EMERGENCY & DISASTER CONTINGENCY PLANNING

Recommended Plans for Colorado Elections

The Secretary of State provides this guide to assist designated election officials with emergency and disaster contingency planning for a variety of events and issues that can affect elections conducted statewide or regionally.

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RECOMMENDED PLANS FOR COLORADO ELECTIONS

INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared after research regarding recommendations from the U.S. Election Assistance Commission as well as various plans and laws from states who have previously implemented procedures relating to emergency and disaster contingency plans. This document is not fully comprehensive. Counties should use this document as a starting point for discussion of this topic.

The objective of this guide is to help ensure that county clerk and recorders make effective plans and preparations and are ready for, can respond to, and can recover from emergency situations to maintain the integrity of the elections process. Establishing and implementing emergency plans will help ensure that polling places will be properly equipped to handle an emergency on Election Day, however, please be sure not to limit planning and preparation to just Election Day worst case scenarios.

An effective emergency plan requires research, discussion and making choices today about solutions for the future. By using the resources that are currently available and by developing new and improved resources, the integrity of elections can be protected and emergency situations addressed or even prevented.

At a minimum, an emergency preparedness plan should address the following:

- Identifying common and or possible contingencies,
- Compiling information,

- Response design,
- Technical and communication needs,
- Resources and support,
- Establishing and maintaining an ongoing partnership with state, county, and local officials/emergency contacts,
- Process to deploy and facilitate emergency communications during a disaster,
- Ability of each of the groups to respond to an emergency,
- Process to activate emergency judges or supplies,
- Level of security that would be required to respond to an emergency,
- Back-up planning, and
- Training for county clerk and recorder office personnel and election judges

Please note, a good emergency plan should be reviewed, refined and updated regularly to be sure it remains effective. We recommend updating your county plan at least once every two years before the general election.

IDENTIFYING AND ASSESSING CONTINGENCIES

Emergency and disaster contingency planning starts with considering the types of situations that can disrupt or impede elections in your county. Identifying and assessing common emergencies and disasters is essential for planning how to respond and minimize the affect on elections.

Identify the top five most probable problems that might occur regardless of whether the event has ever actually occurred. Once these events are identified, the next step involves developing an action plan specific to each emergency scenario and establishing procedures to be followed.

This section will introduce some of the common risks and situations that may occur and provides links to resources for additional information.

NATURAL DISASTERS AND SEVERE WEATHER

Common Colorado risks:

- Extreme heat
- Winter storms and extreme cold
- Avalanche
- Thunderstorms and lightning
- Floods
- Landslide and debris flow
- Earthquakes
- Wildfires
- Tornadoes

Links to additional information and guidance for specific natural disaster and severe weather incidents is available on page 16.

MANMADE DISASTERS AND OTHER RISKS

Elections may be disrupted by manmade disasters or other risks as well and should be accounted for in an emergency plan.

Examples include:

- **Terrorist hazards**
  - Explosions
  - Biological threat
  - Chemical threat
- **Technological and accidental hazards**
  - Blackouts
  - Hazardous materials incidents

- **Influenza pandemic**

- **Medical Emergencies**

- **Pests/infestations**

Links to additional information and resources are available on page 17.

DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING CONTINGENCY PLANS

When developing an action plan, remember to consider and address the following:

- Chain of command
- Emergency reporting procedures
- Emergency management
- Criteria to activate or terminate an emergency plan
- Situation assessment
  - Emergencies can occur pre-election, during the election, and post-election. Consider all three stages

- Response and communication structure
  - Communication network
  - Contact information
  - How to notify local emergency response, county, state and other supporting organizations
  - How to notify electors of an alteration in the normal election process
  - Changing the list of those involved as the emergency changes
  - Media communication

- Backup plans

  - Backup important files and records that you can access

- Training and directions for election judges and staff

- What resources are required

Consider sharing your plan with neighboring jurisdictions.

> **Tip!**
>
> **Action Plans Should:**
>
> - Identify your top five most likely occurrences.
>
> - Have written procedures on hand and easily accessible.
>
> - Be reviewed at least annually, but more often as needed.
>
> - Be shared with key staff prior to Election Day

To develop a detailed and comprehensive response and management plan, use the following outline as a guide:

1. **Set a goal:** the general end result you would like a contingency plan to achieve

2. **Define the purpose:** refers to the scope of the contingency plan

3. **Specify objectives:** Specific outcomes that support and help achieve the goal(s) of the contingency plan. Clear, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound.

4. **Develop an action plan:** speak to the goal and objectives you have established; each action step should relate back to a particular objective(s). Define staff, budget, time, training needs, resources needed. Establish taskforce and/or community partners.

5. **Implement action plan:** implement the action steps outlined in contingency plan. Evaluate/assess how effective the action plan was and how to improve for next time.

Please see for an example management plan concerning a fire in the voting system warehouse.

Source: EAC Election Management Guidelines.

MAKING THE RIGHT CONTACTS

STATE, COUNTY AND LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICES

Contact your local and/or state Emergency Management offices to review existing contingency plans and other information. These offices may have existing plans for local or state emergencies not specifically related to the conduct of elections, but which contain valuable information about resources that may be available to DEOs.

When contacting Emergency Management offices, DEOs may also wish to discuss options currently available and the need for further contact. Emergency Management offices can be a wealth of information and have the necessary skills, contacts, and sometimes resources, to assist DEOs with formulating a local plan. It is recommended that the DEO establish a "Go-To" contact person in the event an emergency occurs.

OTHER LOCAL AGENCIES AND DEPARTMENTS

Work with other county and local agencies, such as the Sheriff's Office or Police Department, Department of Transportation, Road and Bridge Department, and Commissioners' or City Council Offices, to identify resources that may be quickly allocated when responding to emergencies or disasters. Such events may include severely inclement weather thereby creating a need to deploy four-wheel drive vehicles to polling places, provisions for restocking polling places when election supplies are low or gone, and monitoring of polling place security.

Often, local law enforcement has the ability to dispatch or assign officers to closely watch polling places by regularly driving by locations and ensuring that officers are stationed within close proximity in case an event requiring intervention occurs. The Board of County Commissioners and/or City Councils can be instrumental in coordinating such activities and ensuring necessary resources are allocated.

> **Tip!**
> Identify your contacts as early as possible. Do not wait until the election is just around the corner.

In advance of Election Day, establish which jurisdiction each polling location is in (i.e. city police, county sheriff, city department of transportation, county road and bridge department etc.) so the correct agency can be contacted quickly in the event of an emergency. Your county GIS staff may be extremely useful with this process. It is recommended that the DEO establish a "Go-To" contact person should an emergency occur. DEOs may wish to enter into intergovernmental agreements with these agencies to outline duties and responsibilities. Consider politely reminding your emergency contacts on Election Day to be alert.

> **Tip!**
> Establish a "Go-To" person for every agency on your contact list. Pick people you can rely on to get the job done.

STAY INFORMED

COLORADO EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM

The Colorado EAS is a nationwide method of alerting the public to natural and manmade disasters. All broadcast stations and cable systems participate in EAS tests and activations. The system is considered the fastest and most reliable way to alert large areas or isolated locations of life threatening emergencies.

State and local area emergency alert system plans and procedures are also available online at:

- **State plans**
  http://www.startcolorado.com/eas/html/colorado_state_plan.htm
- **Local plans**
  http://www.startcolorado.com/eas/html/colorado_local_plans.htm

General information about the Colorado EAS is available at: www.startcolorado.com/eas/.

SMS/TEXT ALERT AND MOBILE EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEMS

The Colorado Division of Emergency Management, a division of the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA), provides a list of County-level emergency management alert systems in Colorado that support text, SMS, email or mobile alert systems. For more information, visit the following links:

- **Division of Emergency Management (DEM)**
  http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/DOLA-Main/CBON/1251590375261
- **Local information sources**
  List of county-level emergency management websites, telephone (office and 24 hour), emails and sms/txt alert systems in Colorado
  http://www.coemergency.com/p/sources.html
- **COEmergency Mgmt Twitter Feed**
  http://twitter.com/#!/coemergency
- **COEmergey Facebook**
  http://www.facebook.com/COEmergency

WEATHER SERVICE AND ROAD CONDITION ALERTS

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service website provides alerts currently in effect for Colorado and is normally updated every two-three minutes. For more information, click the following links:

- **NOAA National Weather Service**
  http://www.nws.noaa.gov/
- **Watches, Warnings or Advisories for Colorado**
  http://alerts.weather.gov/cap/co.php?x=1
- **Colorado County Forecast RSS Feed Listing**
  http://alerts.weather.gov/cap/co.php?x=3

Additional resources include:

- **Severe Weather Alert System**
  http://www.swasalert.com/

- **National Weather Service - Colorado RSS Feed**
  http://alerts.weather.gov/cap/co.php?x=0

- **CDOT – Road Conditions - Twitter Feed**
  http://twitter.com/#!/coloradodot

ROADWAY MAINTENANCE AND ACCESS

Coordinate with local Road and Bridge Departments to plan and prepare for weather, emergencies, or situations that may impede or otherwise affect road and bridge access/passage on Election Day. For example, Road and Bridge Departments may be resources to help with tree removal, bridge repair, snow plowing, and sanding of icy roads.

BE PREPARED

COMMUNICATION PLAN

CONTACT LIST FOR MISSION-CRITICAL STAFF AND AGENCIES

Develop and make available to staff, election judges, and other necessary parties, a contact list for mission-critical staff. Include the DEO, election director or manager, IT support, law enforcement, phone bank, power company representative, facilities representatives, and/or other key individuals that might be contacted during an emergency. Consider using a colored, laminated card so that the information can be easily found.

Additionally, consider implementing a central text messaging service to provide immediate notification to all poll workers through their cell phone.

COMMUNICATION & AGREEMENTS WITH NEIGHBORING JURISDICTIONS

Coordinate and share plans with neighboring jurisdictions. Also, consider establishing back-up agreements and procedures to transfer operations to a neighboring city/county if an emergency or other situation arises. For example, plan for transferring operations to a neighboring city/county on a different power grid if power is lost in your jurisdiction.

COMMUNICATION WITH POWER, TELEPHONE, INTERNET, AND WATER COMPANIES

Communicate with your electricity, telephone, internet, and water/sewer providers in advance of every election to inform the companies that a polling place is being used. DEOs should request that these companies limit any work near polling places that could cause a power, phone, internet, or water outage.

In the event of an outage, judges are instructed to contact the DEO who in turn contacts the applicable company. Concerning the internet, maintain a contact list that includes state and local internet providers to help troubleshoot any internet connectivity or outage issues on Election Day.

MEDIA COMMUNICATION PLANNING

Prior to Election Day, establish media contacts for local television and radio stations in order to expedite communication. Also, create a Media Action Plan to protect and enhance the Election Office's credibility and to communicate effectively with the media. Consider the following suggestions:

- Designate an election staff member to be the central media contact person.

- Instruct all employees to refer all questions from the media to the election director or to the County's Public Information Officer (PIO).

- Educate your employees that news reporters are under constant deadlines, but no deadline is worth anyone releasing an inaccurate statement to the media.

- Be aware that media reporters often frame their questions to bring out the conflict or emotion in a story.

- Educate your polling place supervisors on proper ways to handle media questions.

- Never allow anyone to provide a "personal" or "off the record" opinion to the media.

- Press releases should be developed and disseminated in an expeditious fashion regarding changes in election times, polling place locations, expected release of election results, etc.

- Be sure to take time to explain to the media and the public the nature of the emergency and all procedures as you work toward managing the issue. Perceived problems can be just as damaging as actual problems. Remember to provide thorough explanations. By taking the time to inform the public as things progress, an Election Day emergency, large or small, will be thought of and reported as a problem that you accurately and efficiently handled, not an Election Day disaster. In short, manage expectations during an emergency.

- The designated election PIO staff should maintain a media contact list, including office and cell telephone numbers and email addresses for all first line media personnel.

- Establish a social media presence before an emergency exists. Aside from disseminating information and helping manage expectations, organizations like the Red Cross monitor social media to determine whether supplies are needed in a community during an emergency.

<u>Source</u>: EAC Election Management Guidelines.

COMMUNICATIONS OUTAGE PLAN

DEOs should consider providing staff cell phones or reimbursing for use of personal cell phones on Election Day. In the event that phone lines and cell phone service becomes unavailable, however, hand held EMS radios may be the sole available form of communication between the DEO and election judges. Consider contacting local enforcement or other agencies to determine if hand held radios or similar devices could be made available for Election Day, or be made available on a contingent basis.

TRAINING & TESTING

Establish a regular training and testing routine. Training for an emergency should be simple and done frequently

so that when a disaster does occur, communications between clerks, judges and state officials can be as seamless as possible. Consider cross-training workers and volunteers in the event a worker needs to be replaced.

Plans should be exercised or tested to ensure they actually work. Exercises highlight gaps or ineffective aspects of the emergency preparedness program. If procedures are not practiced regularly, there could be a lack of familiarity with written plans and checklists.

Key points:

- Develop and make available training for election staff and judges.
- Training conducted by election or emergency professionals.
- Consider specialized training for emergency management, medial emergencies, domestic terrorism threats, etc.
- Frequent training to ensure effectiveness.
- Exercise or test the plans.
- Evaluation and improvement.
- Plan on retirements and change-over of personnel.

The following resources and training programs are available from the following federal and local organizations:

- **FEMA Training homepage** http://www.fema.gov/prepared/train.shtm

- **FEMA Emergency management Training for Government and Emergency Personnel** http://www.fema.gov/about/training/emergency.shtm

- **Center for Domestic Preparedness** http://cdp.dhs.gov/index.html

- **Homeland Security Training & Technical Assistance** http://www.dhs.gov/files/training/prepresprecovery.shtm

- **Red Cross First Aid/CPR/AED Training** http://www.redcross.org/en/takeaclass

POWER-FAILURE PROCEDURES

DEOs using electronic voting equipment should ensure that election judges are well trained regarding procedures for power failure. In all instances, electronic equipment is required to have a battery backup so that voting can continue if power fails. Judges must, however, be fully trained in implementing this process so that voting can continue efficiently. Be prepared to implement backup procedures consistent with Rule if you use an electronic pollbook. Election judges should also be trained to notify the DEO of a power failure. Consider developing a "Quick Reference Card" that outlines procedures for power failure. In the event of such failure, contact the building's manager or the power company to ascertain when power is projected to be restored. If the estimate is longer than the battery backup will last, the DEO should begin planning for alternatives, including transferring operations to a neighboring location/jurisdiction.

DEOs may wish to consider acquiring one or more generators that can be deployed to polling places. Because power generators can be very cost-prohibitive, DEOs are encouraged to work closely with their governing board to secure resources for these purchases. Additionally, vendors have their own plans and procedures. Ask ahead of time to see these plans for optimal coordination and preparedness. DEOs should test all power generator equipment and train staff and election judges on how to use power generator equipment prior to the election. In some situations, if equipment is improperly powered on, it may cause a surge disrupting power to the entire site and related equipment.

EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

It is recommended that sites are equipped with the following helpful items in an emergency:

- Fully charged cell phone
- Flashlight
- Portable, battery-operated radio
- Extra batteries
- First Aid kit and AED
- High calorie food (bars)
- Bottled water
- Communications plan
- Emergency contact list

Please see the Ready Colorado website for additional planning guidance: http://www.readycolorado.com/.

RELOCATION OR CONSOLIDATION OF POLLING PLACES

IDENTIFY AND ESTABLISH ALTERNATE POLLING PLACES

Prior to each election, DEOs are advised to actively identify alternate polling places. When searching for alternative polling places, the location and accessibility of the building should be considered. Consider government offices, community centers, churches, and any other location that can serve as a polling place.

Prior to the election, DEOs may wish to enter into agreements or contracts with such facilities in the event that a location is activated. When identifying and establishing alternate polling places, special consideration should be taken when considering vote centers due to accessibility of computer networking. It is also recommended that DEOs consider traffic control procedures when relocating polling places.

RELOCATION PLANNING TIPS

- Maintain a listing of all available polling place locations within your jurisdiction, along with contact person name and phone number.

- Plan for extra parking and traffic control.

- Consider using satellite early voting locations as emergency polling places on Election Day. These locations usually have computer network lines in place to allow for any voter in the jurisdiction to be validated.

- Consider entering into an IGA/MOU with the facility outlining responsibilities in the event the location is activated.

- If it is necessary to relocate polling places at the last minute, be sure to post notices at the old location to inform voters of the location of the new polling place.

- Notify the media of any polling place changes and remember to also post this information on your office web site.

- Use your office automated telephone system to provide updated information to voters about last minute polling place changes.

- Instruct judges to contact the DEO if it becomes necessary to relocate a polling place.

- Consider having pre-made relocation signs available.

- Remember that when transporting equipment, it is important to have a bi-partisan team of judges overseeing the process.

- Create "Quick Reference Card" outlining these procedures for elections staff and judges. See an example checklist on .

SECURING EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

DEOs are strongly encouraged to develop procedures for securing voting equipment, pollbooks, and supplies when a polling place must be relocated. The safety of electors and election judges must be the first priority. If, however, the event causing a polling place relocation allows for securing equipment and material in a safe environment (such as prolonged power outage, flooding, etc.) election judges should be trained in the procedures to properly secure election materials.

Voting equipment, ballots, and electronic pollbooks among other items should be secured whenever possible. When using DREs, it may become necessary to switch to paper ballots in the event of an emergency so adequate supplies need to be available.

POLLING PLACE SECURITY

DEOs are encouraged to carefully consider security measures for polling places. Partner with local law enforcement agencies to discuss what funding resources may be available. Although voting generally occurs safely and efficiently, recent events around the nation have brought attention to the need for heightened security. Consider coordinating with law enforcement to have polling places placed on patrol routes and ensuring that officers are stationed in close proximity to voting locations. Make certain that election judges have contact information available.

It is recommended that DEOs provide election judges with pre-drawn room layouts to ensure exits are not blocked and entrances are secure.

BOMB THREAT PROTOCOL

Each DEO who is responsible for conducting an election should develop procedures for evacuating and relocating a polling place in the event of a bomb threat.

Provide your election workers with an election emergency contingency plan and necessary evacuation procedures including:

- Securing equipment (when safety permits);

- Evacuating election workers and electors;

- Notifying appropriate parties, such as law enforcement, or building security; and

- Proper methods of notification that the polling place has changed.

It is also helpful to develop an easily identifiable and locatable "Quick Reference Card" for such events.

Counties should advise elections staff on procedures for handling telephone or written bomb threats. To help guide staff if a telephone threat is received, an example Bomb Threat Information Checklist is available online at http://emilms.fema.gov/is906/assets/ocso-bomb_threat_samepage-brochure.pdf.

Additional guidance follows:

TELEPHONE BOMB THREAT

- Remain calm and obtain as much information as possible.

- Pretend to have difficulty hearing - keep the caller talking.

- If caller seems agreeable to further conversation, ask questions such as those outlined in the Bomb Threat Information handout available online at: http://emilms.fema.gov/is906/assets/ocso-bomb_threat_samepage-brochure.pdf

- Do not hang up the phone; leave the extension open.

- Immediately notify the police and appropriate election officials.

- If necessary, consider using the fire alarm to evacuate the building.

- Secure polling place materials and evacuate the building.

- Account for election judges and other personnel.

WRITTEN BOMB THREAT

- Place the message in a clean envelope.

- DO NOT open any additional packages or envelopes.

- Immediately notify the police and appropriate election officials.

- If necessary, consider using the fire alarm to evacuate the building.

- Secure polling place materials and evacuate the building.

- Account for election judges and other personnel.

At all times the safety of the election judges and electors is most critical. When permissible, however, other factors such as equipment security should be considered.

DETERMINE ALTERNATIVE OFFICE SPACE

In advance of each election, identify alternative office space in the event that the main facility is unavailable for any reason. DEOs are encouraged to work with their governing board to identify and secure such locations. Establish procedures to procure and have on site at the alternate location office space, desks, computers, phones, access to the voter registration system, if applicable, and other election supplies. It is recommended that DEOs work closely with their information technologies staff and/or governing board for a smooth transition in the event that the election office must be relocated.

Personal Safety is Number 1!

- Procedures should ensure that the safety of judges and voters comes first.

- Consider practice drills during judges training.

- Provide law enforcement with diagrams of your polling places.

- Secure equipment and ballots whenever possible.

EVACUATION OF DEO OFFICE

Develop and distribute written procedures for evacuating staff at the DEO's office in case of a bomb threat, fire, or other incident. Train staff on securing ballots, voting equipment, and other election related items as well as contacting the appropriate authorities. Consider establishing a scripted telephone message that may be used in such emergencies. Institute evacuation drills so that staff may practice proper evacuation procedures.

INCLEMENT WEATHER AFTER THE POLLS OPEN

- Develop an emergency action plan in the event that roads in your jurisdiction become either somewhat or completely impassable due to ice or snow.

- Contact county/city employees to request use of four-wheel drive vehicles for use in collecting voting equipment and voted ballots from pre-established emergency collection sites or from individual polling place locations. In addition, consider alternative vehicles for transportation. For example, some mountain towns use Snowcats to transport ballots in inclement weather when roads are inaccessible.

- Establish best practices to ensure safety at polling places. Ensure that parking lots and walkways are cleared. Consider periodic snow removal and deicing throughout election day.

- Utilize your established polling place notification plan to inform supervisory poll workers that the Election night emergency action plan is now in place.

SCRIPTED PHONE MESSAGE

In advance of Election Day, develop telephone scripts that may be used if a disaster or emergency occurs. Scripts should include contact information for the public and media. It is vital to prepare these scripts in advance so that the DEO would only need to print out the script and program it into the phone system. If your phone system allows for prerecorded messages that can be turned on or off, you may wish to record all scripts in advance so that they will be available if needed.

DESIGNATION OF ON-CALL POLLWORKERS

Identify potential on-call election judges in advance of each election. These judges must be fully trained and available to serve in a polling place on short notice. Although funding may be an issue for designating on-call pollworkers, having them trained and available could be critical to the success of an election.

You may wish to assign office staff to this task and/or work with the applicable governing board or local service organizations to identify individuals that might be available for a small cost to the DEO. The State of Colorado encourages its employees to serve as election judges.

DESIGNATION OF RUNNERS OR TROUBLESHOOTERS

Designate staff or extra election judges as "runners" so that election supplies can be quickly deployed to polling locations. It is recommended that runners be equipped with backup voting equipment (that has been tested), ballots, and other polling place supplies in the event that a polling place depletes inventory or is unexpectedly relocated. Runners should have sufficient supplies available to respond to an assigned polling place in an efficient manner.

Because some jurisdictions may cover a large geographic area, multiple runners may be necessary and should be assigned a specific geographic section of the county. It is helpful to provide runners with maps including the location of each of their assigned polling places. For large voting facilities, also consider providing runners with pre-drawn maps of the polling location.

FLU SEASON & PANDEMIC PLANNING

Contingency plans should include procedures to conduct an election safely and effectively during flu season. Furthermore, election officials should plan and prepare for a potential virus pandemic. The following precautions and steps are recommended to help lessen the spread of illness and protect election staff and the public especially during a pandemic:

- Distribute hand sanitizer, alcohol/disinfectant wipes, surgical masks, sterile latex gloves, disposable tissues and trash receptacles at every polling place.

- Regularly use alcohol/disinfectant wipes to clean pens/pencils, voting booths, voting equipment, touch screens, headsets, tables and other surfaces.

- Coordination with state and local health officials for information and guidance specific to each community.

- Educate election workers about the characteristics and symptoms of the flu.

- Advise all election workers with mild flu-like illness to stay home.

- Monitor and be aware of seasonal absenteeism. Determine absenteeism thresholds that may negatively impact or obstruct normal polling place operations. Develop a worker replacement and contingency plan to respond if absenteeism approaches/reaches this threshold.

- Establish a list of backup election judges and office staff. Ensure that election workers understand poll-worker replacement procedures.

- Post information such as the "Cover Your Cough" notice.

- Strongly encourage election workers to get the flu vaccination prior to Election Day.

- Advise voters to increase social distances while standing in line and moving within the voting area.

See for a list of links to health resources.

LONG LINES

In the event of long lines of voters, poll workers should be trained to follow the guidelines for line management in their training manual. Tip: Consider developing and incorporating line management guidelines into the poll worker training session and materials if you do not currently have one. Reach out to other community groups, agencies, and businesses that have experience coordinating and managing large events for their input on how they would manage a polling place.

Provide various scenarios as solutions to this issue, i.e. break up the line into two or more check in locations; station a poll worker at the end of the line to encourage voters to review the sample ballot and be prepared to vote in order to keep the line moving; confirm that voters are in the correct polling place location; and consider setting up a separate line to manage provisional voters.

Develop a plan for deploying additional personnel, voting equipment, and other supplies to polling places experiencing long lines.

As a first step on Election Day, have poll workers and/or roaming technicians first explain the cause of the long lines before deploying resources; this will help you identify which personnel or materials need to be sent out or if the problem only requires a modification within the polling place.

Additionally, consider plans for distributing and setting up temporary structures and seating to provide cover/shelter and relief for electors that may wait in line outside of a polling place. Examples include event tents or other canopies that would provide shade on hot summer days or shelter from falling snow in the winter. Providing folding chairs or benches would also provide relief from standing for long periods of time.

Source: EAC Election Management Guidelines.

SHORTAGE OF POLL WORKERS

- As part of your normal operating procedures, assign a certain percentage of poll workers to a "stand by" status. Require that these poll workers report to the central election office instead of a polling place on Election morning. These poll workers can be deployed to any polling place in the county in the event of "no shows" or absences.

- Implement a county/city employee "stand by" poll worker program. These employees should receive full training and be authorized for immediate re-assignment on Election Day, if needed.

- If not needed at the polling places, utilize this pool of "stand by" poll workers to serve other needs on Election Day, i.e. runners, in-house telephone bank staff, etc.

- Reiterate the importance of having staff workers remain in place should an emergency occur. Workers will want to know if his or her family is safe. Consider having a separate staff member check on staff families.

SHORTAGE OF BALLOTS AND/OR SUPPLIES

- Poll workers should be trained to inspect their supply kits on the day before Election Day. They are the final set of eyes to determine if all mission critical supplies have been packaged correctly.

- Provide a checklist of all mission critical supplies. Place this checklist on the top of their supply kit and train them to check this list immediately upon receipt of their supplies. If something is missing, poll workers must be trained to immediately telephone the central election office on the night prior to Election Day.

- Have an action plan in place to monitor telephone calls from poll workers on the night before Election Day, and to dispatch response teams to deliver any missing supplies.

EQUIPMENT ISSUES

- Provide poll workers with easy to follow, step by step instructions for opening and closing voting equipment. Make these instructions as simple as possible, placing the opening instructions on one side and the closing on the reverse side. Laminate this one page of instructions and place it in an easy to use location.

Note Consider attaching the laminated instructions to the handle of the voting equipment, making it easy to find on Election morning.

- Maintain a support help desk to answer questions from poll workers regarding any problem they have with opening or closing the voting equipment. Be sure to document each call and use this information for future debriefing sessions.

- Provide cell phones to all rovers in the field and establish an action plan to enable the central election office to know which rovers have been dispatched to which polling place locations.

- Require the rovers to complete a daily log documenting their visits to assigned polling locations throughout the day.

POLLING PLACE NOT OPEN

- Provide the supervisory poll worker with current contact information for the manager of the facility they are assigned to on Election Day.

- Train poll workers to immediately contact the facility manager by phone if the location is locked and they are not able to gain access. If they are not able to reach the facility manager, they should immediately contact the central election office for assistance.

- In the event that access to the location is not available by the time that the polls are scheduled to open, poll workers should be trained on how to implement a backup plan for processing voters until the building is opened.

HELPFUL RESOURCES AND LINKS

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

Election Assistance Commission (EAC)

Contingency Planning in Elections – webcast and links to additional resources
http://www.eac.gov/contingency_planning_in_elections/

Election Management Guidelines – *Chapter 11: Contingency Planning and Change Management*
(Useful for identifying, assessing, developing and implementing contingencies, including related tips and information on organizing response teams and pre- and post-election issues.) A copy is available online at:
http://www.eac.gov/assets/1/workflow_staging/Page/268.PDF

Quick Start Management Guide
http://www.eac.gov/assets/1/workflow_staging/Page/248.PDF

Federal Emergency Management Agency – Government (Federal, Local, and State)
http://www.fema.gov/government/index.shtm

Disaster Resource Guide – Planning and Management Articles
http://www.disaster-resource.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=718&Itemid=9

Colorado Division of Emergency Management
Field Managers
http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/DOLA-Main/CBON/1251594919240

NATURAL DISASTERS AND SEVERE WEATHER

Extreme heat
http://www.ready.gov/heat

Winter storms and extreme cold
General information
http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather

American Red Cross preparedness fast facts – winter storms
http://www.redcross.org/portal/site/en/menuitem.86f46a12f382290517a8f210b80f78a0/?vgnextoid=91435d795323b110VgnVCM10000089f0870aRCRD

Colorado Department of Transportation – COTRIP Travel Conditions/Info
http://www.cotrip.org/home.htm;jsessionid=57D53D8165533C86A6B9C3D533C66FA2.node1

Thunderstorms and lightning
http://www.ready.gov/thunderstorms-lightning

Floods
http://www.ready.gov/floodawareness

Landslide and debris flow
http://www.ready.gov/landslides-debris-flow

Earthquakes
http://www.ready.gov/earthquakes

Wildfires
http://www.ready.gov/wildfires

Tornadoes
http://www.ready.gov/tornadoes

Additional information and guidance for specific natural disaster and severe weather incidents is available online at the READY Colorado website at http://www.ready.gov/

MANMADE DISASTERS AND OTHER RISKS

Terrorist hazards
    U.S. Department of Homeland Security – Information Sharing
    http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/sharing-information.shtm

    National Terrorism Advisory System (NTAS)
    http://www.dhs.gov/files/programs/ntas.shtm

    Bomb Threat Call Procedures & Checklist
    http://emilms.fema.gov/is906/assets/ocso-bomb_threat_samepage-brochure.pdf

    Explosions
    http://www.ready.gov/explosions

    Biological threat
    http://www.ready.gov/biological-threats
    http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/epr/biological.html

    Chemical threat
    http://www.ready.gov/chemical-threats

Influenza pandemic

    General information
    http://www.ready.gov/pandemic

    See additional health resources in the Flu Season & Pandemic Planning section on the next page.

Technological and accidental hazards

General information
http://www.ready.gov/accidental-emergencies

Blackouts
http://www.ready.gov/blackouts

Hazardous materials incidents
http://www.ready.gov/hazardous-materials-incidents

FLU SEASON AND PANDEMIC PLANNING – HEALTH RESOURCES

Center for Disease Control

CDC Homepage
www.cdc.gov

Seasonal Influenza
http://www.cdc.gov/flu/

CDC Resources for Pandemic Flu
http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources/index.htm

List of flu websites
http://www.cdc.gov/flu/other_flu.htm

Free resources (print materials, video/audio tools, web tools, etc.)
http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/index.htm

Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

Pandemic influenza plan summary
http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/epr/panflusummary.html

Co State Health Dept Twitter
http://twitter.com/#!/COhealth

ReadyColorado – Epidemics and pandemics

General information
http://www.readycolorado.com/who-is-ready-colorado/disasters-101/epidemics-pandemics/

Pandemic Flu Brochure (English)
http://readycolorado.com/pdf/PandemicFluBrochureEng.pdf

Pandemic Flu Brochure (Spanish)
http://readycolorado.com/pdf/PandemicFluBrochureSpan.pdf

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Flu.gov
http://www.pandemicflu.gov/

Colorado Sate & Local Government Planning and Preparedness
http://www.flu.gov/planning-preparedness/states/colorado.html

U.S. Health and Human Services
Flu.gov homepage
www.flu.gov

Colorado State and Local Government Planning & Preparedness
www.flu.gov/professional/states/colorado.html

About pandemics
http://www.flu.gov/pandemic/about/index.html

World Health Organization
Global Alert and Response (GAR)
http://www.who.int/csr/en/

Health topics - Influenza
http://www.who.int/topics/influenza/en/

DOCUMENT PRESERVATION

Library of Congress – Document Care
Emergency Drying Procedures for Water Damaged Collections
http://www.loc.gov/preservation/care/dry.html

EXAMPLE CHECKLISTS

EXAMPLE POLLING PLACE CHECKLISTS

Before Election Day

- ☐ Identify situations that may pose a risk at your polling locations
- ☐ Have a written plan to deal with these situations
- ☐ Train judges on how to handle an emergency situation
- ☐ Provide an emergency checklist in the training manual
- ☐ Discuss emergency situations in election judges' training
- ☐ Provide multiple emergency contact numbers for judges (county clerk and recorders, other polling places, Secretary of State Elections Division, emergency personnel)
- ☐ Develop a checklist of information for the county clerk and recorder's office to get from an election judge regarding an emergency
- ☐ Checklist of backup plans and directions to give election judges in an emergency (post signs, move voting to an alternative site, etc.)

On Election Day

- ☐ Stay alert and be observant
- ☐ Tune into news and weather reports
- ☐ Communicate with schools, districts and other polling sites if emergencies arise
- ☐ Communicate with the media
- ☐ Communicate with the state Elections Division

After an Emergency

- ☐ Review the procedures that were followed
- ☐ Did county clerk and recorders, election judges and other employees have the information they needed to manage the situation?
- ☐ What could have been done better?
- ☐ Provide an opportunity for election judges and others involved to talk about it

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Sample only. Please modify as necessary for county-specific procedures.

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Polling Place Relocation Procedures

1. **Is there an immediate threat to the safety of voters and election judges? If so evacuate voters and judges, then call 911 immediately**.

2. If there is <u>not</u> immediate safety threat:

    ☐ Contact the County Clerk and Recorder at (insert phone number).

    ☐ Evacuate voters in a calm manner. Let voters who have a ballot finish voting.

    ☐ Seal and secure ballots for transport.

    ☐ Before you turn off voting machines, note the number of ballots on each machine so that the number can be verified at the new location.

    ☐ Secure voting equipment and prepare for transport.

    ☐ Transport equipment and supplies to your designated relocation area using bi-partisan teams of judges.

    ☐ Post Polling Place Relocation Signs where they are easily visible at evacuated polling place.

    ☐ Set up machines, ballots and other supplies at the new polling place.

    ☐ Verify that seals on equipment and ballot boxes are intact.

    ☐ After voting machines are turned on, verify that the number of ballots on each machine is the same. New "zero" tapes are not required.

    ☐ Resume voting as quickly as possible.

    ☐ Contact the County Clerk when relocation is complete.

EXAMPLE MANAGEMENT PLAN – FIRE IN VOTING SYSTEM WAREHOUSE

Contingency: fire in voting system warehouse

Goals: prevent fires in voting system warehouse and mitigate impact of fires on warehouse and voting system equipment

Purpose of contingency plan: establish policies and procedures for preventing and mitigating the effects of fire on the voting system warehouse through proper fire safety practices and community collaboration

Objectives:

1. reduce probability of fire occurrence at least 50% by the next scheduled State/local election

2. ensure smoke detectors are operational 100% of the time

3. ensure sprinkler system is operational 100% of the time

4. mitigate impact of fires on voting system equipment

5. develop fire safety measures in collaboration with local firemen and police

6. have backup voting system in case fire destroys equipment in warehouse

7. establish policies and procedures for conducting an election with the backup voting system

8. train staff and poll workers in both regular and backup voting systems

Action steps:

1. within 15 days of adoption of the contingency plan, meet with local fire department to assess safety of warehouse and develop policies and procedures for preventing and reducing incidents of fire and the damage caused by them (objective #5)

2. install smoke detectors in warehouse within 15 days of adoption of the contingency plan (objectives #1 and #2)

3. schedule and conduct monthly visits to the warehouse to ensure smoke detectors are operational 100% of the time (objectives #1 and #2)

4. schedule and conduct monthly visits to the warehouse to ensure sprinkler system is operational 100% of the time (objectives #1 and #3)

5. monitor smoke detectors and sprinklers once a week during the last 30 days prior to a scheduled election (objectives #1, #2, and #3)

6. within 30 days of adoption of the contingency plan, cover voting equipment with nonflammable material during storage at warehouse to reduce impact of fire (objective #4)

7. within 30 days of adoption of the contingency plan, prevent sprinkler water damage by keeping voting equipment at least 12 inches off the warehouse floor (objective #4)

8. within 30 days of adoption of the contingency plan, designate backup facility to store voting system equipment in case current facility becomes unsafe as result of a fire (objective #5)