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**CITY OF SPRINGFIELD EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN****20. ANNEX N: Public Information and Alert & Warning**

→ **Lead Department: City Manager's Office**  
→ **Lead ICS Section: Command**

**20.1 PURPOSE**

This Annex establishes guidelines for the dissemination of public safety-related information for the City of Springfield in the event of an emergency event. In most cases this will be when the EOC is activated; however, many of the procedures and principles may be utilized before or without the activation of the EOC.

The goal of the Public Information and Alert & Warning Annex is to guide the provision of accurate, complete, timely, understandable, and appropriate information and instructions to the diverse audiences within the City of Springfield in order to minimize injury, casualties, property loss, and fear. Audiences may include citizens, public officials, media, area residents, visitors, businesses, and employees of public safety agencies.

Effective public communications are essential to maintain and restore public confidence. When a disaster strikes, the public needs to know that an effective, professional leadership structure is in command of the situation. A professionally-staffed communications structure must be prepared to coordinate and disseminate information efficiently. This Annex employs the nationally accepted model of a Joint Information System (JIS) and/or a Joint Information Center (JIC).

**20.2 SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS****20.2.1 Situation**

In an emergency, the public needs to know what is happening, where to go, what to do, and what not to do, i.e., they need detailed, timely, and accurate information on protective action(s) they can take to minimize the loss of life and property.

Communication of this vital information to the public, both directly and through the media, is crucial to the success of emergency response.

Disasters often strike suddenly, and the emergency public information system may not be able to react quickly enough to fully inform the public about a situation in progress. A program that educates the public in advance of a disaster regarding potential hazards and the protective measures that should be employed can be most effective.

**20.2.2 Assumptions**

- A public information program combining advance education and emergency information when a disaster occurs will be most effective in significantly reducing disaster-related casualties and property damage;
- Special emphasis must be placed on the effectiveness of the emergency public information program because people are generally less concerned about an emergency or disaster until it affects them, their families, friends, or businesses directly;
- During emergency situations, the general public will need and demand information and instructions on effective response and survival actions;
- Media will demand information about an emergency situation and the actions of local officials;
- Local media will perform an essential role in providing emergency instructions and up-to-date information to the public. Depending upon the severity of an emergency, regional and national media also will cover the story and increase substantially the demand for information and comment from local officials;
- Depending upon the severity of an emergency, telephone communication may be sporadic or impossible; local radio and television stations without emergency power may also be off the air. National media with penetration into the Springfield area may be needed to communicate emergency information to the public;
- Additional public information and administrative resources will likely be needed to support the increased level of public information activities required.

**20.3 GENERAL PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

During a major emergency or disaster, it is essential that public information be released from a single point to ensure coordination, consistency, reliability, and authenticity. Just as the establishment of the ICS avoids multiple command posts and ensures accountability, the establishment of a Primary PIO (PPIO) reporting to the Incident Commander (IC) and a Joint Information Center (JIC) or Joint Information System (JIS), will avoid multiple release points and ensure coordinated messages with accountability to the IC.

All other jurisdictions and area operational agencies and/or organizations involved in and relevant to a particular emergency, e.g., City of Springfield, Lane County, mutual aid agreements, state and/or federal PIOs, as well as PIOs from local government and private agencies will be included in the Joint Information System (JIS). Many of these agencies and jurisdictions have developed an active PIO network known as the Lane County Public Information Office Network (LC PIO Network) and have entered into a JIS/JIC agreement (see Emergency Public Information Procedures Manual). This group meets regularly and has discussed and practiced JIC procedures.

The following approach is typical for emergency incidents, including major emergencies and/or disasters when the City's EOC is activated:

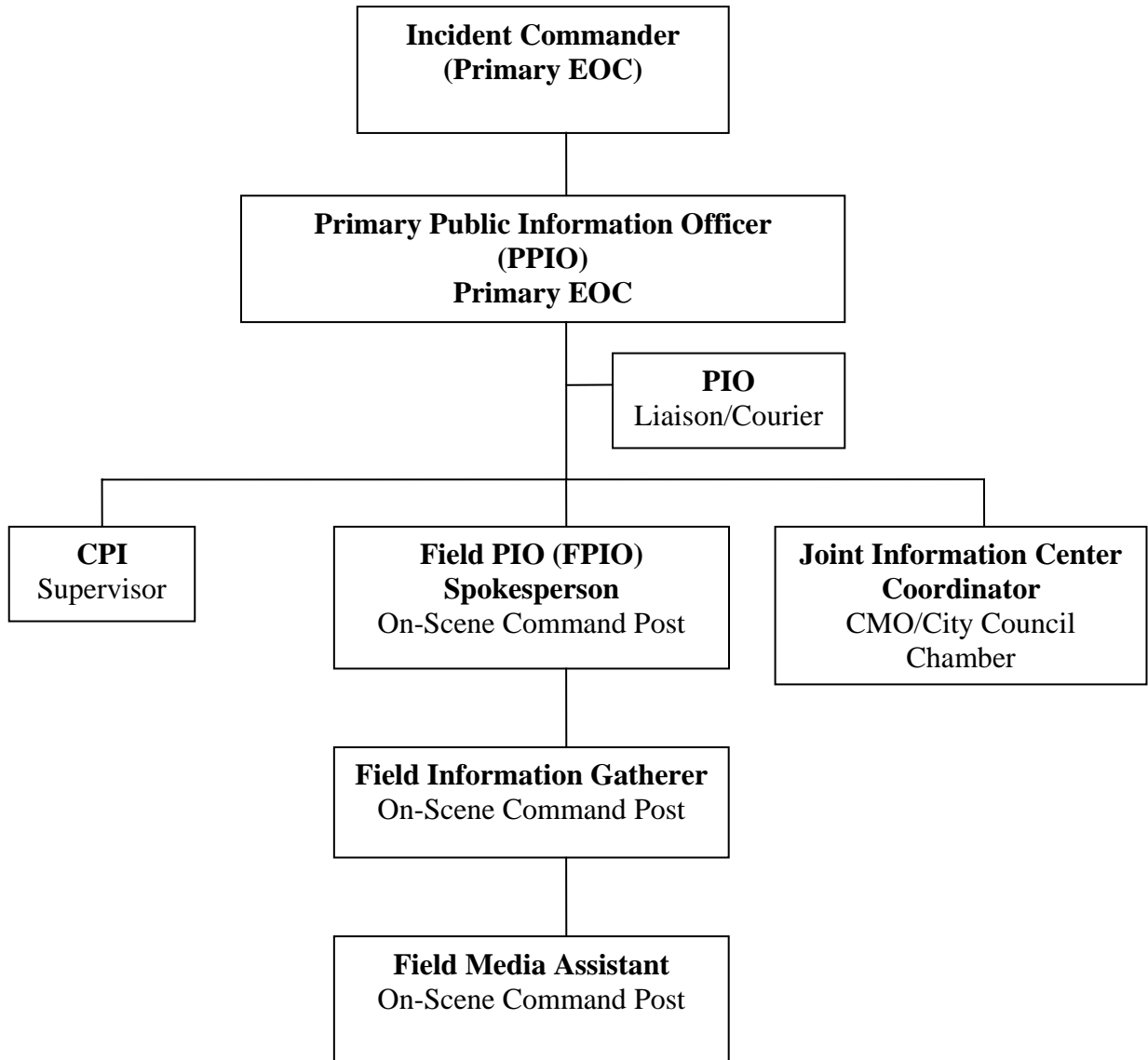
- During a disaster event, the coordination of all media and print information will be directed by the Primary PIO (PPIO), who will be designated by the Incident Commander in the EOC. All involved PIOs will release information from a single point, through the JIC/JIS, as designated by the PPIO. All information is subject to final approval by the Incident Commander before its release to the media and public;
- The Primary PIO will be responsible for establishing a Joint Information Center (JIC) in support of EOC operations. A JIC typically will be established when the EOC is activated or shortly thereafter, or when the demand for PIO resources exceeds the capacity of the incident's lead agency;
- A JIC is most useful when an emergency is expected to last more than a few hours, when it involves multiple agencies, jurisdictions, or functions, or if the media will need a central point from which to obtain information because the situation is complex or widespread involving several locations;
- Ideally, all involved local, state, federal, and private agencies involved in an emergency event will send PIOs to work together at the JIC to gather, verify, coordinate, and disseminate information;
- In incidents involving some magnitude, City of Springfield PIOs who are aware of the emergency will contact other City and non-city PIOs, as appropriate, for notification, mutual assistance, and coordination of information. This network may continue to operate throughout the incident as a Joint Information System, or "Virtual JIC", or may develop into the formal JIC if activated;
- When activating the JIC, the PPIO will designate a JIC Coordinator to open the JIC facility and initiate and coordinate JIC operations. The JIC Coordinator will be responsible for JIC operations and may also serve as spokesperson;
- Coordination of information to be released will continue to be managed by the PPIO who will be in direct communication with the JIC Coordinator;
- The Center for Public Inquiry (CPI) may also be activated to provide the public with a designated phone number and information source in an emergency, other than 9-1-1 or the Police non-emergency number. The decision to activate the CPI or another phone bank will be made by the on-duty 9-1-1 supervisor in conjunction with the lead PIO for the incident or the PPIO if the EOC is activated;
- If the CPI is activated, the JIC Coordinator will also be in direct communication with the CPI Supervisor and will serve as a liaison with the CIP, JIC, and the PPIO, as needed, assisting with the integration of information gleaned from public contacts into public messages. Major responsibilities of this function are:
  - ♦ Develop the ability to rapidly release emergency instructions and information to the public using all available communication means, e.g., media, Internet, and/or Metro Television;

- ♦ Receive information from media and public regarding a disaster event; respond with official information;
  - ♦ Receive inquiries from media, and from the public via the CPI, regarding a disaster event; respond with official information or relay calls to other PIOs, EOC staff, or PPIO;
  - ♦ Obtain reports and situation summaries from EOC representatives of all emergency organizational elements as necessary to maintain current incident status for public information needs;
  - ♦ Prepare news releases;
  - ♦ Conduct situation briefings and press conferences for visitors, media, etc.
  - ♦ Conduct tours of the area affected by the disaster, as appropriate;
  - ♦ Provide an on-scene Information Officer, as necessary;
  - ♦ Establish a Field Information Center, if appropriate, at a location near the command post;
  - ♦ Arrange and oversee interviews with key personnel, as requested by media or PPIO;
  - ♦ Monitor media for misinformation and rumors and make immediate correction as necessary.
- Maintain media log and contact documentation throughout event.

### **20.3.1 Public Information and Alert & Warning Organizational Chart**

See the organizational chart on the following page.

**CHAIN OF COMMAND**  
**Public Information/Alert & Warning Annex**  
*Organizational Chart*



**20.4 PHASES OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

**20.4.1 Mitigation**

**→ Departments Involved: City Manager’s Office, Development Services, Fire & Life Safety, Police**

- Provide public education on mitigating potential disasters, i.e., measures implemented by City, mitigation measures public should take; [Fire & Life Safety]; [POLICE]; [PW]; [Development Services]; [CMO];
- Oversee and coordinate public information strategies (preparedness/awareness campaigns) during normal, day-to-day operations; advise and assist the City Manager and designees with communication strategies [CMO];
- Investigate use of new alert and warning systems [CMO]; and
- Establish an awareness schedule on a yearly basis, which will include programs and activities based on seasonal (and other) hazards in the city. [Fire & Life Safety] [PW]

**20.4.2 Preparedness**

**→ Departments Involved: City Manager’s Office, Fire & Life Safety, Police**

- Conduct public education programs to enhance knowledge of public safety [Fire & Life Safety]; [POLICE]; [PW]; [Development Services]; [CMO];
- Maintain established relationships with media [CMO];
- Plan for information dissemination to media outside jurisdiction to minimize impact and maximize efficiency in an event attracting state and national media [CMO];
- Establish and maintain relationships with public information staff from other agencies responding during an emergency [CMO]; and
- Train and drill public information staff on roles and responsibilities annually, [CMO];
- Prepare and maintain pre-recorded messages for use in the Alert & Warning system(20.4.3.2) [CMO];
- Ensure JIC ready for use [CMO].

**20.4.3 Response**

**→ Departments Involved: City Manager’s Office**

**20.4.3.1 Primary Public Information Officer**

<b>Position:</b>	<b>Primary Public Information Officer</b>
<b>Responsible Department/Division</b>	City Manager’s Office
<b>Emergency Supervisor (title):</b>	Incident Commander
<b>Reports to (location):</b>	EOC
<b>Applicable ICS Section:</b>	Command

The Primary Public Information Officer (PPIO) is responsible for organizing and managing the emergency public information system and establishing guidelines for the release of public information. In addition to the responsibilities identified under NIMS ICS, as an EOC Command Staff member, the PPIO has the following added responsibilities:

- Report to the IC at the EOC;
- Establish contract with the Field Public Information Officer (FPIO)/coordinator;
- Establish contact with media; begin releasing lifesaving/health preservation instructions; explain what City is doing to respond to emergency;
- Evaluate emergency; call in additional staff as needed;
- Contact CMO staff; confirm they have notified Mayor and City Council of emergency;
- In the event of a major, long-term, emergency, with City of Springfield as either lead or a major agency, direct the opening of a Joint Information Center (JIC) and appoint a JIC Coordinator/spokesperson to initiate and coordinate operations at the JIC;
- The primary JIC location for a City-lead event with Incident Command at either the Springfield Police EOC or the ECC will be the Library Meeting Room located at Springfield City Hall. Lane County’s JIC is located in the Lane County Public Service Building, 125 E. 8th Avenue in Eugene, and is also available if needed;
- After a JIC has been established, the PPIO may move between the EOC and the JIC as needed. In this case, PIO liaison in the EOC will be appointed to maintain the connection between the PPIO and the IC;
- Establish a Center for Public Inquiry (CPI), to support most EOC and JIC activations, if determined to be needed by the on-duty Central Lane 9-1-1

supervisor. The CPI is located in the Lane County Public Service Building, 125 E. 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Eugene;

- Disseminate written information among the EOC, JIC, CPI, and the FPIO, via fax or email, if those systems are available, or by courier if needed. Refer to Public Information staff list in the Resource Guide for addresses and phone numbers;
- Ensure maintenance of a media contact log and documentation;
- Ensure maintenance of a log of all warnings issued;
- Conduct or delegate personnel, management, and administrative activities as needed:
  - ♦ Develop and maintain file for PIO employee time reports; submit report to the Finance/Risk Management section;
  - ♦ Gather time reports from all personnel assigned to public information; ensure all identification is correct and signed;
  - ♦ Close out time documents prior to personnel leaving incident;
  - ♦ During emergencies of long duration, establish shift system to ensure public information employees get adequate rest and are able to check in with their families.

#### **20.4.3.2 Alert and Warning**

The PPIO is responsible for communicating the Alert and Warning of impending emergencies. The PPIO may issue an alert in the names of several authorities, e.g., the Incident Commander, City Manager, Mayor, or other appropriate leaders, to increase the credibility of the message.

The Alert and Warning system uses any or all of the following methods, as appropriate:

- Local, regional, statewide, and national media;
- Mobile Police and Fire public address systems;
- Door-to-door contact;
- Community Emergency Notification System (CENS);
- Emergency Alert System (EAS); and
- Cable television alert system.

Refer to the Emergency Public Information Procedures for instructions on how to activate the Emergency Alert System, and cable television alert system, and CENS.

**20.4.3.3 Alert and Warning Checklist**

- IC will determine whether local or citywide Alert and Warning announcements need to be made. The PPIO, working with the IC, will decide on Alert and Warning messages and means of delivery. Messages must be geographically precise, repeated more than once, and presented in more than one medium;
- City emergency response personnel will alert residents through the CENS system, the media, and use of mobile public address systems or door-to-door contact; phone calls to schools and large employers may also be used;
- PPIO (or designee) will maintain log of all warnings issued during an incident;
- PPIO will maintain pre-recorded messages for safety within Metro-TV technology and capabilities.

**20.4.3.4 Field Public Information Officer (FPIO)/Spokesperson**

<b>Position:</b>	<b>Field Public Information Officer</b>
<b>Responsible Department/Division</b>	City Manager’s Office
<b>Emergency Supervisor (title):</b>	Incident Commander
<b>Reports to (location):</b>	EOC
<b>Applicable ICS Section:</b>	Command

The Field Primary Information Officer (FPIO) coordinator/spokesperson serves as the single source of public information in the field. The FPIO will usually be designated by the Field Commander.

- Upon arrival at the scene of the emergency, Field PIO/spokesperson will check in with command post;
- Evaluate situation and call PPIO in EOC to request additional staff if needed. Brief PPIO on nature of emergency;
- Assign duties to public information staff as they arrive;
- Select location for media staging area away from emergency operations and direct or delegate setup of staging area;
- Request media cooperation with ground rules approved by the IC;
- Observe constraints on release of information imposed by IC;
- Obtain approval of all information to be released from IC through PPIO;
- Brief media on incident and response actions underway;
- Use all available media to provide lifesaving/health preservation instructions and other high-priority emergency information;

- Remain with media, providing information and access to scene as able; work with media to avoid their interference with emergency operations;
- Direct media to JIC for information when possible and appropriate;
- Arrange for necessary work space, materials, supplies, phones, and staffing for media if possible;
- Provide media with copies of any current incident documents available;
- Observe constraints on release of information imposed by IC;
- Coordinate and direct all permitted news media tours of incident;
- Maintain activity log of all FPIO activities.

**20.4.3.5 Field Information Liaison/Gatherer**

<b>Position:</b>	<b>Field Information Liaison/Gatherer</b>
<b>Responsible Department/Division</b>	Public Information Staff
<b>Emergency Supervisor (title):</b>	Field PIO/Spokesperson
<b>Reports to (location):</b>	Field Command Post
<b>Applicable ICS Section:</b>	Command

The field information liaison/gatherer is responsible for collecting reports on the emergency situation from various sources and delivering the information to the Field PIO/spokesperson and the PPIO/EOC for developing public and media information releases.

- Upon arrival, check in with the Field PIO/spokesperson;
- Work with Field PIO/spokesperson to identify sources of information, e.g., command post, representatives of other agencies, etc.;
- Gather information from various sources and relay to Field PIO/spokesperson;
- Relay same information to PPIO in EOC, preferably at the same time or as soon as possible. Establish frequent and regular updates (every 30 minutes, if possible);
- Relay any emergency information from EOC to Field PIO/spokesperson, e.g., reports from area hospitals or other affected areas.

**20.4.3.6 Field Media Assistant**

<b>Position:</b>	<b>Field Media Assistant</b>
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<b>Responsible Department/Division</b>	Public Information Staff
<b>Emergency Supervisor (title):</b>	Field PIO/Spokesperson
<b>Reports to (location):</b>	Field Command Post
<b>Applicable ICS Section:</b>	Command

The field media assistant's job is to help the FPIO/spokesperson handle the large number of reporters expected at the scene of a major emergency.

- Upon arrival, check in with the Field PIO/spokesperson;
- At the Field PIO/spokesperson's discretion, either remain with the FPIO/spokesperson to help guide media around the emergency scene, or set up media staging area at a location selected by FPIO/spokesperson.

**20.4.3.7 Media Staging Area**

<b>Position:</b>	<b>Joint Information Center Coordinator</b>
<b>Responsible Department/Division</b>	Public Information Staff
<b>Emergency Supervisor (title):</b>	Primary Public Information Officer
<b>Reports to (location):</b>	Joint Information Center
<b>Applicable ICS Section:</b>	Command

A media staging area will be set up as a location where members of the media can check in, meet with the Field PIO, and prepare their stories.

- Contact Supply Unit Leader to obtain phones, photocopiers, fax machines, and other tools that will aid media at media staging area in performing their job;
- Set up maps and status boards as needed; and
- Direct media to Field PIO/spokesperson.

**20.4.3.8 Joint Information Center Coordinator**

<b>Position:</b>	<b>Joint Information Center Coordinator</b>
<b>Responsible Department/Division</b>	Public Information Staff
<b>Emergency Supervisor (title):</b>	Primary Public Information Officer
<b>Reports to (location):</b>	Joint Information Center
<b>Applicable ICS Section:</b>	Command

The PPIO will typically activate the JIC when the EOC is activated or shortly thereafter, or when the demand for PIO resources exceeds the capacity of the incident’s lead agency. A JIC is most useful when an emergency is expected to last more than a few hours, when it involves multiple jurisdictions, agencies or functions, or when the media will need a central point to obtain information because the situation is complex or has spread to several locations.

Responsibilities of the JIC Coordinator include the following:

- PPIO will inform JIC Coordinator where to report and set up JIC. Contact PPIO in the EOC upon arrival;
- Prepare news releases using information obtained from EOC via the PPIO or EOC Public Information Liaison/Courier. Depending on communication links, information should include reports from area hospitals, surrounding communities, and other agencies responding to emergency situation;
- Contact Supply Unit Leader to obtain phones, photocopiers, fax machines, tables, chairs, and other tools that will aid media in performing their job;
- Set up maps and status boards as needed;
- Coordinate with PPIO Officer to establish times for regular media briefings;
- Update news releases with new information from PPIO or EOC liaison/courier;
- Maintain file of all information released to the media;
- Retrieve instructions on opening center and setting up phone system from Emergency Public Information Procedures Manual; and
- Review the City of Springfield Joint Information Center Plan, found in the Emergency Public Information Procedures Manual.

**20.4.3.9 EOC Public Information Liaison/Courier**

<b>Position:</b>	<b>EOC Public Information Liaison/Courier</b>
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<b>Responsible Department/Division</b>	City Manager’s Office
<b>Emergency Supervisor (title):</b>	Primary Public Information Officer
<b>Reports to (location):</b>	EOC
<b>Applicable ICS Section:</b>	Command

The EOC Public Information Liaison/Courier will be responsible for relaying status reports and lifesaving/health preservation instructions from the EOC to the Joint Information Center. This may occur via phone, Fax, or email, or by physical delivery if necessary.

- Report to EOC; check in with Primary Public Information Officer;
- Relay information from the PPIO to the Joint Information Center Coordinator and the CPI; and
- Relay messages from JIC and CPI back to EOC/PPIO.

**20.4.4 Recovery**

**→ Departments Involved: City Manager’s Office**

- Re-establish communication lines with public;
- Release information about restoration of essential services, travel restrictions, disaster relief services [Primary PIO]; and
- After emergency situation has been resolved, critique effectiveness of City's emergency public information program [All Public Information Staff].

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