



# Communications Annex

<b>Primary Agency</b>	<b>Clermont County Department of Public Safety Services</b>
<b>Support Agencies</b>	<b>Clermont County EMA Clermont County Information Systems Division Northeast Communication Center Union Township Communication Center Local Fire and EMS Agencies Local Law Enforcement Agencies</b>

## I. Purpose, Scope, Situation and Assumptions

### A. Purpose

This Annex provides a framework for coordinating emergency communications to County, municipal and township governmental entities, response agencies, voluntary relief organizations, regional, State and Federal partners requiring communications to perform disaster response and recovery operations.

This annex describes the systems to receive and transmit priority emergency message traffic in support of emergency operations, procedures for communicating during a disaster, and ensures that warnings and critical event information are effectively and appropriately delivered to the public.

### B. Scope

This Annex addresses the following:

- Communication systems and available assets to be used by local governmental agencies during an emergency including radios, mobile data computers (MDCs), voice, data links, paging, fax, e-mail, Emergency Alert System (EAS), Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) and amateur radio.
- Primary and redundant communication systems to ensure interoperability among field response units
- Communication to/from the Emergency Operation Center (EOC)
- Coordination of emergency warnings
- Warning and notification procedures and policies when the situation requires resource coordination
- Accurate and efficient transfer of information during an incident.

### C. Situation

Emergency calls for service are received by the 911 Centers and dispatched to the appropriate public safety agencies. Clermont County has three (3) Public Service Answering Points (PSAP) and three (3) interconnected Dispatch Centers located within the County. The PSAPs have the capability to roll calls over to one another for redundancy.

#### **Clermont County Department of Public Safety Services (DPSS) - (PSAP)**

2279 Clermont Center Drive, Batavia, Ohio 45103

Non-emergency #: 513.732.2231

Provides police, fire, and EMS dispatching services to:

Villages: Batavia, Bethel, Chilo, Felicity, Moscow, Neville, New Richmond, Owensville, and Williamsburg;  
Townships: Batavia, Franklin, Goshen, Jackson, Miami, Monroe, Ohio, Pierce, Stonelick, Tate, Washington, Wayne and Williamsburg

**Union Township Communication Center** (operated by Union Township Police Department) - (PSAP)

4312 Glen Este-Withamsville Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45245 513.752.1230

Provides police, fire and EMS dispatching services to Union Township.

**Northeast Communication Center** (Operated by the Loveland-Symmes Fire Department)

126 South Lebanon Road, Loveland, Ohio 45140 513.677.7000

Provides police, fire and EMS dispatching services to the City of Loveland.

Clermont County utilizes the Ohio Multi-Agency Radio Communication System (MARCS) for radio communication. The County has 11 radio towers including 1 in Northern Kentucky. The County has a paging capability through the 3 Communication Centers (alpha and minter (tones)). In a large scale event, the County will utilize MARCS, the paging system, cell phones, landlines, e-mail, 2-way radios, amateur radio operators, and WebEOC to share information.

Most fire/EMS and law enforcement agencies utilize mobile data computers (MDCs) to send/receive additional information in the field. Command assets are available to augment communication and coordination at an incident command post (ICP). Greater Cincinnati HazMat Unit currently maintains the regional Mobile Command Van (Command 400)

The County has 79 outdoor warning sirens. The sirens are owned and maintained by the local jurisdictions. The sirens can be activated by all 3 of the Dispatch Centers within the County. The County also maintains a platform to disseminate emergency messages through the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS). IPAWS allows for emergency messages to be disseminated to the Emergency Alert System (EAS) (TV and radio), Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) (cellular network), and the Non-Weather Emergency Messages (NWEM) (weather radios).

\*In 11/10/25 Onsolve CodeRED (County vendor) experienced a cyber security event, which resulted in FEMA revoking the systems access to IPAWS. CodeRED is working to resolve the cyber event. Once cleared, FEMA will authorize Onsolve CodeRED to access the IPAWS system. In the interim, EMA and DPSS can make a request to Ohio EMA to disseminate WEA and EAS messages on the County's behalf. A SOG has been created which outlines how to make this request through Ohio EMA.\*

#### **D. Assumptions**

- Primary communications during an emergency will be through the normal day-to-day channels. The increased usage may exceed the capacity of the communication system, limiting the ability of public safety partners to communicate effectively.
- The nature of the emergency can cause serious gaps in normal communications systems through the interruption of service, loss of antennas, repeaters, facilities, hardware, etc. Protection and restoration of emergency communications will be one of the highest priorities.
- Maintaining communication with neighboring jurisdictions, the region, support agencies, state and federal partners and the public is critical.
- Effective communications during an emergency requires interoperable and redundant systems including radio, cellular, Microsoft Teams phones, voice over internet protocol (VOIP), and wireless and wired voice and data connectivity.

- Emergency communications are heavily dependent on the commercial telephone and wireless networks. Technical failure or damage to the commercial infrastructure could hamper communication to responders and the public.
- Telephones (both fixed and cellular) are the primary means of communication during the initial response phase of an EOC activation. E-mail, fax, social media, virtual meetings, face-to-face partner meetings will also be utilized as the event transitions into the recovery phase.
- Additional communication assets are available from regional and state partners. Amateur radio operators may be activated to support emergency communications.
- The County has adopted the National Incident Management System. All communications will use common terminology.

## **II. Concept of Operations**

Following a disaster, the top priority is to establish/maintain emergency communications with/for our public safety partners. This will provide for effective coordination of personnel and resources. The Clermont County Department of Public Safety Services (DPSS) is responsible for coordinating all communication activities during emergency incidents, unless the incident is in the City of Loveland, City of Milford, or Union Township. In these cases, Northeast Communications Center (Loveland), Hamilton County Communications Center (Milford), or Union Township Communication Center (Union Township), has the primary responsibility.

DPSS serves as the primary local 24-hour local warning point to alert key officials and activate public warning systems. DPSS also acts as a contact point for all county agencies after normal business hours, on weekends, and on holidays.

In the event of an EOC activation, a DPSS representative will be the Communications lead to coordinate, track and monitor communication issues. Local governments and individual departments, agencies, and organizations are responsible for developing and maintaining their own internal voice and data communication systems to meet daily operational needs. The individual organizations maintain specific standard operating guidelines (SOGs) / standard operating procedures (SOPs) regarding emergency communications.

### **A. Mitigation**

To prevent or reduce the impact of disasters, Communication agencies should:

- Routinely assess, maintain, and update communication equipment
- Develop/maintain multiple redundant emergency communication capabilities

### **B. Preparedness**

Communication agencies have/will:

- Continue to develop/update SOPs with regards to improving emergency communications and information sharing to include systems integration and redundancy
- Test communication capabilities on a regular basis
- Coordinate training programs for all communications staff, volunteers and repair personnel
- Identifying potential funding sources for additional equipment and supplies
- Establish/test communication capabilities with neighboring counties and the State of Ohio.
- Exercise communications capabilities in annual exercise

### **C. Response**

Communication agencies will:

- Coordinate communications with the field operations during emergencies

- Dispatch and track resources
- Maintain 9-1-1 functions
- Assist with call overload if one PSAP becomes overwhelmed
- Notify senior officials of emergency through the paging system
- Provide public alert and warning functions
- Provide communication resources to field personnel if warranted (e.g. radios, cell phone, technical support, etc.)

#### **D. Recovery**

Communication agencies will:

- Maintain 9-1-1 functions
- Coordinate communications with the field operations during recovery operations
- Provide support to the EOC to assist with tracking resources
- Provide communication resources to recovery operations if warranted.

### **III. Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities**

During large-scale emergencies, communications personnel coordinate resources and assist other agencies/departments to the extent possible with the provision of communications capabilities.

#### **A. Clermont County Department of Public Safety Services (DPSS)**

DPSS is the primary PSAP and provides 911 dispatch services for the majority of Clermont County with the exception of Union Township, City of Milford, and the City of Loveland. DPSS is operated 24 hours a day / 365 day a year. DPSS maintains the NETMOTION domain and the data processing services necessary for operation of Computer Aided Dispatch, and mobile data computers (MDCs).

DPSS SOP #00-436 establishes the operation for the 800 MHz radio talk groups (e.g. Fire Primary, Fire Ground Talk Groups, Incident Command and CC Help Channels).

DPSS maintains communications capabilities via the following systems/hardware:

- Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS)
- 800 MHZ MARCS Radios (portables, mobiles, and base stations)
- Hardwired Telephones (9-1-1 and 513.732.2231)
- Cellular Phones
- Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System
- Local Area Network (LAN) System
- Alphanumeric Paging
- Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD)
- NOAA Weather Radio
- Notification System (OnSolve CodeRED)
- Fax

Preliminary calls for service will be through the 911 system. If the event escalates and additional resources are needed the On-Duty Supervisor will contact the DPSS Director and the EMA Director about additional resource needs.

EMA may be activated to support DPSS or to activate the EOC. If an EOC is activated, DPSS will assign a Communication Lead to the EOC. Primary communications with the EOC will be conducted by telephone, whenever possible. If telephones are inoperable, information will be relayed by 800 MHZ radio. Amateur radio

operators may be utilized to provide back-up communications to disaster sites, shelters, hospital(s), lodging and feeding facilities.

## **B. Union Township Communication Center**

Union Township Communication Center is the primary PSAP for Union Township and is overseen by the Union Township Police Department. It is operated 24 hours a day / 365 day a year and has established SOPs for the operation for the 800 MHz radio talk groups (e.g. Fire Primary, Fire Ground Talk Groups, and Incident Command).

## **C. North East Communication Center (NECC)**

NECC provides dispatch services for the City of Loveland and Symmes Township in Hamilton and Warren County. It is overseen by the Loveland-Symmes Fire Department. It is operated 24 hours a day / 365 day a year and has established SOPs for the operation for the 800 MHz radio talk groups (e.g. Fire Primary, Fire Ground Talk Groups, and Incident Command).

## **D. Clermont County Information Systems Department (ISD)**

ISD is responsible for all information technology systems and hardware within the Clermont County domain. They maintain Microsoft 365 licenses and Microsoft Teams telephone system. ISD also works with private providers to provide the County cellular service.

## **E. Clermont County Emergency Management Agency (EMA)**

EMA will establish an information management process for maintaining and distributing situational awareness to local, state and federal stakeholders during a disaster environment. The EMA will maintain a primary, back-up and virtual EOC capabilities. The Direction and Control Annex describes the facilities, staffing, and standard operating guidelines.

The Primary EOC includes:

- The EOC, Executive Conference Room, and the Annex
- 27 work stations for local agencies and EOC staff
- Geographical Information System (GIS) workstation
- Emergency backup power and an uninterrupted power supply
- Digital phone lines, 1 audio conference line, wired network access, and wireless internet access
- Access to the Ohio WebEOC System

Remote EOC capabilities include:

- Laptops and accessories
- Mobile conference call system
- Printers
- Projection System
- EOC Go-Kits
- Cache of portable 800 MHz radios and accessories

## **F. Local Fire and EMS Agencies**

Local Fire and EMS agencies maintain their own 800 MHz radios (portable, hand-held radios and mobiles). Many departments use MDCs. DPSS can alert all of the Fire and EMS command staff through the alpha numeric paging system.

## **G. Local Law Enforcement Agencies**

Local law enforcement agencies maintain their own 800 MHz radios (portable, hand-held radios and mobiles). Many departments use MDCs. Some vehicles are equipped with 154.935 MHz Law Enforcement Radio Network (LEERN).

## **IV. Administration and Logistics**

- DPSS will assign a Communication Lead to the EOC to support response and recovery communication activities.
- Agencies will document all decisions made, resources needed/used, actions taken, and other important information.
- The Board of County Commissioners (BCC) may make an emergency declaration to allow emergency actions not otherwise authorized or to request additional communication resources from the State and/or federal government.

## **V. Authentication**

Jessica Wiederhold

Jessica Wiederhold, Clermont County Department of Public Safety Services

1/16/26

Date