

EMERGENCY SOCIAL SERVICES

(Municipal and Provincial Response)

AS OF APRIL 1, 2019

GUIDELINES



Emergency Social Services

Guidelines

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INTRODUCTION:

Emergency Social Services (ESS) are those services provided on a short-term basis to preserve the emotional and physical well-being of evacuees and response workers in emergency situations.

The *Emergency Social Services Guidelines* are to be used as a guide for the provision of ESS in Manitoba by municipalities and the Province at the time of an emergency, the local authority is responsible for providing these supports for a minimum of 72 hours. If the supports are required for a longer duration, a request can be made to the Province through Manitoba Emergency Measure Organization (EMO) for assistance. Provincial ESS is always made aware of significant events through EMO (whether or not requests for assistance have been made).

The guidelines itemize and define the roles and responsibilities of ESS and its partners in the management and delivery of ESS in the case of disasters and emergency situations. They are intended to set a minimum level of service delivery and outline the responsibilities of local authority (both municipalities and unincorporated communities), Provincial ESS and its partners.

Types of evacuations can be classified under the following:

Mandatory – As per powers granted by The Emergency Measures Act (as well as other applicable legislations), for their own safety or for other specific reasons linked to the overarching response effort, people are directed to vacate affected areas and are required to comply.

Voluntary – Local authority recommends that people evacuate under certain conditions to lessen the overall risk posed by a hazard during an event, but is not at the point where they need to order a mandatory evacuation using emergency powers.

Self Evacuation – People make decisions based on their own circumstances, their own interpretation of the risk posed by a particular hazard and their own comfort level with their ability to cope with current and emerging circumstances.

Provincial ESS supports only apply to **mandatory** evacuations.

ESS supports are available for those affected in an emergency or disaster. Many evacuees will have access to insurance, personal financial resources or assistance from family or friends and may decline offers of ESS.

ESS provides those basic needs considered essential for the immediate and continued well-being of persons affected by the disaster/emergency ESS are the supports that meet the basic and essential needs of individuals, households, and communities affected by emergencies. For example, highway is closed due to inclement weather. The **need** is for safe, warm sleeping accommodations and possibly food. There can be cots in the community centre with hot drinks and snacks for the evening, commercial lodging may be requested but it is not needed.

HIERARCHY OF SERVICES:

ESS is not the only source of assistance available to people during emergencies. Consider the following as possible resources to meet needs:

- Insurance, if available for the type of event
- Personal financial resources
- Family and/or friends
- Non-Government Organizations and community groups

AUTHORITY:

ESS authority is derived from the authority of the *Manitoba Emergency Plan*. Regardless of the level of response and support, responsibility for the control and conduct of the municipal emergency operation rest with the local authority affected. The Department of Families provides leadership and coordination in planning for and responding to emergencies and disasters province-wide. Provincial ESS may work alongside other provincial departments and non-government organizations involved in the provision of ESS during an emergency or disaster in Manitoba if required.

Local authority must submit a copy of the ESS plan including contact information for individuals responsible for the response to EMO.

GUIDING OPERATIONAL PRACTICES

The *Emergency Social Services Guidelines* are grounded in the following principles. They are intended to promote a philosophy for service provision and community resiliency.

1. Local authorities are responsible for ESS responses in their jurisdictions
2. Local authorities are responsible for registering their residents in the emergency
3. Local authorities are to establish an appropriate ESS response structure for their community
4. When a local authority ESS team is overwhelmed, first calls for assistance should be to neighbouring communities through mutual aid agreements
5. When mutual aid resources are insufficient, request for Provincial ESS assistance can be made through Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization
6. Provincial ESS expects local authorities to develop ESS capacity to support their residents in emergencies for a minimum of 72 hours
7. During the first 72 hours, evacuees should be contacting their insurance agents, family and friends, or accessing other possible resources

LOCAL AUTHORITY ACTIVATION LEVELS (examples):

- Small event – 10 or less
 - A small localized event such as a house fire affecting one or two households
 - Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) and Reception Centre not activated
- Moderate event – 11-99 people
 - A significant event affecting more than 11 people, such as an apartment fire
 - Reception Centre may be activated
 - EOC may be activated
- Large/Complex event – (over 100) large number of people and multiple dwellings
 - A major emergency, such as large scale flooding or interface wildland fires, involving a large scale evacuation
 - Reception Centre and possibility of congregate shelter
 - EOC activated
 - Due to complexity of evacuation, request for Provincial ESS may be made through EMO

ACTIVATION OF PROVINCIAL ESS

ELIGIBILITY:

Evacuated residents must meet the following criteria to be eligible for Provincial ESS supports:

- Evacuees must be identified by the local authority under a **mandatory evacuation order**
- The local authority has provided 72 hours of assistance or the event is larger and a request has been made for provincial support through EMO
- Evacuees must register to be eligible for assistance
- Eligibility for ESS supports may continue until “the safe to return” date is determined by officials or insurance has been established with the time not exceeding 30 days
- Requests for supports for non resident tourists or visitors will be reviewed on a case by case basis and require approval from the Director of ESS

PROCESSES:

- When a local authority is overwhelmed or threatened by a potential overwhelming emergency and existing mutual aid agreements are not sufficient, Provincial ESS can be requested through EMO
- In large scale/complex events, ESS may start immediately. Requests for immediate services must be reviewed and approved with the Director of ESS in consultation with the Director of Operations at EMO
- ESS will make a provincial representative available (if requested) to connect with affected communities to support ESS activities
- ESS supports are subject to a 30 day maximum duration or until the activation of insurance coverage
- Other assistance programs (such as Disaster Financial Assistance) may be available for events exceeding 30 days or insurance coverage has not been established

- ESS supports shall end once the affected community or residence has been determined by officials it is deemed “safe to return” which may be less than the 30 day maximum
- ESS coordinates and engages the appropriate non-government organizations (Partners in Disaster) throughout the emergency

DETERMINING ELIGIBILITY

The following guide is recommended to help determine eligibility for ESS assistance.

| Event Type | Provincial Eligibility | Local ESS |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Flood, Fire, Tornado | Mandatory evacuation order, large scale, complex event with request made through EMO | Small or moderate event. Local authority decides whether or not to assist with self or recommended evacuations |
| Interface Wildland Fire | Mandatory evacuation order, large scale, complex event with request made through EMO | Small or moderate event. Local authority decides whether or not to assist with self or recommended evacuations |
| Power Outages | Generally not covered. Depending on length and season of event, request made through EMO may be considered for Provincial ESS | Comfort centres established during prolonged outages with extreme weather conditions |
| Temporary Residents & Tourists | Generally ESS not provided | Tourists or short term visitors are expected to use their own resources or leave the affected area or residence |
| Stranded Travellers | Generally ESS not provided | Responsible for lodging and comfort food if travellers have limited financial resources |

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Depending on the size of the event, many of the following roles and responsibilities can be done by one person and is at the discretion of the local authority. These roles are provided as guidelines for local authorities. It is recommended all staff working with residents in the emergencies have criminal record and child abuse registry checks done. It is also recommended a minimum of two staff on site. No one should work alone on a site.

Unless a provincial event in which formal Provincial ESS supports have been approved, costs for the provision of the following are the responsibility of the local authority and are not reimbursed through the Province.

Municipal ESS Coordinator

The ESS Coordinator is a vital link between the EOC and the Reception Centre, making sure information and resources flow back and forth. They are responsible to review and possibly activate mutual aid agreements. The ESS Coordinator also monitors all purchases, saves, and stores all records pertaining to the event (i.e. registration forms, invoices etc.).

The ESS Coordinator initiates the official call-out to specific ESS team members when activated. Depending on the size of the event, the Coordinator may also take on the role of being the reception centre manager (RCM) or when a RCM exists, they work directly with the RCM for staff assignments.

Reception Centre Manager

RCM is responsible for the overall management of the Reception Centre. The RCM oversees the operations to ensure evacuee needs are met and is the first source of contact for all facility-related issues.

The RCM is also responsible for the health and safety of both evacuees and workers in the Reception Centre. As part of this function, it may include setting up quiet areas and mental health supports specifically for the Reception Centre staff. The RCM is responsible for developing ESS staff schedules and keeping staff/volunteers informed of their duties. This role also keeps record of volunteer hours and of all expenditures in the reception centre.

The RCM acts as the point of contact for external agencies that require information or are assisting in the operation of the Reception Centre. It can also be helpful in coordinating with other Reception Centres if there are multiple centres open. The RCM may also act as the spokesperson with the media to ensure effective and accurate information is released if tasked by the local authority.

Meet and Greet

Meet and greet is the first point of contact for evacuees entering a Reception Centre and provides a critical service for setting the tone for the evacuee experience in the Reception Centre. The greeter will have a sense of what services the evacuee is looking for and can

point them to the right section of the Reception Centre, as well as provide an overall orientation to the facility, such as where the bathrooms are located.

These staff should do an initial assessment identifying the immediate needs of evacuees and connect evacuees with the relevant services within the Reception Centre. Assessing the needs of evacuees is a critical step in ensuring the smooth delivery of ESS. Without identifying evacuee needs, critical functions that are required might not be activated.

Some common categories of information that are helpful to gather:

- Requirements for food and lodging
- Requirements for clothing and toiletries
- Requirements for pet care
- Requirements for special needs provisions such as relevant medical conditions, food allergies, specific religious or cultural needs, and language needs
- Identifying children or persons with physical or mental disabilities
- Determining if they have insurance to cover losses incurred during the disaster
- Awareness of emotional trauma that needs to be dealt with

Registration

Registration can be one of the first steps in determining the overall status of people and their specific needs. This function requires gathering evacuee contact information and any special circumstances. Those completing this role may be the first person that an evacuee has communicated with since the crisis occurred. It is important to take the time to listen and these conversations can be extremely emotional. By ensuring formal registration and inquiry, we are able to keep track of evacuees and their relocation arrangements, re-unite families that have become separated, and answer queries from concerned relatives and friends. These tasks require careful planning and training for volunteers

Every family needs to be registered. Children 18 or older are registered on their own even if living in the family home; this also applies to any other adults in the home. It is critical that all evacuees are registered whether self, recommended or mandatory. It is vital for the local authority to know everyone who has evacuated from their community and have a way to notify evacuees of any changes in the emergency.

Any special circumstances such as specific medical needs, psychosocial needs, language barriers, pet care should be noted and brought to the attention of the Reception Centre Manager or ESS Coordinator.

Food

The provision of food and water is likely to be a key consideration if a Reception Centre is opened. Refreshments should be available upon opening the centre.

The food service provides nutritionally appropriate nourishment for evacuees at the site or a Reception Centre. Dependent on the evacuation, cultural and special dietary needs may need to be considered.

The responsibility of providing food also need to take into account a plan to provide meals and nourishment to staff and volunteers. If food is prepared on site, it must be done in a commercial kitchen with a minimum of one person with the Manitoba Food Handlers Certificate. Food also can be ordered in from outside vendors. If appropriate, funds can be provided to individuals to obtain meals at a local restaurant or the local government may make arrangements for direct billing of such services.

Lodging

Emergency lodging is designed to provide evacuees with safe, temporary housing during a disaster or emergency.

Short-term overnight accommodation may be provided at commercial accommodations such as hotels, motels or group lodging facilities. If using commercial lodging in the area, contact to negotiate rooms, price, length of availability before the reception centre officially opens. Availability and price may help determine if using commercial lodging or going to a congregate setting.

If using congregate, mats/cots should be setup in a private area. 5' by 8' space is recommended to allow people personal space. Staff must ensure all mats are sanitized after the event as well as blankets and pillows are laundered.

Clothing

Those affected by the emergency who are inadequately clothed or whose clothing was either lost or destroyed would be provided with basic clothing assistance. Generally, clothing is not provided for people who were given notice of the potential evacuation.

Be prepared for people to make donations. Canadians are generous and will want to bring items whether or not they have been requested. Have a plan! It is not recommended to accept donations at the reception centre or use the reception centre as a clothing depot. Having a site nearby ensures better control for the community.

Transportation

The purpose of the transportation function is to arrange for transportation appropriate for the evacuee needs by using local vendors and service providers.

Household Pets

Household pet care and shelter are not routinely available at the Reception Centre for logistical and health reasons but arrangements need to be made to care for pets in time of distress. It is recommended to have a list of pet boarding kennels in your local area in your ESS kit or in the EOC along with other resource contacts. Household pets are defined as "domesticated animals, such as dogs, cats, birds, rabbits, rodents or turtles traditionally kept in the home for pleasure, and can travel in commercial carriers and be housed in temporary facilities. Reptiles, fish and farm animals are not included".

Psychosocial Support

Several types of counselling may be necessary, depending upon the incident and its various effects on those involved. Often evacuees need a listening ear. Local

authorities should be engaging with their local regional health authority to arrange for a plan to provide psychosocial supports. Staff and volunteers working on the emergency need to be aware of signs of stress and know the process put in place to deal with these issues.

Training is available in psychological first aid. This is a way of helping people immediately after a disaster by providing support in a way that respects the persons' dignity, culture and abilities. The course teaches listening skills and ways of identifying stress to potential ESS team members.

Recreation

With a potentially large number of people in the Reception Centre for an extended period, delivering some recreational or leisure activities may help alleviate the stress the evacuees are under. It is recommended to have recreational activities within 72 hours of evacuation.

Child Care

The provision of child care will vary from emergency to emergency. In some cases, this may simply be a safe place for kids to play but still require parents/guardians to supervise them. Local authorities will need to ensure that if any child care is being provided without parents or guardians present, they must abide by the *Community Child Care Standards Act*.

Medical First aid

The medical services function identifies and provides for the physical health of evacuees at the Reception Centre. Again, discussions should occur with local service agencies (St. John Ambulance) or the regional health authorities to arrange for the provision of this service.

Multicultural Services

Evacuees may come from many different backgrounds and this function provides specialised services that may be required due to language barriers or religious requirements.

Security

Security ensures only evacuees and workers are within the defined Reception Centre. In order to protect the privacy of evacuees during this time, media are not allowed inside the Reception Centre. Some other roles for security may include coordinating and monitoring parking lot activity including the arrival of any buses carrying evacuees.

Information Services

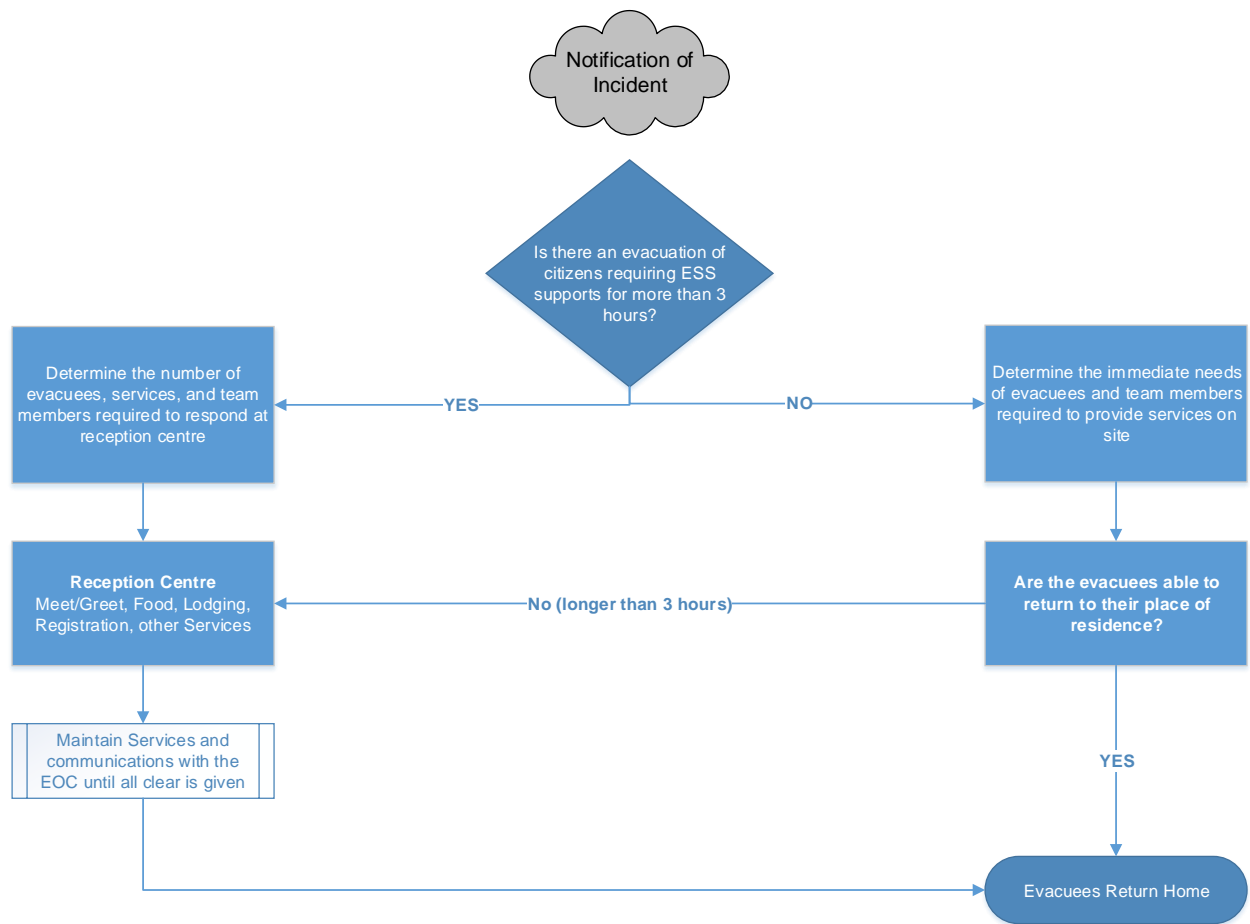
People impacted by the emergency will crave information. Not knowing what is going on, or worrying about the status of your home can add to anxiety and frustration. The ability to provide means of communication such as a phone, charging station, Wi-Fi or the internet will help. Ensure you have an information board for daily updates and other pertinent information. The presence of municipal staff from where the incident occurred to answer

questions is beneficial as it provides a direct link for evacuees to their local authority. Daily town halls are encouraged.

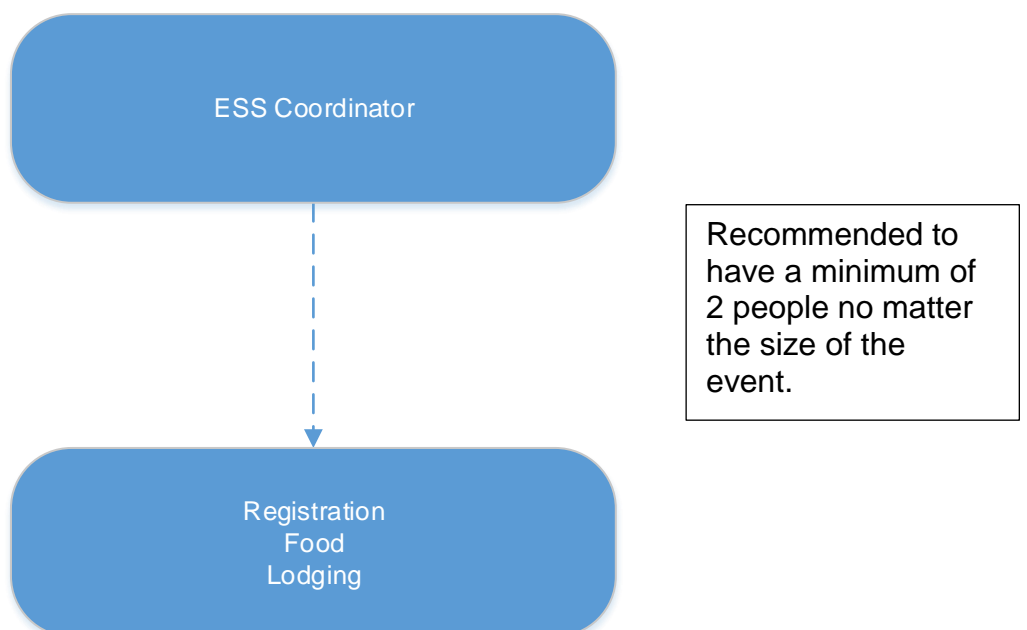
Volunteer Management Strategy

The key to successful volunteer management is to provide resources and information for self-mobilization, rather than trying to command the masses. In effect, you should try to work **with** them, rather than getting them to work for you.

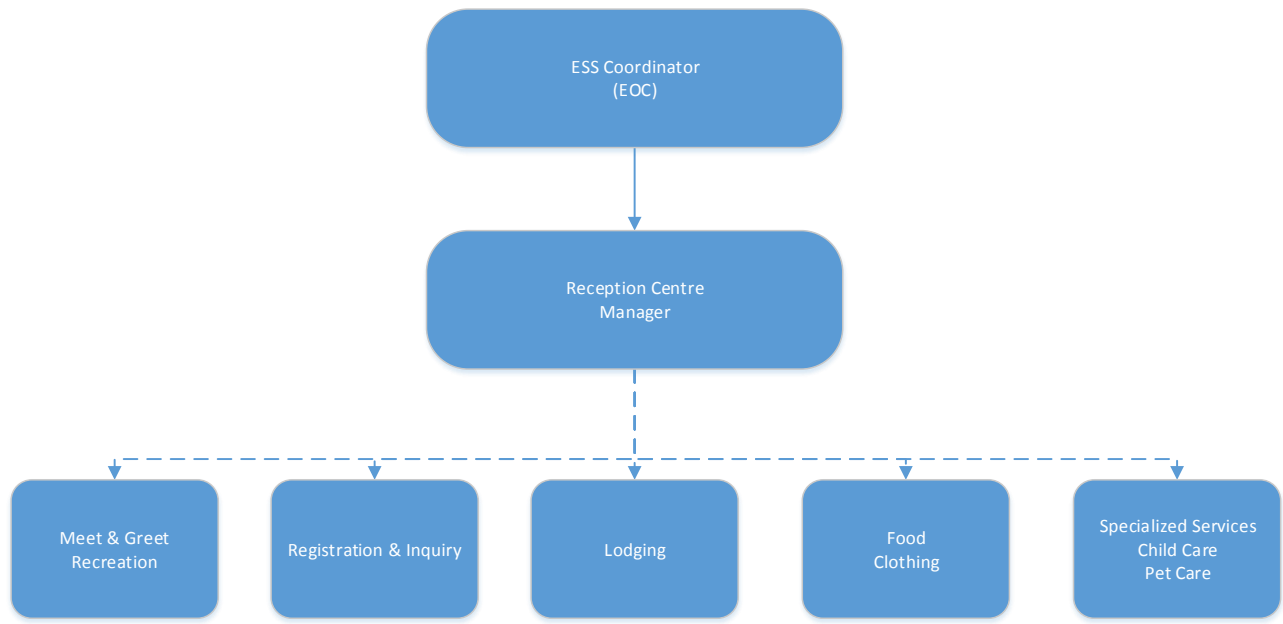
Establish a Volunteer Centre where they can go to receive information, assignments and resources to assist during the emergency. Unless they can provide a current criminal record and child abuse registry check, it is not recommended you have new volunteers working directly with evacuees. Free databases such as Recovers.org can assist with volunteer and donation management.



SMALL EVENTS



LARGER EVENTS



In larger scale emergencies, staff may need to focus on specific areas.
This is a sample of staff taking on multiple roles while ensuring evacuees needs are taken care of.

RECEPTION CENTRE

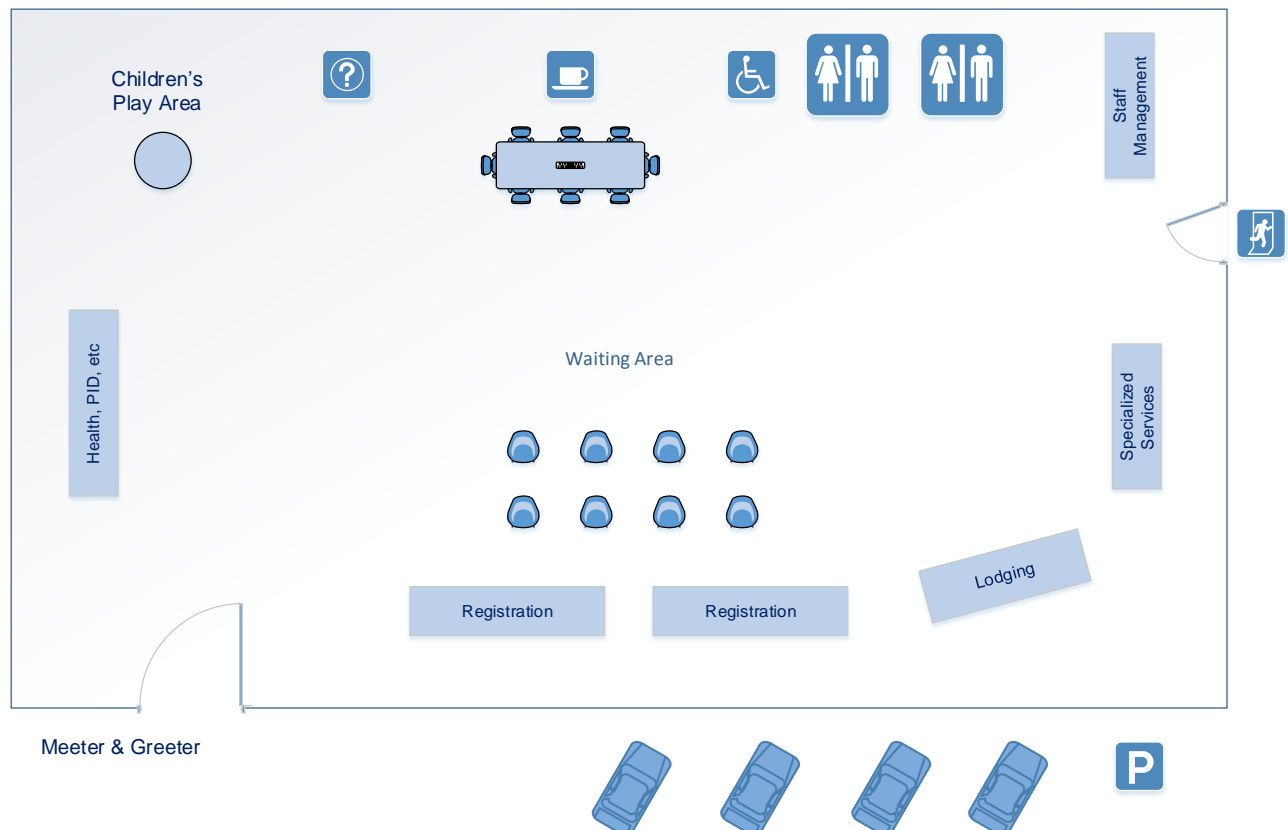
Important to have a few pre-identified reception centre locations. Not all locations will be available when required. When choosing a reception centre, it is important to ensure it is far away from the “hot” zone.

Have contact information and potential reception centre floor plans available for each location as well as service agreements.

Look for the following components for a reception centre or possible shelter location:

- An elevator if the facility has several floors or a ramp to the additional floors
- Accessible 24/7
- Parking and space for cars, trucks, buses, RVs and delivery vehicles to drive in and out of
- Ramps, washrooms and parking for the disabled
- Cooking facilities and/or adequate space to serve catered meals and snacks
- Adequate sanitation facilities
- Rooms to be used by emergency personnel for meetings, volunteer quiet areas, administrative functions and private interview rooms for evacuees
- Heating and ventilation systems
- Telephones or cell phone reception and Wi-Fi capability
- Fire safety equipment and procedures in place

SAMPLE FLOOR PLAN



CONFIDENTIALITY

- Personal information about an evacuee must not be disclosed without a signed consent from the evacuee.
- The importance of sharing information with relevant health and social service providers must be discussed with the evacuee and only disclosed with evacuee consent. The evacuee must fully understand what information is being disclosed, why it is being disclosed, and to whom it is being disclosed.
- Files containing resident information should be kept in a secure location and locked to maintain confidentiality.
- ESS must adhere to *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) and *The Personal Health Information Act* (PHIA) where applicable.

WORKPLACE, HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS

- ESS Leads must maintain an accurate, up to date operations log to record incidents related to the safety of evacuees or staff and other matters related to the operation of the Reception Centre.
- All Reception Centre's must implement procedures and policies based on *The Workplace Safety and Health Act* (part 7.4) and Regulation.
- At least one staff person certified in First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) must be on duty at all times at the Reception Centre.
- Resources for Safety & Health can be found at <http://www.gov.mb.ca/labour/safety/>

DEFINITIONS

Congregate Facility – A group lodging facility that is set-up to provide emergency shelter to evacuees in the time of an emergency.

Director of Emergency Social Services – The provincial lead for the delivery of emergency social services. The Director reports directly to the Assistant Deputy Minister of Community Service Delivery in emergencies and keeps the Executive Directors of Winnipeg Services as well as Rural and Northern Services informed.

Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA) – Manitoba program administered by Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) providing financial assistance for eligible costs associated with a widespread disaster. It is critical to keep a record of all expenses (invoices, receipts, etc.) until EMO advises the records can be destroyed (beyond 7 years).

Emergency Measure Organization (EMO) – Is the provincial coordinating organization responsible for engaging relevant government departments, non-governmental organizations and private sector representatives in an integrated response to an emergency. EMO's legislated mandate, drawn from *The Emergency Measures Act*, makes it responsible for preparedness, response and recovery from emergencies and disasters in Manitoba.

Emergency Social Services (ESS) – Is the provision of basic needs to individuals who have been affected by an emergency situation. (I.e. Registration and Inquiry, Food, Clothing, Lodging, Specialized Services, Reception Centre Management).

Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) – Is the focal point for a local authority and serves to coordinate and manage emergency response activities from a local authority level.

Evacuees – Are individuals who have been ordered under a "State of Emergency" or municipal government to evacuate their residence due to a disaster or emergency.

Guidelines – Are defined as the *Emergency Social Services Guidelines* as set forth by the Province of Manitoba.

Household Pet – Defined as a domesticated animal, such as a dog, cat, bird, rabbit, rodent or turtle that is traditionally kept in the home for pleasure rather than for commercial purposes, can travel in commercial carriers and be housed in temporary facilities. Household pets do not include reptiles (except turtles), amphibians, fish, insects, farm animals (including horses), and animals kept for racing purposes. (FEMA Disaster Assistance Policy 9523.19)

Incident Command – Incident Command is the standardized emergency management system specifically designed to allow emergency responders to adopt an integrated organizational structure equal to the complexity and demands of single or multiple incident sites.

Local Authority– Includes both municipalities and unincorporated communities in Manitoba. First Nations communities in Manitoba **do not fall** under the authority of *The Emergency Measures Act*.

Manitoba Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC) – EMO coordinates emergency management, information flow and assistance to local authorities through Manitoba Emergency Coordination Centre (MECC). MECC ensures that an integrated Government of Manitoba response to a major emergency or disaster is coordinated. EMO personnel, along with additional personnel from other provincial and federal government departments and agencies, staff it during major emergencies and disasters.

Mutual Aid Agreement - A pre-arranged agreement developed between two or more organizations to render assistance to the parties of the agreement. Note: the term “mutual aid/mutual assistance agreement” includes cooperative agreements, partnership agreements, memoranda of understanding, intergovernmental compacts, and other terms commonly used to describe the sharing of resources (CSA Z1600)

Partners in Disaster (PID) - The services provided by Canadian Red Cross, Salvation Army, Mennonite Disaster Services, Samaritan’s Purse and St. John Ambulance are split between relief and recovery. Relief encompasses immediate response to provision of basic needs such as Food, Shelter, Clothing, Personal Services and Family Reunification. Recovery addresses longer-term needs due to damage to homes and personal items. PID is committed to providing services to meet the needs of families in both relief and recovery phases.

State of Local Emergency (SoLE) – Under the provisions of *The Emergency Measures Act*, a local authority (e.g. municipality, mayor) may declare a State of Local Emergency, while the provincial government may declare a provincial State of Emergency in respect to all or any part of the province. Upon declaration of a state of emergency or a state of local emergency, the minister or the local authority, as the case may be, can issue orders and expend funds to prevent or limit loss of life and damage to property or the environment.

Types of Evacuations

Mandatory – As per powers granted by the Emergency Measures Act, for their own safety or for other specific reasons linked to the overarching response effort, people are directed to vacate affected areas and are required to comply.

Voluntary – Local authority recommends that people evacuate under certain conditions to lessen the overall risk posed by a hazard during an event, but is not at the point where they need to order a mandatory evacuation using emergency powers.

Self Evacuation – People make decisions based on their own circumstances, their own interpretation of the risk posed by a particular hazard and their own comfort level with their ability to cope with current and emerging circumstances.

RESOURCES

| | |
|---|---|
| Manitoba Flood Information | www.gov.mb.ca/flooding |
| Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization | https://www.gov.mb.ca/emo/resources/index.html |
| Manitoba Government Animal Care Line | 204-945-8000 1-888-945-8001 |
| Manitoba Mental Health Crisis Information | https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/mh/crisis.html |
| Public Health Agency of Canada | https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health.html |
| Public Safety Canada | https://www.getprepared.gc.ca/index-en.aspx |

Non-Government Agencies

| | |
|---|---|
| Canadian Red Cross | https://www.redcross.ca/in-your-community/manitoba |
| Justice Institute of British Columbia | myem.jibc.ca/ |
| Mennonite Disaster Services | https://mds.mennonite.net/ |
| St. John Ambulance | https://www.sja.ca/English/Pages/default.aspx# |
| The Salvation Army | https://salvationarmy.ca/prairie/ |
| Winnipeg Amateur Radio Emergency Services | http://www.winnipegares.ca/ |