



**Ritchie County**  
**Office of Emergency Management**  
**Emergency Operations Plan**

Approved	12/31/22
Next Review Due	4/1/24

## APPROVAL AND IMPLEMENTATION

This plan provides Ritchie County the basis for a systematic approach to the solution of problems created by the threat or occurrence of emergencies. It identifies the responsibilities, functions, operational guidelines and working relationships between and within governmental entities and their various departments, private support groups, and individual citizens.

### *Implementation*

The Ritchie County Emergency Operations Plan has been developed and maintained by the Ritchie County Office of Emergency Management. The Ritchie County Office of Emergency Management coordinated with county government departments as well as in-county and neighboring jurisdictions to ensure an overall compatibility of operations and has complied with national standards to facilitate an effective, coordinated response regardless of the jurisdictions involved.

The first step in the planning process identified each potential hazard, either natural, technological, or man-made, to serve as the basis for the basic plan and the emergency support functions. This hazard analysis is contained in the West Virginia Statewide Standard Hazard Mitigation Plan. The second step assessed the resources of each governmental entity and the third step was to develop response procedures based solely on the resources.

Regular review of this plan as well as emergency exercises and actual emergencies serve to refine and clarify these emergency responsibilities and contribute to the ongoing planning process.

### *Approval*

This document has been officially adopted by the Ritchie County Commission As the head of the custodial agency, the Director of the Office of Emergency Management signature below verifies that this is the current version of the document and confirms that agency's commitment to supporting its implementation.

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Date

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Director of the Office of Emergency Management

## PROMULGATION STATEMENT

WHEREAS preparedness to cope with disasters requires many diverse but interrelated elements which must be woven into an integrated emergency management system involving all departments of local government and private support agencies as well as the individual citizen, planning is necessary to coordinate all of these elements.

WHEREAS disasters necessitate a sudden escalation in the material needs of a community and a reorganization of resources and personnel to address the emergency response, a lack of planning results in disorganized, “salvage-type” activities instead of a coordinated response.

WHEREAS planning for population protection must be a cooperative effort to avert or minimize the effects of an emergency, a standard set of incident management guidelines should be followed to allow for seamless interoperability and cooperation to restore the stricken area to its pre-disaster condition with as little social or economic disruption possible.

WHEREAS the National Incident Management System (mandated by Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5) requires all jurisdictions to follow a standardized operational framework for managing emergency incidents that includes the Incident Command System, multi-agency coordination systems (e.g. local EOC), and a joint public information system, a plan outlining this framework must be developed.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT this plan is a statement of policy regarding emergency management and assigns tasks and responsibilities to county officials and department heads, specifying their roles during an emergency or disaster situation. It is developed pursuant to Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD)-5, Presidential Policy Directive (PPD)-8, and Chapter 15, Article 5 of the West Virginia Code.

Signed this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

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Commission President

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Commissioner

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Commissioner

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Appendix 3: .....Emergency Response Cost Summary  
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## BASIC PLAN

### I. INTRODUCTION

The Ritchie County Emergency Operations Plan Basic Plan provides the coordinating structures, processes, and mechanisms in a collective framework for the coordination of resources during a large-scale incident. It is compatible with the West Virginia Emergency Operations Plan, the National Response Framework (NRF), and the National Disaster Recovery Framework (NDRF) and provides the structure for coordinating with the state and federal governments in the delivery of disaster assistance. The plan supports the emergency mission of the county by improving the capability to respond to and recover from natural, human-caused, and technological hazards. County agencies and departments, non-government agencies, and private institutions that have been assigned primary emergency response or recovery duties and responsibilities maintain their designated components of the EOP.

#### A. Purpose

1. Reduce the vulnerability of the residents and visitors of the Ritchie County to loss of life, injury, environmental damage, economic damage, and the loss of property resulting from natural, human-caused, and technological events;
2. Identify the roles, responsibilities, and actions required of municipal, county, and non-governmental agencies in responding to major disasters, emergencies, and special events, and integrating these with the National Response Framework;
3. Protect and restore critical infrastructure and key resources. Facilitate recovery of individuals, businesses, communities, governments, and the environment;
4. Identify the relationship between local response functions and those of the State EOP and Federal ESFs; and
5. Provide a framework of policies, objectives, and approaches for coordinating, integrating, and administering the emergency operations and related plans of local, state, and federal governments, as well as private industry and educational and healthcare facilities.

**B. Scope & Applicability**

1. This EOP is based on the “Whole Community” approach to emergency response and may be used in any disaster or large-scale event.
2. This EOP is intended to apply to all forms of emergencies and disasters that pose a threat to lives, property and/or the environment in Ritchie County.

**C. Situation**

1. The Ritchie County Emergency Operations Plan has been built on the templates of the National Response Framework (USDHS, 2016), The National Incident Management System USDHS, 2017), and the West Virginia Emergency Operations Plan (WVEM, 2018).
2. Geographic and Demographic Characteristics
  - a. Ritchie County covers approximately 454 square miles, with an estimated population of 9,747 (U.S. Census, 2020). The county is home to City of Pennsboro. Towns of Auburn, Cairo, Ellenboro, Harrisville, Pullman.
  - b. Ritchie County is home to an agricultural community consisting of (all information from USDA Census of Agriculture 2017):
    - i. Farms: 473
    - ii. Farmland: approximately 97,500 acres.
    - iii. Market Value of agricultural product sold: over 9,600,00 annually
  - c. Transportation
    - i. US Highways: 50
    - ii. State Routes: 16, 74, 47
  - d. Other considerations
    - i. Ritchie County does not have a hospital within its borders.
    - ii. Ritchie County is home to Ritchie Regional Health Center.

### 3. Planning Assumptions

- a. Ritchie County, its political subdivision, and private industry partners have capabilities that, if effectively managed in the event of an emergency or disaster, will maximize preservation of life and property. These capabilities include workforce, equipment, supplies, facilities, and specialized skills.
- b. Ritchie County and response agencies within are prepared to commit all available resources to respond to any emergency and have mutual aid agreements amongst themselves (and adjoining jurisdictions) should the need exceed the capability of one particular organization or jurisdiction.
- c. Incident management activities will be initiated and conducted using the principles contained in the National Incident Management System (USDHS, 2017).
- d. When required, a “state of emergency” can be declared by the county commission to allow the activated emergency operations center to request assistance from the state and federal government.
- e. Though the response to incidents is primarily a local endeavor, the combined expertise and capabilities of all levels of government, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations will be required to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from large-scale emergency incidents in Ritchie County.
- f. All agencies, departments, and organizations assigned tasks in any part of the emergency operations plan are aware of their responsibilities and have appropriate policies and plans in place to accomplish the assigned tasks.
- g. Government offices, including the emergency operations center and other emergency facilities, may be destroyed or rendered uninhabitable during a major incident.
- h. Normal communication systems may be overwhelmed, destroyed, degraded, or rendered inoperable in a disaster.

i. Ritchie County may experience emergency situations that cause injury, death, property loss, environmental damage, economic situation disruption and its effects, disruption of normal support systems, evacuation and/or sheltering of the public at risk.

4. Policies

a. West Virginia Code §15-5, Public Safety requires that every county establish an emergency management organization, and develop and maintain a current emergency operations plan.

b. Incidents are typically managed at the lowest possible geographic, organizational, and jurisdictional level. As such, the direction of emergency operations will be exercised by the level of affected local jurisdiction closest to the incident. If the incident is suspected to be or determined to be terrorism, the appropriate Federal agencies should assume direction and control of the investigation, in coordination with state and local authorities.

c. Emergency response should be accomplished within the guidelines of the National Incident Management System, allowing for coordination of local, state, federal, and private sector departments and agencies.

d. The county commission should issue a state of emergency declaration prior to requesting assistance from higher levels of government.

5. Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment

a. Hazards

i. Preparedness, response, recovery, prevention, and mitigation strategies are largely based on analyses of natural and human caused hazards.

ii. West Virginia Statewide Standard Hazard Mitigation Plan (2018) which includes Ritchie County, contains a detailed risk assessment. The following hazards pose the greatest risk to the county:

- Winter Storms
- Thunderstorms
- Flooding

iii. Additional hazards that were analyzed in the hazard mitigation plan include:

- Dam Failure
- Drought
- Earthquake
- Hailstorm
- Land Subsidence
- Thunderstorm
- Wildfire
- Wind

iv. Other hazards not profiled in the hazard mitigation plan may constitute a hazard to the county. These hazards may include:

- Transportation infrastructure decay (e.g., road slips, structurally deficient bridges, etc.)
- Shortage of critical resources (e.g., water, fuel, electrical service, etc.)
- Environmental hazards (e.g., transportation accidents involving hazardous materials, oil & gas incidents, etc.)
- Civil unrest & criminal activity (e.g., protests, active assailants, terrorism, etc.)

## II. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

- A. Ritchie County Commission has created an Office of Emergency Management and appointed a Director to oversee the agency.
- B. When the county emergency operations center (EOC) is activated, the Ritchie County Emergency Management Director, or designee, will serve as the EOC Manager.
- C. All departments and agencies will maintain control over their personnel and other resources.

### III. CONCEPTS OF OPERATIONS

#### A. General

1. The Ritchie County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is written based on the assumption that emergency operations are managed at the lowest jurisdictional level possible until their abilities are exceeded or resources depleted before requesting assistance from higher levels of government.
2. This plan is activated for major events and/or emergencies, not for minor local emergencies that can be mitigated following local operating guidelines and mutual aid. If a minor emergency escalates to the point that external resources, public information, or operational support is necessary, then the appropriate portions of this plan should be activated.
3. When the emergency exceeds the county's capabilities to respond, assistance may be requested through the activated county emergency operations center (EOC) from the West Virginia Division of Emergency Management (WVEM).

#### B. Direction, Control, & Coordination

1. The Ritchie County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is located at the Doddridge/Ritchie 911 Center, 4317 Lamberton Road, Pennsboro, WV.
2. A location for a backup physical EOC may be determined at the time of an incident due to location and magnitude of the event.
3. Ritchie County may also utilize a virtual EOC via the Homeland Security Information Network (HSIN) maintained by WVEMD.
4. The organization of the EOC (e.g., ICS-Like, Incident Support, Departmental) will be based on the type and magnitude of the event as well as the purpose of the activation (e.g., support a surrounding county, county-wide disaster, etc.).
5. Following a disaster, the EOC should remain, at minimum, partially activated during the recovery process to allow for requesting and allocating resources.

## C. Phases of Emergency Management

All emergency responses start at a local level. As such, Ritchie County Office of Emergency Management focuses on the five primary phases of emergency management during the planning process.

- a. **Preparedness:** any action taken in advance of an emergency that facilitates the implementation of a coordinated response in the event of an emergency.
- b. **Prevention:** any action to prevent, avoid, or stop an imminent, threatened, or actual incident from occurring.
- c. **Response:** immediate actions to preserve life, property, and the environment; meet basic human needs; and maintain the social, economic, and political structure of the community.
- d. **Recovery:** short-term activities to return vital life-support systems to minimum operating standards and long-term activities to return life to pre-event conditions.
- e. **Mitigation:** Actions taken to eliminate or reduce risks to persons and/or property or to lessen the actual potential effects or consequences of a potential incident.

## D. Activation & Notification

### 1. Activation

- a. Activation decisions should be based on current information from situational reports and potential threats within or affecting Ritchie County.
- b. Emergency Support Functions are activated as the situation dictates. Not all ESFs will be activated for every incident.
- c. Ritchie County uses a tiered flexible response level that allows for ESFs to be activated as the emergency incident dictates, as well as activating appropriate Incident Specific and Support Annexes. Activated ESFs should provide representation in person at the EOC or via the virtual EOC.

- d. The activation levels are based on the National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS) and similar to the activation levels used by WVEM.
- e. The county's readiness and response conditions are:
  - **Normal Operations:** this reflects daily operations. RCOEM staff is available either on-site or via telephone/email to receive information about emergencies or disasters that may arise. Central Communications operates 24-hours a day and will contact RCOEM staff as requested or needed.
  - **Enhanced Watch:** this reflects those times when on-call RCOEM personnel should be prepared to respond to the EOC due to a potential threat or hazard.
  - **Partial Activation:** This is appropriate at times when RCOEM staff may be under time constraints. Situations may include monitoring a significant situation for changes or planned events involving a large attendance, or the need to issue multiple notifications or receive requests for information from the general public.
  - **Full Activation:** This reflects when the EOC or virtual EOC is activated and is staffed by RCOEM personnel and activated ESF coordinators.

## 2. Notification

- 1. RCOEM and partner agencies and organizations have multiple methods to relay information concerning emergencies and emergency operations to the general public.
- 2. The methods and systems used to relay information to the public are discussed in Emergency Support Function 15: External Affairs.

## E. Response

- 1. Upon receipt of notification of an imminent or actual emergency, RCOEM will notify the appropriate personnel and assess the situation to determine the scope of the incident.

2. RCOEM should determine if the need to activate the EOC, either partial or full activation, is necessary. If activation occurs, RCOEM will notify personnel of activation and to respond to the physical EOC or login into the virtual EOC.
3. RCOEM, through the activated EOC, should maintain contact with the State EOC and the West Virginia Information Fusion Center to provide situational updates, receive information provided by the state, and to request resources as needed.

## IV. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

### A. County Government

#### 1. Ritchie County Commission

- a. Appoint an Office of Emergency Management Director to coordinate emergency preparedness and management activities in Ritchie County.
- b. Declare local states of emergency as appropriate.
- c. Establish a local emergency operations center to facilitate support of emergency response operations.
- d. Adopt and support the National Incident Management System as the preferred management construct for Ritchie County.
- e. Approve and maintain mutual aid agreements and memorandums of understanding entered into by county agencies.

#### 2. Ritchie County Office of Emergency Management

- a. Coordinates the preparation and maintenance of the county emergency operations plan and distributes it to stakeholders as appropriate.
- b. As appropriate, activates the Ritchie County Emergency Operations Center and coordinates local operations based on guidance and direction of the incident command/unified command.
- c. Requests assistance and/or resources from the state EOC as appropriate and needed.
- d. Develop and coordinate a public information program to provide timely and accurate information to the public during all phases of emergency management. e. Coordinate exercises to test, evaluate, and update emergency plans.

- f. Coordinate training to ensure preparedness of emergency services and non-governmental organizations for disaster conditions.
- g. Develop and enter into mutual aid agreements with other jurisdictions, agencies, organizations, and private businesses for reciprocal aid when an emergency exceeds the capabilities of the county's agencies.

### 3. City Government Elected Officials

- 1. Enter into and maintain an emergency management agreement with Ritchie County.
- 2. Enter into mutual aid agreements with other jurisdictions, agencies, and organizations.
- 3. Make resources available for disaster response as necessary.

### 4. Emergency Response Agencies

- 1. Develop and maintain plans and policies to complete tasks assigned in this emergency operations plan.
- 2. Coordinate training opportunities for personnel to ensure NIMS compliance.
- 3. Facilitate or participate in exercises testing abilities to implement the emergency operations plan.

## **V. PLAN MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE**

- A. The RCOEM Director is responsible for the overall development and completion of this emergency operations plan. The Ritchie County Commission is responsible for approving and promulgating this plan.
- B. RCOEM is responsible for ensuring that necessary additions and revisions to this plan are prepared, coordinated, published, and distributed.
- C. Each agency and organization that participates in this plan should review its portion of the EOP at least annually. Suggested changes to the plan should be discussed with the emergency support function coordinator and submitted to RCOEM.
- D. Any and all sections of this plan can be updated at any time. Many changes are required because of changing information and situations.

## VI. AUTHORITIES & REFERENCES

- Authorities
  - West Virginia Code Chapter 8, Article 14
  - West Virginia Code Chapter 15, Article 10
  - West Virginia Code Chapter 29, Article 30
  - West Virginia Executive Order 20-04 (December 23, 2004)
  
- References
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