

Public Health and Medical Services

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Emergency Support Functions

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Emergency Support Functions

Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) is the grouping of governmental and certain private sector capabilities into an organizational structure to provide support, resources, program implementation, and services that are most likely needed to save lives, protect property and the environment, restore essential services and critical infrastructure, and help victims and communities return to normal following domestic incidents.

Emergency Support Functions

- ESF1 Transportation
- ESF2 Communications
- ESF3 Public Works and Engineering
- ESF4 Firefighting
- ESF5 Emergency Management
- ESF6 Mass Care, Housing, and Human Services
- ESF7 Resources Support
- ESF8 Public Health and Medical Services
- ESF9 Urban Search and Rescue
- ESF10 Oil and Hazardous Materials Response
- ESF11 Agriculture and Natural Resources
- ESF12 Energy
- ESF13 Public Safety and Security
- ESF14 Long-term Community Recovery and Mitigation
- ESF15 External Affairs

There are 15 ESFs, and HHS is the primary agency responsible for ESF 8- Public Health and Medical Services. ESF 8 is coordinated by the Secretary of HHS principally through the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR). ESF 8 resources can be activated through the Stafford Act or the Public Health Service Act.

ESF 8 – Public Health and Medical Services provides the mechanism for coordinated Federal assistance to supplement State, Tribal, and local resources in response to an emergency.

ESF 8 – Public Health and Medical Services

ESF 8 – Public Health and Medical Services provides the mechanism for coordinated Federal assistance to supplement State, Tribal, and local resources in response to the following:

- Public health and medical care needs
- Veterinary and/or animal health issues in coordination with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- Potential or actual incidents of national significance
- A developing potential health and medical situation

ESF #8 involves supplemental assistance to State, Tribal, and jurisdictional governments in identifying and meeting the public health and medical needs of victims of major disasters or public health and medical emergencies. This support is categorized in the following functional areas:

- Assessment of public health/medical needs
- Public health surveillance
- Medical care personnel
- Medical equipment and supplies
- Patient movement
- Hospital care
- Outpatient services
- Victim decontamination
- Safety and security of human drugs, biologics, medical devices, veterinary drugs, etc.
- Blood products and services
- Food safety and security
- Agriculture feed safety and security
- Worker health and safety
- All hazard consultation and technical assistance and support
- Mental health and substance abuse care
- Public health and medical information
- Vector control
- Potable water/wastewater and solid waste disposal, and other environmental health issues
- Victim identification/mortuary services
- Veterinary services.
- Federal public health and medical assistance consists of medical materiel, personnel, and technical assistance.

Health and Medical Response Lead Partners

HHS leads and coordinates the overall health and medical response to national-level incidents through coordination, along with the following.

- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Defense
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- Department of State
- Agency for International Development
- Department of Energy
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Department of Homeland Security
- General Services Administration
- Department of Interior
- U.S. Postal Service
- Department of Justice
- American Red Cross