

EVACUATION PLAN
2023-2025

EVACUATION PLAN

The Eagle County Evacuation Plans operate on the principle that local governments bear the initial responsibility for response to an emergency. As a product of this principle, each level of government will accomplish the functions for which it is statutorily responsible, and will coordinate response and activities with other entities using a National Incident Management System model of Unified Command.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Evacuation Plan Annex is to outline roles, responsibilities, and authorities to establish the organizational concepts for an effective system of notification, direction and coordination.

SCOPE

This Evacuation Plan Annex encompasses the following:

- Who shall order an evacuation
- Responsibilities for those involved
- How the evacuation notifications are made
- What Support Plans exist for specific locations and populations that may need additional evacuation assistance
- Re-entry considerations

The Evacuation Plan Annex is intended as a high-level strategic plan and does not replace the need for tactical-level plans and agency-specific Standard Operating Procedures that detail how the responsibilities in this Annex will be carried out.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

Evacuation authority in Eagle County rests with the Law Enforcement agencies that have jurisdiction over the areas being evacuated. Members of on-scene Incident Command (Law, Fire, EMS, Emergency Management, etc.) provide direction and guidance on the evacuation need, locations threatened, and the evolving nature of the hazard. Incident Command will be the ones with the necessary situational awareness to recommend evacuation or shelter in place options as the preferred method of protecting lives before, during, or after disasters or emergencies.

A key component of a successful evacuation or shelter in place operation is timely and accurate provision of information.

Essential information during evacuation notifications includes:

- Reason for the evacuation or shelter in place order
- Shelter in place instructions if applicable
- Evacuation routes if applicable
- Instructions for obtaining evacuation assistance
- Area of refuge locations if evacuation routes are not accessible

- Time frame for evacuation (consider staged evacuation orders to limit crowding on roadways)
- Evacuation Center location
- The need to check in even if you provide your own alternate shelter

In most situations evacuation orders should be disseminated through ALL available public information and warning channels. These may include:

- Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS) / Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) alerting cell phones in the defined notification area
- 9-1-1 call back systems alerting landlines and cell phones with addresses registered in the defined notification area
- ECAAlert notifying users who have opted into public safety text, email, and app-based alerts
- Door-to-door evacuation protocols and/or loudspeaker broadcasts in the evacuation zone
- ECEmergency.org public safety website
- Official agency social media channel(s)
- Evacuation sirens in areas where available
- Variable Message Signage (with assistance from the Colorado Department of Transportation)
- Low power highway radio system (with assistance from the Colorado Department of Transportation)

Whenever an evacuation order is issued, the Incident Commander(s) **SHALL** identify an Evacuation Center location and request an **Evacuation Center Manager** to meet and greet evacuees when they arrive at that location. The Eagle County Emergency Operations Plan defines an Evacuation Center as a temporary short term facility which provides shelter from the elements, restroom facilities and information dissemination, usually for displacements anticipated to be **12 hours or less**. The Evacuation Center Manager must have communication with the Incident Command organization in order to provide timely information to the evacuees.

There are several factors which must be considered when planning for an evacuation. Among these are the characteristics of the hazard or threat itself. The magnitude, intensity, speed of onset, duration, and impact on the local community, are all significant elements to be considered. They will determine the number of people to be evacuated, time available in which to effect the evacuation, and the time and distance of travel necessary to insure safety.

Whenever possible, at specific subdivision level, all hazard evacuation plans will be developed by the appropriate public safety entities with community input based upon the types of potential hazards, and the location.

ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Law Enforcement:

- Authority to issue evacuation orders
- Lead evacuation efforts to and from the affected areas
- Emergency traffic control and crowd control
- Provide Security of evacuated areas and Evacuation Centers
- Coordinate transportation to shelters for those who need transportation assistance from the evacuation location.

Fire Agencies:

- Provide direction and guidance on the evacuation need, locations threatened, and the evolving nature of the hazard

Emergency Medical Services (EMS):

- Provide medical support to evacuees and first responders

Vail Public Safety Communications Center or Pitkin County Regional Emergency Dispatch Center:

- Dispatch first responder resources and coordinate radio communication between involved agencies
- Sends area alert and incident related notifications to the public via Everbridge
- Coordinates notifications with Incident Command and Emergency Management

Emergency Management:

- Activate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) as necessary to support Incident Command and maintain coordination between Incident Command, support partners, and impacted jurisdictions

Eagle County Public Information Officers Group:

- Provides public information to ensure that the community understands, pre-evacuation, evacuation and/or shelter in place orders
- Establishes channels of communication to keep and maintain the community informed

Public Works:

- Clearing debris from roads as necessary to maintain evacuation routes
- Assist in traffic management in support of Law Enforcement
- Ensures power, water supply, and sanitary services at mass care facilities are maintained during emergency conditions

Eagle County Public Health and Environment and Department of Human Services:

- Coordinate with healthcare providers and nonprofit organizations to provide medical and mental health support to evacuees

Evacuation Center Manager:

- Accounts and manages the evacuation center, provides relevant information and addresses needs from evacuees

The Salvation Army:

- Provides staffing and food to first responders and evacuees at evacuation centers, shelters, and at the incident location

American Red Cross:

- Provides assistance with evacuation shelters, management and staffing.
- Ensures the means necessary for services related to shelter, feeding, and medical care

Emergency Support Function 1 - Transportation (Transit Agencies):

- Coordinates and fulfills transportation needs relevant to the incident

Colorado State University (CSU) Extension Service:

- Supports relocation and sheltering of large and farm animals assisting with the wellbeing of them

Eagle County Animal Services:

- Provides support for evacuated pets and companion animals including food, sanitation, and coordination of veterinary care

Schools:

- Provide school facilities to be used as shelter for evacuations
- Provide services as requested to help aid the incident

Recreation Districts:

- Provide recreation facilities to be used as shelter for evacuations
- Provide services as requested to help aid the incident

Non-profit/Public Service Organizations:

- Provide services as requested to help aid the incident

SUPPORT PLANS

In addition to the high-level evacuation processes outlined in this Eagle County Evacuation Plan, Eagle County Emergency Management supports public safety, critical infrastructure, and community partners in the development of more in-depth evacuation plans. All of the below integrate with the Emergency Operations Center evacuation efforts during a large-scale incident and will receive support from the EOC in carrying out their evacuation and mass care activities. Some key plans and processes for critical locations include:

EVACUATION ZONE MAPBOOKS FOR RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMERCIAL ZONES

Eagle County public safety agencies maintain Evacuation Zone mapbooks that designate predetermined evacuation zones across all of Eagle County. These mapbooks are used by Law Enforcement, Fire, Dispatch, Emergency Management, and others to effectively communicate evacuation orders to public safety partners and the community. Evacuation Zone mapbooks also include population estimates, preferred traffic routing and control measures, site-specific hazards, and critical infrastructure (utilities & fuel, hospitals, schools, public safety & government facilities). Evacuation Zone Map Books are For Official Use Only. Additional public safety partners can access these Mapbooks on a need-to-know basis by contacting Eagle County Emergency Management.

EAGLE COUNTY REGIONAL AIRPORT EMERGENCY PLAN

The Eagle County Regional Airport (EGE) maintains a Federal Aviation Administration-compliant Airport Emergency Plan. This plan outlines incident response activities for emergencies at the airport and includes Standard Operating Guidelines for the safe evacuation of airport facilities and aircraft. Public safety partners can access the Airport Emergency Plan on a need-to-know basis by contacting the EGE Director of Aviation.

CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

The Eagle County Detention Center is overseen by the Eagle County Sheriff's Office. The Sheriff's Office coordinates with Eagle County Emergency Management and the Mass Care and Public Health & Medical Emergency Support Functions to maintain Fire and Safety Evacuation Procedures and ensure processes are in place to effectively evacuate, transport, and shelter incarcerated individuals during an emergency.

SCHOOLS & COLLEGES

Educational institutions in Eagle County have worked with the public safety agencies in their district and Emergency Management to develop evacuation plans, communication processes, preferred routes, and shelter locations for each of their sites. School and College evacuation plans are For Official Use Only. Additional public safety partners can access these plans on a need-to-know basis by contacting district and institutional leadership.

HOSPITALS AND HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

Vail Health Hospital, Valley View Hospital, and healthcare facilities in Eagle County maintain up-to-date emergency and evacuation plans and work closely with Emergency Support Function 8 - Health & Medical and jurisdictional public safety agencies to ensure evacuation processes address any medical, access, or functional needs for any individuals in their facilities. Note - Valley View Hospital in Glenwood Springs is not in Eagle County, but is one of the designated transport locations for medical emergencies in some parts of Eagle County. Public safety partners can access hospital and healthcare facility evacuation plans on a need-to-know basis by contacting the facility leadership.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Special Events and venues in Eagle County that have more than 500 people in attendance must obtain permission to have a mass gathering and address the criteria outlined in 3-310(T) of the Eagle County Land Use Regulations. All Special Events are strongly encouraged to complete the Special Event Guideline Form that notifies public safety of the event and promotes the development of a medical/emergency services plan. Details on this process can be found on the [Eagle County Special Event Guidelines website](#). Municipalities, state, and federal lands within Eagle County may have additional special event requirements.

ANIMAL SHELTER

Evacuation of the Eagle County Animal Shelter would be coordinated through the EOC. Special support for pets and livestock are coordinated through Emergency Support Function 6 - Mass Care and Emergency Support Function 11 - Agriculture and Natural Resources. Eagle County Animal Services and the Colorado State University Extension are key support agencies for any evacuation that involves pets or livestock.

AGENCY-SPECIFIC STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Public safety agencies, jurisdictions, and other entities with evacuation responsibilities are encouraged to maintain agency-specific Standard Operating Procedures that detail how the agency will carry out the responsibilities outlined in this Evacuation Plan Annex. Standard Operating Procedures should be developed and exercised by the responsible agencies in whatever manner is most consistent with their organizational needs.

ACCESS AND FUNCTIONAL NEEDS CONSIDERATIONS

Evacuations disproportionately impact individuals with access and functional needs. Eagle County public safety organizations and Emergency Management use a variety of strategies to identify and remove barriers that inhibit our whole community's access to critical resources during an emergency or evacuation. Systems to support individuals with access and functional needs during evacuations include (but are not limited to):

- [Eagle County Evacuation Assistance Request Form](#) - Individuals with access and functional needs are encouraged to share the additional assistance they need with 911 dispatch and Emergency Support Function 8 - Health & Medical.
- **Emergency Support Function 8 - Health & Medical Plans** - As the Lead for ESF 8, the Eagle County Department of Public Health & Environment maintains plans for supporting people with durable medical equipment, mobility barriers, and other access and functional needs during emergencies.
- **Emergency Support Function 6 - Mass Care Plans** - Lead and support agencies for ESF 6 (including the Eagle County Department of Human Services, American Red Cross, and Salvation Army) maintain plans and systems for addressing the needs of the whole community during emergencies and evacuations with special focus on individuals with access and functional needs.
- **Eagle County EOC Access & Functional Needs Coordinator** - Eagle County's EOC Operating Plans outline the role and processes for the EOC Access & Functional Needs Coordinator. This position is dedicated to identifying impacted individuals and groups

who are not able to effectively access resources and information during an emergency and coordinating with EOC partners to address those needs.

AUTHORITIES

In the event of an emergency, Law Enforcement and Incident Command have the authority to order any person to evacuate any premises, vehicle or other real or personal property.

The Colorado Attorney General ruling of June 26, 2002, highlights criminal sanctions to persons who disobey, threaten or interfere intentionally with an evacuation order.

“Evacuation orders of the Governor, local authorities, and sheriffs are enforced by criminal sanctions, and a person disobeys an evacuation order at his or her peril. A person commits the crime of obstructing government operations if, by using or threatening to use violence, force, or physical interference or obstacle, he or she intentionally obstructs, impairs, or hinders the performance of the governmental function by a public servant. § 18-8-102(1), C.R.S. A person commits the crime of obstructing a police officer or firefighter or other rescuer if the person uses or threatens violence, force, physical interference, or an obstacle and knowingly obstructs, impairs, or hinders the enforcement of a penal Law or the preservation of the peace by a peace officer or the prevention, control, or abatement of fire by a fire-fighter. § 18-8-104(1)(a), C.R.S.”

SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A hazard analysis of Eagle County has identified numerous situations which may prompt the need for evacuation and/or isolation of people in the name of public safety. These situations include but are not limited to wildland fires, hazardous materials incidents, flooding, and winter storms.

Some assumptions that can be taken from an examination of historical data on evacuations in the United States are:

- Hearing the warning is critical, public information and warning works, as those who feel vulnerable are more likely to take action
- No single information and warning method will reach all segments of the population and all methods will still not reach everyone (remember special warning needs like hearing impaired, limited English proficiency, etc.)
- People must believe that the warning is credible
- People will attempt to confirm that a threat exists from multiple sources before heeding a warning
- People need to be assured that the warning pertains to them so the warning message must provide details (who, what, when, where, why and how)
- People may not voluntarily request special assistance with evacuation (functional limitations, lack of transportation, etc.)
- People are less likely to evacuate if their companion animals are not provided for.
- People are less likely to evacuate if they feel that their property will not be adequately protected (security)
- Residents of the County are responsible for preparing themselves, their families and their guests for any emergency, including the possible need to evacuate on short notice

- The County and local jurisdictions will provide education to assist the public in preparing personal emergency plans

MASS CARE

Refer to [Emergency Support Function #6](#) Mass care, Housing and Human Services Annex for further information on Mass Care.

RE-ENTRY MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS FOR RE-ENTRY

Following a disaster, where evacuation of portions of Eagle County have occurred, roadblocks (traffic control points) will be established restricting re-entry evacuated areas until it has been determined by public safety agencies and damage assessment teams that it is safe to do so.

The following points are essential for **Safety** during re-entry:

- The provision of minimum access on primary roads
- Reestablishment of emergency services (Police, Fire, EMS and Medical Facilities)
- Removing of utility hazards

Considerations for Initiating Re-entry:

- That a situation has affected all or portions of Eagle County that prompted an evacuation
- That damage is such that food, water, and/or shelter may not be immediately available
- That damage is such that debris may restrict movement along primary road systems
- That damage is such that electrical power, gas and or water may not be available
- That damage is such that local emergency and public communications may not be available or significantly reduced
- That damage is such that health services, medical facilities, and medical transport may not be available
- That Law Enforcement, Fire, and EMS services may be hampered

OBJECTIVE OF RE-ENTRY

The objective of post-incident re-entry management is to identify immediate needs of affected areas and once identified, provide a systematic assessment and recovery process.

RE-ENTRY PROCEDURES

There is an absolute need to provide access by clearing debris from primary roadways, to reestablish EMS, Police and Fire services and, remove and secure utility hazards while establishing a minimum of capabilities, and to assess damages in order to manage an effective response. There is also a recognized need for emergency protection measures. Additionally, many outside services will be needed and outside interests will desire access.

Every effort will be made to allow evacuees to return to their homes and businesses. Re-entry to all areas evacuated will be authorized based on public safety and security concerns, the extent of dangers, and operational requirements of public safety. The decision to establish general re-entry

will be evaluated through continuous coordination among the various municipalities, county, state and federal agencies. This information will be announced over all available media.

- The Eagle County EOC will receive assessment from all Incident Command organizations to determine extent of damage and will assist with resource acquisition and management for the re-entry process.
- Public Works officials will assure that primary roads are open and bridges are without damage.
- Public Information announcements will be made regarding the re-entry by all media , including public health recommendations regarding public safety upon re-entry to damaged homes or facilities.
- Restricted re-entry to the damaged area will be at the discretion of the authority(s) having jurisdiction.

Until access is restored for all evacuees to re-enter an area without restriction, a check-in/badging procedure shall be used to identify those persons allowed into an evacuated area (utility workers, homeowners, etc.) with the requirement for all such persons to display the badge on the outermost portion of their clothing while in the evacuated area.

- Public Information announcements will be coordinated through the Joint Information System.
- All requests for assistance beyond the capabilities of a municipality or district should be channeled through the Eagle County EOC.

Re-entry will be determined by priority scheduled or at the direction of the controlling authority.