



# New Jersey Office of Emergency Management Directive

	EFFECTIVE DATE	NUMBER
	March 17, 2023	<b>NJOEM-11 (2023)</b>
	SUBJECT	
	Review, Update and Approval of County and Municipal Emergency Operations Plans	
REFERENCE	EXPIRES	RESCINDS
N.J.S.A. App.A:9-43.2; N.J.S.A. App.A:9-43.3; N.J.S.A. App.A:9-43.4; N.J.S.A. App.A:9-43.7(a); Directive NJOEM-5 (2022); Directive NJOEM-6 (2022); NJOEM-7 (2022); NJOEM-9 (2022); FEMA’s Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101, version 3 (September 2021)	N/A	NJOEM Directive 101

This Directive updates the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management (NJOEM) review and approval of emergency operations plans (EOP). Pursuant to N.J.S.A. App.A:9-43.2, each county and municipality in the State must “prepare a written Emergency Operations Plan with all appropriate annexes necessary to implement the plan.” N.J.S.A. App.A:9-43.3 requires each county and municipal Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) to conform to relevant federal and State guidance, and to be reviewed and updated at least every two years.

Directive NJOEM-6 (2022) requires county emergency management coordinators to coordinate the “review and update of the county EOP and comply with the NJOEM EOP approval process pursuant to N.J.S.A. App.A:9-43.2 through 43.4, NJOEM procedures, and State Director directives.” In addition, under the guidance of the county emergency management coordinator, the County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is responsible for “providing guidance and oversight to the municipal emergency management coordinators within the county and reviewing municipal emergency operations plans in conformance with State Director directives and NJOEM guidance.”

Pursuant to Directive NJOEM-7 (2022), a municipal emergency management coordinator shall oversee the Municipal Office of Emergency Management in coordinating the preparation and periodic review of an approved municipal emergency operations plan” that addresses the municipality’s risks and hazards. The emergency management coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the municipal EOP is reviewed and updated pursuant to N.J.S.A. App.A:9-43.2 through 43.4, NJOEM procedures and directives issued by the State Director.”

County and municipal emergency operations plans are required to be approved by NJOEM. The electronic transmission of EOPs submitted to NJOEM for approval must be done in a secure manner N.J.S.A. App.A:9-43.7(a). N.J.S.A. App.A:9-43.4 provides the general parameters and time frames for NJOEM to review and approve county and municipal EOPs. Directive 101, originally issued in 1990, provided a process for the review and approval of new EOPs.<sup>1</sup> This Directive NJOEM-11 (2023) provides for development of an enhanced notification, review and approval process for municipal and county EOPs, which shall be approved by NJOEM as part of the review and update process required at least every two years. Accordingly, this Directive NJOEM-11 (2023) rescinds and replaces Directive 101.

<sup>1</sup> Directive 101 was updated in 2012 to require counties to use the Emergency Support Function (ESF) format.

Note: this Directive NJOEM-11 (2023) is limited in scope to the EOP review and approval process. Other than as specified herein, it generally does not provide guidance for EOP content and format, which is set forth in other NJOEM and federal guidance documents, and which may be the subject of future State Director of Emergency Management (State Director) directives.

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**I. EOP Review and Update**

1. County and municipal emergency management coordinators are directed to ensure compliance with N.J.S.A. App.A:9-43.3 regarding the review and update of their emergency operations plans which must be completed every two years at minimum.
2. This review and update shall be in coordination with their respective emergency management councils, pursuant to Directives NJOEM-5 (2022) and NJOEM-9 (2022).
3. County and municipal emergency management coordinators shall comply with NJOEM guidance and directives issued by the State Director regarding the content and format of EOPs.
  - a. Consistent with FEMA’s Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 101, version 3, September 2021 (CPG 101) and the State EOP, counties are required to maintain the Emergency Support Function (ESF) format for their EOPs.
  - b. Municipalities should use the function-focused format pending future guidance from NJOEM, unless otherwise approved by the county OEM and NJOEM.
4. In addition to the mandatory review and update pursuant to N.J.S.A. App.A:9-43.3, county and municipal emergency management coordinators should periodically review and revise the EOP to incorporate lessons learned from exercises or actual incidents, as well as any changes in operational resources, key personnel, or hazards/identified risks. Coordinators must evaluate the effectiveness of EOPs through annual exercises. In some instances, a real-world event may substitute for a planned exercise provided a thorough evaluation of the execution of the EOP during the incident is performed. All EOP development and maintenance activities shall be consistent with CPG 101 and directives issued by the State Director.

**II. Development and Implementation of a New EOP Review and Approval Process**

1. NJOEM’s Emergency Response Bureau (ERB) is responsible to design, plan, implement and oversee an EOP approval protocol that aligns with the statutorily mandated biennial review and update of county and municipal EOPs, and fosters the efficient and secure transmission, sharing and storage of EOPs.
2. As part of this process, pursuant to Directives NJOEM-6 (2022), county offices of emergency management shall be responsible for reviewing municipal EOPs within the county jurisdiction prior to NJOEM’s review. Municipal coordinators shall cooperate in this regard. NJOEM-7 (2022).

3. NJOEM shall develop an EOP approval process which shall incorporate updated platforms and technology for document retention and storage to facilitate access to and approval of EOPs at the municipal, county and State levels. These processes shall ensure that the platforms and technologies are secure and will enhance the current notification and approval processes while maintaining statutory compliance. These processes shall incorporate a permission-based access to the EOPs as follows:
  - a. A municipality shall have access only to its own EOP.
  - b. A county shall have access to the county EOP and the EOPs of all municipalities within the county.
  - c. NJOEM shall have access to all county and municipal EOPs.
4. These EOP review and storage processes shall provide:
  - a. secure electronic transmission of EOPs in compliance with N.J.S.A. App.A:9-43.7(a);
  - b. permission-based access per Section II.3 for the required document retention period;
  - c. defined timeframes for EOP submission, review and approval;
  - d. automated notifications of compliance deadlines and approvals/disapprovals (and reasons for same), as well as a flagging system and a dashboard of compliance; and
  - e. procedures for notifying municipal and county governing bodies of non-compliance.
5. NJOEM ERB shall maintain, update, publish and disseminate the EOP approval process to county and municipal OEMs.
  - a. ERB shall periodically update the EOP approval process to reflect future changes in State statutes and available technology.
6. NJOEM shall disseminate guidance to monitor, track and ensure compliance with N.J.S.A. App.A:9-43.2 through 43.4.
  - a. NJOEM ERB shall undertake a review of all current EOP certification letters issued pursuant to Directive 101 and shall advise each county and municipality of their compliance status.
  - b. The NJOEM ERB Regional Representatives shall work with the county and municipal offices of emergency management to ensure compliance with all relevant statutes and this Directive.

**III. Effect:**

Directive 101 is rescinded. This order shall take effect immediately.



Patrick J. Callahan  
Colonel  
State Director of Emergency Management