

## CHILD WELFARE SERVICES DISASTER RESPONSE PLAN TEMPLATE

County & Agency Name: Imperial County DSS  
Children's Services

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This template is intended to be used as a guide to help counties incorporate the 2006 federal disaster response criteria as part of local child welfare plans. Minors in the probation system must also be included in the plan. County plans must be amended to include Child Welfare Services (CWS) Disaster Response Plans and be operational by September 28, 2007.

In September 2006, Congress passed the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006 (Public Law (PL) 109-288). PL 109-288 amended Part B of Title IV of the Social Security Act to reauthorize the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. Among other changes, PL 109-288 established requirements for states on disaster planning in child welfare under Section 6 (a) (16). Accordingly, counties are requested to address the following program areas in developing local disaster readiness plans.

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CWS Disaster Response Criteria A:	Identify, locate, and continue availability of services for children under State care or supervision who are displaced or adversely affected by a disaster:
Essential Function:	<b>1. Identification and location process of children who may be displaced</b>
Process Description:	

	<p><b>Children and Family Services are committed to locating Court dependent and ICPC Children in the event of a disaster and will :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify area of Disaster by zip code and match to child’s home zip code found on <b><i>Emergency Preparedness List</i></b>. This list identifies the child’s placement address and the name and phone number of the child’s caregiver and also identifies the assigned Social Worker, the Service Component, the child’s next Court date, and child’s and parents attorney information. The list will be distributed in paper copy, saved to a portable (flash) drive as well as sent to each Program Manager via email. Updated copies will be distributed BI-weekly and stored in the <b><i>Emergency Preparedness Notebook</i></b>.</li> <li>• Call caregivers at their home, work or emergency contact phone number to find out how the family is and what their plans are and if necessary direct them to a local shelter.</li> <li>• If phones are not operable, in or out of county, and when it is safe to travel, staff will conduct home visits to check on the welfare of children and families.</li> <li>• A list of children located will be kept for the duration of the disaster and until the appropriate persons are contacted.</li> </ul> <p>If Disaster Relief Shelters have been established, Children and Family Services will, as communication and confidentiality allows, compare lists when searching for children and their families.</p>
Essential Function:	2. <b>Communication process with child care providers</b>
Process Description:	<p>All out of home caregivers are required to complete an <b><i>Emergency Plan</i></b>, which includes emergency contacts. The plan is kept on file in the Relative Approval/Licensing office. The plan is available to Child Welfare staff if staff needs to connect with emergency contacts during a disaster. The plan requests the caregiver list an out of county contact because it is sometimes easier to call out of county during a disaster. Caregivers are instructed to call the established 800 number and report their status after a disaster.</p>
Essential Function:	3. <b>Identification of evacuation procedures – Event known in advance</b>

<p>Process Description:</p>	<p>The Imperial County Sheriff’s Department has jurisdiction in an emergency involving evacuation within the unincorporated areas and contract cities. As a practical matter, the decision to evacuate should be a joint Unified Command decision (Sheriffs, Fire Department, CHP, Local Police Departments, and Hazardous Material Authority). Several types of hazards may require the temporary relocation of people from threatened areas.</p> <p>Under ideal circumstances there will be enough time for radio and television stations to broadcast the required evacuation information via the Emergency Alert System. Also, if sufficient time is available, copies of the evacuation notice can be locally produced and distributed. Regardless of the means, the evacuation warning should include minimum information such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type of evacuation( voluntary or mandatory)</li> <li>• Best available route(s) out of the area</li> <li>• Location of evacuation center(s) / shelters</li> <li>• Anticipated duration of the emergency</li> <li>• Time remaining before a situation becomes critical</li> </ul> <p>Specific evacuation requirements will vary with each situation, but should be carried out in a manner consistent with other Critical Functions.</p>
<p>Essential Function:</p>	<p><b>4. Identification of evacuation procedures – Event not known in advance</b></p>
<p>Process Description:</p>	<p>Emergency Evacuation procedures for facilities such as The Betty Jo McNeece Receiving home and the Juvenile Hall shall be carried out in compliance with established evacuation procedures for those facilities and in accordance with the Imperial County Evacuation Annex, The Imperial County Building Evacuation Guidelines, May 2005 and the County Sheriff’s Evacuation Guidelines, July 1999, Copies of which are located in the <b><i>Emergency Preparedness Notebook</i></b>. Contact information for Probation Youth in or out of county including the name, address, and phone number of their placement can be accessed through the JALAN System. Caregivers for probation youth have contact information for the assigned Probation Officer, the Division Manager and the Chief Deputy.</p>
<p>Essential Function:</p>	<p><b>5. Identification of shelters</b></p>

<p>Process Description:</p>	<p>The American Red Cross (ARC) has been designated, nationwide, by FEMA as the agency to operate shelters for disaster relief. Therefore, the County will rely upon its ARC counterpart to operate shelters as needed within the County.</p> <p>The Imperial County Department of Social Services is tasked with operating shelters in the event the ARC is unable to immediately operate sufficient shelters. Imperial County Department of Social Services staff has been trained by the Red Cross in mass care shelter operations and has conducted shelter operations exercises with the Red Cross.</p> <p>Imperial County Social Services include the following departments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult and Family Services</li> <li>• CalWORKS program</li> <li>• Children and Family Services</li> <li>• Medi-Cal / Food Stamps</li> <li>• Transitional Assistance</li> <li>• Veterans Affairs</li> </ul>
<p>Essential Function:</p>	<p><b>6. Parental notification procedures</b></p>
<p>Process Description:</p>	<p>Program Managers will assign Clerical staff the responsibility of notification of Parents and Guardians of Court Dependent Children as soon as Program Manager has received notification of child's contact from Line Supervisor. Clerical Staff will contact Parents and Guardians and apprise them of children's condition and location. Clerical Supervisor will maintain a list of all parents contacted. This list will be kept for the duration of the disaster and until all appropriate persons are located. The use of Clerical staff for this function will allow Social Workers and Social Worker Aide staff to be used to locate and contact children and families.</p>
<p>Essential Function:</p>	<p><b>7. Alternative processes for providing continued services</b></p>

<p>Process Description:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Brawley One Stop Center located at 860 Main St in Brawley California has a computer server and access to CWS / CMS systems. This center could be used as an alternative site to continue to provide services to clients. CalWorks, Medi-Cal / Food Stamps and Adult Services can also be accessed at this site. Children’s Services also has been assigned twelve tokens which will allow users to access CWS/CMS through non CWS/CMS computers and could be used in the event of an emergency.</li> </ul>
<p>Essential Function:</p>	<p><b>8. Staff assignment process</b></p>
<p>Process Description:</p>	<p>Program Managers will contact Line Supervisors and coordinate the response to the disaster. The first priority will be to assess the physical plant and communication resources to determine if the work environment is safe and conducive to emergency operations. Program Managers will coordinate Social Worker Supervisors and staff in efforts to locate and contact Child Welfare Supervised Children and maintain a list of all children located and their new locations and contact numbers if applicable.</p> <p>This list will be kept for the duration of the disaster and until all appropriate persons are located. Line Supervisors will coordinate and direct staff to the appropriate staging area, assign specific duties and monitor the progress of individual workers attempts to locate Child Welfare Supervised Children and report the progress to the Program Managers. Line Supervisors will remain in contact with staff and maintain flight plans for any staff that are in the field. The flight plans will contain the destination address and names of children they are visiting, their planned travel route and the social worker contact phone numbers. Line Supervisors will document all Social Worker staff locations and check to make sure staff has checked in hourly.</p> <p>Social Workers will be responsible for locating Child Welfare Supervised Children and reporting back their location to Line Supervisors. Social Workers will complete flight plans containing their destination address, the name of the child they are visiting and the travel route they plan to take. Social workers will call their individual Supervisors hourly to progress report. . Clerical Staff will contact Parents and Guardians and apprise them of children’s condition and location. Clerical Supervisor will maintain a list of all parents contacted. This list will be kept for the duration of the disaster and until all appropriate persons are located.</p>
<p>Essential Function:</p>	<p><b>9. Workload planning</b></p>

<p>Process Description:</p>	<p>Program Managers will contact Line Supervisors and coordinate the response to the disaster. The first priority will be to assess the physical plant and communication resources to determine if the work environment is safe and conducive to emergency operations. Program Managers will coordinate Social Worker Supervisors and staff in efforts to locate and contact Child Welfare Supervised Children and maintain a list of all children located and their new locations and contact numbers if applicable. This list will be kept for the duration of the disaster and until all appropriate persons are located.</p> <p>Line Supervisors will coordinate and direct staff to the appropriate staging area, assign specific duties and monitor the progress of individual workers attempts to locate Child Welfare Supervised Children and report the progress to the Program Managers. Line Supervisors will remain in contact with staff and maintain flight plans for any staff that are in the field. The flight plans will contain the destination address and names of children they are visiting, their planned travel route and the social worker contact phone numbers.</p> <p>Line Supervisors will document all Social Worker staff locations and check to make sure staff has checked in hourly.</p> <p>Social Workers will be responsible for locating Child Welfare Supervised Children and reporting back their location to Line Supervisors. Social Workers will complete flight plans containing their destination address, the name of the child they are visiting and the travel route they plan to take. Social workers will call their individual Supervisors hourly to report progress.</p>
<p>Essential Function:</p>	<p><b>10. Alternative locations for operations</b></p>
<p>Process Description:</p>	<p>Imperial County Department of Social Services has identified possible alternate locations of operation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Brawley One Stop Center located at 860 Main St. in Brawley, California has a computer server and access to CWS / CMS systems.</li> </ul>

	<p>A copy of the <b>Emergency Preparedness Notebook</b> would be stored at this location. <b>The Emergency Preparedness Notebook</b> contains the <b>Emergency Preparedness List</b>. This list identifies the child's placement address and the name and phone number of the child's caregiver and also identifies the assigned Social Worker, the Service Component and the child's next Court date. The list will be distributed in paper copy, saved to a portable (flash) drive as well as sent to each Program Manager via email. Copies are updated BI-Weekly.</p> <p>A Disaster Preparedness Mutual Aid MOU has been drafted and agreed upon to provide mutual assistance for Imperial, San Diego, San Bernardino, Orange, Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara and Riverside Counties.</p>
Essential Function:	<b>11. Orientation and ongoing training</b>
Process Description:	<p>Imperial County Department of Social Services employees have attended mandatory disaster preparedness training provided by Imperial County Office of Emergency Services which detailed the role of a Disaster Service Worker.</p> <p>Imperial County Department of Social Services Representatives have attended the Red Cross Mutual Aid Shelter Training which prepared staff to effectively and sensitively assist in emergency operations as a team while meeting the needs of people displaced by a disaster.</p> <p>Imperial County Department of Social Services Staff has participated in Red Cross shelter operation exercises including Operation Golden Guardian Earthquake drill on November 13, 2008.</p> <p>Program Managers have reviewed, and have a copy available in the <b>Disaster Preparedness Notebook</b> of The Imperial County Area - Emergency Operations Plan ( EOP )</p>

<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria B:</b>	<b>Respond, as appropriate, to new child welfare cases in areas adversely affected by a disaster, and provide services in those cases:</b>
Essential Function:	<b>1. New child welfare investigation process</b>
Process Description:	The Imperial County Department of Social Services will continue to provide services in areas adversely affected by a disaster and will investigate any new child welfare cases in those areas.
Essential Function:	<b>2. Implementation process for providing new services</b>
Process Description:	The Imperial County Department of Social Services will maintain its 24-hour hotline and continue to investigate any new referrals. In the event that the main office is damaged and inoperable, the Child Abuse Hot line could be switched to another land base line or to a mobile phone numbers and new referrals could be dispatched from that location. Emergency Response Supervisors will check with the local Office of Emergency Services to determine if it is safe to travel into the location. If it is determined that it is safe to travel, staff will conduct home visits to check on the families.
<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria C:</b>	<b>Remain in communication with caseworkers and other essential child welfare personnel who are displaced because of a disaster:</b>
Essential Function:	<b>1. Communication structure – staff</b>
Process Description:	Social Workers carry a department issued cell phone with a fully charged battery at all times when in the field. Social Workers will complete flight plans containing their destination address, the name of the child they are visiting and the travel route they plan to take. Social workers will call their individual Supervisors hourly to report progress. Line Supervisors will document all Social Worker staff locations and check to make sure staff has checked in hourly.

Essential Function:	<b>2. Communication structure – child welfare personnel (phone tree)</b>
Process Description:	Program Managers will contact line supervisors who would then contact department staff, all of which are classified as Disaster Service Workers using employee phone listing or department cell phone listing directory. The updated directory will be located in the <b><i>Emergency Preparedness Notebook</i></b> .
Essential Function:	<b>3. Communication structure – contracted services</b>
Process Description:	All out of home caregivers are required to complete an <b>Emergency Plan</b> , which includes emergency contacts. The plan is kept on file in the Relative Approval/Licensing office. The plan is available to Child Welfare staff if staff needs to connect with emergency contacts during a disaster. The plan requests the caregiver list an out of county contact because it is sometimes easier to call out of county during a disaster. Caregivers are instructed to call the established 800 number and report their status after a disaster.
Essential Function:	<b>4. Communication process when all normal channels are unavailable</b>
Process Description:	In the event the disaster has rendered the telephone network inoperative the County Communications Center has access to a Motorola 800 Smartnet II trunked 800 MHz Radio system with conventional 800MHz repeaters for coverage in rural areas of the county. The Office of Emergency Services will coordinate communications. Radio Communications for catastrophic event response is addressed on multiple levels with the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type of event</li> <li>• Impacted area</li> <li>• Who the responders are</li> <li>• Condition of in-place radio systems infrastructure</li> <li>• Support resource availability</li> </ul>

Essential Function:	<b>5. Communication frequency</b>
Process Description:	The County Communications center has access to all individual fire and safety frequencies. And will provide access to these frequencies
Essential Function:	<b>6. Communication with media</b>
Process Description:	The County has a Public Information Officer (PIO) who acts as a spokesperson as directed. The PIO directs plans, organizes and coordinates a public relation and information dissemination program for the County. All Communication with the media would be coordinated with the Public Information Officer.
Essential Function:	<b>Communication with volunteers</b>
Process Description:	Imperial County Children and Family Services will, as communication and confidentiality allow, compare lists when searching for children and their families. Imperial County will coordinate with the Red Cross local chapter for Mutual Aid and Shelter Operation.
Essential Function:	<b>7. Establishment of a toll-free number prior to disaster (include TTY)</b>
Process Description:	Imperial County has an established Toll Free Number <b>1-866-858-7750</b> .

<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria D:</b>	<b>Preserve essential program records:</b>
<b>Essential Function:</b>	<b>1. Record preservation process</b>
<b>Process Description:</b>	Program Managers will contact Line Supervisors and coordinate the response to the disaster. The first priority will be to assess the physical plant and communication resources to determine if the work environment is safe and conducive to emergency operations. If the primary location is deemed not safe for emergency operations and if safety conditions permit all records will be moved to secondary location for preservation. Duplicate copies of records such as court reports; case plans etc. could be generated from CWS/CMS system at alternate location of operation.
<b>Essential Function:</b>	<b>2. Use of off-site back-up system</b>
<b>Process Description:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Brawley One Stop Center located at 860 Main St in Brawley, California has a computer server and access to CWS / CMS systems. All records could be accessed from this location in the instance the main location computer servers were operable.</li> <li>• Provisions have been made for access to CWS / CMS in neighboring counties that were not affected by the disaster.</li> <li>• A copy of the <b>Emergency Preparedness Notebook</b> would be stored at this location. <b>The Emergency Preparedness Notebook</b> contains the <b>Emergency Preparedness List</b>. This list identifies the child's placement address and the name and phone number of the child's caregiver and also identifies the assigned Social Worker, the Service Component and the Child's next court date.</li> <li>• The list will be distributed in paper copy, saved to a portable (flash) drive as well as sent to each Program Manager via email. Copies are updated BI-Weekly.</li> </ul>

<b>CWS Disaster Response Criteria E:</b>	<b>Coordinate services and share information with other states:</b>
Essential Function:	<b>1. Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children reporting process</b>
Process Description:	<p>Imperial County will report back by phone or Fax to the Social Worker / Agency with primary responsibility on a child's status by contacting both the local sending state's Child Welfare office and the sending state's ICPC Consultant.</p> <p>The response time to inform an out of state agency of the child's status will depend on the ability to phone/fax/email. Note: the Department is not able to email names of clients. However, an email could be sent referencing the name of the receiving and sending state social workers.</p> <p>A current list of all State and County ICPC contact numbers will be maintained in the <b><i>Emergency Preparedness Notebook</i></b>.</p>
Essential Function:	<b>2. Mental health providers</b>
Process Description:	The County shelter coordinator will make arrangements with the Department of Public Health, Behavioral Health, and other agencies, to provide the necessary support personnel at shelters.
Essential Function:	<b>3. Courts</b>
Process Description:	<b><i>The Emergency Preparedness List</i></b> has the next court date for all individual cases and a listing of the child's and parents attorney contact information. This information will allow the court process to continue in the event that data systems were not accessible.

Essential Function:	<b>4. Federal partners</b>
Process Description:	Manage response to Multi-agency and Multi-jurisdictional emergencies in accordance with the Standardized Emergency Management System and the National Incident Management System.
Essential Function:	<b>5. CDSS</b>
Process Description:	Provide Support and Mutual Aid as provided for in the California Emergency Services Act.
Essential Function:	<b>6. Tribes</b>
Process Description:	ICWA Supervisor will keep Tribes apprised of ongoing efforts to locate Dependent Children who are under the Indian Child Welfare Act.
Essential Function:	<b>7. Volunteers</b>
Process Description:	If Disaster Relief Shelters have been established, Children and Family Services will, as communication and confidentiality allows, compare lists when searching for children and their families.