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**PEMA Circular**


**Subject:**  
Commonwealth March 26 All Hazards Exercise “MAR26 AHX” Functional Exercise

**Scope:**  
All applicable Commonwealth Agencies; County and Municipal Emergency Management Agencies; Public, Charter, Private Schools, and Custodial Child Care Facilities.

**Distribution:**

- www.pema.pa.gov
- see Participating Agencies

**By Direction of:**



David R. Padfield  
Acting Director, PA Emergency Management Agency

**I. PURPOSE**

The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) annually provides an opportunity for all Commonwealth preparedness stakeholders to examine, test, and validate their Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs), and emergency response and recovery capabilities.

This circular provides guidance and information for the conduct of the Commonwealth March 26, 2019, All Hazards Exercise (MAR26 AHX). The state scenario will begin at 8:30 a.m. and terminate by 3:30 p.m.

**II. DEFINITIONS**

**Custodial Child Daycare Facility:** A custodial child daycare center as defined under Section 1001 of the Act of June 13, 1967 (P.L. 31, No. 21), known as the Public Welfare Code, or nursery school licensed or regulated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

**III. GENERAL INFORMATION**

A. Each county Emergency Management Agency (EMA) will receive a “Severe Weather Warning” exercise message from the National Weather Service (NWS) via the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather radio system on March 26, 2019, which will establish the foundation for the functional exercise.

**Comments and Questions Regarding this Circular Should be Directed to:**  
Mr. Reginald Godfrey, Bureau of Planning, Training, and Exercise, 717-651-2714

- B. This exercise is an opportunity for all schools (public, charter, and private) and custodial child daycare facilities to fulfill annual requirements to conduct a disaster response or emergency preparedness plan drill.
- C. This exercise is also an excellent opportunity for hospitals, health care facilities, nursing homes, and personal care homes to conduct a disaster response or emergency preparedness plan drill.
- D. County 9-1-1 centers and Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs) are invited to take advantage of this functional exercise to conduct an exercise of their own and review their all hazards response plans.
- E. Applicable state agencies will be represented in the Commonwealth Response Coordination Center (CRCC).

#### **IV. REGISTRATION**

- A. Registration for this exercise is required for audit and statistical reporting. All participating entities, including state agencies, are requested to register online.
- B. Online registration for the exercise is available as of Monday, February 11, 2019, until Friday, March 22, 2019. Please visit the PEMA website at [www.pema.pa.gov](http://www.pema.pa.gov) and select “online registration” for March 26 All Hazards Exercise under POPULAR sites on the right-hand side of the page. School districts whose member schools do not share a common plan or address should register as separate entities.

#### **V. PEMA’s MAR26 AHX CORE CAPABILITIES and OBJECTIVES**

- A. Core Capabilities:
  - 1. Situational Assessment
  - 2. Planning
  - 3. Logistics and Supply Chain Management
- B. Objectives:
  - 1. Evaluate December 2018 CRCC Quarterly Training using WebEOC to populate appropriate WebEOC Boards (Situation Report Notes, Situation Report Roll Up, Situation Report Working, Situation Report Dashboard) to produce a Situation Report (SITREP) within an eight-hour operational period during an all hazards incident.
  - 2. Test the Planning Section’s ability to anticipate incident impacts upon Commonwealth preparedness regarding response, resources, services, policy decisions, and incident consequences affecting multiple counties during an eight-hour operational period.
  - 3. Demonstrate critical decision making as it relates to resource allocation and task assignment and exercise the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) request process using the EMAC system during an eight-hour operational period in the CRCC.

## **VI. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

- A. The Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP) is the cornerstone of the exercise program in Pennsylvania. It is expected that all levels of government will use the concept, form, and spirit of HSEEP during this exercise to ensure HSEEP compliance (Attachment 1).
- B. PEMA will provide all weather-related exercise message traffic based on the MSEL.
- C. Counties are requested to not add events that were not included in the Extent of Play, as these injects could impact the adjacent counties and unnecessarily increase the scope of the functional exercise.
- D. Each county Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) should contact her or his municipalities and encourage participation, including that of their elected officials. This functional exercise will afford municipalities an excellent opportunity to test their emergency plans and warning procedures. A sample participant's letter can be found in Attachment 2, which may be customized accordingly.
- E. Damage reporting will be accomplished through the Commonwealth Damage Reporter (CDR).
- F. The functional exercise will have a theme of community preparedness that gives counties three options to participate:
  - 1. The county can activate its EOC, participate as a county activation, and support the custodial care facilities and critical infrastructures.
  - 2. The county can bring representatives of the custodial care facilities and critical infrastructure into its EOC and conduct a tabletop exercise.
  - 3. The county can function as an exercise Simulation Cell (SimCell) to facilitate the functional exercise for the custodial care facilities and critical infrastructures.
- G. Each participating jurisdiction should use the exercise template provided to develop its own exercise or drill that would challenge those functional areas they want to test and evaluate. Attachment 1a contains a sample exercise Master Scenario Events List (MSEL).
- H. PEMA Area Offices will provide assistance requested by the respective counties or will participate in their usual liaison role during the functional exercise.

## **VII. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

- A. The CRCC shall ensure receipt of weather messages at the county EOCs within 15 minutes of release by the NWS and immediately for tornado and flood warnings. The CRCC shall validate the connectivity of the 800MHz radio system.

- B. Counties shall forward to the CRCC any unmet needs that are not available at a lower jurisdictional level within one hour of that determination. PEMA Area Office personnel should be fulfilling their roles as Liaison Officers.
- C. The CRCC shall coordinate the filling of unmet needs by those agencies responsible for doing so and/or advising the requesting agencies of the status of their requests within one hour of receipt of the request.
- D. Counties should submit their Initial Damage Reports (IDRs) within two hours of completing their assessment to the CRCC.
- E. Resource requests should be completed by the requesting entity and submitted to the PEMA Logistics Section and the CRCC. For example, with few exceptions, local facilities report to municipal EOCs, municipal EOCs report to county EOCs, and county EOCs report to PEMA Logistics and the CRCC.

## VIII. EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTERS

Each participating county should engage to the extent necessary to support participating school districts and other agencies.

## IX. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. All available communications systems (PEMA website, Emergency Management Network (EMNet) state and local Auxiliary Communications Service [ACS], telephone, NWS, and NOAA weather radio system) will be activated during the entire period of this functional exercise. The exercise offers an excellent opportunity for the emergency management community to test the entire range of communications systems. The NWS SKYWARN system will also be activated. This system provides for communications between the NWS and their observers, who relay weather information to NWS. PEMA will have ACS personnel available the day of the exercise.
- B. During the functional exercise, all counties should review their local emergency notification systems and report any problems or concerns to the CRCC at 717-651-2001 or via email to Charles Thorp at [cthorp@pa.gov](mailto:cthorp@pa.gov).

## X. REPORTS SUBMISSION TIMELINE

- A. PEMA will send each county EMC an email containing an extract of online registrations of participants from their county **on a weekly basis beginning on February 15, 2019**. Participating entities should contact their County Emergency Management Agency to ensure integration into the county functional exercise.
- B. For audit and statistical purposes, following the exercise, schools, hospitals, nursing homes, adult/child daycare centers, and other participating organizations are requested to complete the online After Action Review **no later than April 5, 2019**.

- C. Following the exercise, counties/municipal exercise evaluators are requested to complete the online PEMA 2019 All Hazards Exercise Evaluator’s Report **no later than April 12, 2019**. Attachment 3 is available for evaluator’s use during the exercise.
- D. Links for the AAR and Evaluator’s Report will be made available **no later than March 29, 2019**.
- E. PEMA will use the supplied information for its AAR/IP as it pertains to the CRCC’s conduct during the exercise. For this reason, the AAR/IP will not be distributed, but all reports will be made available to other PEMA offices for grants purposes.

**XI. ADMINISTRATIVE NOTES**

Questions regarding the functional exercise should be directed to the PEMA State Exercise Officer, Reginald Godfrey, at 717-651-2714 or via email at [ra-exerciseofficer@pa.gov](mailto:ra-exerciseofficer@pa.gov).

- Attachment (1) Guidance on Conduct of Exercise
- Attachment (1a) Sample Master Scenario of Events List (MSEL) Injects
- Attachment (2) Sample Participants Letter
- Attachment (3) Evaluators Report
- Attachment (4) Exercise Contact Information

- Carbon Copy:
- Office of the Director
  - Office of the State Fire Commissioner
  - Executive Deputy Director
  - Deputy Director for Preparedness
  - Deputy Director for Response
  - Deputy Director for Administration
  - Deputy Director for 9-1-1
  - External Affairs Office
  - Chief Counsel’s Office
  - Legislative Liaison/Policy
  - Special Assistant to the Director
  - Communications Director
  - Bureau/Office Directors
  - Commonwealth Agency Representatives
  - Pennsylvania School Districts
  - FEMA Region III Exercise Office

## **Attachment 1**

### **GUIDANCE ON CONDUCT OF EXERCISE**

1. The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) and the National Weather Service (NWS) developed a weather scenario that places severe weather conditions within your county. The county Emergency Management Coordinators (EMCs) are responsible for ensuring that the county exercise objectives are met.
2. The conduct of this exercise must be within, and in compliance with, the spirit and intent of the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).
3. Inject Messages – Master Scenario Events List (MSEL) coordinators, assigned by each participating jurisdiction, should develop exercise messages of simulated weather events to be inserted into the exercise based on the MSEL in Attachment 1a to generate actions by emergency response agencies. These messages must be clearly marked as exercise messages and must:
  - a. Be realistically injected into the exercise at such frequency as to allow a continuous, logical flow of events.
  - b. Not involve or impact another county unless pre-coordinated with the county EMC.
  - c. Have information that requires action on the part of emergency response agencies that will meet all the objectives of the exercise.
  - d. Be challenging and require problem-solving, management of resources, and coordination.
  - e. Be oriented to require a response or involvement by the county EMC, rather than routine handling by dispatch centers.
  - f. Not involve large-scale operations, such as major evacuations, urban search and rescue, handling mass casualties, etc.
  - g. Include in the exercise some day-to-day routine incidents to ensure the proper prioritization of, and eventual resolution of, all exercise events.
  - h. Generate the requirement to develop reports to outside agencies.
  - i. Involve all the county participants taking part in the exercise, e.g., hospitals, school districts, nursing homes, daycare centers, etc.
  - j. Require the implementation of established plans and procedures.
4. Exercise Start and Finish Times:
  - a. Timeframes are flexible for counties and school districts which have agreed to participate.
  - b. This all hazards exercise date and times are March 26, 2019, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. No alternate dates are scheduled.



**Attachment 1a**

**SAMPLE MASTER SCENARIO OF EVENTS LIST (MSEL) INJECTS**

<b>Inject</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Domain</b>	<b>Brief Description of Inject</b>
1.	03/26/19	0930	School District	THIS IS AN EXERCISE Eisenhower Middle/High School is experiencing severe flooding. THIS IS AN EXERCISE
2.	03/26/19	1000	School District	THIS IS AN EXERCISE The roof of the Parkside Elementary School is beginning to come off due to high winds. THIS IS AN EXERCISE
3.	03/26/19	1015	Township Q	THIS IS AN EXERCISE The township municipal building has received an email saying that their computers have been hacked, and they will get back control if a ransom is paid. THIS IS AN EXERCISE
4.	03/26/19	1129	County Z	THIS IS AN EXERCISE A township is reporting a complete loss of power due to downed electrical lines. THIS IS AN EXERCISE
5.	03/26/19	1155	County O	THIS IS AN EXERCISE A township is reporting a complete loss of power due to an unknown computer issue with the power station. THIS IS AN EXERCISE
6.	03/26/19	1238	County D	THIS IS AN EXERCISE Reports are coming in of severe wind damage to structures and utilities in the eastern part of the county. THIS IS AN EXERCISE

## **Attachment 2**

### **SAMPLE PARTICIPANT'S LETTER**

Dear Participant:

The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) annually provides an opportunity for all Commonwealth preparedness stakeholders to examine, test, and validate their Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs), and emergency response and recovery capabilities. At this time, PEMA will conduct the next All Hazards Exercise (MAR26 AHX) on Tuesday, March 26, 2019.

This statewide functional exercise is one of the few opportunities that educational institutions (school districts, charter schools, intermediate units, etc.); health and human services organizations (hospitals, nursing homes, adult/child daycare centers, etc.); correctional facilities; community infrastructure organizations; and local emergency assistance volunteers (Community Emergency Response Teams [CERTs] or community assistance teams) have to test their plans in coordination with local governments under simulated emergency conditions. This would be an excellent opportunity to test your facility's alternate power sources, and to stress employee preparedness measures for themselves and their families. It is also suggested that participants monitor local National Weather Service (NWS) radio frequencies during the exercise for early alert notifications and subsequent weather updates and messages.

Please copy this link into an internet browser to go to the MAR26 AHX registration page.

<http://events.egov.com/eventreg/PA/event.htm?name=26march2019allhazardsexercise>

It is very important that the exercise be evaluated. PEMA requests that participants conduct evaluations and report the results to the respective county emergency management agency (EMA) within five business days following the exercise. A link to the list of county emergency management coordinators (EMCs) may be found on the home page of PEMA's website (<https://www.pema.pa.gov>). Please keep a copy of your exercise results on file. After the MAR26 AHX a survey link will be made available on PEMA's website.

The various organizations that desire to participate in the exercise are encouraged to notify their respective county EMC of their intent to take part in the exercise. EMCs are a great resource to assist in the development of site-specific and measurable objectives. This will also ensure early notification to these entities in the event of an actual emergency by giving the county and municipal EMCs an opportunity to update contact information.

Past exercises have improved our local and state emergency preparedness and response efforts in Pennsylvania. Participation in this exercise joins thousands of citizens across the Commonwealth in a continuing effort to enhance our future preparedness.



### Attachment 3

#### PEMA 2019 All Hazards Exercise Evaluator's Worksheet

This form shall be completed by the county/municipal evaluator and used to complete the online PEMA 2019 All Hazards Exercise Evaluator's Report

1. County: \_\_\_\_\_ Municipality: \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Emergency Management Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Evaluator: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Exercise Date: \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Total Facilities and Personnel That Participated in the exercise: \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Schools: \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ schools participated in the exercise.  
\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ schools have a NOAA weather radio.  
Total Number of Students and Staff Participating in the exercise: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Hospitals: \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ hospitals participated in the exercise.  
\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ hospitals have a NOAA weather radio.  
Total Number of Patients and Staff Participating in the exercise: \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Nursing \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ nursing homes participated in the exercise.  
Homes: \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ nursing homes have a NOAA weather radio.  
Total Number of Clients and Staff Participating in the Exercise: \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Daycare \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ daycare centers participated in the exercise.  
Centers: \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ daycare centers have a NOAA weather radio.  
Total Number of Clients and Staff Participating in the Exercise: \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Was the EOC activated with a full complement? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_
  
7. Identify all of the communications systems used in this exercise:  
( ) ACS (ARES/RACES) ( ) CLEAN ( ) EMNet ( ) 800MHz Radio  
( ) PEMA Website ( ) Telephone ( ) Other : \_\_\_\_\_
  
8. Primary communication means by which weather watches and warnings were received:  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Were weather warning messages received within 10 minutes of release by the National Weather Service (NWS)? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_  
If no, what time was the weather message received? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Did the county or municipality provide specific instructions to the local EAS stations within 10 minutes of receipt of a NWS weather warning? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_  
If no, give the time the instructions were received: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Did the county or municipality provide a complete listing of unmet needs to their PEMA Area Office within one hour from the time that it was determined the needs could not be filled at a lower level? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

12. Did the county or municipality provide preliminary damage reports to PEMA's Area Office within two hours of the initial damage report? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

13. County or Municipality Objectives (use additional sheets as needed)

a. **Objective 1** (cite objective) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Was it accomplished?** Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

If no, why wasn't it accomplished? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. **Objective 2** (cite objective) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Was it accomplished?** Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

If no, why wasn't it accomplished? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Attachment 4**

### **Exercise Contact Information**

Reginald Godfrey, State Exercise Officer  
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(717) 651-2714  
ra-exerciseofficer@pa.gov

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