



UPSHUR COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN INCIDENT ANNEX: PANDEMIC

COORDINATING AGENCY

- Upshur County Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Management (UCDHSEM)

PRIMARY AGENCIES

- Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department (UBHD)
- WVU Healthcare – St. Joseph's Hospital
- Community Care of West Virginia (CCWV)

SUPPORTING AGENCIES

- Additional Local Health & Medical Partners
- Community First Response Agencies (Police, Fire, & Emergency Medical)
- Congregate Care Facilities (Local)
- Non-Governmental Organizations (Local)
- West Virginia Department of Health & Human Resources (WVDHHR)
- West Virginia Division of Emergency Management (WVEMD)
- West Virginia National Guard (WVNG)
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (USHHS)
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security / Federal Emergency Management Agency (DHS/FEMA)

APPROVED

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UPSHUR COUNTY COMMISSION

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I. PURPOSE

This incident annex to the *Upshur County Emergency Operations Plan* sets forth a framework for Upshur County stakeholders to manage operations to a pandemic¹.

¹ A **pandemic** is an epidemic of an infectious disease that has spread across a large region, for instance multiple continents or worldwide, affecting a substantial number of individuals. Pandemics differ from **epidemics**, which are sudden increases in cases in a much smaller region. Further, pandemics are not **endemic** infections, where the agent causing the infections is constantly maintained at a baseline level.



Table 1.1: Annex Roles Aligned with Core Capabilities

Core Capability	Annex Roles
Planning	The EOC structure noted herein supports an on-going community-wide incident action plan as well as provides community-wide situational awareness for planning at the individual stakeholder level.
Public Information & Warning	Upshur County should consider whether official information from sources such as the CDC and the WVDHHR would be better received with a local perspective.
Operational Coordination	The EOC structure serves as an incident management construct for pandemic operations.
Environmental Response/Health & Safety	The narrative below outlines a series of precautionary measures for limiting the spread of the causal agent.
Situational Assessment	EOC operational period briefings are vehicles for updating situational awareness for community stakeholders.
Logistics & Supply Chain Management	Outside of the public health and medical response, the most impactful support that extended stakeholders can provide may be in the form of resource support (e.g., childcare, elder care, housing, feeding, volunteers, etc.).
Public Health, Healthcare, & Emergency Medical Services	This annex identified the major elements of a pandemic response (that exceed ESF 8: Public Health & Medical Services).
Health & Social Services	Options for providing community support (e.g., feeding, housing, mental health, employment, etc.) to impacted residents appear below.

II. SCOPE

The guidelines below may apply to any pandemic, regardless of the causal agent. This annex assumes that all pandemic responses will be multi-jurisdictional, and as such, resources from Upshur County, the City of Buckhannon, and the quasi-governmental and private sectors appear herein. Further, the intent of this annex is to outline an operational framework for this multi-jurisdictional, multi-agency response. It assumes that participating stakeholders will continue to conduct their business and will not specifically list these activities as “pandemic responsibilities.” For instance, the health department will continue to provide public health services; the hospital will continue to function as a hospital.

III. POLICIES

Neither Upshur County, the City of Buckhannon, nor (in the case of a pandemic) the Upshur-Buckhannon Board of Health maintain standing policies related to pandemic operations. All policy decisions made in response to a pandemic will be consistent with the limits of governmental powers. The guidelines that appear in this annex anticipate the types of policy decisions that may be necessary, and as such, it will be likely that pandemic response policies will be consistent with this annex.

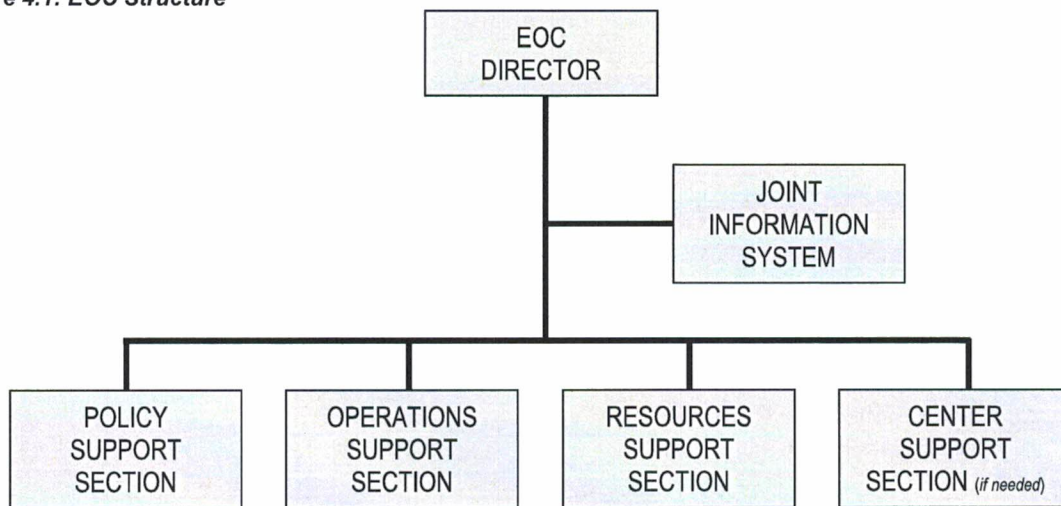


IV. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

A. Incident Management

1. This annex does not dictate the internal structures that stakeholders may use to manage their own operations.
2. For countywide pandemic operations, Upshur County utilizes its emergency operations center (EOC) to manage pandemics, as it more flexibly and effectively addresses the potential complexity of the overall response. EOC activities organize under an incident support model (ISM), as shown below.

Figure 4.1: EOC Structure



B. EOC Section Roles

- The **Policy Support Section** sets policy for the response. For pandemics, its membership is typically the Upshur County Commission, the Buckhannon City Council, and the Upshur-Buckhannon Board of Health. The entities comprising the policy support section would declare states of emergency for their jurisdiction(s) as well as issue local mandates for public protective measures (e.g., quarantines, face coverings, etc.). In some cases, these entities may adopt local “versions” of state-level directives (emanating from gubernatorial executive orders).
- The **Operations Support Section** sets SMART objectives for the response, ensures appropriate support for response activities, and serves as a mechanism to share the status of various on-going activities. Examples could include community testing sites, vaccination clinics, contact tracing call centers, commodity points of distribution, etc.



- The **Resources Support Section** prioritizes and allocates resources that stakeholders cannot acquire within their normal procurement channels. Examples could include personal protective equipment (PPE).
- The **Center Support Section** is an optional section; its purpose is to ensure the EOC (and any other coordination center, such as a joint information center [JIC]) has what it needs to operate effectively (e.g., communications, information technology [IT], food/support for staff). For the purposes of a pandemic, it is unlikely that this section would be active.

V. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. EOC Activation and Support

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the EOC operation to which this annex refers was the Buckhannon-Upshur Covid-19 Community Task Force.

1. Activation of the EOC may be considered at the request of any primary or supporting agency listed above, by the Upshur County Commission, or by the Upshur County Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Management.
 - a. All participating stakeholders will be responsible for designating a point of contact that can participate in EOC activities.
 - b. The incident support model EOC organization described above may be physical (i.e., in-person) or virtual.
2. The EOC team should meet, at minimum, once per operational period. Participating stakeholders decide the length of operational periods (heavily informed by public health and medical partners). For instance, during the Covid-19 pandemic, initial operational periods were approximately 72 hours apiece, later periods were seven days, and approximately 10 months in, operational periods were two weeks in length.
3. The overall goal of the EOC operation is to serve as a vehicle for sharing information and the operational status of participating entities. Its membership comes from the primary and supporting agencies listed above, and their perspectives represent the “eyes and ears of the community.” Put simply, the goal of the EOC operation during pandemics is to gauge the temperature of the community, thereby supporting the decision-making of primary and supporting agencies based on those community needs.



B. Information Management

1. Surveillance data, such as the reporting of cases, testing results (individual and aggregated), etc. are typically the purview of the Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department, medical providers throughout the community, and in some cases, local pharmacies and Upshur County Schools. The processing of surveillance data is thus a responsibility of these entities and not the focus of this annex. However, ***the aforementioned EOC operational period briefings serve as the opportunity to share applicable surveillance-related intelligence with the wider network of community partners.*** Sharing surveillance data should be an expectation of EOC operational period briefings.
2. Contact Tracing
 - a. "Contact tracing," the process whereby public health officials create a list of possible close contacts of individuals who test positive, is a key strategy for slowing the spread of a causal agent. During the Covid-19 pandemic, it was an important, yet labor intensive effort.
 - b. Locally, the Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department should lead the contact tracing effort. Medical providers play a substantial supporting role.
 - c. Personnel support may be necessary. The process of contact tracing is trainable, typically in a just-in-time fashion. The county may use volunteers to support contact tracing out of the emergency operations center facility on Pallottine Drive (which houses multiple telephone lines), assuming the appropriate authorities have been delegated to them. If implementing this strategy, a staff person from the UBHD should be on-site to validate quality operations, address difficult questions, etc.
3. Public Education and Information
 - a. Primary and support agencies in Upshur County should only release official public information and educational materials. For a pandemic, this information typically emanates from the CDC and the WVDHHR.



- b. It may be beneficial to put a “local spin” on the official information². Options for doing so include (but are not limited to) the following.
 - i. Copying official infographics onto local letterhead or otherwise incorporating them into graphics displaying local logos, photos, etc.
 - ii. Opting for a WVDHHR version of official CDC releases
 - iii. Requesting comments or quotes from local public health and medical officials (to accompany the release of official information)
 - iv. Highlighting local portions of statewide data (e.g., Upshur numbers from a statewide dashboard)
 - v. Calculating official percentages based on the local population for press releases
- c. The release of public education and information during pandemics should be the same (procedurally) as noted elsewhere in this emergency operations plan.

C. Preventing Disease Spread

- 1. While the lofty goal of prevention is to eliminate spread in the community, elimination is often not possible. The more realistic goal related to spread is to keep public health and medical capabilities from being overwhelmed.
- 2. Examples of Precautionary Measures (per CDC and WVDHHR recommendations)
 - a. Physical distancing (maintaining space between persons at distances recommended by public health authorities)
 - b. Face coverings (wearing surgical or KN95 masks when in public spaces [or cloth or N95 masks contingent on need and availability])
 - c. Schedule alterations
 - d. Temporary migration to virtual media for meetings and, in some cases, events
- 3. Testing
 - a. Testing for infected individuals may be a containment strategy.
 - b. In addition to identifying those that are infected with a causal agent, testing efforts may identify asymptomatic individuals that are infected, contribute to a more

² In all instances, local entities should properly cite or attribute official information.



- accurate understanding of the extent of infection in the county or a given community, etc.
- c. Public health and medical entities throughout the county will likely be early adopters of testing methodologies. As a pandemic progresses, additional options, to include home testing, may be available.
 - d. As during the Covid-19 pandemic, operational partners may organize modified points of distribution (PODs) to support community testing events.
4. Limiting the spread of some causal agents may require isolation and/or quarantine.
- a. Upshur County's partners should follow recommendations from public health authorities regarding conditions for isolation/quarantine, lengths, etc.
 - b. The enforcement of a quarantine order may be a challenge. (For example, the general public did not always honor quarantine orders during the Covid-19 pandemic.) The Upshur County Sheriff's Department and Buckhannon Police Department may be available to serve quarantine orders. Contracted bonds persons (or the like) may also support the operation (assuming the appropriate authorities have been delegated to them).
 - c. Depending on the circumstances (and since enforcement resources may be limited), local officials may consider implementing a tiered approach (e.g., the initial issuance of the order followed by a warning and then a threat of law enforcement intervention before requesting law enforcement support).
5. Vaccination
- a. Determination of vaccine effectiveness for the causal agent of any pandemic should follow from the CDC and the WVDHHR.
 - b. The health department, medical providers, or pharmacies may be involved in the distribution of vaccine.
 - c. If vaccine clinics are necessary, the planning of them may be a function of a "subcommittee" of the above-referenced EOC structure.
 - i. Clinic operations should conclude with a hot wash, with the findings factoring into future clinics as well as recorded for implementation during future operations.



- ii. The schedule, appointment requirements, and other special instructions (if any) should be disseminated amongst the partners participating in an EOC operation to support community-wide awareness.
 - iii. A “best practice” during the response to the Covid-19 pandemic was the vaccination hotline established by Community Care of WV (which was followed by the state's release of its online portal).
- D. All treatment operations for those infected with a causal agent are coordinated by medical providers (to include emergency medical services [EMS]).
- E. Ancillary Activities
- 1. Resource Management
 - a. Lessons learned during the Covid-19 pandemic indicate there are two types of resources: those on-hand and those obtained.
 - b. On-hand resources, because of storage requirements, product expirations, etc., would likely be limited to personal protective equipment.
 - c. Obtained resources can come from requested/accepted donations or be procured from external sources.
 - i. For resources to the general public that can be made available quickly, a request for donations from partner entities (individually and via the EOC) may be appropriate.
 - ii. For others, even those desperately needed, procurement may be a better option to ensure quality, sanitation, etc.
 - d. The Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department (UBHD) participates in the WV REDI volunteer registration and management program. Volunteers to support vaccine clinics, testing sites, contact tracing, childcare/elder care, etc. may be available from this source via the UBHD.
 - 2. Business Continuity / Continuity of Operations
 - a. This annex assumes that the primary and supporting agencies listed above will have some level of business continuity measures in place to support pandemic operations in Upshur County.



- b. Lessons learned in the H1N1 and Covid-19 pandemics suggest that the definition of “essential worker,” at the community level, is subjective. Initial planning considerations at the EOC should include the industries that may be essential during the presenting pandemic (e.g., pharmacy workers, grocery store workers, etc.) to seek their inclusion in EOC operations.
 - c. “Alternate operations” during pandemics may not be the traditional notion of a secondary physical site; virtual operations may be necessary. As such, the EOC concept above can function virtually (as it did during the Covid-19 pandemic).
3. Psycho-Social Impacts³
- a. Social Vulnerability
 - i. Employment
 - Businesses may be forced to modify operations during pandemics, to include closure for an extended (and undetermined) period.
 - Though local government is limited in the direct assistance it can provide to its constituents, the EOC should stand ready to push information to residents and local businesses about unemployment and re-employment assistance.
 - Unemployment may necessitate the needs discussed below.
 - ii. Feeding
 - **Description of Potential Needs:** Access to nutritional food, sustaining programs like Meals on Wheels, approximating what children receive via school lunch, etc.
 - **Potential Resource Providers:** The Parish House, Upshur County Schools, Upshur County Senior Center
 - iii. Housing
 - **Description of Potential Needs:** Rent payment assistance, utility payment assistance
 - **Potential Resource Providers:** Mountain CAP, The Parish House

³ In all of the psycho-social categories, state or federal entities may make ad hoc, pandemic-specific sources of assistance available. Programs specific to and tied to the funding associated with the Covid-19 pandemic are examples.



iv. Childcare and Elder Care

- Safe and reputable care may become an issue during a pandemic, particularly for essential workers.
- During the Covid-19 pandemic, daycare providers could seek temporary designation as a “critical care provider,” which made them available for additional stipends and reimbursements. Similar programs may be available in the future, and it may be a responsibility of the EOC to compile and publicize a list of these.
- Additionally, resources such as local churches – who know their congregations (and are trusted by their congregations) – may be significant resources in this regard. Many churches asked how they could assist the Covid-19 response; for future pandemics, the provision of daycare is an opportunity to help.
- Similarly, many individuals take care of elderly family members. Care for them, in a manner similar to daycare (i.e., church support), may be necessary in future pandemics.

b. Mental Health

i. Mental health concerns during pandemic operations include the following.

- Stress-related issues stemming from the presence of the pandemic
- Stress related to unemployment and other psycho-social variables (see above)
- Burnout and stress within the responder (particularly public health and medical) and other critical service (i.e., congregate care, school, etc.) communities

ii. Resource providers in Upshur County include Appalachian Community Health Center (ACHC), Community Care of WV, Mountain CAP, United Summit Center, and West Virginia Home Health (under limited circumstances). Faith-based organizations may also provide support.



VI. AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

Table 6.1: Local Responsibilities

Agency	P / S	Responsibility(ies)
Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serves as the primary local authority on matters of public health Serves as the local conduit for CDC and WVDHHR advisory information Coordinates local-level disease surveillance Provides local interpretation of contact tracing and precautionary measures for the general public Supports vaccination operations, as necessary (to include participation in planning for delivery) Designates agency participants for EOC operations
WVU Healthcare – St. Joseph's Hospital	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operates the area's emergency (medical) department with acute treatment options Supports vaccination operations, as necessary (to include participation in planning for delivery) Designates agency participants for EOC operations
Community Care of WV	P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports the medical response through its network of clinics Supports vaccination operations, as necessary (to include participation in planning for delivery) Designates agency participants for EOC operations
Additional Local Health & Medical Partners	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports the medical response, as necessary Participates, as necessary, in EOC operations
Community First Response Agencies (Police, Fire, & Emergency Medical)	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides (and sustains) emergency response services, as usual Seeks to prevent spread within their agencies to ensure emergency services delivery Participates, as necessary, in EOC operations
Congregate Care Facilities (Local)	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implements precautionary measures and other countermeasures, as necessary and directed by public health authorities Supports disease surveillance, as necessary Participates, as necessary, in EOC operations
Non-Governmental Organizations (Local)	S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses the human services needs created by a pandemic Participates, as necessary, in EOC operations

VII. AUTHORITIES & REFERENCES

A. Authorities

- West Virginia Code, §9 (Human Services), as amended
- West Virginia Code, §15-5 (Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management), as amended
- West Virginia Code, §16 (Public Health), as amended
 - §16-3-2: Powers of County and Municipal Boards of Health to Establish Quarantine; Penalty for Violation



B. References

1. United States Department of Homeland Security / FEMA. (2020a). Community Lifelines. Online. Retrieved from <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/lifelines>
2. United States Department of Homeland Security / FEMA. (2020b). Mission Areas and Core Capabilities. Online. Retrieved from <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/national-preparedness/mission-core-capabilities>
3. United States Department of Homeland Security. (n.d.). *National Response Framework*. Washington, DC: Federal Government.
4. West Virginia Division of Emergency Management. (n.d.). *West Virginia Emergency Operations Plan*. Charleston, WV: State Government.
5. Upshur County Commission. (UNDER REVISION ~ 2022). *Upshur County Emergency Operations Plan*. Buckhannon, WV: Local Government.
 - Basic Plan
 - ESF 2: Communications
 - ESF 6: Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing & Human Services
 - ESF 7: Logistics Management & Resource Support
 - ESF 8: Public Health & Medical Services
 - ESF 14: Recovery & Mitigation
 - ESF 15: External Affairs
6. Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department. (n.d.). *Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department All-Hazards Plan*. Buckhannon, WV: Local Government.

VIII. LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: List of Community Stakeholders



UPSHUR COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN
INCIDENT ANNEX: PANDEMIC
APPENDIX 1: LIST OF COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

This appendix lists the stakeholders available to support a pandemic response in Upshur County. It consists of those entities that supported the Covid-19 pandemic response and recovery.



Stakeholder	Annex Coordinator	Primary	Support	Entity Type
Upshur County Commission			X	Local government
City of Buckhannon			X	Local government
Upshur County DHSEM	X			Local emergency management agency, annex coordinator
Upshur-Buckhannon Health Department		X		Public health
WVU Healthcare, St. Joseph's Hospital		X		Medical services
Community Care of WV		X		Medical services
Appalachian Community Health Center			X	Mental health support
Davis Health System, Buckhannon Medical Care			X	Medical services
Khan & Associates			X	Medical services
Stonewall Jackson Memorial Hospital			X	Medical services
West Virginia Hospice			X	Hospice
Adrian Volunteer Fire Department			X	Emergency response
Banks District Volunteer Fire Department			X	Emergency response
Buckhannon Fire Department			X	Emergency response
Buckhannon Police Department			X	Emergency response
Buckhannon PD VIPS			X	Volunteer services, response support
Ellamore Volunteer Fire Department			X	Emergency response
Upshur County E-911			X	Emergency response
Upshur County EMS			X	Emergency response
Upshur County Fire Chiefs Association			X	Administrative/planning representation for fire service
Upshur County Sheriff's Department			X	Emergency response
Warren District Volunteer Fire Department			X	Emergency response
Washington District Volunteer Fire Company			X	Emergency response
West Virginia State Police			X	Emergency response
Buckhannon Housing Authority			X	Congregate care
Buckhannon Manor			X	Congregate care
Cambridge Heights Apartments			X	Congregate care
Child Development Center			X	Congregate care
Holbrook on the Hill			X	Congregate care
Mountain CAP CDC			X	Congregate care
Serenity Care			X	Congregate care
Stockert Youth & Community Center			X	Congregate care
Upshur County Schools			X	Congregate care
Upshur County Senior Center			X	Congregate care
West Virginia Wesleyan College			X	Congregate care

Stakeholder	Annex Coordinator	Primary	Support	Entity Type
WVDHR			X	State agency support
West Virginia Division of Emergency Management			X	State agency support
Brooks Hill Library				Community entity
Buckhannon-Upshur Chamber of Commerce				Community entity
Buckhannon-Upshur Convention & Visitors Bureau				Community entity
Buckhannon-Upshur Rotary Club				Community entity
Charles W. Gibson Library				Community entity
Fred Eberle Technical Center				Community entity
JH Consulting, LLC				Community entity
Mountain CAP				Community entity
New Community Church				Faith-based representative
Region VII Planning & Development Council				Economic & community development
The Opportunity House				Functional & access needs populations
The Parish House				Community entity
Upshur County Mapping & Addressing				Local government support
Upshur County FRN				Community entity
Upshur County Public Library				Community entity
WVDNR				State agency support
WV Small Business Development Center				Economic & community development
WVU Extension Service				Economic & community development