



Examine the ability of the whole community to provide disaster survivors with streamlined, coordinated, and inclusive life-sustaining services—such as feeding, reunification, and distribution of emergency supplies—from congregate sheltering through long-term housing.

The National Exercise Program (NEP) is a two-year cycle of exercises across the nation that examines and validates capabilities in all preparedness mission areas. The 2019-2020 NEP cycle is guided by nine Principals’ Strategic Priorities, established by the National Security Council and informed by national preparedness data.

What are Mass Care and Housing exercises?

Exercises aligned to this priority should:

- Examine the implementation of wraparound mass care services that survivors need as they move through the housing process
- Assess which housing programs should be made available to survivors throughout the housing process, from short-term sheltering to long-term and permanent solutions
- Observe the coordination between response and recovery partners as they move survivors through the sheltering and housing process
- Examine coordination among Federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial partners with voluntary organizations and economic development organizations

Related Core Capabilities

- Health and Social Services
- Housing
- Long-term Vulnerability Reduction
- Mass Care Services
- Operational Coordination
- Planning

Why is this important?

States, territories, tribes, urban areas, and other communities use the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (THIRA) and Stakeholder Preparedness Review (SPR) to assess their preparedness. FEMA includes the results of the THIRA and SPR, along with several other preparedness indicators, in the annual National Preparedness Report (NPR). Analytic results help shape planning, training, exercise, and other prioritization decisions at all levels.



National Preparedness Report

- Housing was identified as a **national area for improvement** in each NPR from 2012 to 2017
- The 2017 NPR highlighted that comprehensively addressing the housing needs of disaster survivors is an **ongoing challenge**

Stakeholder Preparedness Review

- In 2017, **only 20% of states and territories rated themselves proficient** in the Housing core capability. This is the second-lowest level of proficiency reported
- While **70% of jurisdictions rated Mass Care Services as a high priority, only 33% rated themselves proficient** in that capability

Spotlight: Housing Initiatives

FEMA is exploring innovative ways to reduce the need for long-term congregate sheltering after a disaster. The **Sheltering and Temporary Emergency Power (STEP)** program provides essential power to affected residences, thereby reducing the demand for other shelter options and allowing individuals to return to or remain in their homes.



What are the major challenges?

An analysis of 15 exercise after-action reports (AARs) revealed common challenges:

- Ensuring disproportionately impacted communities are aware of resources to address unmet housing needs
- Increasing opportunities to train for and exercise mass care and housing operations
- Ensuring the Federal government provides adequate emergency sheltering resources to mitigate the over-reliance on nongovernmental assistance
- Establishing formal processes to streamline life-sustaining resource deployment timelines between local, state, and Federal entities
- Developing sheltering plans that account for individuals with Access and Functional Needs



Distribution of jurisdictions that submitted AARs for exercises aligning to Mass Care and Housing capabilities

What can I do?

Training and exercises can help all levels of government, the private and nonprofit sectors, and other partners across the whole community be better prepared. The National Exercise Division at FEMA is committed to providing assistance to partners in planning, designing, developing, conducting, and evaluating their own exercises that validate core capabilities.

Exercise Starter Kits

Exercise Starter Kits are pre-packaged sets of guides and templates to help exercise planners develop tabletop exercises that can be tailored to the specific threats, resources, and operational plans of their community.

Spotlight Initiative

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's **Housing Counseling Disaster Recovery Toolkit** provides housing counseling agencies with resources to help clients prepare for and recover from disasters. Access the toolkit at hudexchange.info/programs/housing-counseling/housing-counseling-disaster-recovery-toolkit.

Related Training Courses

Examples of relevant training courses are provided below. Course offerings frequently change; please visit firstrespondertraining.gov for a full list of training courses and resources.

- E-321:** Management of Individual Assistance
- E-418:** Mass Care - Emergency Assistance Planning and Operations
- G0108:** Community Mass Care and Emergency Assistance
- IS-405:** Mass Care/Emergency Assistance Overview
- MGT-447:** Managing Food Emergencies: Strategies for a Community Response

FEMA training courses are provided at no cost to first responders.

Please visit preptoolkit.fema.gov for Exercise Starter Kits, training courses, and additional resources.

Nominate an Exercise to the National Exercise Program

Benefits of participating in the NEP include:

- Receiving technical assistance and support for your exercises from experienced exercise specialists
- Access to exercise templates, tools, and other resources to help you design, conduct, and evaluate your exercises
- The ability to pursue new exercise ideas and broaden the impact of your exercises to a wider group of stakeholders
- The opportunity to influence national preparedness policy and resource allocation decisions at all levels by contributing exercise findings

How to Participate in the NEP

1. Visit fema.gov/nep to learn more about the NEP
2. Download and complete the Exercise Nomination Form
3. Submit your completed Exercise Nomination Form to nep@fema.dhs.gov
4. The FEMA National Exercise Division will respond to discuss your exercise