

# **Guide for County Departments of Family & Children Services**

## **Continuity of Operations Plan**

**COOP**

**2008**

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## **Introduction**

This document is intended as a guide for county offices to use in preparing their Continuity of Operations Plans. There is an accompanying template which is to be used to write the plans. This document offers minimum requirements outlining what the counties should include in different sections of their plans. These minimum requirements have been included to give an outline of the process of writing your plans. Please include all items you feel are important to the successful implementation of your Continuity of Operations Plans. If you have any questions regarding the guide or the template please contact your regional resource coordinator or your regional manager.

We would like to thank you for your continued commitment to being prepared to respond in times of emergency or disaster.

DFCS Emergency Response Unit Staff

## **Planning**

County directors should make updates to their plans as needed to ensure the highest level of safety and security for our staff, customers, and facilities.

Plans should be reviewed at least annually or as changes occur in local county operations or staffing. The following elements should be reviewed and updated:

- Internal communications procedures in response to an emergency/disaster, including staff lists with telephone, pager, cell phone and radio numbers;
- List of community partners and their responsibilities;
- Actions to address potential workforce demands;
- Current Business Continuity and Contingency Plans;
- Actions to ensure safety of foster children;
- Safety and security for staff, customer files, facilities, and equipment;
- Drills;
- List of first and second level response teams for your county, multi-county, and multi-region;
- Procurement and accounting procedures for emergency and disaster-related supplies, travel, salaries, cell phones, etc.;
- Shelter identification and approval process;
- Opening/closing and staffing procedures for shelters (included is a list of shelters approved/unapproved);
- Evacuation and re-entry procedures for local DFCS agency/geographic area;
- DFCS responsibilities for Individuals and Households Program; Disaster Food Stamp Program; and
- Staff training and education.

## **Partners/Responsibilities**

Examples of community partners may include but are not limited to the following organizations:

- American Red Cross
- Local Emergency Management Agency
- Office of Homeland Security/Georgia Emergency Management Agency
- Law Enforcement
- Board of Education
- Public Health
- MH/DD/AD
- Housing Authority
- Foster Parent Association
- Office of Aging

- Regional Accounting
- Others (Faith Community/Community Service Groups/Community Action Agencies)

## **Communication**

Immediately following a disaster or emergency, communication with staff on-site must be established by use of operational cell phones, local area networks (LAN lines), or radios

The county DFCS office will develop a plan of action to be implemented following an emergency/disaster that includes:

- Implementation of an emergency phone tree with critical/essential staff contacting supervisors and/or supervisors contacting staff;
  - Phone tree should be updated as staff changes occur.
- Establishment of contact with regional directors;
  - regional director to establish contact with program managers and DFCS emergency management staff in the State Office;
- As information becomes available, DFCS will complete an assessment that covers:
  - Casualties, Serious Injuries and Missing County DFCS Staff or visitors;
  - Operational capability of agency facilities;
  - Availability of local staff to assist and/or identification of assistance needed from the region; and
  - Shelter openings and operations.
- Reports to regional directors (or others as directed) at regular established times following the disaster;
  - Ensures orderly reporting of information and staff ability to support local emergency efforts without interruptions (OHS/GEMA, Red Cross, etc.).
  - Efforts will be made to establish no more than four reports/updates per day. (Unless emergency situations warrants additional contacts)
- Communications protocol to be established by the local emergency planning committee (who will communicate with regional director, local EMA, etc.)
- Defined work plans and relief operations;
- Plans to communicate with non-English speaking residents and evacuees from other areas; and
- Maintenance of a list of local numbers for emergency utility disconnection or reconnection.

## **Actions To Address Potential Workforce Demands**

- Determine which services are critical or non-critical.
- Determine which services can be delayed or postponed and the impact involved.
- Determine how services will be provided in the event the DFCS office is rendered unusable.
- Identify alternative worksites for short and long durations.
- Identify equipment required for alternative worksites.
- Determine procedures to safeguarding records.
- Identify staff persons who are reservists in the Armed Forces or members of the National Guard.
- Determine how workloads may need to be adjusted if reservists and guard members are called to active duty.
- Identify staff to serve on emergency response team.
- Determine how workloads may need to be adjusted if DFCS emergency response teams are called upon to assist with a local or regional emergency.

## **Actions to Ensure Safety of Foster Children**

- Maintain current database on all foster children that includes:
    - Child's Name
      - School Attended
      - School Emergency Protocol (plans for children in their care)
      - Special Needs of the child (if any)
      - Will foster parents and child need transportation in case of evacuation?
      - If boarding for another county, identify county contact information
    - Foster Parent's Name
      - Address
      - Phone (work and home number)
      - Alternate Emergency Contact Information
    - Birth Parent's Name
      - Address
      - Phone (work and home number)
- (Keep copies of this data off-site)***
- Sponsor/conduct meetings with foster and adoptive parents to provide:
    - Information on local emergency planning.
    - Instructions/guidance in discussing need for emergency planning with foster children. (Websites: <http://www.gema.state.ga.us/>, [www.fema.gov/kids/](http://www.fema.gov/kids/) )
    - Development of families' emergency/disaster plans.
    - Instructions on how to maintain contact with DFCS during emergencies and evacuations.
    - Information on staff responsibility during emergency/disaster.
    - Invitation to crisis counselors (MH/DD/AD) to guide staff and foster parents in planning for and working with children in emergencies.
    - Written materials (multi-lingual) from National Association of School Psychology. (Website: <http://www.nasponline.org/>)
    - Invitation to American Red Cross (ARC) and other agencies to share information and to provide in-home training on emergency preparation and response.
    - Phone numbers of staff and others to enable contact to be maintained should an emergency/disaster occur.
    - Provide foster parents with the toll free number to the DFCS Call Center (outside Atlanta: 1-888-295-1769 option # 3; in Atlanta 404-463-0039, option #3) to use in the event they are displaced during an emergency evacuation, and unable to reach the designated numbers established by the County Office.
    - Maintain a list of training sessions provided for foster families.

# **Safety and Security of Staff, Customers, Files, Facilities, and Equipment**

## **Staff and customers:**

- Determine whether to evacuate the facility or “shelter in place”. (Website: [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov) for guidelines)
- Determine whether to fight or flee in fire situations. (Website: [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov) for guidelines)
- Display building evacuation routes in prominent locations throughout all facilities, including in restrooms and conference rooms. Include copy of the floor plans.
- Designate an assembly area for staff evacuated from the facility and procedures to account for all staff, customers and visitors. Identify the names and last known locations of anyone not accounted for and pass the information on to the official in charge.
- Hold planned evacuation drills as often as needed so that staff persons are familiar with all evacuation exits from multiple locations within facilities.
- Ensure adequate first aid supplies. (These should be readily available on each floor of multi-level buildings and in each wing of single-story facilities.)
- Ensure availability of charged flashlights/other emergency lanterns near each stairwell or exit on each floor and maintain a supply of back-up batteries.
- Maintain an updated list of staff addresses, telephone, pager, and cell phone numbers. Ensure that copies of this list are available to senior managers at all times and that managers keep copies off-site as well as at their workstations.
- Require sign-in/sign-out for all staff leaving buildings during regular work hours and require general information about their intended destination and expected return time. The sign-out sheet should be secured and removed from the building during an emergency.
- Prepare an annotated building diagram, blueprint or floor-space outline that identifies specific workstations to which individual staff persons are assigned. (Copies of this information should also be maintained off-site.)
- Work with on-site security staff to ensure that adequate safety measures are in effect at all times.
- Maintain effective after-hours building access procedures at all locations.
- Consider storage of some bottled water on-site.
- Provide breathing masks to staff to keep at their workstations and in their vehicles (with extra masks provided to staff that transport children and other clients).
  - The masks referred to are simple breathing masks for dust, smoke, etc. like those worn by painters or mowers — not the more sophisticated gas masks.

## **Facilities, equipment, and files:**

- Designate a staff member and alternate to be on-site following an emergency/disaster to ensure security of equipment and files and to consult with rescue staff on recovery.
- Develop a plan with assistance from I.T. for disconnecting equipment and transferring it to an alternate location.
- The plan should include an inventory of all equipment and its location (a copy of the inventory should be kept off-site).

## **Drills:**

- Drills should be conducted quarterly. Counties should alternate the type of drill to ensure that all staff experience fire, tornado, and bomb threat safety procedures.
- Participation in local and state exercises is highly recommended. I.E. Statewide HURREX, Regional Domestic Terrorism etc.
- Drills should be planned and announced to avoid panic and fear.
- Drills should be coordinated with ARC/EMA staff.
- A log of drills conducted and exercise participation should be maintained indicating time, date and type of drill or exercise conducted, and identification of any issues noted.

## **Procurement and Accounting in Disasters**

The County Director must ensure that records are kept for any disaster-related expenditure for possible state reimbursement from Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The following guidelines should be used in the event of disaster-related expenditures:

- Develop a packet of forms to document and report expenditures (wages, travel, cell phones, etc.). A separate file for disaster-related expenditures should be established and maintained.
- Disaster-related expenditure should be copied and filed as each expense is incurred.
- Purchase orders, invoices, telephone bills, travel expenses, staff time sheets and any other expense documentation related to the disaster should be maintained in the file.
- Program codes will be established and furnished to counties in the event reimbursement is granted for disaster-related expenses.
- Directors should follow the DFCS Administrative Policy and Procedures Manual, Purchasing and Procurement Policy and Procedures, when possible. Refer to Emergency Purchase Policy section.

## **Response team:**

- Maintain current database on staff trained in shelter management, shelter operations, first aid, etc.
- Select staff to serve on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> response team.
  - Share this information with ARC/Emergency Management Agency (EMA) staff.
  - Plan for additional training if the need exists.
  - Determine what staff will assist DFCS peers in other counties or regions.
  - Provide name, cell phone, pager, etc.

# **Shelter Identification, Inspection and Approval**

## **(Emergency Support Function 6 - MASS CARE)**

The Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) has primary responsibility for ensuring that emergency shelters have been identified, surveyed and inspected (approved). Inspection results should be forwarded to the Division of Family and Children Services, Emergency Response Unit, for entry into the State's emergency shelter database. Emergency Support Function (ESF) 6 of the Georgia Emergency Operations Plan delegates this responsibility to DFCS. There are three types of mass shelters used in support of ESF 6: Congregate, Special Needs Population, and Pet Shelters. The Georgia Department of Agriculture has primary responsibility for establishing Pet Shelters.

- If at all possible, all agencies should be contacted and an inspection date should be arranged so that all involved agencies can make a joint visit to complete their inspections at the same time, thus eliminating the need for the sites being made available more than once. This also promotes a teamwork approach to completion of this task. In some counties, some inspections may have already been completed, but the results were never forwarded to the State office. If inspections were previously completed, written verification of the findings should be obtained from the inspecting agencies (eliminating the need for a second inspection) and then forwarded to the State office.
- The American Red Cross (ARC), DHR Division of Public Health (DPH), Department of Labor Rehabilitation Services (DRS), and Department of Agriculture, with input and collaboration from the local Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Director, will complete the shelter survey and inspection.
- ARC, DPH, and DRS should have survey or inspection forms for this purpose. Copies of their findings should be obtained and forwarded by the County DFCS representative to the DFCS Emergency Response Unit so that the State shelter database may be updated. If either ARC or DPH do not approve the shelter, it will be deleted from the database and will not be used. Shelters found inaccessible by Rehabilitation Services will remain in the database, but will be noted as unusable for individuals with special needs.
- The local EMA Director and the ARC have the authority to open an emergency shelter. Decisions on the number of shelters needed in a county and their locations should be made with input from all responsible agencies. If DFCS is contacted by the local EMA Director and requested to provide support staff for the shelter, the DFCS staff member contacted should ensure that the ARC has been contacted and requires DFCS involvement before proceeding to open an approved ARC shelter location. **DFCS staffs are only authorized to provide support to ARC approved shelters.**

- The ARC will open approved shelters only. Unapproved shelters must be inspected before the ARC and/or DHR will open them. DHR/DFCS has primary state agency responsibility for mass care and sheltering. DFCS will provide support staff to work in the shelters as requested by the ARC. The DHR Divisions of Public Health and Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Addictive Diseases, as well as other agencies may also provide support as needed.
- Special Needs Population Shelters serve individuals whose health conditions, as assessed by Public Health, warrant supplemental care not available in Congregate (regular) Shelters. Sites that are adjoined or are in close proximity to the Congregate Shelter are preferred. Currently, the ARC does not operate or staff Special Needs Shelters in Georgia. (See Shelter Responsibility - Special Needs Population Shelter Section for more instructions on shelter opening and closing.) The administrative shelter management responsibility in Special Needs Population Shelters will fall to DFCS staff unless alternatives are developed and approved. It is therefore essential that DFCS staff be trained by the ARC in shelter management in preparation for working at both Congregate and Special Needs Shelters. Training should be arranged through your local ARC chapter.
- The Georgia Department of Agriculture has primary responsibility for establishing Pet Shelters. This responsibility includes identification, inspection and approval of shelter sites and inspection and approval of sites identified by DFCS. Space that is in close proximity to the Congregate Shelter is preferred. Requests for Pet Shelter inspections by the Department of Agriculture or questions regarding the suitability of a site to be a Pet Shelter should be directed to **Vanessa Sims-Green, Agriculture Manager, at (404) 656-4914.**
- The (OHS/GEMA) Shelter Database is accessible so that EMA Directors and other responsible agencies will be working from the same information. The shelter database is updated as shelter additions/changes are reported. The database includes all approved Congregate and Special Needs shelters. A listing of approved shelters can be accessed online through the OHS/GEMA Internet web site address at: <http://www.gema.state.ga.us/ohsgemawebsh.nsf> . The shelters will be listed by county. Click on the ">" symbol next to the county name to see a list of shelters for that county.
- Shelter information entered into the database is taken from the written results obtained from ARC, DPH, and DRS inspections. When inspections have been completed and required approval information received, the DFCS County Director is responsible for ensuring that a copy of the Agreement between the Facility and the ARC, the Environmental Health Shelter Survey Form, and any other forms completed as part of the approval process are mailed to:

Myra K. Watts, Shelter Database Administrator  
 Department of Family and Children Services  
 2 Peachtree Street, NW, Room 3-214  
 Atlanta, GA 30303-3142

Questions or problems in the shelter inspection process should be directed to Myra Watts via GroupWise at [mkwatts@dhr.state.ga.us](mailto:mkwatts@dhr.state.ga.us) or by telephone at (404) 463-3466 or by fax at (404) 657-0602.

## **Shelter Responsibility**

### **Congregate Shelters**

- DFCS Responsibility
  - If requested by the American Red Cross, (due to ARC staffing limitations) DFCS staff will be responsible for opening and operating approved congregate shelters. ARC staff will assume shelter management responsibilities when they arrive on site. DFCS will continue to provide staff supports to ARC on an as requested basis as long as the shelter is operational.
  - If an ARC representative is not available, County Director or designated alternate contacts the shelter facility manager (minister, principal, or facility key holder in charge) to open facility, turn on lights and heating or air conditioning.
  - County Director or designated alternate contacts DFCS staff, via calling tree, to report to designated shelter(s).
  - If an ARC representative is not available, designated DFCS staff should bring prepared shelter management kits (to include resident registration forms, pencils, signs, markers, tape, flashlights, etc.) to designated shelters to set up and operate registration.
  - If an ARC representative is not available, the designated DFCS shelter managers, in coordination with local EMA and ARC, should implement plans for registration, sleeping needs (mats, cots, etc), mass feeding arrangements, and other needs as they arise. If the ARC representative is available, that individual has primary responsibility for this component.
  - Only guide/support animals are allowed in congregate mass care or Special Needs Population Shelters (SNSP)
- DFCS Administrative Functions
  - County directors must ensure that a cross section of staff is trained in Red Cross Shelter Management and Shelter Operations. County directors must also ensure that updated listings of ARC approved shelters and shelter contact persons are maintained.
  - County directors should assign DFCS staff to shelters on a shift basis. Staff should not leave shelters until relieved by the next shift.
  - County directors may request, through their regional director, the implementation of "mutual aid" agreements with non-impacted counties or regions to assure adequate trained staff availability on-site, around-the-clock.
- American Red Cross (ARC) Responsibility
  - EMA director or ARC representative will contact county director or designated alternate to open shelters.
  - If sufficient volunteers are available, the ARC will take over operation of ARC approved Congregate Shelters as soon as feasible.

## **Special Needs Population Shelters**

The Emergency Support Function (ESF) 8 of the Georgia Emergency Operations Plan designates the Georgia Department of Human Resources as the lead agency for health and medical support. The decision whether to open a Special Needs Population Shelter (SNPS) is the ultimate responsibility of the District Public Health Director or his/her designee. Under Public Health Guidelines for SNPS, they will not be opened unless the District Public Health Director has given approval.

The populations with special needs are those persons who do not require hospital admission but do require a higher level of care than the general population. Each Public Health district can choose to develop a more detailed description or definition of persons with special needs, including specific examples, with the understanding that there is consistency with the five levels of care.

If the District Public Health Director has authorized opening a SNPS, DFCS is responsible for the non-medical management of the SNPS and public health is responsible for arranging (not providing) the medical management of the SNPS. Both DFCS and Public Health should collaborate with each other when recommending the SNPS be closed, but the District Public Health Director gives the final approval to close the shelter.

Each county should seek guidance of local law enforcement and collaborate with the county EMA in developing a local security plan for the SNPS. The security plan should clearly specify the agencies or parties to be called and the necessary contact information. All available resources should be considered.

DFCS, in collaboration with Public Health, has the responsibility to ensure that sites are identified for the special needs shelters and that the required DHR survey forms and Facility Agreements are completed and forwarded to Myra Watts. DFCS should follow the same guidelines for inspection and approval of the Special Needs Shelters that are used for ARC Congregate Shelters. The site selection should be a collaboration between the local EMA, Local Public Health, ARC, DOL and DFCS.

American Red Cross normally will not staff special needs shelters, so DFCS should plan accordingly. If the DHR Special Needs Shelter is co-located with the ARC Congregate Shelter, ARC to the best of its ability, will provide the same services to the DHR Special Needs Shelter that it provides to the Congregate Shelter.

## **Pet Shelters**

- The Georgia Department of Agriculture has lead responsibility for identifying, approving and staffing pet shelters. Information related to pet shelters can be obtained from the Georgia Department of Agriculture web site: <http://www.agr.state.ga.us/>. Go to the link, frequently asked questions: Animals – Emergency Storm Shelters.
- EMA officials should identify the location of pet shelters
- DFCS staff should direct pet owners to the nearest pet shelters.
- Only guide/support animals are allowed in congregate mass care shelters.
- All other animals must go to pet shelters.

## **Emergency and Quarantine Shelters**

The Emergency Response Plan for Hartsfield/Jackson International Airport has been developed in coordination with multiple agency partners. The plan outlines an emergency response for passengers arriving at the airport with symptoms that would require isolation and medical review. Should the medical community determine that the passengers and aircraft crew need to be quarantined, a hanger or other designated location at or near the airport will be designated to serve as the emergency shelter. It will be designated as a Special Needs Population Site (SNPS).

DHR (delegated to DFCS) will be responsible for providing support for shelter management. Services to include: primary oversight of the setup, function and maintenance of the SNPS; guidance for personnel staff; coordination of all activities with ARC, DHR EM, DPH, EPT, OHS/GEMA and Airport Quarantine Station Office; distribution of supplies and equipment; manning the canteen; and closing the shelter. Personnel will be required to report to the SNPS within 90-120 minutes after alert. The SNPS will be prepared to process and house the aircraft crew and passengers within two hours after the arrival of staff.

DFCS staff that volunteers for emergency or quarantine shelter duty will receive training and information detailing the risk involved. Due to the timeframe of reporting to the site, DFCS volunteers will be recruited from the metro Atlanta Regions.

# **Evacuation and Re-Entry**

## **Evacuation**

Agencies located within potential hazard zones (in flood plains, near flood prone rivers or streams, or along hurricane prone coastal areas, etc.) should make advance preparations for orderly evacuation and re-entry.

### **Advance Preparation Responsibilities:**

- County director should make an advance facility survey to determine steps necessary to prevent agency property damage or loss such as: having landlord or building owner cut/store plywood to cover windows during a hurricane; and identifying critical records, data and equipment to be moved, shut down, disconnected or otherwise protected.
- County director should formalize the facility shutdown plan with specific staff responsibilities and implementation time frames.
- Staff should be trained on and provided a copy of the facility shutdown plan.
- Agency should maintain an advance plan with each employee and foster parent to establish where the individual will relocate in the event of evacuation.
- County directors should ensure the development of written evacuation instructions including a pre-arranged contact number for the reporting of safe evacuation locations and for the receipt of re-entry instructions.
- Evacuation instructions and contact number should be furnished to all staff, foster parents.
- County directors should do advance planning with local EMA and OHS/GEMA officials to determine how and when DFCS staff will be permitted re-entry following an evacuation.
- Re-Entry passes should be acquired for distribution in advance of evacuation, if possible.
- Local offices should develop a pre-arranged assembly point for staff to gather in the event of a localized agency disaster (fire, workplace violence, etc.) requiring building evacuation.

### **At Time of Emergency:**

- County director should remain in contact with local EMA officials and the regional director regarding potential threats that could mandate evacuation.
- EMA directives regarding office closures and evacuations should be followed.
- County directors should plan for the orderly shut down of their office while permitting staff to attend to the needs of their families.
- Evacuating DFCS staff should be encouraged to contact the nearest DFCS office once they are safely evacuated to offer their assistance with shelter care duties.

## **Re-Entry**

- County director should receive re-entry instructions from local EMA officials.
- County director should relay re-entry instructions to staff and foster parents through pre-arranged communication plans.
- Local DFCS offices should re-open as soon as it is deemed safe to do so, as returning citizens may need assistance with food and shelter including possible mass care.
- County director should contact the regional director upon re-entry and advise him or her regarding facility damage, status of staff, general community conditions, and whether or not additional outside staff resources are needed for sheltering or facility recovery. The regional director should relay this information to the State DFCS Emergency Manager.

## **Individuals and Households Program**

This section has been deleted because the counties are not involved in the delivery of services through the IHP. Only State Office staff from the Emergency Response Unit would be required to provide support for this program.

# **Disaster Food Stamp Program**

## **Overview:**

The Georgia Department of Human Resources Disaster Food Stamp Program Plan is a plan of operation for providing Food Stamp benefits to households, who are victims of a natural or manmade disaster. Because of the varied geography in Georgia, natural disasters, as defined, could range from hurricanes in coastal areas to widespread damage from flooding or tornadoes in any part of the state. Man-made disasters would not be geographically defined. The details of any disaster food stamp program will vary with each disaster, but the basic principles and framework contained in this guide will apply to any disaster situation.

## **Disaster Definitions:**

**Level I Disaster** – The Disaster has a very limited strike zone, limited number of victims, limited power/telecommunications impact (service restored within 2-3 days) and no need for food stamp disaster declaration. Normal certification rules are applicable. Normal issuance system is capable of handling the needs of recipients. There are an adequate number of food vendors available. Replacement of food lost as a result of a household disaster can be made at the local offices if the recipients sign affidavits attesting to the loss.

**Level II Disaster** – The disaster has a broader but well defined strike zone, moderate number of victims, moderate power/telecommunications impact (service restored within 3-7 days). Within the 7 days there are an adequate number of food vendors available. The modified food stamp program will be run using the on-going certification system. A Presidential Disaster Declaration will accompany this type of response. EBT drop site issuance will provide EBT cards on site within two business days of the certification. The client will select PINs when the EBT card is obtained. Benefits will be loaded on these cards by normal systems interface.

**Level III Disaster** – The disaster damage is catastrophic with large numbers of victims from all economic strata and there is widespread destruction of businesses and residences. There is widespread power/telecommunications impact (service outages beyond one week). A Presidential Disaster Declaration will accompany this type of response. This type of disaster is or threatens to be of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant disaster assistance by the Federal government to supplement the efforts and available resources of the local and State governments in alleviating the hardships and suffering caused thereby. The Disaster Food Stamp Program will be run using the ongoing certification system (SUCCESS). Active EBT cards with predetermined Personal Account Numbers (PAN's) and Personal Identification Numbers (PIN's) will be issued on-site. The disaster food stamp benefits will be loaded onto these cards within 2 business days through the SUCCESS/EBTAS interface.

## **Preparation Prior to the Disaster:**

Each disaster is unique and preparation for the disaster should be customized to the needs that can be anticipated. In disasters such as hurricanes in which there is some advance warning with potential evacuations ordered, the Office of Family Independence (OFI) will determine the need to override the staggered issuance for current food stamp recipients. This would allow current food stamp recipients to buy needed food prior to the disaster to use in both evacuations or to stockpile at home while awaiting restoration of food distribution channels.

Disaster Food Stamp Program Pre-Disaster County Assessment Form

This form in it's' entirety has been deleted from the guide and made a part of the Continuity of Operations Plan template for each County to complete.

## **Suggested Training and Education Activities for DFCS Staff**

### **Orientation sessions for new hires:**

- Discuss the content of the county's current Emergency Preparedness (EP)/Safety Plan.
- Discuss roles of key staff related to the plan.
- Communicate expectation that new hires participate in disaster planning and response.
- Encourage voluntary participation in shelter management training or shelter simulation training.
- For appropriate social services staff, share/discuss county's system for tracking foster children -include staff's personal responsibilities for caseload customers.
- Provide each staff person with a quick-reference guide. County office management will determine specific content of the guide.  
Provide a minimum of 2 facemasks for each staff person (1 for workstation and 1 for auto) and additional masks for staff responsible for transporting clients.
- Encourage staff to keep a working flashlight at their workstations.
- Develop/utilize a checklist of issues covered and have new-hire and orientation facilitator sign and date.

### **Refresher/On-going Education and Training for All Staff:**

- Provide an EP quick-reference guide to current staff (as noted above for new hires).
- Regular meetings (at least quarterly) to discuss/review planning and response issues and update quick reference guides as needed.
- Periodically test EP knowledge.
- Provide current staff with facemasks.
- Encourage voluntary participation in shelter management training or shelter simulation training.
- County management staff should ensure that at **least 20%** of their staff persons are trained in shelter management and/or shelter simulation.
- Identification of new shelter management/simulation trainees would be an on-going effort to ensure staff turnover does not result in **less than 20%** staff trained.
- County management should ensure that the pool of trained staff has representation from all program areas and administrative operations.
- Staff involved in shelter management/simulation activities should have this reflected in their annual performance evaluations.
- EP checklist reflecting topics discussed signed and dated by staff and trainers.

## **Education & Training Requirements for Foster Parents:**

- Incorporate emergency planning and disaster response training into IMPACT (formerly MAPP) training sessions.
- Provide training for current foster parents on the same topics covered in IMPACT sessions.
- Encourage foster parents to maintain a supply of masks, working flashlights in their homes and autos, as well as other emergency evacuation supplies.
- Provision of a Statewide Call Center number (outside Atlanta: 1-888-295-1769; in Atlanta 404-463-0039) to report information during a disaster.
- Provide regular EP training sessions that could count as training hours.
- Provide web-site addresses and printed materials that offer current updates/info on disaster preparedness.
- Provide a quick-reference guide to insert as an addendum to their foster parent manuals.
- Ensure that foster homes approved for special needs children are given information about locations of special needs shelters in local and neighboring counties.