapahoe Rescue Patrol/All fire departments/districts serving the county
ESF 10 – Hazardous Material	Arapahoe County Sheriff’s Office HAZMAT Team
ESF 11 – Agriculture and Natural Resources	CSU Extension/Arapahoe County Public Health
ESF 12 - Energy	Arapahoe County Office of Emergency Management
ESF 13 – Public Safety	Arapahoe County Sheriff’s Office Public Safety Bureau
ESF 14 – Community Recovery, Mitigation, and Economic Stabilization	Arapahoe County EOC Policy Group/Arapahoe County Sheriff’s Office of Emergency Management
ESF 15 – External Affairs	Arapahoe County Sheriff Public Affairs/Arapahoe County Communication Services Department/City and/or municipality public information and/or communication services

The following roles and responsibilities apply to all county departments, government and non-governmental partners, regardless of ESF assignments and should be considered the basic tasks needed to ensure preparedness and an effective response.

Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify threats to systems and resources • Develop plans, procedures, and organizational structure needed to ensure safe and timely delivery of agency services required during an emergency event
Preparedness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and maintain a network of available private, city, county and state resources • Participate in training sessions and exercises. • Evaluate agency emergency operation plans and procedures. • Ensure that administrative and accounting procedures are in place to document actions taken and all costs incurred during incident operations.
Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select and contact appropriate personnel. • Designate personnel authorized to enter affected area and provide information to the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office OEM. • Provide a representative to the EOC, as requested. • Provide and coordinate public information through the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office OEM, the EOC, and the Joint Information Center in support of ESF 15 - External Affairs. • Coordinate with Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office Public Safety Bureau personnel and other law enforcement agencies for maintaining security of facilities and supplies per ESF 13 - Public Safety and Security.
Recovery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate and organize long-term plans for the safe movement of the public and emergency service resources. • Provide documentation on injuries and/or deaths of people resulting from the incident. • Document actions taken and all costs incurred during incident operations

In addition, Board of County Commissioners responsibilities include the following:

- Approve and commit County resources and funds for disaster or emergency purposes
- Issuance of directives to County departments and personnel regarding changes in normal duties/work schedules, temporary reassignments, and employment of temporary workers, as needed
- Formal declaration of a County emergency or disaster, which may include additional authorized spending authorities.
- Issuance of official orders regarding population protection or temporary social restrictions such as evacuation orders, establishment of curfews and enactment of price controls
- Intergovernmental liaison and initiation of formal requests for outside assistance from other local jurisdictions
- Issuance of formal requests to the Governor's Office through the Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM) for the declaration of a state emergency for the purposes of obtaining state and/or federal assistance

Direction, control, and coordination

This section explains who controls emergency response and how different agencies work together. In Colorado, local leaders manage disasters in their areas. In Arapahoe County, the Emergency Management Director provides direction and control by special delegation of authority from the BOCC. Emergencies are handled at the lowest level possible unless more help is needed. If a disaster affects only one area, that area handles it unless they ask for help. If county resources run out, they will request help from state or federal agencies.

Line of Succession

For events requiring decisions about the commitment of resources beyond those normally available to Arapahoe County, the following line of succession will be observed based on the availability of the senior ranking public official. Public officials are advised and assisted by the Office of Emergency Management where appropriate.

1. Arapahoe County Board of County Commissioners
2. Arapahoe County Sheriff

Lines of Authority Between Jurisdictions

In large disasters, each local government controls its own resources and decides how to use them. Leaders of political jurisdictions in Arapahoe County must set up a line of succession for approving money and resources in emergencies.

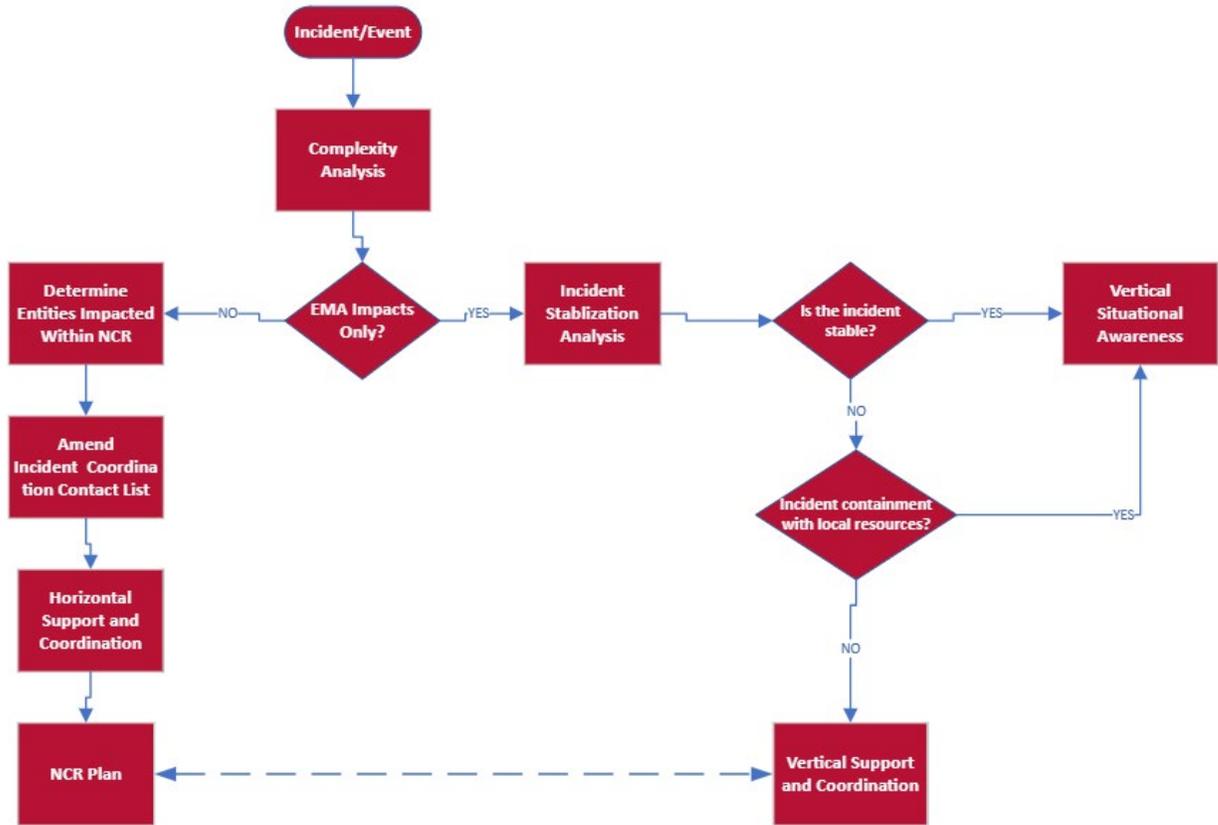
Operational Coordination

Operational coordination is the process and systems OEM uses to collect, share, and analyze information to manage disasters in Arapahoe County. It helps track and respond to emergencies of all sizes like floods, fires, storms, pandemics, and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) threats.

The information flow, both vertically and horizontally, plays an essential role in the operational coordination process. The Arapahoe County OEM maintains access to key elected officials, including the Sheriff and Chair of the Board of County Commissioners along with key directors who serve in advisory roles such as the County Attorney. Externally, the OEM maintains relationships and access to area emergency management agencies, via email, phone, and in-person meetings. Functionally, OEM maintains the capability to quickly message, establish virtual meetings, and include outside agencies into the virtual disaster management environment. Upon the establishment of situational awareness, the OEM establishes a briefing cadence, defined in the EOC handbook, to provide updates, solicit policy decisions, and advice as required.

As an incident grows in either complexity or instability, the OEM may initiate a vertical support and coordination process. The tier of coordination requirements is determined by the elements needed to reach containment and stabilization. The tiers range from the local level with Policy Group authorizing enhanced spending up to a federal level with FEMA authorization of disaster dollars. This is depicted in the graphic below showing the operational coordination flow.

Diagram 1: Operational Coordination Flow



Information collection, analysis, and dissemination

This section explains how information is collected and shared during an event. It covers what information is needed, where it comes from, how it is sent and recorded, and any required procedures or forms. Intelligence functions may operate from the ICP, EOC, or both. The Colorado Information Analysis Center (CIAC) and other law enforcement agencies may work from separate locations and connect with local incidents. Proper planning ensures intelligence is shared effectively while keeping sensitive information secure.

Collection

Information comes from many sources, including responder reports, eyewitness accounts, news, social media, and other agencies. Federal or state agencies may also provide intelligence. Information should be gathered quickly for responder safety and to help the Incident Commander set response goals. Regular updates keep information accurate. Some data is only useful for a short time, so it must be shared promptly through the chain of command. ICS forms like the Incident Briefing (ICS 201), Incident Status Summary (ICS 209), and Unit Log (ICS 214) help collect and share information.

Dissemination

Information is shared with responders, emergency personnel, and key stakeholders. Briefings happen throughout the incident, and supervisors must keep their teams informed. Communication can be written or verbal, depending on the content. Informal updates may be used for non-sensitive information.

Use of ICS Forms

All incident information, like resource tracking, situation reports, action plans, and communication logs, will be recorded using the proper ICS forms. While forms may be adjusted for field or EOC use, they will follow the latest FEMA guidelines.

Veoci

Arapahoe County OEM uses Veoci to streamline EOC operations. Veoci allows for many EOC tasks and processes to be brought into one software system, resulting in a single source location for information and collaboration. Veoci has specialized rooms for EOC activations, chat logs for discussion, and ICS and logistics integrations. ESF owners and Arapahoe County EOC staff can request logons to the system and use Veoci during EOC activations.

Public Information

Emergency public messaging provides timely and accurate updates to the public and media. It includes incident details, response actions, expected duration, street closures, shelter locations, and safety instructions.

Incident Commanders, local officials, or a designated Public Information Officer (PIO) handle media communication. To prevent confusion and rumors, one main contact will release county-wide emergency updates.

For small incidents, a spokesperson from the primary response agency will share updates. In larger disasters, a Public Information Officer (PIO) at the EOC will manage briefings and approve news releases. A Joint Information Center (JIC) may be set up for major emergencies. Arapahoe County's Crisis Communications Manual provides more details.

Critical Information Requirements (CIRs)

CIRs are necessary information for the Manager of OEM or the EOC Director to make a key decision. CIRs can help leadership make an operational environmental assessment, validate or dispute assumptions, identify achievements or goals met towards intermediate objectives, and identify key decision points that must be made during operations. These CIRs are normally a short list that can focus staff attention on important items and can change as an incident evolves overtime. These CIRs should be known by all working in or supporting EOC operations and monitored and reported when necessary.

The Manager of OEM or the EOC Director is responsible for setting the CIRs for an incident. Planning section will develop draft CIRs for approval and distribute to EOC and DOC staff.

Communications

During disasters, emergency agencies must communicate efficiently, no matter their location. Establishing links between command posts and operations centers early helps speed up resource delivery.

Agencies will use their own radio frequencies and designated emergency channels. If possible, a dedicated emergency channel will connect ICPs, EOCs, and key jurisdictions. Public safety radio users in the Denver Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) and Colorado North Central Homeland Security Region (NCR) should use the Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) for cross-agency communication.

The IC must create a Communications Plan using ICS Form 205, which can be assigned to communications staff. If communication fails due to frequency or equipment differences, the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) telecommunications team will set up an integrated system.

The ACSO Communication Center handles emergency communication for unincorporated areas and several local jurisdictions. Backup communication is available through designated fire and police agencies. In major incidents, state, federal, military, and volunteer radio resources may assist.

The ACSO Communication Center runs quarterly drills on the Backup Communications Center (BCC) and includes communication testing in all planned and small-scale events. Redundant systems, like cell phones, offer backup options but have service gaps.

GETS

If networks fail or are overloaded, Arapahoe County employees can use the Government Emergency Telecommunication Service (GETS). Departments must submit a Resource Request Form (Form 213 RR) to the EOC Logistics Section Coordinator to request GETS cards for employees.

Administration

This section outlines support needs for emergency response, including MAAs, Emergency Management Assistance Compacts (EMAC), staffing policies, liability, and financial tracking. More details are in Emergency Support Function #7 (ESF #7): Resource Management. Individual jurisdictions and Arapahoe County agencies should develop their own resource management plans.

Finance & Administration

Tracking resources includes personnel hours, overtime, expenses, insurance, and equipment use. The Emergency Manager can approve emergency spending but amounts over \$100,000 require BOCC approval. Agencies must follow county purchasing policies and track expenditures.

All resources—such as personnel, vehicles, equipment, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), medical supplies, and food—must be tracked on ICS forms, including ICS 203, 205, 206, 211, 215, and 220. These forms are in the EOC Handbook. If the EOC is activated, policy makers may report to the Policy Room to guide response and recovery.

Logistics

Each county department tracks its own resources and finances. Logistics staff in the EOC manage resource allocation and work with Finance to confirm purchases. During major incidents, an Area Command logistics team prioritizes resources each operational period. Initial resource requests go through the ACSO Communication Center or the EOC, following NIMS guidelines.

Resource Management

Arapahoe County uses Veoci for event reporting and resource management, along with other processes detailed in the Resource Mobilization Annex. The system is accessible 24/7. OEM updates resource lists in the state's WebEOC annually and as needed.

Resource management follows the Hazard Identification and Risk Analysis (HIRA) and considers hazard-specific needs. It is shaped by gap analyses from Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP), Integrated Emergency Management Course (IEMC) AAR, Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP), and the OEM Strategic Plan. More details are in the Resource Mobilization Annex.

Plan development and maintenance

The plan is updated every five years to keep mitigation, response, and recovery efforts aligned with current hazard data. COOP and COG planning should follow this update cycle for full alignment.

Testing

Arapahoe County follows the NCR exercise schedule for disaster response and recovery. Arapahoe County OEM created an IPP for regular training to ensure all departments understand the EOP. Exercises follow Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP) guidelines, with trained personnel overseeing them. After each exercise, improvements are made to the EOP. Departments and offices must ensure their staff are trained and ready for emergency roles.

Maintenance

The Emergency Manager (EM) of Arapahoe County is responsible for keeping this plan updated, though they may assign this task to others. The plan is reviewed yearly for accuracy and updated every three years as part of the Emergency Management Planning Cycle.

Agencies in Arapahoe County must inform ACOEM of any changes and participate in the three-year update by providing, reviewing, and approving information. They must also update internal plans and train staff accordingly.

ACOEM will send updates to those listed in the Record of Distribution, using the most efficient method, either digital or hard copy. Agencies must share updates with relevant staff.

Evaluation

To keep the EOP effective and up to date, AAR-IPs will be used to review emergency response methods. These reports are shared with stakeholders and partners in the Emergency Management Program. Any changes needed will be made to improve the plan. The evaluation process is ongoing, and the EOP will be reviewed before, during, and after events whenever possible.

Laws, authorities and references

Federal Authorities

- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act and Amendments (P.L. 93-288, as amended by P.L. 100-707).
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5: Management of Domestic Incidents, February 28, 2003.
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive 7, Critical Infrastructure Identification, Prioritization, and Protection, December 17, 2003
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8, National Preparedness, December 17, 2003
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8, Annex I, Planning, February 2008.
- National Security Presidential Direction 51/Homeland Security Presidential Directive 20, National Continuity Policy, May 4, 2007.
- The Homeland Security Act of 2002, Pub. L. 107-296, 116 Stat. 2135 (2002)
- The Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act (PKEMRA), Pub. L. 109-295, 120 Stat. 1355 (2006)
- United States Dept. of Homeland Security (2013). National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP). [Washington, D.C.]: U.S Dept. of Homeland Security.

State Authorities

- C.R.S. 24-33.5-701 Colorado Disaster Emergency Act (2018)
- C.R.S. 24-33.5 §701-716: Emergency Management
- C.R.S. 24-33.5 §1601-1615: Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
- C.R.S. 24-33.5 §1101-1109: Disaster Relief
- C.R.S. 24-33.5 §1501-1507: Colorado Emergency Planning Commission

Local Authorities

- Arapahoe County, Colorado Resolution No. 389-95, reassigning responsibilities of Director/Coordinator of Arapahoe County Emergency Operations/Disaster Agency to the Arapahoe County Sheriff.
- Arapahoe County, Colorado Resolution No. 040271, adoption of National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- Arapahoe County, Colorado January 14, 2025, Resolution #25-031 appointment of Sheriff Tyler Brown or designee as the Emergency Management Director/Coordinator
- Arapahoe County, Colorado Resolution No. 180599, Department of Finance, Purchasing Policies

References

- National Incident Management System, October 2017 - Department of Homeland Security.
- National Response Framework, June 2016 - Department of Homeland Security.
- National Strategy 2007 - Department of Homeland Security
- Colorado State Emergency Operation Plans (SEOP) 2010 - Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
- Comprehensive Planning Guide (CPG) 201, May 2018 - Department of Homeland Security and FEMA
- Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program Guidelines
- Arapahoe County Crisis Communications Manual
- Arapahoe County Recovery Framework
- Arapahoe County Continuity of Operations and Continuity of Government Plans
- Arapahoe OEM Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP)
- Colorado State Homeland Security Strategy, March 2008
- North Central Region TICP/TICFOG
- United States Dept. of Homeland Security (2013). National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP). [Washington, D.C.]: U.S Dept. of Homeland Security.

Acronyms

AAR-IP – After Action Report – Improvement Plan

AC – Arapahoe County

ACSO – Arapahoe County Sheriff’s Office

BCC – (ACSO) Backup Communications Center

BOCC – Board of County Commissioners

CBRN – Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear

CIAC – Colorado Information Analysis Center

CIR – Critical Information Requirements

COG – Council of Governments

COG – Collaborative Operation Group

CONOPS – Concept of Operations

COOP – Continuity of Operations

CPG 101 – Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101

DOC – Departmental Operations Center

EOP – Emergency Operations Plan

EMAC – Emergency Management Assistance Compacts

EMAP – Emergency Management Accreditation Program

ESF – Emergency Support Functions

FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency

GETS – Government Emergency Telecommunication Service

HIRA – Hazard Identification and Risk Analysis

HSEEP – Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program

HSPD-5 – Homeland Security Presidential Directive – 5

ICP – Incident Command Post

ICS – Incident Command System

IEMC – Integrated Emergency Management Course

IGA – Inter Governmental Agreement

IMT – Incident Management Team
IPAWS – Integrated Public Alert and Warning System
IPP – Integrated Preparedness Plan
JIC – Joint Information Center
MAA – Mutual Aid Agreements
MCP – Mobile Command Post
MOA – Memorandum of Agreement
MOU – Memorandum of Understanding
NCR – (Colorado) North Central Homeland Security Region
NIMS – National Incident Management System
NRF – National Response Framework
PIO – Public Information Officer
PPD-8 – Presidential Policy Directive 8
PPE – Personal Protective Equipment
PSAP – Public Safety Answering Point
RTD – (Denver) Regional Transportation District
OEM – Office of Emergency Management
TICP – Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan
UASI – Urban Area Security Initiative
UC – Unified Command

Annexes

Annex A: Emergency Support Functions (ESF)

Annex B: Public Alert and Warning

Annex C: Cyber Incident Response

Annex D: NCR Mass Fatality Family Assistance Center/Victim Information Center Operational Plan

Annex E: Resource Mobilization

Annex F: Recovery Framework