

SAFETY DIRECTOR BULLETIN

June 2020

2020 Hurricane Season and the COVID Pandemic

Responding to storms during the 2020 New Jersey Hurricane Season will present the additional challenges of operating under the restrictions of the COVID-19 crisis in the State. To assist emergency managers, FEMA released their [*COVID-19 Pandemic Operational Guidance for 2020 Hurricane Season*](#).

The guide supports FEMA's mission of helping people before, during, and after disasters. Federal, state, and local officials, along with the private sector and non-governmental organizations, must partner together to fulfill their respective missions and help disaster survivors. As the Nation continues to respond to and recover from COVID-19 while posturing for the coming hurricane season, emergency managers must continue to operate under a framework of a locally executed, state managed, and federally supported approach to incident stabilization. The guide will:

- Describe anticipated challenges to disaster operations posed by COVID-19 and describe planning considerations for emergency managers in light of these challenges;
- Outline how FEMA plans to adapt response and recovery operations to the realities and risks of COVID-19 to:
 - Ensure prioritization for life safety, life sustainment, and workforce protection, and
 - Maintain the delivery of FEMA's programs and help to solve complex problems by using whole-of-community disaster assistance to the highest level possible;
- Allow emergency managers to prepare and plan accordingly based on FEMA's operational posture and create a shared understanding of expectations; and
- Provide guidance, checklists, and resources to enable emergency managers to best adapt response and recovery plans.

The guide is comprised of two main sections: response planning and recovery planning. Throughout each section, emergency managers will find detailed information on FEMA's operating posture and guidance for State and local governments. In the appendixes, emergency managers will find checklists and resources on FEMA operations and additional COVID-19 related guidance.

Public entities are facing unprecedented challenges as they must still respond to hurricanes and other large-scale emergencies. The Safety Director encourages emergency managers, elected officials, and leaders of agencies that are a part of the Emergency Operation Plans to download the FEMA guide and incorporate the information into your plans.