



Introduction

The 2024 California State Emergency Plan, hereinafter referred to as the State Emergency Plan (SEP), addresses California's response and recovery to emergency situations associated with natural or human-caused disasters.

The SEP was originally developed for civil defense in the 1950's but was superseded by the 1970 California Emergency Services Act (ESA). The ESA established the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). The Cal OES is charged with coordinating statewide emergency preparedness, post disaster recovery, mitigation efforts, and the development, review, approval, and integration of emergency plans.

The SEP is required by the ESA and describes methods for oversight of emergency operations, mutual aid provision, government agencies emergency capabilities, mobilization of resources, consistent and accessible public messaging, and continuity of government during disasters.

The 2024 SEP introduces the California Disaster Recovery Framework (CDRF), implemented in 2019, and corresponding California Recovery Support Functions (CA-RSFs).

New and updated concepts were also introduced in the 2024 SEP including but not limited to enhanced mitigation programs for reduction of vulnerability to disaster and increased community resiliency; new preparedness activities and programs; and the Whole Community Planning Approach to involve community members, businesses, organizations, and all levels of government to increase capacity for emergency preparedness, response, and recovery.

The SEP should be read and understood before an emergency occurs. It outlines activities of all California government and non-governmental organizations working together as a comprehensive, statewide emergency management system.

The primary beneficiaries of California's emergency management system and the SEP are the people, and those that live here have a responsibility to ensure they and their households are prepared for emergencies. Personal preparation allows people to better serve themselves, reduce demands on first responders, and increase personal resiliency.



Significant Changes

The 2024 SEP includes new and updated concepts in emergency management, such as emerging science and technologies, climate change, and consideration of vulnerable and marginalized populations. Several additions to the 2024 SEP include:

- Emphasizing the Whole Community Planning Approach in emergency management.
- Discussing integration of access and functional needs population considerations in emergency planning and the implementation of the Statewide Access and Functional Needs Community Advisory Committee.
- Integrating cultural competence, including considerations for vulnerable and underserved communities in emergency planning.
- Explaining and emphasizing equity priority communities in emergency planning.
- Listing significant disasters and events since the 2017 SEP release, such as the 2017 Oroville Dam emergency spillway incident and Northern California Wildfires, the 2018 Camp Fire, the 2019 Ridgecrest earthquake, the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, civil unrest, the 2020-2021 wildfires, and the 2022-2023 winter storms.
- Mentioning emerging science and technology, such as "Dataminr" for early awareness of emerging events; Next Generation 9-1-1; wireless emergency alerts; earthquake early warnings; enhanced personal protective equipment; the Fire Integrated Real Time Intelligence System (FIRIS) and the Wildfire Forecast and Threat Intelligence Integration Center (WFTIIC); and the "MyPlan" hazard mitigation tool to assist emergency managers, businesses, and individuals throughout the state in emergency planning efforts.
- Emphasizing climate change and its significant impacts to the state's disaster profile when developing emergency management plans.
- Adding the CDRF and the California Recovery Support Functions (CA-RSFs) to the SEP.



- Introducing new Cal OES statewide preparedness programs, such as the Preparedness Ambassadors Program, a free curriculum designed for students using real-life disaster scenarios to develop preparedness plans for their households, schools, and communities.
- Presenting innovations to the state's emergency planning efforts as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic, including distance learning, data mining to identify health inequity communities for directed resources, and enhanced responding capabilities by state agencies.

The 2024 SEP has an additional 184 pages, 102 hyperlinks, 17 exhibits, and 70 endnotes compared to the 2017 SEP. The "Attachments" section was significantly enhanced and is more comprehensive than previous SEPs.

The following outlines the information included in the 2024 SEP.

California Hazards and Vulnerabilities

A hazard is an event or physical condition that may cause fatalities, injuries, property damage, infrastructure damage, agricultural losses, damage to the environment, interruption of business, or other types of harm or loss. Earthquakes, floods, and wildfire hazards historically represent the most frequent events that have led to losses. Vulnerability indicates the level of exposure of people and property due to damage from natural and human-caused hazards. The hazards and vulnerabilities listed in the SEP include energy disruption, earthquake, flood, wildfire, severe weather, landslide, terrorist attack, dam and levee failure, tsunami, cyberattack, civil unrest, epidemic/pandemic, food and agriculture emergency, hazardous material emergency, and volcanic event. These descriptions are based on the 2023 SHMP.

Climate impacts, including extreme weather events, sea level rise, and precipitation patterns, present new risks to all phases of emergency management. Climate change is already affecting temperatures across California. Due to rising temperatures, the state has experienced some of the deadliest and most destructive wildfires in its history over the last seven years.



The Emergency Management Organization

The Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) is the cornerstone of California's emergency response system and fundamental to emergency management. The SEMS is required by statute to manage multiagency and multijurisdictional response to disasters in the state and unifies all elements of California's emergency management community into a single integrated system.

The SEP describes the state's emergency management organization and its compatibility with the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The SEP describes:

- Recommended activation and staffing levels for Emergency Operations Centers.
- The functions and organization of the State Operations Center, Unified Coordination Group, and Cal OES Regions.
- The roles of the Governor, state agencies, the California Legislature, and the California Judicial Branch.
- The roles of local governments, special districts, and tribal governments.
- The roles of other state, federal, and international governments.
- The role of the private sector, including the people of California, businesses, volunteer organizations, and public-private partnerships.

Emergency Preparedness

Preparedness includes activities in advance of a disaster to improve response and recovery capabilities for incidents. Comprehensive preparedness programs include integrated plans and procedures, training and exercises, methods for community protection, the Whole Community Planning approach, cultural competence, and accessible and consistent public communications.

Mitigation Programs

The SEP emphasizes the importance of hazard mitigation programs to reduce or eliminate risk to people or property during disasters. The Enhanced SHMP



provides a foundation for the state or local jurisdictions in long-term strategies for mitigating risk. The SEP also provides information and links to the Cal OES sponsored “MyPlan” and “MyHazards” tools to assist individuals and businesses develop mitigation plans.

Response Concept of Operations

The plan describes the following components which are put into action during response to emergencies: establishing operational goals, priorities, and strategies to protect life, property, and the environment; establishing direction, control, and coordination under the SEMS; developing accessible and consistent public alerts and warnings; gathering and disseminating intelligence; utilizing technology and systems for forecasting/planning; coordinating and providing mutual aid under established agreements; and mission tasking state agencies for provision resources and assistance.

California Emergency Support Functions

The SEP outlines the California Emergency Support Functions (CA-ESFs) and their roles, activities, and responsibilities during local and state emergency operations. The CA-ESFs are 18 disciplines essential to addressing the needs of communities in all phases of emergency management. The CA-ESFs are each led by a state agency and represent an alliance of state government and other stakeholders with similar functional responsibilities. The 18 CA-ESFs are listed below.

CA-ESF 1: Transportation

CA-ESF 10: Hazardous Materials

CA-ESF 2: Communications

CA-ESF 11: Food and Agriculture

CA-ESF 3: Construction and Engineering

CA-ESF 12: Utilities

CA-ESF 4: Fire and Rescue

CA-ESF 13: Law Enforcement

CA-ESF 5: Management

CA-ESF 14: Recovery

CA-ESF 6: Mass Care and Shelter

CA-ESF 15: Public Information



CA-ESF 7: Resources

CA-ESF 16: Evacuation

CA-ESF 8: Public Health and
Medical

CA-ESF 17: Volunteer and
Donations Management

CA-ESF 9: Search and Rescue

CA-ESF 18: Cybersecurity

California ESFs are different than the Federal ESFs. CA-ESF 9 is divided and was merged into CA-ESF 4: Fire and Rescue (Urban Search and Rescue) and CA-ESF 13: Law Enforcement (Wilderness Rescue). CA-ESF 16: Evacuation was merged with CA-ESF 13 Law Enforcement.

Recovery Concept of Operations

Recovery is restoring a state of normalcy in a community affected by disaster. The SEP emphasizes that recovery begins during response and effective recovery requires equitable delivery of services to all impacted individuals, households, and communities. The CA-ESF 14 Recovery facilitates this coordination and communication with other recovery partners throughout the recovery lifecycle.

California adopted the California Disaster Recovery Framework (CDRF) in 2019 and established California Recovery Support Functions (CA-RSFs) to assist with immediate, intermediate, and long-term community recovery. There are six CA-RSFs aligned across functionalities to allow for direct coordination with supporting state and federal agencies.

Continuity Planning

Continuity planning is essential when government and the private sector are directly impacted by disasters. Loss of essential services can have cascading impacts on critical infrastructure and negatively affect life safety and basic human needs. Effective continuity planning provides a proactive approach to continuation of services even when those responding are affected by disaster.

There are 11 state essential functions (SEF) that must be continued, no matter the circumstances, to enable the Executive Branch to perform critical functions and services. The 11 essential functions are:



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SEF 1: Government Leadership

SEF 7: Financial, Economic, and
Business

SEF 2: Public Safety

SEF 8: Information Technology and
Communications

SEF 3: Emergency Management

SEF 9: Agriculture

SEF 4: Medical/Health

SEF 10: Environment

SEF 5: Social Services and
Education

SEF 11: Information Collaboration

SEF 6: Critical Infrastructure

State Agency and Department Roles and Responsibilities

During an emergency, the Governor and/or the Cal OES Director may require the capabilities of all 200 plus state agencies, departments, offices, boards, commissions, councils, and authorities. The 2024 SEP describes key agencies and departments that have coordinating or support roles in emergencies. State agencies not specifically listed in the 2024 SEP may also be directed to support emergencies with resources or services per the ESA and the CDRF.

Plan Development, Maintenance, and Implementation

The revision of the 2024 SEP began in 2019 and was collaborative effort between Cal OES and state agency partners.

The revision was based off the 2017 SEP and updates provided by the review team were incorporated into the 2023 SEP Coordinated Draft.

A lengthy comment period was then opened for additional comments from state agencies, local and tribal governments, businesses, organizations, and individuals. The 2024 Executive Draft SEP was developed by incorporating additional comments received during the public comment period.

The SEP went through the Cal OES executive and Governor's Office review, which was completed in 2025. So even though the SEP was reviewed and



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approved in 2025, it is based on the SEP draft finalized in 2024. The 2024 SEP has been shared with all state agencies, local and tribal governments, and volunteer and community organizations. The 2024 SEP is publicly available on the Cal OES website.

The SEP update process is continuous, and development of the next SEP begins when the current SEP is published. If needed, the SEP planning team may incorporate minor edits to the current SEP and document this on the SEP "Record of Changes" page.