

# COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

## Emergency Operations Plan



## SUPPORT ANNEX #4 MASS CARE & SHELTERING

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT  
OF  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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**Lead Agency**

- Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS)

**Support Agencies and Organizations**

- Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)
- Department of Military Affairs (DMA)
- Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
- Virginia Department of Corrections (DOC)
- Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP)
- Virginia State Police (VSP)
- Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS)
- Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH)

- Virginia Department of Health (VDH)
- Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI)
- Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS)
- Virginia Department for the Aging (DOA)
- Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
- Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)
- Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA)
- Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM)
- Department of General Services (DGS)
- Virginia Public Institutions of Higher Education
- Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VAVOAD)

**Purpose**

This annex exists to establish the legal and organizational basis for operations in the Commonwealth of Virginia to effectively respond to and recover from all-hazards disasters and/or emergency situations to include catastrophic emergencies which involve a component for mass care and sheltering.

**Scope & Applicability**

This annex acknowledges the responsibility and impacts of sheltering on the local government. This annex does not replace, supersede, or supplant any local plans, nor does it usurp the authority or responsibilities of local government.

This annex assigns broad responsibilities to state government agencies and support organizations for Mass Care & Sheltering preparedness, operations, and response. It addresses the state responsibility and procedures for state managed human shelter operations and state managed pet shelter operations in support of an Executive Order issued by the Governor.

The Mass Care & Sheltering Annex is also supported by documents that address specificities germane to the process of sheltering including:

- Without Warning Evacuation Planning
- Assembly Area Planning
- Refuge of Last Resort Planning

This annex sets forth the concepts and procedures whereby the Commonwealth can effectively apply available resources to ensure that casualties and property damage will be minimized and that essential services will be restored as soon as possible following an emergency or disaster situation. The foundation for this coordinated response is established through the Commonwealth of Virginia's Basic Emergency Operations Plan.

**Planning Assumptions**

- The development and execution of effective sheltering actions must include consideration of the character and associated needs of the impacted community and include an assessment of the resources and capabilities required to implement the various actions needed.

- There are special facilities, such as correctional facilities and mental health facilities that are the responsibility of a state or federal authority with which localities must also coordinate.
- Special facilities, regardless of government or private affiliation, should have an emergency plan that includes sheltering.

### **Policies**

- All agencies assigned responsibilities within this annex will develop and maintain the necessary plans, standard operating procedures, mutual aid agreements, and model contracts to successfully accomplish their tasks.

### **Organizational Structure**

This document will address general situations with no consideration given for special incident scenarios. For more information on specific incident scenarios, including timelines for various activities, consult the appropriate incident-specific annex for additional guidance.

#### *Sheltering Agencies*

Coordination of state sheltering operations will be managed by ESF #6 of the Virginia Emergency Response Team (VERT). Agencies with operational responsibilities are listed in Attachment 1 – Human Sheltering.

#### *Pet Evacuation and Sheltering Agencies*

Coordination of pet evacuation and sheltering operations will be managed by ESF #11 of the VERT. Agencies with operational responsibilities are listed in Attachment 2 – Pet Evacuation and Sheltering.

### **Concept of Operations**

The Mass Care & Sheltering annex is the core plan for managing an all-hazards approach to mass care sheltering procedures. Other supplemental agency and interagency plans

provide details on authorities, response protocols, and technical guidance for responding to and managing specific events (such as hazardous materials spills, wildland fires, hurricanes, etc.).

At the onset of these events, plans would be set into motion to assist with the sheltering of any given population affected.

The following local emergencies may require state assistance for Mass Care sheltering:

- Radiological Event
- Hazardous Materials Event
- Hurricane
- Snow/Ice Event
- Flooding
- Terrorism Event
- Wildland Fire
- Earthquake

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

*\*See Attachments 1 and 2*

### **Authorities & References**

#### *Authorities*

- Virginia Emergency Services and Disaster Laws
- Code of Virginia § 36-98.1
- Section 44-146.18 of the Code of Virginia amended.
- Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act, 2007, Pub. L. No. 109-295, 120 Stat. 1355 (2006), Signed on October 4, 2006. Sec. 536.

#### *References*

- Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) 4.6.3: The emergency operations/response plan shall identify and assign specific areas of responsibility for performing essential functions in response to an emergency or disaster.

Areas of responsibility to be addressed include: mass care; sheltering; and food, water, and commodities distribution.

## Attachment 1 – Human Sheltering

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### Purpose

The Human Sheltering Attachment describes the coordinating processes used to direct State Managed Shelter (SMS) operations in any region in the Commonwealth. Additionally, the plan refers to the transportation components necessary to address the operations of Refuges of Last Resort (ROLR) during a declared state of emergency. This attachment is also supported by documents that address specificities germane to the process of sheltering including Refuges of Last Resort Planning.

### Planning Assumptions

- In major disaster events or emergencies, regional, state, federal and private resources might be necessary to augment local sheltering resources to ensure an effective and timely execution of the protective action(s).
- The opening of pre-identified local and/or SMS sites will be announced at marked points as determined by the specific incident.
- Localities have identified functional needs populations and this information will be readily available and communicated to the state to allow for provisions for these needs if SMS sites are to be utilized.
- Some segments of the population might not receive or follow the instructions communicated.
- Shelter supplies and resources will be requested and/or pre-staged as needed.
- State agency employees will staff SMS and may be augmented by shelter teams from evacuating localities and/or by voluntary organizations.

### Policies

- Shelter operations are a local responsibility and will be initiated at the local level. All localities should have a clear, comprehensive shelter plan as part of their EOP.
- The American Red Cross is a primary shelter provider. Their shelter guidance can serve as a tool to local emergency planning.
- Plans and procedures for identified SMS sites will be available pre-event to ensure that SMS sites are prepared, trained, and staffed.
- A method for registering and tracking evacuees will be established and maintained.
- A pre-screening of transit dependent persons boarding buses or trains for evacuation will occur at the local assembly areas. This manifest will be transmitted to ESF 6 for determination of destination and for transition to the appropriate SMS unified command prior to the arrival of the evacuees such that sufficient and appropriate space can be held for this incoming population.
- State agencies will work together to allow for adequate shelter management staff at the designated shelter sites.

### Concept of Operations

The Commonwealth of Virginia Human Sheltering Attachment is the core plan with an all-hazards approach for managing state level human shelters. Other supplemental agency and interagency plans provide details on authorities, response protocols, and technical guidance for responding to and managing specific incidents (such as hazardous materials spills, wild land fires, hurricanes, etc.).

Shelter operations will vary especially when consideration is given to incidents requiring decontamination of evacuees. This document will address general situations with no consideration given for special incident scenarios. Regional shelter planning is ongoing to ensure seamless integration among local, regional, and state plans. Information on special incident scenarios can be found in the appropriate COVEOP Hazard-Specific Annexes.

Determination of need for SMS operations will be accomplished by the Virginia Evacuation Coordination Team for Operational Response (VECTOR) within the Operations Section of the VERT.

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

#### Virginia Department of Social Services

- Oversee the operation of SMS in caring for evacuated populations.
- Request and coordinate the assistance provided by quasi-government and volunteer relief organizations.
- Facilitate the transition of evacuees through the human service system from response to recovery.
- Provide shelter occupancy data to facilitate the movement of traffic along the evacuation routes.
- Use 2-1-1 and/or other communications channels to assist with outreach efforts to citizens on evacuation education pre-event, notification during an event, and reunification post-event.
- Monitor, coordinate and manage shelter activation and sequencing.
- Provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.
- Coordinate with VDEM and DHCD during mass sheltering events to facilitate case management for housing and

relocation services for displaced persons whose needs extend beyond the 30-day State Managed Shelters limit.

- Prior to the declaration of an emergency, coordinate with the DGS Division of Engineering and Buildings to perform the duties of the building official under the provisions of § 36-98.1 for all state-owned buildings or structures designated for use as an emergency evacuation shelter notwithstanding any other provisions of the Code of Virginia to the contrary.

#### Virginia Department of Emergency Management

- Coordinate sheltering and/or refuge of last resort efforts with external agencies to include federal, local and other states.
- Coordinate efforts for reimbursement to localities, agencies, and partners participating in ROLR and sheltering efforts.

#### Department of Military Affairs

- Provide a trained and ready force at designated SMS to support Virginia State Police (VSP) security operations.
- Provide Liaison Teams to each SMS to facilitate interagency coordination between DMA forces; VSP and VDSS.

#### Virginia Department of Transportation

- Assist in identification of proper egress and ingress routes to SMS locations.
- Ensure public safety and security of the transportation infrastructure on major/primary roadways used to access SMS sites.
- Provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.

## Virginia Department of Corrections

- Provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.
- Provide security related assistance at SMS

## Virginia Economic Development Partnership

- Provide access to a database of privately owned locations that may be eligible for refuges of last resort.
- Serve as a contact point and to facilitate contact efforts with land and property holders.

## Virginia State Police

- Provide coordination of staffing at SMS to support security operations.
- Assist with missing person reporting at SMS in accordance with standard VSP Missing Persons protocols.
- Provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.

## Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services

- Provide subject matter expertise and guidance in matters relating to the needs of citizens with mental health, mental retardation, and/or substance abuse issues.
- Provide guidance to State-managed facilities in the event of a major disaster, to implement their emergency preparedness plans, including cooperative efforts with local Community Service Boards (CSBs) resources and evaluation and relocation of clients, as required.
- Provide assurance that State-managed facilities and CSBs are aware of their responsibilities in the event of a major disaster involving sheltering operations

and have necessary procedures and plans in place for responding to major disasters.

- Provide direction to State-managed facilities, in the event of a major disaster, to establish liaison with State and local emergency services offices and to make their facilities available for relief assistance.
- Provide crisis intervention services at SMS.
- Provide any additional assistance as required by the State or local Office of Emergency Management, within the capability of the Department; this includes on-site visits to assess service needs and provision of needed technical assistance.
- Provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.

## Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

- Provide sign language interpretation services at SMS.
- Provide guidance in developing assistance for the deaf and hard of hearing populations that might come to a SMS.
- Provide subject matter expertise in matters relating to the deaf and hard of hearing in shelter environments.
- Provide assistive listening devices and other appropriate assistive technology, as requested and as available in stock.

## Virginia Department of Health

- Plan and prepare to assist evacuees with special medical needs at SMS.
- Assist with the media outreach efforts of shelter and/or refuge of last resort

education pre-event targeting potential medically fragile evacuees.

- Provide subject matter expertise in matters relating to the people with special medical needs in shelter environments.
- Provide subject matter expertise on other topics to state agencies, as needed.

#### Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired

- Provide guidance in developing assistance for the vision impaired and deaf/blind populations at SMS.
- Provide subject matter expertise in matters relating to the visually impaired in shelter environments.

#### Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services

- Provide subject matter expertise in matters relating to the needs of those involved in rehabilitative services.
- Provide guidance in developing assistance for the mobility impaired populations that might come to a state-managed shelter.

#### Virginia Department for the Aging

- Provide subject matter expertise and guidance in developing assistance for older adult populations in shelter environments.

#### Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development

- Provide local, state, federal, and private sector entities access to information on housing units to use for displaced people who require long-term housing (beyond 96 hours).
- Provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.

#### Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

- Provide coordination and assistance with sheltering, staffing, supplies, and equipment for household pets and service animals.
- Assist with the provision of food to people in emergency areas; and to provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.

#### Virginia Information Technologies Agency

- Provide and support information technology infrastructure required for establishment of State Managed Shelters.
- Supply technical expertise, direct technical support, and maintenance of Commonwealth communication assets (within the scope of existing capabilities) and maintenance agreements in support of State Managed Shelters.

#### Virginia Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

- Provide feeding capability, food provisions and staffing augmentation, at SMS locations, when requested.

#### Department of Human Resource Management

- Notify the Adjunct Emergency Workforce (AEW) of activation, and monitor and coordinate their response.
- Provide a representative to the VEOC.

#### Department of Medical Assistance Services

- Assist evacuees with obtaining health care services from the private medical providers
- Provide assistance with third party billing for medical care services that may be provided within the shelter

Department of General Services

- Notwithstanding any other provisions of the Code of Virginia to the contrary, through the Division of Engineering and Buildings, function as the building official for all state-owned buildings or structures and for all buildings and structures built on state-owned property designated for use for sheltering. The Division shall review and provide building permits, certificates of occupancy, as appropriate, for all such state-owned buildings for use as emergency evacuation shelters.

Virginia Public Institutions of Higher Education

- Assist DGS with the identification of buildings that may be used in the State Managed Shelter Program at individual campuses.
- Provide support as outlined in the State Managed Shelter Memorandum of Understanding at individual campuses.

## Tab A – Refuge of Last Resort

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### Purpose

The Refuge of Last Resort (ROLR) Support Document outlines the procedures necessary to address the operations of a ROLR during a declared state of emergency.

### Planning Assumptions

- Some people will not adhere to instructions and will fail to evacuate, evacuate too late or be caught in heavy evacuation traffic and need temporary refuge.
- At a minimum, sites chosen for ROLR will provide security (i.e., police presence), restroom facilities, and parking.

### Policies

- Localities (at-risk or host) are solely responsible for establishing and maintaining a ROLR. This includes the decision to open a ROLR and identifying what services are provided.

### Concept of Operations

The Commonwealth of Virginia is vulnerable to a variety of hazards, many of which could result in the need to evacuate numerous citizens.

A ROLR is not intended to be a “shelter” by the locality and may not be able to provide basic services such as food, accommodations for sleeping, and first aid. It should be considered only as a probable safe haven for evacuees who are unable to clear the area. During an evacuation, these sites will be located close to established evacuation routes and will be easily accessible from those routes.

A ROLR may be operated for up to 24 hours, and provisions at the site will be minimal.

### Roles & Responsibilities

#### Virginia Department of Emergency Management

- Assist localities in identifying ROLR sites along evacuation routes.
- Provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.

#### Virginia Department of Transportation

- Assist in identifying proper egress and ingress routes to sites.
- Assist in traffic control to ROLR sites.
- Provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.

#### Virginia State Police

- Assist localities in the provision of civil order, when requested and resources are available.
- Assist where possible with establishing a safe and secure ROLR site.
- Assist in traffic control to ROLR sites in accordance with the Highway Laws of Virginia and the policies of the State Highway Commission.
- Provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.

#### Virginia Department of Social Services

- Provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.

## Tab B – Host Sheltering

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### Purpose

The Host Sheltering support document describes the coordinating processes used in the operations of host shelters. Host shelters will be opened in localities not affected by the incident, but in close proximity.

### Planning Assumptions

- Some localities in impacted areas will not be able to open shelters. Residents of those areas will be advised to seek shelter in host areas.
- Given notice of an event, a portion of the population will voluntarily evacuate before an evacuation has been recommended or directed. Most people leaving their homes will seek shelter with relatives, friends or in motels and will not need host shelters.
- Despite the comprehensive effort implemented to communicate host shelter locations, some segments of the population might not receive or follow the instructions.

### Policies

- Host shelter operations may be available even when host locality capabilities are impacted.
- When capacity in both local and local host shelters is exceeded or is anticipated to be exceeded, the Governor may issue an Executive Order to open SMS.
- The Commonwealth will authorize state reimbursement of expenses incurred by local governments and host communities to provide sheltering in accordance with existing written agreements and within federal/state public assistance program regulations.

- The incident specific traffic management plan, developed by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and Virginia State Police (VSP) will be implemented. The plan identifies evacuation routes and limits access, based on the maximum capacity of each route. Evacuation routes will be monitored by VSP and VDOT.
- Local governments will be responsible for traffic control within their jurisdictions. Host localities will be responsible for traffic control from the evacuation routes to designated shelters within the host locality.

### Concept of Operations

The Host Sheltering Support Document is the core plan for managing host sheltering operations. Such operations may occur when an impacted locality is unable to provide shelter to its affected populations and seeks shelter for those populations outside of its jurisdictional boundaries. Other supplemental agency and interagency plans provide details on authorities, response protocols, and technical guidance for responding to and managing specific contingency situations (such as hazardous materials spills, wildland fires, etc.).

Host Shelter operations will vary especially when consideration is given to incidents involving the need for decontamination of evacuees prior to entry into a shelter environment. This document will address general situations with no consideration given for special incident scenarios.

### Roles & Responsibilities

Virginia Department of Emergency Management

- Initiate opening of host shelters when needed.

- Provide subject matter expertise to state and local agencies, as needed.

#### Virginia Department of Transportation

- Assist in identification of proper egress and ingress routes to host localities from impacted localities.
- Ensure public safety and security of the transportation infrastructure on major/primary roadways used to access host shelters.
- Staff the traffic control measures implemented in the plan on state-maintained roads.
- Coordinate the closure of high-risk roadways such as bridges, tunnels, or flood-prone sections of roadway as indicated in the Transportation Emergency Operations Plan and other protocols for adjusting transportation resources to meet impending emergencies.
- Provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.

#### Virginia State Police

- Ensure public safety and security of the transportation infrastructure on major/primary roadways.
- Monitor the flow of traffic during the evacuation of an impacted area and keep the VERT informed of the status.
- Control re-entry into the impacted area post-event.
- Provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.

#### Virginia Department of Social Services

- Participate in VECTOR to determine when and where Host Sheltering implementation should begin.

- Provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.

#### Virginia Department of Health

- Coordinate state resources in the provision of transportation or shelter facilities for people with special health or medical needs, in accordance with local plans.
- Provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.

## Attachment 2 – Pet Evacuation and Sheltering

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### Purpose

The Pet Evacuation and Sheltering Attachment describes the coordinating processes used to ensure the smooth evacuation and state managed sheltering of household pets from any region in the Commonwealth due to any hazard.

### Planning Assumptions

- Given notice of an event, a portion of the population will voluntarily evacuate with their household pets before an evacuation has been recommended or directed. Most people who leave their homes with their household pets will seek shelter with relatives, friends or in motels.
- There are ongoing efforts between all local, state, and federal partners to proactively reach out and educate residents of the Commonwealth on evacuation and sheltering procedures for themselves and their household pets to include where to go for information on evacuations and routing, when to shelter-in-place, where to go for information on pet sheltering options, and what supplies to bring to a pet shelter.
- Stranded motorists with household pets could present significant problems during an evacuation situation.
- Some owners of household pets will refuse to evacuate unless arrangements have been made to care for their animals; therefore some household pets may require evacuation prior to a disaster, sheltering and adequate care during a disaster and reunification with their owners after a disaster.
- Service animals will be evacuated and transported with their owners.
- Household pets not transported in the owner's vehicle may be transported in

separate vehicles from their owners. For example, a van for pets in cages may follow a bus with the owners. Crates will need to be provided.

- Private industry (e.g., hotels) may modify requirements allowing for the housing of household pets during an emergency.
- In major disaster events or emergencies, regional, state, federal and private resources might be necessary to augment local pet sheltering resources to ensure an effective and timely execution of the protective action(s).

### Policies

- National humane organizations will assist in the rescue, shelter and care of non-owned animals (i.e., lost, stray and/or abandoned). Non-owned pets will be taken to local animal shelters. Wildlife rescuers will be contacted concerning injured or orphaned wildlife.
- Pet shelter operations initiated at the local level are a local responsibility.
- Pre-identified local and/or State pet sheltering sites will be announced as determined by the specific event. Not all pet shelter sites will be opened at once during an event, and sites will be event-dependent.
- Public education materials will emphasize the need for individual responsibility with regard to emergency preparedness for household pets.
- Service animals will be allowed in all emergency shelters.
- Only those SMSs that are designated for pets will accept pets.

- Pet shelter supplies and resources will be requested and/or pre-staged as defined in the incident evacuation timeline.

### **Concept of Operations**

This annex is the core plan for managing pet evacuation and state pet sheltering operations with an all-hazards approach.

Other supplemental agency and interagency plans provide details on authorities, response protocols, and technical guidance for responding to and managing specific contingency situations (such as hazardous materials spills, wildland fires, etc.).

Experience has shown that during times of disaster people may risk their own safety to secure the safety of their household pets and service animals. They may not leave their homes without their pets, or they may try to return to an unsafe house to retrieve pets left behind. These situations can lead to injuries to the animals, injuries to the owners, and possible injuries to emergency personnel when assisting in recovering animals.

Pet evacuation and sheltering operations will vary from situation to situation, especially when consideration is given to incidents involving the need for decontamination of household pets prior to entry into a pet shelter environment.

### **Roles & Responsibilities**

Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

- Coordinate with ESF #17 to assist in identifying staff members and supplies needed to address the safety and well being of household pets.
- Provide subject matter expertise to state agencies, as needed.
- Coordinate with ESF #17 and appropriate government agencies, and private organizations, the utilization of a resource network, with lists and contact

information for kennels, boarding facilities, animal shelters, veterinary hospitals, or other resources, which will assist in the sheltering of domestic pets during emergencies and disasters.

- Coordinate animal disposal resources.
- Identify outlets for unclaimed pets.
- Coordinate with the PIO to facilitate dissemination of information to the public on both the location of the animal care facilities that will be opened and directions to them.