



Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

2025



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Promulgation Statement

To the citizens, public officials, and emergency response partners of Pearl River County:

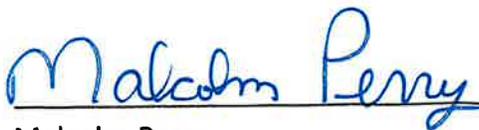
The safety, security, and resilience of Pearl River County depend on a unified approach to preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and disasters. The Pearl River County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) provides the framework for coordination among county departments, municipalities, volunteer organizations, private sector partners, and state and federal agencies to protect lives, property, and the environment.

This plan has been developed in accordance with the Mississippi Emergency Management Act of 1995 (MS Code §33-15), the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and the State of Mississippi Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. It establishes the responsibilities, authorities, and operational concepts needed to guide emergency management activities in the county.

The CEMP is a living document and will be updated as needed to reflect new laws, policies, and best practices. All county departments and partner organizations are directed to integrate this plan into their operations, participate in training and exercises, and maintain readiness to fulfill assigned roles.

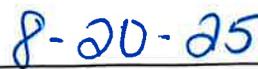
Through the cooperation and dedication of our community and partners, Pearl River County will remain prepared to meet any challenge.

Therefore, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the Pearl River County Board of Supervisors and in witness whereof, I hereby promulgate this Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan for Pearl River County, Mississippi, and furthermore charge the Director of the Pearl River County Emergency Management Agency with responsibility for the implementation of this plan.



Malcolm Perry

President, Pearl River County Board of Supervisors



Date

RECORD OF DISTRIBUTION

Primary Distribution List

Copy No.	Individual's Name and Title / Organization Name	Date of Transmittal	Date of Receipt
1	David Allison- PRC SO	8.20.2025	8.20.25
2	Carey Meitzler- PRCCD	8.20.2025	8.20.2025
3	Chuck Carter- AAA Ambulance	8.20.2025	8.20.2025
4	Will Berry- MEMA	8.20.2025	8.20.2025
5	MEMA -Office of Preparedness	8.20.2025	8.20.2025
6	Jason Bannister- City of Poplarville	8.20.2025	8.20.2025
7	Joe Quave-City of Picayune Police	8.20.2025	8.20.2025
8	Josh Abercrombie- City of Picayune Fire	8.20.2025	8.20.2025

Secondary Distribution List

Personnel and organizations on the secondary distribution list are those identified as essential to understanding the framework of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), but with certain information excluded pursuant to MS Code Ann. § 33-15-11(b)(12) (1972).

Copy No.	Individual's Name and Title / Organization Name	Date of Transmittal	Date of Receipt
1			
2			
3			
4			

RECORD OF CHANGES

As changes are made to this plan, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The Pearl River County Emergency Management Agency (PRC EMA) will distribute changes to plan holders via electronic or hard copy format.
2. Upon receipt of a change, individuals maintaining hard copies should insert updated pages and remove/destroy outdated material. Minor changes may be made using pen and ink.
3. All changes must be logged in the chart below.
4. This plan will be reviewed and revised biennially, and rewritten every five years, in accordance with MS Code Ann. § 33-15 (1972).

Change Number	Date	Page(s)/Section(s) Affected	Brief Description of Change	Initials
01	08/04/2025	Full Document	Initial adoption of revised CEMP; supersedes all previous versions	SCW

I. Purpose, Scope, Situation, and Assumptions (PSSA)

Purpose

The purpose of this Basic Plan is to describe the overall emergency management system for Pearl River County. It establishes the structure for coordination among all stakeholders to manage major emergencies and disasters.

Scope

This plan applies to all jurisdictions and agencies within Pearl River County. It will be made accessible to the public and stakeholders through the county's official website and in printed form at local government offices and public libraries. It is intended for use in all phases of emergency management – mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery – for all hazards.

Situation Overview

Pearl River County is located in southeastern Mississippi and includes the cities of Picayune and Poplarville. It is bisected by Interstate 59 and has a mix of rural and urban communities. Pearl River County has a population of approximately 56,145 people (as of the 2020 census) and spans 819 square miles, with 811 square miles of land. Interstate 59 runs for about 42 miles through the county, providing a critical north-south corridor for transportation and evacuation. The Norfolk Southern Railroad also traverses the county, roughly parallel to I-59, and carries commercial freight, including hazardous materials.

Known Vulnerabilities (Prioritized)

The following table presents prioritized hazards and vulnerabilities specific to Pearl River County:

Prioritized Vulnerabilities Table

Vulnerability	Description
Flash Flooding	Heavy rainfall and low-lying terrain create rapid-onset flooding conditions.
Severe Weather	Frequent thunderstorms, hail, and tornadoes, especially during spring and fall.
Tropical Weather	Subject to hurricanes and tropical storms with impacts from wind, storm surge, and flooding.
Winter Weather	Can disrupt government, schools, and community operations.
Flood-Prone Infrastructure	Roads, culverts, and residential properties in floodplains experience repeated flooding.
Mobile Home Communities	Higher risk during high-wind and tornado events.
Chemical Releases	Risk from fixed facilities and transportation routes, especially along I-59.
Critical Facilities	Key structures in high-risk zones require continuity planning.
Aging Infrastructure	Older systems may not withstand severe weather or sustained emergency use.
Limited Medical Facilities	Limited local healthcare capacity poses risks during major health emergencies.
Earthquake Exposure	Within impact range of New Madrid Seismic Zone; infrastructure may not meet seismic standards.

Assumptions

Assumptions are grouped into four categories for clarity:

Incident Characteristics

- **Incidents may occur at any time** with little or no warning and may involve multiple jurisdictions.
- **All incidents begin and end locally**, managed at the lowest possible level using available resources.

Government Operations

- **Government must remain operational** under all threats, emergencies, and disaster conditions.
- **The National Incident Management System (NIMS)** and Incident Command System (ICS) will guide all incident management activities, as mandated by Executive Order No. 932 and in accordance with MS Code Ann. §33-15.

Community Impacts

- **Incidents may result in widespread impacts**, including environmental damage, casualties, displaced individuals, and infrastructure loss.
- **Access and functional needs populations** (children, elderly, disabled, non-English speakers) may require special assistance due to limited access to essential services.

Support and Coordination

- **Mutual aid agreements** exist with Hancock, Lamar, Forrest, and Stone Counties. Pearl River County also participates in SMAC and EMAC and may request support through MEMA and FEMA.
- **Community preparedness is encouraged** through public outreach, school programs, and workshops facilitated by Pearl River County Emergency Management and partners.

II. Concept of Operations

Operational Escalation Flow:

- Local first responders initiate **ICS** at the incident scene.
- If needed, the Pearl River County **EOC** activates to coordinate resources and support field operations.
- When county capabilities are exceeded, assistance may be requested through **MEMA's State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC)**.
- Further escalation may involve FEMA's **Regional Response Coordination Center (RRCC)**.

EOC Activation Levels:

- **Level 4 – Normal Operations:** Routine monitoring by EMA staff.
- **Level 3 – Monitoring:** Enhanced readiness; select ESFs are notified.
- **Level 2 – Partial Activation:** Staffing of essential ESFs and agencies.
- **Level 1 – Full Activation:** All ESFs are activated; multi-jurisdictional coordination in place.

Pearl River County employs a **Multi-Agency Coordination System (MACS)** to ensure collaboration across agencies during major incidents. A **Unified Command** may be established when multiple agencies or jurisdictions are involved in a response.

Public information is coordinated through a **Joint Information System (JIS)** led by a **Public Information Officer (PIO)** or **Joint Information Center (JIC)**, ensuring consistent and timely messaging to the public.

All operations emphasize **interoperable communications**, supporting clear and secure communication between field personnel, EOC staff, and partner agencies.

III. Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Supervisors The Pearl River County Board of Supervisors is the governing body for the County. During an emergency, the Board may declare a local emergency or disaster and authorize the use of County resources to respond and recover. The Board of Supervisors will assume additional Executive Emergency Powers of the Governor as provided under MS Code Ann. § 33-15-11 (1972) and MS Code Ann. § 33-15-13 (1972), otherwise cited as the MS Emergency Management Act of 1995.

Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Pearl River County EMA is the lead agency for all phases of emergency management. It is responsible for maintaining the County's CEMP, coordinating EOC operations, requesting mutual aid or state/federal assistance, and facilitating preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation initiatives. The Emergency Management Act of 1995 requires each county operating individually or jointly to establish and maintain a local emergency management organization. Local officials will appoint a local Emergency Management Director who will have direct responsibility for the organization, administration, and operation of a local organization for emergency management.

Municipal Governments (Picayune, Poplarville) Cities within Pearl River County have independent emergency responsibilities. They will coordinate their local resources and, when needed, request County assistance through the EMA. Municipal leaders are expected to follow the County's emergency protocols, contribute to preparedness efforts, and manage incident response in their jurisdictions.

Law Enforcement, Fire Services, and EMS These public safety agencies are responsible for life safety, evacuation, scene security, rescue, and emergency medical care. They operate under ICS and coordinate with the County EOC as needed.

Public Works and Utilities Responsible for restoring infrastructure (roads, water, sewer, and debris removal), damage assessments, and providing technical support during response and recovery.

Health and Medical Services Local hospitals, clinics, and the Mississippi State Department of Health coordinate to ensure continuity of care, mass casualty response, public health monitoring, and support for access and functional needs populations.

Schools School districts are responsible for the safety of students and staff, shelter-in-place and evacuation procedures, reunification plans, and coordination with the County EMA for support.

Nonprofits and Volunteer Organizations Organizations such as the American Red Cross and local VOADs (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster) provide sheltering, feeding, donations management, and volunteer coordination.

Private Sector Businesses and critical infrastructure operators are expected to maintain internal continuity and safety plans and coordinate with local government to support restoration efforts and community resilience.

Public Information The Public Information Officer (PIO) or Joint Information Center (JIC), if activated, ensures that coordinated and accurate information is released to the public in a timely manner, consistent with the Joint Information System (JIS).

III-A. Local, State, and Federal Relationships

Pearl River County coordinates with local, state, and federal partners to ensure effective emergency management. Local government retains primary responsibility for emergency response and recovery within its jurisdiction. When needed, support is requested through mutual aid agreements and the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA).

State coordination is governed by the Mississippi Emergency Management Law (MS Code §33-15), which authorizes MEMA to manage statewide response efforts and assist counties upon request. Pearl River County aligns its planning and response strategies with the State CEMP developed by MEMA to maintain consistency and interoperability.

Federal support is requested through MEMA in accordance with the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other federal partners may provide technical, logistical, or financial assistance when state and local resources are exceeded.

This cooperative framework ensures that emergency operations are scalable, adaptable, and responsive to the specific needs of Pearl River County.

IV. Information Collection, Analysis, and Dissemination

The EOC will collect situational information from field operations, weather services, GIS, and public safety sources. Information will be shared through:

- Briefings and reports (DR1, DR2)
- HSIN, Crisis Track, WebEOC or other incident management platforms

V. Communications

Effective communications are critical to successful emergency operations. Pearl River County maintains an interoperable communications infrastructure to ensure reliable information exchange among first responders, EOC staff, partner agencies, and the public.

Primary Systems:

Mississippi Wireless Information Network (MSWIN)

- Satellite phones and cellular backup devices
- Internet-based platforms (WebEOC, email, secure portals)

Coordination Protocols:

- Communications planning is coordinated through the Communications Officer who also serves as Communications Unit Leader (COML) under the ICS structure.
- Redundant systems are maintained to ensure continuous communication.
- Procedures are established for frequency management, message prioritization, and incident-specific communication needs.

Public Alerts and Notifications:

- Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)
- NOAA Weather Radio
- Emergency Alert System (EAS)
- County Alert Systems (SMS, voice, email)
- Social media and public website updates

Pearl River County EMA ensures regular testing and training to maintain communication readiness and coordinates closely with MEMA's communications protocols for statewide interoperability.

VI. Administration, Finance, and Logistics

Pearl River County will manage emergency response and recovery resources effectively through coordinated administrative, financial, and logistical systems. These processes ensure accountability, resource tracking, and timely support.

Administration:

- Accurate records will be maintained for all incident-related activities, including personnel time, resource usage, and decisions made.
- Documentation is vital for legal compliance and cost recovery.

Finance:

- County agencies are responsible for tracking their expenditures during emergency operations.
- Pearl River County EMA coordinates with MEMA and FEMA to apply for reimbursement through state and federal disaster assistance programs.
- All purchases and contracts follow county procurement guidelines and federal grant requirements.

Logistics:

- Resource requests and deliveries are coordinated through the Logistics Section of the EOC.
- Mutual aid agreements and vendor contracts are leveraged to supplement local inventories.
- Staging areas, points of distribution (PODs), and shelter supply chains are managed according to established protocols.

These functions are regularly reviewed and exercised to ensure readiness and compliance with applicable laws and funding agency requirements.

VII. Plan Development and Maintenance

The Pearl River County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) is responsible for the development, coordination, and maintenance of this Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP). This plan is a living document and will be reviewed biennially or following any significant incident, exercise, or policy update that affects emergency operations.

Development Process:

- The plan is developed in accordance with guidance from MEMA, FEMA, the National Response Framework (NRF), and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- It incorporates the FEMA Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101 and aligns with the Homeland Security National Preparedness Goal.

Maintenance and Updates:

- Agencies and departments with responsibilities in this plan are responsible for updating their respective roles, contact information, and supporting procedures.
- The EMA will coordinate updates based on input from local, state, and federal partners.
- Plan revisions will consider after-action reports (AARs), changes in threat and hazard profiles, and improvements identified through exercises.

Training and Exercises:

- EMA may activate this plan during training and exercises to validate procedures and ensure operational readiness.
- Training and exercise participation from all primary and support agencies is encouraged to ensure familiarity and effectiveness.

Distribution and Accessibility:

- The plan will be distributed to all participating agencies and local jurisdictions.
- Public access will be provided through the county website and physical copies will be available at government offices and public libraries.

This structured maintenance process ensures the CEMP remains current, actionable, and aligned with emergency management best practices.

VIII. Authorities and References

This section outlines the legal and policy foundations that guide the development and implementation of the Pearl River County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

Federal Authorities:

- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 93-288, as amended)
- Homeland Security Act of 2002
- Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5)
- Presidential Policy Directive 8 (PPD-8): National Preparedness
- National Response Framework (NRF)
- National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- FEMA Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101, Version 3.0

State Authorities:

- Mississippi Emergency Management Law (MS Code Ann. § 33-15-1 et seq.)
- Executive Order No. 932 (Adoption of NIMS for Mississippi)
- Mississippi State Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (State CEMP)

Local Authorities:

- Pearl River County Board of Supervisors Resolutions and Ordinances
- Local Emergency Operations Ordinances
- Mutual Aid Agreements with neighboring counties and municipalities

These authorities serve as the foundation for coordination, response, and recovery efforts in Pearl River County and ensure alignment with state and federal emergency management systems.

IX. Appendices

Appendix A: Glossary

- **Area Command (Unified Area Command):** An organization established to oversee the management of multiple incidents handled by separate ICS organizations or to manage large incidents involving several Incident Management Teams. Area Command sets overall strategy, prioritizes resources, and ensures consistent objectives are met.

Appendix B: Acronyms

- **EOC:** Emergency Operations Center
- **ESF:** Emergency Support Function
- **FEMA:** Federal Emergency Management Agency
- **GIS:** Geographic Information Systems
- **ICS:** Incident Command System
- **JIC:** Joint Information Center
- **JIS:** Joint Information System
- **MEMA:** Mississippi Emergency Management Agency
- **MSWIN:** Mississippi Wireless Information Network
- **NIMS:** National Incident Management System
- **NRF:** National Response Framework
- **PIO:** Public Information Officer
- **POD:** Point of Distribution
- **RRCC:** Regional Response Coordination Center
- **SEOC:** State Emergency Operations Center
- **VOAD:** Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster
- **WEA:** Wireless Emergency Alerts

X. Emergency Support Functions (ESFs)

Pearl River County uses Incident Support Model (ISM) to coordinate response and recovery operations. This includes ESF's that align with MEMA and FEMA's national ESF structure to ensure compatibility. Each ESF will activate based on the nature and scope of the incident and provide regular updates.

- **ESF-1 Transportation:** Coordinates the use and restoration of transportation infrastructure; supports evacuation.
- **ESF-2 Communications:** Ensures communication systems are operational and interoperable.
- **ESF-3 Public Works and Engineering:** Manages debris removal, infrastructure repair, and damage assessment.
- **ESF-4 Firefighting:** Coordinates fire suppression efforts and mutual aid.
- **ESF-5 Emergency Management:** Oversees overall coordination and situational awareness.
- **ESF-6 Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services:** Manages shelters, feeding, and human services.
- **ESF-7 Logistics:** Coordinates resource support, including supplies and facilities.
- **ESF-8 Public Health and Medical Services:** Oversees public health, EMS, hospitals, and fatality management.
- **ESF-9 Search and Rescue:** Provides technical search and rescue operations.
- **ESF-10 Hazardous Materials:** Coordinates response to hazardous materials spills and releases.
- **ESF-11 Agriculture and Natural Resources:** Addresses food supply safety, animal rescue, and agricultural issues.
- **ESF-12 Energy:** Restores energy systems and coordinates utility providers.
- **ESF-13 Public Safety and Security:** Ensures law enforcement, security, and public safety.
- **ESF-14 Long-Term Recovery:** Coordinates recovery and redevelopment planning.
- **ESF-15 External Affairs:** Manages public information and media relations.
- **ESF-16 Military Support:** Coordinates National Guard and Department of Defense support as needed.

XI. Functional Annexes

Functional Annexes provide detailed operational guidance for cross-cutting response capabilities that support multiple hazards. Each annex defines roles, responsibilities, coordination mechanisms, and standard operating procedures.

- **Evacuation Annex:** Outlines evacuation zones, decision criteria, transportation support, and traffic control measures.
- **Sheltering Annex:** Identifies shelter locations, staffing needs, accessibility considerations, and logistics for feeding and supplies.
- **Mass Care Annex:** Details provision of basic human needs (food, water, medical) and coordination with VOADs and the Red Cross.
- **Donations and Volunteer Management Annex:** Establishes procedures for managing unsolicited donations and spontaneous volunteers.
- **Continuity of Operations (COOP) Annex:** Describes plans to maintain essential government functions during major disruptions.

XII. Incident Annexes

Incident Annexes describe specific strategies and procedures for responding to particular hazards that are likely or significant to Pearl River County. These annexes ensure specialized actions and coordination are clearly defined.

- **Tornado and Severe Weather Annex:** Provides early warning protocols, shelter guidance, and rapid damage assessment procedures.
- **Hurricane/Tropical Storm Annex:** Includes pre-landfall planning, evacuation/reentry coordination, and debris clearance strategies.
- **Flood Annex:** (Includes High Risk Dam failures) Details real-time monitoring, flood response zones, and coordination with public works, NWS, and MDEQ Dam Safety.
- **Hazardous Materials Annex:** Defines response to fixed facility and transportation-related chemical releases, including decontamination.
- **Earthquake Annex:** Addresses response to potential seismic events related to the New Madrid Seismic Zone.
- **Winter Weather Annex:** Describes school closures, roadway treatment, and continuity of services during snow or ice events.
- **Public Health Annex:** Supports response to pandemics, epidemics, or other health emergencies, including mass prophylaxis.

Each annex is maintained and regularly reviewed in coordination with EMA to ensure consistency and readiness.