

EVACUATION PLAN

2023-2025

GENERAL

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

Evacuation plans establish the organizational concepts for an effective system of notification, direction and care for those displaced from their home or vehicle due to public safety concerns.

SCOPE

This plan encompasses the following:

- Who shall order an evacuation
- Responsibilities for those involved
- How the evacuation notifications are made
- Required information to be included in an evacuation order
- Facilities involved
- Functionally limited populations and evacuation assistance
- When is re-entry authorized and who makes those decisions

AUTHORITIES

While no specific state statute can be found granting the authority for evacuation orders by anyone except the governor, the following Colorado Attorney General ruling of June 26, 2002, seems to convey that authority to any local authority charged with public safety.

“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.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The responsibility for recognition of the need for evacuation or shelter in place rests with the on-scene Incident Commander(s) or the EOC. They will be the ones with the necessary situational awareness to recommend either evacuation or shelter in place options as the preferred method of protecting lives before, during, or after disasters or emergencies.

Regardless of which decision is made, to evacuate people, to advise them to shelter in place or no action, the key component of a successful operation is timely and accurate provision of information.

The basic information that must be provided 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 include:

- Everbridge, the 9-1-1 call back system.
- ECAAlert, the text and email messaging alert system.
- Emergency Alert System (EAS), which sends messages via local radio and possibly through Denver area television stations (provided by the National Weather Service and activated through the Vail Public Safety Communications Center, Pitkin County Regional Emergency Dispatch Center or Eagle County EOC).
- Official agency website(s).
- Official agency social media channel(s).
- Variable Message Signage (with assistance from the Colorado Department of Transportation).
- Low power highway radio system (with assistance from the Colorado Department of Transportation).
- Local access television stations (channels 5, 13, 18 and 21).
- Emergency vehicle public address systems.

Whenever an evacuation order is issued, the Incident Commander(s) **SHALL** identify an Evacuation Center (sometimes referred to as an Evacuation Point) location (preferred location would be County or municipal owned facilities) and request an **Evacuation Center Manager** from the Sheriff's Office Victims Services 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

American Red Cross:

- Provides Evacuation Shelters, management and staffing. Provides staffing assistance for Evacuation Centers.
- Opening of the facility.
- Staff composition and management structure.
- Provisions for registering and tracking location of each evacuee (to be able to respond to inquiries from the evacuee's family, track health concerns, etc.)
- Specific services provided to evacuees (shelter, feeding, medical care, etc.).
- Ensures each shelter receives the necessary supplies to sustain itself.
- Reporting requirements.
- Termination of services and closure of the facility.

CSU Extension Service:

- Develops and maintains a list of local food warehouses and other sources of bulk food stocks.

Emergency Management:

- Development and coordination of evacuation plans.
- Assist in dissemination of the warnings.
- Assist in evacuation within capabilities and as requested.
- Activate EOC as necessary to provide resource support and to maintain liaison with State and Federal authorities and authorities of other nearby political subdivisions.

EMS:

- Assist in dissemination of the warning.
- Assist in evacuation within capabilities and as requested.
- Provides medical support to evacuees.

Eagle County Animal Services:

- Provides companion animal shelter services, including food, sanitation and other necessities, preferably in a location close to the established Red Cross shelter.
- Provides support for care of livestock that may have been relocated due to the incident or event.
- Coordinates the actions needed to obtain sufficient personnel to staff animal shelters, as needed.
- Ensures each animal shelter has a highly visible identity marker and sign that identifies its location.
- Coordinates with the PIO Group to facilitate dissemination of information to the public on the location of the companion animal shelters that will be opened.
- Keep shelters open as long as necessary.
- Ensures each shelter receives the necessary supplies to sustain itself.
- When appropriate, terminates shelter operations and closes the facility.

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

- Provide medical and mental health support to evacuees in coordination with the American Red Cross resources on scene.

Eagle County Public Information Officers Group:

- Assist in dissemination of the warning.
- Assist with providing information at Evacuation Centers.
- Makes public announcements about availability of mass care facilities and animal shelters and their locations.

Emergency Support Function 1 - Transportation (Transit Agencies):

- Providing buses for temporary shelter from the elements as necessary.
- Coordinate emergency transportation for those in need.
- Support law enforcement, ESF 8- Public Health & Medical, and ESF 6 - Mass care with planning and transportation support for high-risk locations and populations including (but not limited to): individuals with access and functional needs, non-resident and transient populations, hospitals and healthcare facilities, nursing homes and assisted living facilities, behavioral health facilities, educational institutions, and special event locations.

Evacuation Center Manager:

- Receive assignment from Incident Command.
- Provide check-in to account for those evacuated.
- Provide situation information to evacuees.
- Determine need to open Evacuation Shelters.

Fire Agencies:

- Recommending and assisting in evacuation if the situation warrants.
- Assist in dissemination of warning.
- Assist in evacuation within capabilities and as requested.

Law Enforcement:

- Assist in dissemination of the warning.
- Coordinate transportation to shelters for those who need transportation assistance using buses, EMS or other appropriate vehicles.
- Emergency traffic control and crowd control.
- Assist in evacuation within capabilities and as requested.
- Security of evacuated areas and Evacuation Centers.

Non-profit/Public Service Organizations:

- If appropriate, provide personnel to help staff mass care facilities.

Public Works:

- Clearing debris from roads as necessary to maintain evacuation routes.
- Assist in evacuation within capabilities and as requested.
- Ensures power, water supply, and sanitary services at mass care facilities are maintained during emergency conditions.

Recreation Districts:

- If appropriate, provides facilities and personnel to manage and staff mass care facilities.

Schools:

- If appropriate, provides personnel to manage and staff mass care facilities.

- Shelters students in school buildings when the situation warrants or when requested to do so by the appropriate authority.

The Salvation Army:

- Provides staffing and food to evacuees at Evacuation Centers and Shelters.
- Provide personnel to help staff mass care facilities.

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

- Lead agency for dissemination of warnings when directed by the Incident Commander(s).
- Notification of Emergency Management any time there is an incident requiring evacuation/relocation of more than 10 people.
- Notification of the Salvation Army and American Red Cross any time an evacuation is ordered.

MASS CARE

GENERAL

This function deals with the actions that are taken to protect evacuees and other victims from the effects of the emergency situation. These actions include providing temporary shelter, food, medical care, clothing, and other essential life support needs to those people that have been displaced from their homes because of an emergency or disaster threat situation.

PURPOSE

Mass care describes the provisions that have been made to provide disaster victims with the appropriate services when at a mass care facility. During the post-disaster period these facilities may be used on a long-term basis to feed, care for, and provide temporary housing to the disaster victims whose homes have been severely damaged or destroyed or cannot return to their homes or continue to their destinations due to weather conditions or damage to or debris on roads. Other long-term post-disaster mass care options may include: kitchens to feed people; water supply stations; first aid stations; temporary housing in rental units, tents, hotels/motels, and mobile homes; hygiene facilities (portable toilets and showers); mail service, etc.

EMERGENCY SHELTERS

The Eagle County Emergency Operations Plan defines an Emergency Shelter as a temporary longer term facility which provides shelter from the elements, sanitary facilities to include restroom and shower facilities, sleeping accommodations, food services and information dissemination.

SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

The situations requiring mass care are identical to those requiring evacuations. Some assumptions that are relevant to mass care planning are:

- People will not desire staying in an emergency shelter if there are other options available to them.
- Shelter locations should provide for families with children to be segregated from the general shelter population.
- Medical support services and supplies may be needed for functional limitation populations to travel to and after they arrive at the shelter location.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

The need to establish Emergency Shelters should be determined from the information derived from the Evacuation Center(s).

The American Red Cross will be the lead agency in shelter management. They have the resources, depth of service and most importantly, the agreements in place with the schools and recreation centers which are the only facilities that meet the needs for an Emergency Shelter.

EVACUATION CENTER CHECK-IN

The Evacuation Check-in Form (or similar documentation) should be used to gather information to confirm evacuation status, determine the need for evacuation shelters, gather special needs and establish contact information in order to keep evacuee's apprised of the status of the situation/evacuation.

A sample Check-in sheet is included on the following page.

EVACUATION 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.

EGE 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.

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.

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 retry 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 as listed below or at the direction of the controlling authority.

1. Emergency Services, public works, utility and damage assessment officials
2. Resident
3. Non-resident (insurance adjusters, repair personnel, etc.).
4. Unrestricted access