

PLEASANTS COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN
ANNEX P: SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Related Federal ESFs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESF #6: Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services
Related State Annexes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex F: Sheltering • Annex O: Animals in Disaster
Purpose	<p>This annex outlines the process by which Pleasants County OES cares for Special Populations during a disaster.</p>
Primary Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WV Department of Health and Human Resources (WVDHHR) • American Red Cross
Support Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pleasants County Office of Emergency Services (PCOES) • Pleasants County Park • Pleasants County Board of Education • Wood County Society • Stonerise • The Herritage • Westbrook Health • Senior Center • SMCC • .
7Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WV Code, §15-5-12, as amended • ADA
References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>West Virginia Emergency Operations Plan</i>. WVEMD, as amended. • <i>American Red Cross Program Guidance</i>. American Red Cross, as amended. • <i>National Response Framework</i>. USDHS, as amended. • <i>Developing and Maintaining State, Territorial, Tribal, and Local Government Emergency Plans: Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG)-101</i>. USDHS, March 2009. • The Region V Hospitals Special Needs Annex: Alternate Care Site • Interim Emergency Management Planning Guide for Special Needs populations (CPG -301)

I. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. During an emergency, a portion of the population (or the entire population) of Pleasants County may be required to evacuate. Depending upon the type and location, some of these citizens may be classified as “Special Populations”.
2. Severe winter storms, floods, severe thunderstorms, power outages, and hazardous material incidents are among the most likely incidents to prompt sheltering activities in Pleasants County. As such, a variety of shelters have been designated so that some should be available, regardless of the hazard event.
3. The American Red Cross (ARC) is the primary agency for operating shelter facilities in Pleasants County during emergencies.
4. WV has one of the highest rates of people with disabilities in the U.S.
5. The WVDHHR will assist in placing special needs people in other facilities or shelters equipped to handle their needs.
6. Assistance may be provided by local citizens as necessary until a relocation facility is located.

B. Assumptions

1. The ultimate responsibility for sheltering rests with local government.
2. If a hazard threatens the entire county, the population may be evacuated and sheltered in a neighboring reception county.
3. Sufficient warning time may be available to ensure that shelter facilities are opened in time to provide shelter and other services for evacuees, especially for those displaced by flood waters, etc.
4. Approximately 80% or more of evacuees will seek shelter with friends or relatives rather than go to shelter facilities.
5. During an emergency, if it is suspected that special needs populations may be impacted.

C. Special Populations

1. Special Populations are defined as individuals in the community who may require additional assistance due to any condition (temporary or permanent) that limits their

- ability to act in an emergency. This includes people with disabilities, chronic conditions or injuries, limited English proficiency, older adults, children, low income, homeless, and/ or transportation disadvantaged individuals, and pregnant women.
2. Special Population residents can be found in their own homes, adult day service programs, assisted living facilities, foster and group homes, and long-term care facilities.
 3. Examples of disabilities:
 - a. Sensory disabilities such as reduction or loss of sight or hearing
 - b. Mobility disabilities such as use of a cane, crutches, or wheelchair
 - c. Mental disabilities such as persons who are mentally ill or developmentally disabled, and those with traumatic brain injury or learning disabilities.
 - d. Other medical conditions such as renal dialysis, diabetes, or lung diseases requiring oxygen.
 - e. Seniors
 - f. Others who at the time of the disaster fall into the special needs category (ex. 9 months pregnant and isolated in a rural area).
 4. Many people with disabilities may be quite self-supporting, even in a disaster situation.
 - a. These people require no additional assistance beyond that given to the general public.
 - b. It is the impact that the disaster has on the individual's resources and support network that may cause that person to require additional assistance.

II. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. General

1. ARC Organization
 - a. During large-scale emergencies with significant sheltering demands, the ARC would manage operations from its Parkersburg location.
 - b. The regional ARC operations division (in Parkersburg) staffs and operates its own Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to coordinate ARC functions.
 - c. During larger operations, an ARC Operations Manager may report to the Pleasants County EOC to function as a liaison with the ARC EOC.
 - d. The DHHR and local volunteers will assist as needed.

- e. Resources
 - 1) There is an inventory of resources (such as cots, blankets, etc.) located within the Mid-Ohio Valley Chapter's region.
 - 2) Some of these resources are located in Pleasants County.
 - 3) ARC personnel receive standard human resources training.
 - 2. Considerations for those Special Populations residents
 - a. During an emergency, if it is suspected that a part of the population may be impacted and require special needs. The PCOES and ARC should plan to open or locate a shelter that can serve those individuals.
 - b. A list of the estimated number of evacuees classified as "Special Populations" will be assembled.
 - c. If an individual needs to be evacuated, field responders can coordinate with EOC personnel to arrange for recovery and transport to a shelter facility.
 - d. The nursing home and the assisted living facilities in Pleasants County have MOUs with other facilities for temporary sheltering. These agreements should be used first until the other facilities can no longer take the evacuees.
 - e. In general, nursing homes, schools, and other special needs populations should be transported to a reciprocal facility outside of the threatened area.
 - 3. Volunteers
 - a. The ARC staff includes a "Volunteer Services Coordinator," who interfaces as necessary with ARC volunteers.
 - b. If additional volunteers are necessary for sheltering operations, the ARC should coordinate with any Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) that may be established.
- B. Shelter Facilities
- 1. General Operations
 - a. "Shelter facilities" are defined as public or private structures used to lodge and care for evacuees based on approximately 40 square feet of space per person.
 - b. All shelter facilities should be supplied with essential items and materials on an as-needed basis from an inventory maintained by the ARC.
 - c. Generally, the ARC maintains a list of facilities that can be used as shelter facilities.
 - 1) The ARC maintains agreements with the facility owners for access and usage.

- 2) The ARC also maintains a list of volunteer shelter staff.
 - 3) Operations at shelter facilities opened by the ARC should be managed by the ARC.
 - d. Those Special Populations residents from County facilities shall be tracked by the staff of the evacuated facility.
 - e. A liaison at the Pleasants County EOC should be tasked with maintaining on-going coordination with ARC resources at the ARC EOC in Parkersburg (during large-scale emergencies).
 - 1) The liaison may be designated from available volunteers in the EOC or may be provided by the ARC.
 - 2) An ARC Operations Manager may also report to the Pleasants County EOC to serve as this liaison.
 - f. Additional shelter facilities may be operated independent of the ARC.
 - g. These shelters will be staffed with their own personnel but will coordinate efforts with the ARC and the EOC.
2. Reception Centers
- a. Clients at shelters should be registered to maintain accountability.
 - b. The ARC manages the reception and registration of clients at shelter facilities. The ARC may request assistance, if necessary.
 - c. Reception may include a brief health and mental health assessment (performed by ARC health services personnel) if not accompanied by a staff member from the facility.
 - d. If a shelter is activated quickly (due to a quick onset emergency, for example), temporary reception centers may be established in a safe location.
3. Feeding
- a. The ARC may establish fixed feeding sites when shelter facilities are operating.
 - b. Additionally, the ARC may deploy mobile feeding units to other locations (upon request).
 - c. Additional feeding resources may come from the Salvation Army, local churches, restaurants, and nutrition centers.
4. Animals
- a. Domestic and/or farm animals are not allowed at disaster shelters.

- b. Pet and animal owners are ultimately responsible for the care of their animals.
- c. Service Animals
 - 1) The ARC does make provisions for service animals.
 - 2) Service animals include hearing dogs, guide dogs, seizure alert animals, allergen alert animals, psychiatric service animals.
 - 3) Emotional support animals are not included.
- d. For all other pets/animals, the ARC coordinates with the local humane society regarding animal concerns (including resources for pet sheltering) through the county EOC.
- e. Service animals in WV are not registered.
- f. Cannot ask questions about the persons' disability.
 - 1) Can ask "Is this a service animal?"
 - 2) "What task has the animal been trained to do?"
 - 3) Does not have to be on harness or leash.

C. State and Federal Involvement

1. State

- a. According to the *West Virginia Emergency Operations Plan*, the WV Department of Health and Human Resources (WVDHHR) and ARC share the lead responsibility for coordinating relief services. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - 1) Assisting local communities with the provision of sheltering for victims and pets who need to be temporarily relocated, and
 - 2) The mass distribution of food, water, and other basic relief services.
- b. Services for special needs individuals may include (but not be limited to) the following:
 - 1) Acquisition and delivery of supplies such as cots and blankets,
 - 2) Delivery of basic medical supplies,
 - 3) Provision of equipment, and
 - 4) Additional staffing.
 - 5) Relocation to an appropriate facility.
- c. The West Virginia Department of Agriculture may facilitate state and local emergency response teams to assist with the evacuation and sheltering of

animals. Additional assistance may include the following:

- 1) Facilitate plans and procedures to provide shelter and care to companion animals and livestock during emergencies,
- 2) Assist local jurisdictions in identifying potential locations for fixed-facility and temporary companion animal and livestock shelters, and
- 3) Assist local jurisdictions in developing guidelines for returning pets to owners.

2. Federal

- a. As mentioned above, the ARC is a support entity for implementing Emergency Support Function (ESF) #6 of the National Response Framework (NRF).
- b. Local ARC personnel should be familiar with ESF #6 and respond in accordance with it.
- c. The ARC may have access to federal resources for the provision of short and long-term housing assistance and human services such as counseling, identifying support for persons with special needs, expediting the processing of federal benefits claims, and expediting mail services in affected areas.
 - 1) If other federal resources (for housing and/or human services) are deployed, federal representatives may coordinate with the appropriate state agency.
 - 2) As such, the coordinating ARC representative and PCOES should coordinate if additional resources are needed (i.e., if such services are needed, the coordinating ARC representative should notify the PCOES, who requests the deployment of state resources prior to the coordinating ARC representative requesting additional federal support).

III. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Organization

1. The ARC is the primary agency for sheltering in Pleasants County with assistance from the WVDHHR as needed.
2. Other agencies may operate shelters in addition to the ARC.
3. The PCOES support sheltering operations via the dissemination of public information and resource procurement in the county EOC.
4. Local agencies may support shelter facility operations through the EOC.

B. Responsibilities

1. American Red Cross

- a. Maintains lists of available shelter facilities in Pleasants County.
- b. Coordinates with appropriate emergency personnel to open shelter facilities as needed.
- c. Employs internal policies and guidance to staff and operate shelter facilities.
 - 1) Registers clients at shelter facilities
 - 2) Provides basic health assessments and mental health assessments to clients in shelter facilities
- d. Establishes fixed feeding sites or mobile feeding routes to serve those housed in shelter facilities.
- e. Staffs and operates the chapter EOC in Parkersburg to support the needs of ARC resources and to maintain liaison with the county EOC.
- f. Closes shelter facilities when appropriate.

2. Support Agencies

- a. Pleasants County Office of Emergency Services
 - 1) Coordinate with the ARC and the First Baptist Church should shelter facilities need to be opened in Pleasants County.
 - 2) Receive external resource requests from ARC personnel if ARC resources are exhausted.
 - 3) Provide liaison between the affected jurisdictions and state resources.
- b. WVDHHR
 - 1) Assist in sheltering for any Special Population needs.
 - 2) Work with facilities in relocating those special needs people who cannot stay in a regular shelter.
- c. WV Department of Health and Human Resources
 - 1) Assists local communities with the provision of medical care in a mass setting for persons with special needs.
 - 2) Provides support, staffing, supplies, and resources to local governments if their capabilities are overwhelmed.
- d. WV Department of Agriculture
 - 1) Coordinates with the WV Emergency Management Division and the State EOC

- (SEOC).
- 2) Facilitates state and local response teams to assist with the evacuation and sheltering of livestock and companion animals.
 - 3) Facilitates plans and guidelines to provide shelter and care to livestock and companion animals.
 - 4) Assists local jurisdictions in the development of guidelines for reuniting pets with their owners.
- e. US Department of Homeland Security
- 1) Serves as the coordinator of ESF #6 of the NRF.
 - 2) Coordinates and leads federal resources to support local and state governments and voluntary agencies in the performance of mass care, emergency assistance, housing, and human services missions.
- g. Local Facilities
- 1) Maintain MOUs with other area facilities to accept displaced residents.
 - 2) Arrange for the transfer of residents to another facility as necessary,
- h. VOAD
- 1) Assists in locating volunteer organizations who can assist during disasters
 - 2) Assists affected residents in obtaining individual relief recovery funding

IV. DIRECTION AND CONTROL

- A. The ARC has developed and maintains a system for managing activated shelter facilities.
- B. The ARC can activate its own EOC at its Parkersburg office during large-scale incidents to manage ARC resources.
- C. If the ARC's EOC is activated, it should establish communications with the Pleasants County EOC. (The local EOC may initiate said communications.)
- D. More details regarding the ARC's internal management structures are contained in various plans and other documents maintained by the Mid-Ohio Valley Chapter.

V. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT

- A. County EOC staff positions are filled on an as-needed basis by volunteer personnel that are available at the time. A line of succession for those positions, therefore, cannot be developed.

- B. The Parkersburg office maintains its own personnel roster, complete with backups to essential positions.

VI. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

A. Administration

1. ARC personnel are expected to maintain their own internal reporting policies throughout an emergency. Such records may include volunteer time records, lists of expended supplies, logs for shelter activation/deactivation, etc.
2. ARC personnel should interface with the national shelter database if any shelters are activated. Such an operation allows for an on-going record of accountability for sheltering resources.
3. WVDHHR personnel shall coordinate with the ARC and facility staff in sheltering special needs population.
4. Requests for Cost Reimbursement
 - a. Pleasants County may be eligible for cost reimbursement following some *declared* emergency incidents, in which cases accurate reports are critical.
 - b. The PCOES compiles such requests for Pleasants County (in coordination with pertinent local agencies).
 - c. Reports and records to be included in reimbursement requests should be submitted to the PCOES no later than 10 days following the conclusion of response operations.

B. Logistics

1. Communications systems such as telephones, cellular phones, email, and facsimile will serve as the primary forms of communication during emergencies.
2. Resource Management
 - a. ARC resources are managed by the ARC EOC.
 - b. External resources that are unavailable through ARC channels may be requested through the Pleasants County EOC.
 - c. All local resources should be committed prior to requesting external resources.
 - d. When requesting resources, the ARC should provide the EOC with the following

information:

- i. Name and title of individual making the request,
- ii. Brief description of the situation,
- iii. Actions taken,
- iv. Specific type of assistance needed, and
- v. Estimated number of affected persons.

VII. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

- A. The PCOES, WVDHHR, and the ARC should coordinate revisions to this annex.
- B. An annual review of this annex should be conducted.
- C. This annex should be updated as needed.

APPENDIX 1

SHELTER SUPPLIES (RED CROSS)

10 Special Needs Cots

APPENDIX 2

The Region V Hospital Committee's Special Needs Alternate Care Site Plan