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# **ONONDAGA COUNTY**

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## **COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

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The Onondaga County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan stems from the recognition on the part of local government and state officials that a comprehensive emergency management plan is needed to ensure that the County can efficiently and effectively manage emergency/disaster situations. This Plan was developed with participation of County officials, key emergency preparedness and response partners, along with engagement of key constituents. This Plan is a dynamic tool that provides a road map for the County emergency management program of mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery. It is a management plan, not an operations plan. It has been structured to align with both the New York State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and the federal National Response Framework. Authority to undertake this effort is provided by New York State Executive Law Article 2-B, New York State Defense Emergency Act and the federal Stafford Act.

## II. COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH

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Dealing with disasters is an ongoing and complex undertaking. Utilizing a comprehensive approach to emergency management can save lives and minimize property damage. The comprehensive approach involves four phases: Mitigation, Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. These are defined as:

- **Mitigation:** Evaluating hazards and taking actions to reduce the risk from emergencies/disasters;
- **Preparedness:** planning with emergency response and support organizations to ensure a more effective response capability
- **Response:** timely and effective actions taken during an actual occurrence; and
- **Recovery:** provision of both short and long term recovery assistance after the occurrence of a disaster.

The comprehensive emergency management approach emphasizes the interrelationship of activities, functions, and expertise necessary to deal with emergencies.

The development of this Plan included input from a myriad of stakeholders, along with an analysis of potential hazards that could affect the County, and an assessment of the response capabilities existing in the County. The capabilities assessment evaluates emergency planning, the emergency management organizational structure, response equipment, responder training, and plan testing through exercising.

### III. PLAN CONCEPTS AND STRUCTURE

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The Plan incorporates the National Incident Management System (NIMS) systematic approach to incident management. Key components of NIMS included in this Plan are Preparedness, Communications and Information Management, Resource Management, Command and Management, Ongoing Management and Maintenance.

### IV. MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

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The Onondaga County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan outlines the emergency management program adopted by the County to ensure a more resilient community in the event of a disaster or emergency. The Plan addresses responsibilities for various County departments and agencies with incident management assignments based on the most current County capability along with existing agency responsibilities.

The Department of Emergency Management is designated to oversee the Onondaga County Emergency Management program. In that capacity, the Department of Emergency Management coordinates all emergency management activities of the County.

Onondaga County utilizes the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS.) These systems, which build upon each other, provide a means for cross functional incident management by employing a standard organizational approach and terminology for command, control, resource management and public communication during an emergency. (See Appendix \_\_\_\_ NIMS Reference.)

A foundational concept of NIMS is that an emergency or disaster begins at the local governmental jurisdiction – city, villages, and towns. The lowest government level is responsible for emergencies/disasters within the designated jurisdictional boundary. Consequently, a clear hierarchy exists for requesting and sharing resources. The County is tasked to assist upon receiving a request from the local governmental jurisdiction indicating that they have fully committed their resources and are still unable to cope with the emergency or disaster. The County will provide coordination or emergency response services and resources, while maintaining County services and operations.

Similarly, New York State is obligated to provide assistance to the County after resources have been exhausted and the County is no longer able to cope with the emergency or disaster. Section I outlines steps each level of government is to follow in determining the need for additional assistance.

Specific emergency management guidance for situations requiring special knowledge, technical expertise, and managing resources may be addressed in separate annexes attached to the Plan. For Onondaga County an example of this type of situation are

emergencies resulting from hazardous chemical releases for which a separate annex is attached to this Plan.

Annexes and appendices attached to the basic Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan are more dynamic and subject to change due to technological improvements, changes in terminology and notification procedures.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

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The Onondaga County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan provides operating guidance that is to be followed for a variety of emergencies or disasters. The plan outlines policies, objectives, legal authorities, the incident management system, and the three key processes for managing emergency situations – Preparedness, Response, and Recovery.