

August 4, 2025

P-2025-Emergency Preparedness-001

TO: REGIONAL CENTER EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: REPORTING DURING EMERGENCIES

This letter highlights the benefit to people served by regional centers and their families of strong collaboration between regional centers and the Department of Developmental Services (Department) during active emergency events. Please share it with your leadership teams and employees involved in emergency preparedness and response activities, and with other employees who may have vital and/or useful information during an emergency event.

In a nutshell, the State has significant resources available to assist local government and regional centers in responding to emergencies. Regardless of the size and scale of an event, the State is better prepared to assist when local resources need to be supplemented if the State already is aware of what is going on, and what might be needed in the future. In other words, the State needs to be kept informed during events in order to be able to better assist in a timely manner.

Just like regional centers, the Department consistently is called upon by State leadership and the media to speak about the status of individuals during and following emergency events. Additionally, the fundamental premise underlying the Legislature funding Emergency Services Coordinators at each regional center starting in 2021-22 was to establish coordinated statewide preparedness and response. The detailed matrix of activities that originally justified this funding is provided as Attachment A to this letter. Regional centers now have dedicated personnel responsible for establishing local and peer relationships who have the capacity to provide situational status updates to multiple agencies involved including emergency response entities, community-based organizations, and to state and local entities including this Department.

Regional center emergency coordinators and the Department worked collaboratively on Attachment B, which provides additional details about reporting. Attachment C provides an example of active-event daily reporting from the Department to CalOES and the California Health and Human Services Agency.

Coordination with the Department is critical to maximize the preparedness of individuals and families and regional centers for floods, wildfires, earthquakes, power shutoffs, and weather events. Advance coordination with the Department provides the information necessary to assist with communications to individuals and families, evacuation, relocation, and prompting

responsive contact with state and local community emergency preparedness networks to identify resources for people impacted by a disaster.

During and after an event, people need more assistance than the Department and regional centers provide. Knowing the location(s), number of people impacted, their safety (or lack thereof) and their specific needs, are critical. Knowing the geography of impacts allows pre-placement or deployment of FAST teams, supplies, and identification of shelters and alternative licensed sites. The number of affected people helps judge the magnitude and duration of potential assistance. Knowing unmet needs is critical to allow planning for shelter locations, capacities, Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant facilities, food, water, cots, Local Assistance Center capacity, medical supplies and medication replacement.

Lastly, CalOES has standing relationships with food kitchens and nonprofit donor organizations beyond the Red Cross. The Department has leadership relationships with CalOES, the California Department of Social Services, and the California Department of Public Health, and other state agencies to help make things happen. Numbers and impacts reported daily informs planning well beyond what each of us do and is briefed daily through CalOES to the Governor's Office during active events. Not reporting makes our individuals and families invisible in these processes, and thus less likely to receive timely assistance they inevitably need.

We hope this explanation is helpful and appreciate the ongoing partnership between regional centers and the Department to protect the wellbeing of the individuals and families we serve.

Sincerely,

*Original Signed by:*

PETE CERVINKA  
Director

Attachments

cc: Regional Center Administrators  
Regional Center Directors of Consumer Services  
Regional Center Community Services Directors  
Association of Regional Center Agencies  
Tamara Rodriguez, Department of Developmental Services

## **Vision for the Emergency Response Proposal**

*February 9, 2021*

### ***Background***

The Governor's Budget for 2021-22 proposes \$2 million and 21 positions to provide dedicated resources for emergency planning, preparedness, response, and recovery for the unique needs of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), to complement other existing resources that are dedicated to the public more generally. The short proposal is found in Section G-14 of the [DDS Estimate](#).

The regional centers and the Department are coordinating how best to utilize these resources with the recognition that needs and practices will differ across regional center areas, just as disasters in various areas of the state do. The work of regional centers and the local partnerships they have developed over time will be strengthened by the dedicated staff resources included in this proposal. There is broad agreement and recognition that these emergency functions are critical to protecting the health and safety of people with IDD, and should not be addressed in an ad hoc manner as they become necessary. The needs of the IDD population often are unique from other populations, including educating, sheltering, feeding, evacuation, transportation, communication and other aspects, yet still needs to be complementary to the State's overall emergency framework.

Advance planning, having pre-existing relationships, developing training and expertise, and having a dedicated point-person to coordinate efforts when the need arises are key to successfully minimizing harm and saving lives. Similarly, the activities during a response are critical: sharing information, coordinating supplies and contracted services, ensuring and verifying well-being, and reporting necessary information for incident management and planning. Once a fire has subsided, for example, the emergency is not over. People must know when it is safe to return home, be connected to state and federal assistance when they cannot, and have their needs (medication, food, access and functional needs, health care, transportation) met for months, or even years, after an event in some cases.

Certain principal considerations therefore are in the forefront of our coordination: preparedness, response and recovery; mutual aid; training standards; community and government engagement; and coordination versus performing. All considerations are focused toward reducing the risk of harm and protecting health and safety.

### ***Using the Proposed Resources***

The regional centers and the Department have identified the following matrix of tasks as priorities for these proposed resources. We recognize that no one person can possess all of the necessary knowledge and skills in all of these areas, and that mutual aid is a successful feature of California's existing emergency plans. Therefore, we are exploring the extent to which we can take a teamwork approach with these positions, wherein each position has a basic foundation of knowledge and skills and can rely upon a network of peer positions with specializations to cover all aspects of planning/preparedness, response, and recovery. We also note that each regional center has a different experience with emergencies and different set of staff experience and skills, which will be factored into future planning as well. Below is a topical list of potential emergency activities that may need to be accomplished in each area:

<b>Examples of Potential Emergency Activities</b>			
<b><i>Planning</i></b>	<b><i>Preparedness</i></b>	<b><i>Response</i></b>	<b><i>Recovery</i></b>
Recruit the 21 requested positions	Create, review, and complete ongoing updates to regional center emergency response plans.	Reduce the risk of harm	Be prepared to assist clients with state and FEMA programs, access and languages, as needed
Development of training plans	Identification of individuals served who are at greatest risk.	Listing of local resources for unmet needs of people served	Familiarity with available State/Federal financial resources that may aid individual and community recovery
Provide basic foundational training, for emergencies and about the IDD community	Branding and refining communication protocols, tools, and templates specific to each RC, including Everbridge and its capabilities.	Use of communication protocols and tools for consistent messaging and status updates to individuals served	Lessons learned / after-action reports
Specialized training, including VEST and FAST teams	Networking w/ local OES, and being an active participant and liaison in local planning meetings for each County, including sheltering and feeding	Utilize reporting tools, including online options, for timely reporting and situation awareness	Close identified gaps
Recurring team meetings	Participate in State-level planning meetings such as IOU Advisory (PSPS).	Triage incoming info, prepare it, and present it appropriately for dissemination	Complete after-action reports to further improve emergency efforts
Development of community and government education and awareness materials	Review program / service designs for providers/vendors for all hazards, and conduct exercises as appropriate	Well-being validation and in-person checks	Monitor and report well-being, safety, recovery
Establish clear roles for coordinators and “do-ers”, and identify those people	Identify needed services and work with community partners on cooperative agreements	Address unmet access and functional needs, medication, feeding, health care, power/batteries, and transportation	

Identify available grants for exercises, supplies, expertise/training	Coordinate or Provide training for providers / vendors based on local needs	Coordinating with existing resources and providing specialized expertise I.e. working with American Red Cross.	
Identifying and educating counties on unique and specialized needs such as specialized diets while sheltering	Work closely with SLS/ILS/families on emergency response and alternative plans		
Consistent and verified information for messaging	Development of standardized information reporting and sharing expectations and tools		
	Educate consumers, families, and providers about how to be prepared, what to expect for different kinds of events		

### ***Current discussions***

At this time, we continue to discuss what additional activities need to be considered, in light of past experiences and discussions with other experts at the state and local levels. We are focusing our discussions around the following topics:

How can we begin to operationalize next steps for recruitment and training, so that the IDD system can benefit from these resources before and during the coming Fall fire season?

Given varying local needs, available skillsets, and visions for the position, how to promote inter-regional center interaction and sharing of best practices to support needed mutual aid across catchment area boundaries as dictated by the needs of a particular event?

Are there opportunities for shared trainings?

How best to develop and disseminate standard preparedness information to people with IDD and their caregivers, considering the diversity of conditions, events, geographies, and language?

How to increase awareness about regional centers and people with IDs among other state and local emergency operations center agencies and their employees, and in the community more generally?

### ***Conclusion***

While we recognize that there yet remains much to be discussed in terms of detail, we hope that this vision conveys the importance of these resources and the depth of thought and experience that is being applied to ensuring the State is better prepared to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergency events that affect or imperil people with IDs.



This tool is intended to be a step-by-step process for emergency response coordinators to use during emergencies and to provide guidance for tracking throughout the event for your regional center. It also includes reporting information needed by DDS to ensure statewide coordination and consistency.

## PLANNING AHEAD

- ☐ Monitor for all potential threats, emergencies, and hardships that may impact individuals served by the regional center. Familiarize yourself with different emergency related resources i.e., [DisasterAWARE Pro](#), or [Watch Duty](#), or other related resources.
- ☐ Ensure you are signed up for local county alerts.
- ☐ Recommend creating notification templates in advance of emergencies to assist and speed up the process at the time of delivery.
- ☐ Preventative measures: inform all staff of daily threats/hazards via email. (I.e., low humidity with high temperatures provides a high fire risk). Doing this keeps staff informed of risks and has their focus on the potential impacts to individuals served by the regional center and alleviates last minute surprises.

## EMERGENCY ALERT

- ☐ Alerted to an emergency? Upon receiving this knowledge whether Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS), wildfire, active shooter, earthquake, or other emergency start with identifying the location using Google, or other reliable source to confirm location.
- ☐ Once location is confirmed, open Everbridge and scroll to that location to identify individuals, vendors/providers and staff that may be risk.
- ☐ The Department will provide any available shapefiles and/or additional event details as they are available. Available shape files will be uploaded into the Everbridge platform under folder "DDS Uploads".
- ☐ If there aren't any individuals, vendors/providers or staff at risk, write down the name and type of incident, for example, *Blacktop Drive Fire, Forest Fire, 21 acres, 20% contained, potentially high risk in the future and monitoring continues*. Notify RC staff/activation team of the incident. Monitor

until no longer a threat.

- ☐ If individuals, vendors/providers, or staff are at risk, utilize the drawing tools within the Universe Tab, or download the available shapefile under “DDS Uploads” to identify those in the area of the emergency, and to obtain precise details of those within that shape or area.
- ☐ Once the individuals, vendors/providers, and staff are highlighted, download the contact list. Open the download file from your email where the contact list was generated and open the link. The link will take you back to Everbridge to view the file.
- ☐ This file will provide you the contact information of those individuals, vendors/providers, and staff in the area of impact or potential impact.
- ☐ Save the document as a spreadsheet. Remove any columns that do not have data. This will become your working spreadsheet to track status updates throughout the incident. Sample under “other information below”.
- ☐ Additionally, this spreadsheet can be used as part of the RC activation for making follow up wellness checks or phone calls. You can sort this spreadsheet by service coordinator if that is helpful.

## PREPARING A NOTIFICATION

- ☐ Preparing to send a notification. Best practice recommend is to utilize the polling option. You can either send a new notification using the Notifications Tab or if you are working in the Universe Tab, you can create a template while looking at the map by clicking the blue button to the right of the screen “New Notification” after you have identified the are of impact by drawing a shape or uploading a shapefile.
- ☐ Completing a message provides your service system critical information, allows them time to prepare, or is an opportunity for those impacted to indicate they need RC assistance or support.
- ☐ Decide on the need for a separate message to staff or include staff in the same message as individuals and vendors/providers.
- ☐ Once notification is sent, analyze the notification results. If you utilized the polling option for the message, you could quickly identify who may need further assistance. This analytical review will provide information needed for reporting requirements.
- ☐ Update the working spreadsheet as new data comes in. For instance, if the individual, vendor/provider, and/or staff is safely evacuated change the color of their status and log their new location. (Sample under “other information”).
- ☐ Note significant impacts, for example your status update should clearly identify that an individual, vendor/provider, or staff has lost their home. Loss of home, loss of services, and unmet needs should be mentioned in the summary and highlighted on the spreadsheet.
- ☐ If you have multiple emergencies at the same time, use different color schemes per event. This eliminates the potential for information cross contamination. Sometimes fires merge. If this occurs, remove the data from the smaller fire spreadsheet and the main fire spreadsheet.
- ☐ Once all data is confirmed, analyzed, prepare the data for DDS in in easy-to-understand format and

send via email. It should include the number of those impacted, notified, evacuated, actions and outreach of the regional center, and extended program closures/loss of services. Include a copy of your spreadsheet or a separate situational report (Sitrep).

- ☐ Be sure to analyze the spreadsheet to prioritize individuals who may be at greater risk. Some examples might be individuals on medical equipment, oxygen or living in ILS/SLS environments as well as vendors/providers, and provide actions taken to support obtaining status.
- ☐ **Send information daily between 2pm - 3pm** until the emergency no longer poses a threat to individuals, vendors/providers, and staff. More details to follow in "Information to DDS".

## INFORMATION TO DDS

### ***Initial Report: Summary of Impacts (individuals, vendors/providers, RC staff)***

- ☐ Provide an email summary to DDS [Tamara.Rodriguez@dds.ca.gov](mailto:Tamara.Rodriguez@dds.ca.gov) and [Chris.Garbarini@dds.ca.gov](mailto:Chris.Garbarini@dds.ca.gov) in an easy to understand format. The status update shall include a very high-level summary of individuals, vendors/providers and staff impacted by the emergency. The status update should include those clients/vendors/providers that require additional supports, i.e. ILS/SLS, those on medical equipment requiring power, vendors/providers supporting individuals with medical/behavioral needs, and extended program closures.
- ☐ Essentially a summary of your analysis which could look like this: we have a total of 250 in the area, highlighting 2 CCH homes were evacuated, they are currently evacuated to (X); we have 3 individuals on oxygen, and 6 non-ambulatory and status is unknown. We are working to obtain more information and will provide any unmet needs as we become aware.
- ☐ In the body of the email to DDS provide regional center actions/activities in response to the emergency event, i.e., RC has sent out an Everbridge notification, notified Service Coordinators and Program Managers of the emergency and potential clients at risk, and they are making outreach calls to obtain status and/or unmet needs.
- ☐ Provide a daily report between 2pm - 3pm until the threat is mitigated so DDS can meet their reporting requirements and be alerted to any potential future unmet needs and obtain any support if needed.

### ***Ongoing / Daily Reporting***

- ☐ Gathering information and impacts could take time depending on the scope of the event. If the event has grown and is now impacting additional individuals, then your spreadsheet should be updated for ongoing tracking and needed updates.
- ☐ Provide information if you become aware of facility and program closures that result in consumer displacement or loss of services.
- ☐ Provide information on homes lost or other significant impacts such as unmet needs, (i.e. individual running low on oxygen and cannot locate a vendor or local resource). Include the RC actions taken.
- ☐ If no significant changes from your initial report provided of those impacted, please provide any



additional new updates received, activities completed, and include any concerns or unmet needs, you have become aware of since the last report.

- ☐ If no changes simply state, “no additional changes from last report”. But a daily report is required to be submitted between 2pm – 3pm until the threat is mitigated.

### Assistance Needed or Questions?

- ☐ Please reach out to [Tamara.Rodriguez@dds.ca.gov](mailto:Tamara.Rodriguez@dds.ca.gov), or [Chris.Garbarini@dds.ca.gov](mailto:Chris.Garbarini@dds.ca.gov).

## OTHER INFORMATION

### Sample Report Tracker

- ☐ Here is a sample Everbridge report spreadsheet tracker.

First Nam	Middle Init	Last Name	Suffix	External I	Country	Business	Record Ty	Groups	SSO User I	Travel Arr	Address T	Location	Street Ad	Apt/Suite	City	State/Pro	Phone 1	Custom Val	Custom Value 12
O/C		11A			US		Client	Client Group			Static	Residence		NI WAY	REDDING CA			11 = English	11 = Parent/Relative/Legal Guardian
	No contact																		
	Notified																		
	Evacuated																		
	Lost in fire																		

### Sample email/questions to include to SC's or Program Mangers

Intro: Hello SC/PM – Attached is a list of the individuals that you support that have been affected or potentially will be affected by the (incident name). The first section of the list received an Everbridge alert that was sent out (date). These individuals/families may have been evacuated or placed on warning of evacuation. The second part of the list are the names of individuals that have not received an alert but are potentially in the direction that the (fire) is moving. Please complete the following:

1. Contact the individual/family that you support on the list to check on them and determine evacuation status. (Evacuated, warning or neither).
2. If evacuated, where did they evacuate to? Do they need anything related to their evacuation?
3. If not evacuated, do they have a plan of where to evacuate to if the need arises?
4. Are there any unmet needs/concerns related to this (incident) and their evacuation or possible evacuation?
5. Document your contact efforts on the T19 and start note with “Health and Safety Check”.
6. Please forward the above information to me (emergency coordinator) for each of the individuals on the list that you support.

If there are any unmet needs related to this emergency, please contact your supervisor asap. Thank you for your assistance.

**SAMPLE REPORTING FROM THE DEPARTMENT TO THE CALIFORNIA HEALTH AND  
HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY AND CALOES**

**From:** Rodriguez, Tamara@DDS <Tamara.Rodriguez@DDS.CA.GOV>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 9, 2025 4:38 PM  
**Subject:** Los Angeles County Fires - 1/9/25 PM update

Good afternoon, As everyone is well aware the Los Angeles Fire's remain extremely active with 0% containment for the 2 large fires (Eaton and Palisades). Hurst Fire is still very active but has 10% containment. At this point the fires have grown to now include all 7 of the LA Regional Centers. They are all actively monitoring the event, sending messaging through Everbridge, completing outreach calls, sharing local resources, and working closely with other neighboring regional centers who are on standby to assist. As each day passes, we unfortunately hear of additional homes lost. WRC is reporting 16 consumer/family homes lost, and SGPRC is reporting 75 consumer/family homes lost. All unmet needs are being met at the local level, with no requests from the State at this point. We continue to provide daily updates for fire expansions as needed and are providing support to all 7 regional centers throughout the day. Windy conditions remain to be of great concern, as well as the air quality. Multiple notices of provider closures.

As I am writing this email, we received alert of a new fire – Kenneth Fire – LA and Ventura Counties – currently at 500 acres with evacuation orders and warnings.

Daily reporting requirements continue so please do keep us posted on anything you receive directly.

**Tamara Rodriguez** | Officer, Emergency Preparedness & Response  
Emergency Preparedness/Data Analytics & Strategy  
California Department of Developmental Services  
Phone: (916) 651-1484  
Visit the DDS' Emergency Preparedness Page  
[Prepare for Emergencies](#)

**From:** Rodriguez, Tamara@DDS  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 8, 2025 5:10 PM  
**Subject:** Los Angeles County Fires - 1/8/25 PM update

Good Afternoon,

The weather conditions remain in critical status. This status is expected through tomorrow. Current PSPS events are impacting 116,745 in Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties.

Below are the fires we are currently monitoring. There are currently evacuation orders and warnings in the following areas. The Department continues to monitor for significant changes and to support the regional centers impacted. This is very tragic and probably the most impacts I have seen to those we serve. Still very active and we are monitoring through the night. Have notified RCs to reach out if any support is needed. From what I have, all needs are being met at the local level at this time.

**Palisades Fire - 15,832 acres and 0% contained**

**WRC**

- 176 individuals on evacuation orders
- 41 individuals on evacuation warnings
- 136 individuals Evacuated

RC staff have reached out to all those on orders and warnings and confirmed the below info:

- 32 Sheltering in Place
- 1 Individual lost their home (sheltering with family)
- 48 Left Message and text no response yet
- No unmet needs reported at this time

**NLARC**

- 86 individuals on evacuation orders
- 1,189 individuals on evacuation warnings
- No unmet needs reported at this time

**Eaton Fire – 10,600 acres, 0% contained**

**SGPRC**

- 632 individuals on evacuation orders
- 125 individuals on evacuation warnings
- 8 residential homes destroyed
- 24 residential homes evacuated and temporary locations forthcoming
- 41 homes lost
- No unmet needs reported at this time

Multiple Everbridge messaging sent as well as outreach calls.

**ELARC**

- 6 individuals on evacuation orders
  - 3 individuals at initial onset of fire; 2 have evacuated to a hotel and 1 was evacuated with the skilled nursing facility. Individual was transported to Golden Legacy Care Center in Sylmar and the individual is stable. 3 additional individuals added with expansion of fire awaiting updates.

- 9 individuals on evacuation warnings
- No unmet needs reported at this time

**NLACRC**

- Now impacting 501 individuals (8 providers, 36 employees, and 457 consumers)
- Everbridge notifications sent and wellness checks being completed.

**Hurst Fire – 700 acres, 0% contained**

**NLACRC**

- Orders and warnings impacting 4,770 (95 providers, 4548 Consumers, and 127 employees).
- Everbridge messaging sent and for those did not respond RC is reaching out to complete calls.
- Considering closing the Santa Clarita Office tomorrow.

**Lidia Fire – 80 acres, 30% contained**

**NLACRC**

- 117 individuals (4 providers, 1 employee, 112 consumers)
- Beginning outreach calls and Everbridge messaging.

Please reach out if you have questions and a reminder to share any updates that you receive directly to ensure Chris and I are looped in for consistent messaging.

Thank you,

**Tamara Rodriguez** | Officer, Emergency Preparedness & Response  
Emergency Preparedness/Data Analytics & Strategy  
California Department of Developmental Services  
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