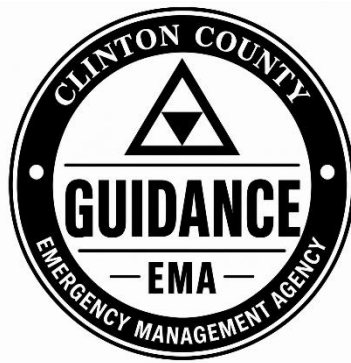




EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

10.01 – EMA GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Special Events, Camps, and Temporary Gatherings

Published: June 2026

Administrative Handling Note: **UNRESTRICTED**

Legal review status: **TO BE REVIEWED**

Prepared by: **Clinton County Emergency Management Agency**

Purpose: This guidance document is intended to support preparedness, situational awareness, and emergency coordination for temporary gatherings occurring within Clinton County, Ohio. It is designed to assist camps, fairs, festivals, youth activities, church groups, and other organized events in improving readiness for severe weather, emergencies, and operational disruptions.

EVENT ORGANIZER BRIEFING

10.01. SPECIAL EVENTS, CAMPS, AND TEMPORARY GATHERINGS

Clinton County EMA Guidance Document

What This Document Is

This guidance document provides preparedness, weather safety, and emergency coordination recommendations for camps, fairs, festivals, youth activities, church gatherings, and temporary assemblies occurring within Clinton County, Ohio. It also outlines optional support available through Clinton County Emergency Alerts (CCEA), DTN Weather Observation Notification Support, and National Weather Service (NWS) coordination support.

Why It Matters to Organizations

Temporary gatherings often occur during periods of increased weather risk and may involve volunteers, parent leaders, or temporary staff with limited emergency management experience. Early awareness, simple planning, and reliable communications can improve participant safety, accountability, emergency coordination, and protective actions during severe weather or other incidents. This information also helps Clinton County EMA, law enforcement, fire departments, EMS, and Public Health maintain awareness of larger gatherings during emergencies.

Key Takeaways

- This document is informational guidance, not a permit or regulatory requirement.
- Clinton County EMA may provide optional CCEA and DTN notification support for eligible events and camps.
- DTN weather observation notifications are limited to monitored locations in Blanchester, Clarksville, Lees Creek, New Vienna, Port William, Sabina, and Wilmington.
- Organizations are encouraged to identify no more than four (4) adult emergency coordination contacts.
- Outdoor warning sirens should not be relied upon as the sole warning method.
- NWS event weather support may be available when requested at least one week in advance.

What This Document Does Not Do

This document does not approve or permit events, establish mandatory operational requirements, guarantee emergency response coverage, replace National Weather Service warnings, or remove organizer responsibility for participant safety. DTN notifications are supplemental situational awareness tools and may not precisely reflect conditions at the event site.

What Event or Activity Coordinators Should Know

Organizations should identify severe weather sheltering options, accountability procedures, overnight notification methods, reunification considerations, and backup communications before activities begin. Clinton County EMA recommends maintaining multiple methods of receiving emergency information, including CCEA, NOAA Weather Radio, Wireless Emergency Alerts, weather applications, and local media. Requests for National Weather Service event support should be submitted at least one week prior to the event to allow coordination with the Wilmington Weather Forecast Office (ILN).

RECORD OF CHANGES

This section documents significant revisions, updates, and modifications made to this document to support version control, operational continuity, and historical reference. Minor formatting, spelling, or administrative corrections that do not affect operational content may not be individually tracked.

Changes are recorded in chronological order and should include the date of revision, affected section(s), a brief summary of the update, and the individual or agency responsible for the change.

This document should be reviewed periodically and updated as operational requirements, authorities, procedures, or organizational structures change.

Version	Date	Section(s) Updated	Summary of Changes	Updated By
1.0	7 May 2026	All	Initial Draft	T. Breckel, EMA
1.1	10 June 2026		Finalized draft	T. Breckel, EMA
1.2	17 June 2026		Update Wx support	T. Breckel, EMA

Contents

RECORD OF CHANGES	3
SPECIAL EVENTS, CAMPS, AND TEMPORARY GATHERINGS	6
1. Purpose	6
2. Scope.....	6
3. Planning Philosophy.....	7
4. Preparedness Considerations & Best Practices	7
Planning Philosophy.....	7
Medical & Access Considerations	8
Communications Planning	8
Severe Weather Shelter Planning.....	8
Weather Monitoring.....	8
Weather Impact Suggestions	8
Shelter Distance & Access	9
Best Shelter Options	9
Transportation Considerations	9
Heat Safety Considerations	9
Lost Child & Missing Person Considerations.....	10
Accountability & Participant Tracking.....	10
Reunification Planning.....	10
Overnight Operations	10
Water Activities & Boating.....	10
Traffic & Access Considerations	10
Vendor Coordination Considerations	10
Media & Social Media Considerations	11
Hazardous Materials & Nearby Incidents	11
Shelter-in-Place Considerations	11
5. Common Hazards Affecting Temporary Gatherings	11

6. Emergency Coordination Contacts	11
7. Clinton County Emergency Alerts (CCEA).....	12
Current Event and Camp Alert Keywords	12
8. DTN Weather Observation Notification Support	13
9. National Weather Service (NWS) Support	14
10. Shelter and Protective Actions	14
11. Situational Awareness Information Requested	15
Online Event Coordination Submission	15
12. Participation and Support Limitations	16
SOURCES	16

SPECIAL EVENTS, CAMPS, AND TEMPORARY GATHERINGS

1. Purpose

This guidance document provides preparedness, weather safety, and emergency coordination recommendations for camps, fairs, festivals, youth activities, church gatherings, temporary assemblies, and other organized events occurring within Clinton County, Ohio.

The document is intended to improve situational awareness, participant safety, emergency communications, and coordination with public safety agencies before and during incidents involving severe weather, natural hazards, medical emergencies, hazardous materials incidents, infrastructure disruptions, or other emergencies.

This document is informational in nature and does not establish permitting requirements, inspection authority, or mandatory operational standards.

2. Scope

This guidance applies to temporary gatherings and organized activities occurring within Clinton County, Ohio, including:

- Camps
- Youth activities
- Church retreats
- Scout activities
- Festivals
- Community events
- Outdoor gatherings
- Temporary assemblies
- Sporting events
- Temporary vendor events
- Agricultural and fair-related activities

This document is intended to support preparedness and coordination for both public and private organizations.

3. Planning Philosophy

Organizations should develop simple, flexible emergency plans appropriate for the size and complexity of the activity or event. Simple plans, brief discussions, and short walkthroughs before activities begin may significantly improve response during emergencies.

Organizations are encouraged to incorporate the concept of P.A.C.E. planning into preparedness activities whenever practical:

Level	Example
Primary	Main shelter / primary communications
Alternate	Backup shelter / alternate communications
Contingency	Transportation workaround / alternate staff
Emergency	Last-resort protective actions

Examples may include:

- Multiple ways to receive weather alerts
- Alternate shelter locations
- Backup communications methods
- Alternate transportation options
- Emergency accountability procedures

Conditions during emergencies may change rapidly. Organizations should remain flexible and prepared to adapt protective actions based on changing hazards, weather conditions, infrastructure impacts, or public safety guidance.

Emergencies rarely occur under ideal conditions. Darkness, weather, communications disruptions, transportation delays, stress, and incomplete information may complicate decision-making. Organizations should focus on simple, practical actions that improve participant safety, accountability, and communications during incidents.

4. Preparedness Considerations & Best Practices

Organizations are encouraged to consider the following preparedness recommendations and operational best practices prior to activities or events.

Planning Philosophy

- Simple plans are better than no plans
- Brief discussions and walkthroughs before activities begin may improve emergency response
- Flexibility and sound judgment remain critical during emergencies

Medical & Access Considerations

- Consider participants with medical, mobility, or access and functional needs considerations
- Consider refrigeration needs for medications or electrically powered medical devices

Communications Planning

- Maintain updated adult contact information
- Consider backup communications methods during cellular outages or degraded service

Severe Weather Shelter Planning

- Identify shelter locations before activities begin
- Temporary structures, tents, picnic shelters, and pavilions generally do not provide adequate tornado protection
- The best available shelter may not be located directly at the event site
- Consider travel time required to move participants to shelter
- Identify who is responsible for suspending activities or initiating sheltering actions
- Clearly identify who has authority to suspend activities, initiate sheltering, evacuate participants, or contact emergency services

Weather Monitoring

- Monitor weather conditions continuously during outdoor activities
- Maintain multiple methods of receiving weather information
- Do not rely solely on outdoor warning sirens for emergency notification
- Consider assigning a designated adult responsible for monitoring alerts and weather conditions
- Consider establishing criteria for suspending or resuming activities during severe weather
- Consider additional precautions for water activities, inflatables, or large outdoor gatherings during lightning or high wind events

Weather Impact Suggestions:

Condition	Recommended Consideration
Lightning within 30 miles	Increase weather awareness
Lightning within 15 miles	Prepare to suspend activities
Lightning within 8 miles	Move participants toward shelter
No lightning for 30 minutes	Consider resuming activities
Wind Gusts 28+ MPH	Evaluate tents, inflatables, and outdoor activities for relocation or mitigation
Wind Gusts 34+ MPH	Consider suspending tent, inflatable, or elevated outdoor operations
Wind Gusts 45+ MPH	Consider terminating outdoor operations and moving participants toward shelter
Tornado Warning	Move immediately to best available shelter

Shelter Distance & Access

- Consider how long it takes to move all participants to shelter
- Consider mobility limitations and transportation challenges
- Avoid shelter routes that may become impacted by flooding or traffic congestion
- Consider whether shelter locations are accessible for individuals with mobility limitations or access and functional needs considerations

Best Shelter Options:

Location Type	Tornado Protection	Lightning Protection	Wind Protection
Basement	Best	Best	Best
Interior Room (Lowest Floor)	Good	Good	Good
Permanent Building	Moderate to Good	Good	Moderate to Good
Large Gym / Open Span Building	Poor	Moderate	Poor
Cabin / Lodge Structure	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Vehicle	Limited	Moderate	Limited
Tent	Very Poor	Very Poor	Very Poor
Picnic Shelter / Pavilion	Very Poor	Very Poor	Very Poor
Bleachers / Grandstands	Very Poor	Very Poor	Very Poor
Open Field	None	None	None
Under Trees	Very Poor	Very Poor	Very Poor
Canoe / Boat on Water	None	None	None

Transportation Considerations

- Consider transportation limitations during evacuations or severe weather
- Plan for roadway congestion during arrival or departure operations
- Consider how severe weather may impact participant arrival or departure operations
- Consider procedures for delaying dismissal or sheltering participants during rapidly changing weather conditions

Heat Safety Considerations

- Consider hydration availability during outdoor activities
- Consider shaded rest areas or cooling locations during periods of extreme heat
- Monitor participants for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke
- Consider modifying schedules or activities during periods of excessive heat
- Ensure adult leaders understand basic heat-related illness recognition

Lost Child & Missing Person Considerations

- Designate a reunification or reporting location for separated participants
- Establish procedures for notifying law enforcement or emergency services
- Preserve the last known location and time associated with missing persons incidents
- Ensure adult leaders understand notification and accountability procedures

Accountability & Participant Tracking

- Develop accountability or headcount procedures
- Practice accountability procedures before activities begin
- Establish procedures for missing persons or separated children

Reunification Planning

- Develop procedures for parent or guardian reunification following emergencies
- Consider alternate pickup locations if the primary site becomes unusable

Overnight Operations

- Develop a method to rapidly wake and notify sleeping occupants
- Ensure adult leaders maintain access to emergency notifications overnight
- Consider backup lighting during power outages or nighttime evacuations

Water Activities & Boating

- Water activities may increase risk during severe weather or lightning events
- Consider procedures for rapidly clearing lakes, ponds, or waterways
- Ensure accountability procedures exist for participants involved in water activities

Traffic & Access Considerations

- Maintain access routes for emergency vehicles whenever possible
- Consider parking congestion, narrow roadways, or restricted access points
- Ensure adult leaders understand how emergency responders may access the site during incidents

Vendor Coordination Considerations

- Consider maintaining a basic list of participating vendors and contact information during larger events
- Consider identifying vendors using generators, propane, open flame cooking, or temporary electrical systems
- Ensure vendor layouts maintain emergency vehicle access routes whenever possible
- Consider how vendors will receive emergency notifications or protective action instructions during incidents
- Consider procedures for securing or shutting down vendor operations during severe weather or emergencies

Media & Social Media Considerations

- Consider designating one individual responsible for external communications during emergencies
- Encourage adult leaders to avoid spreading unverified information during incidents
- Consider how parent or guardian notifications may occur during emergencies

Hazardous Materials & Nearby Incidents

- Consider nearby rail lines, highways, industrial facilities, and agricultural operations
- Some incidents may require shelter-in-place rather than evacuation

Shelter-in-Place Considerations

- Some emergencies may require participants to remain indoors rather than evacuate
- Consider locations that may provide protection from airborne hazards
- Consider methods for notifying participants to move indoors rapidly
- Follow instructions provided by public safety agencies during hazardous materials incidents

5. Common Hazards Affecting Temporary Gatherings

Organizations should understand that temporary gatherings within Clinton County may be affected by:

- Severe thunderstorms
- Tornadoes
- Lightning
- Flash flooding
- Extreme heat
- High winds
- Winter weather
- Power outages
- Hazardous materials transportation incidents
- Large crowd medical emergencies
- Transportation disruptions
- Missing persons incidents

Outdoor activities and temporary structures may be particularly vulnerable to rapidly changing weather conditions.

6. Emergency Coordination Contacts

Organizations are encouraged to identify no more than four (4) adult emergency coordination contacts associated with the activity or event.

Recommended contact roles may include:

- Event Coordinator
- Activity Leader
- Parent Leader
- Camp Counselor
- Safety Coordinator
- Operations Coordinator
- Adult Leader

At least two adult contacts should be capable of receiving emergency notifications during all operational periods, including overnight hours when applicable.

Recommended contact information includes:

- Full Name
- Role or Position
- Mobile Phone Number
- Email Address

7. Clinton County Emergency Alerts (CCEA)

Organizations are encouraged to enroll key adult representatives in CCEA when available for the event or activity.

CCEA notifications may provide:

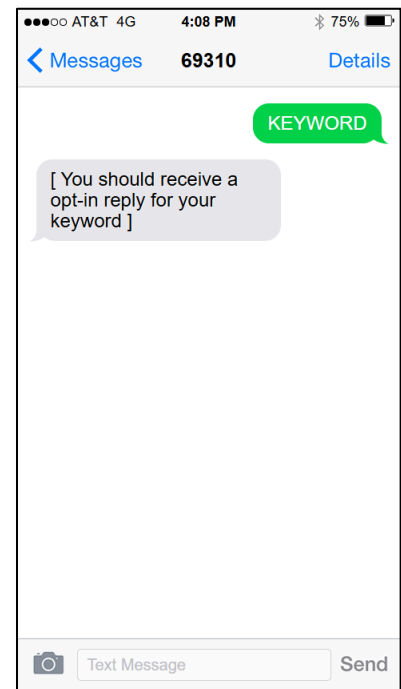
- Severe weather alerts
- Protective action information
- Emergency notifications
- Incident-related situational awareness

Current Event and Camp Alert Keywords

Additional event- or location-specific alert groups may be available through Clinton County Emergency Alerts (CCEA).

Current examples include:

Location / Activity	Enrollment Method
Camp Graham	Text CAMP GRAHAM to 69310
Denver Park	Text DENVER PARK to 69310
Camp Kirkwood	Text CAMP KIRKWOOD to 69310
Cowan Lake	Text COWAN LAKE to 69310



Additional alert enrollment information may be available at: Clinton County EMA Alerts Page (cc-ema.org/alerts).

Keyword availability may change over time. Organizations are encouraged to coordinate with Clinton County EMA prior to the activity or event to confirm available notification options.

Organizations should not rely solely on outdoor warning sirens for emergency notification. Sirens may not be heard indoors, in wooded areas, during storms, or inside tents and temporary shelters.

Multiple methods of receiving emergency information are strongly recommended.

8. DTN Weather Observation Notification Support

Clinton County EMA may provide temporary DTN Weather Observation Notification Support for camps, temporary gatherings, and outdoor events upon advance request.

Support is limited to text and/or email notifications associated with monitored locations in:

- Blanchester
- Clarksville
- Lees Creek
- New Vienna
- Port William
- Sabina
- Wilmington

These locations generally align with school locations and historically significant severe weather entry and exit corridors affecting Clinton County.

DTN notifications may include:

- Real-time lightning indicators
 - Advisory: 30 miles
 - Caution: 15 miles
 - Warning: 8 miles
- All Clear notifications when no lightning has been detected within 30 minutes for the associated range band
- National Weather Service watches and warnings
- Precipitation arrival timing (within approximately 2 hours)
- Heavy precipitation indicators and rainfall rates
- Wind speed alerts:
 - 28 MPH
 - 34 MPH
 - 45 MPH

- Storm corridor indicators involving:
 - Tornado threats
 - Dangerous thunderstorms
 - Severe hail

DTN notifications are intended to provide supplemental situational awareness only and should not replace:

- National Weather Service warnings
- On-site weather monitoring
- Protective action decision-making
- Organizer responsibility for participant safety

Notification support may be activated for:

- The day prior to the activity
- The duration of the event
- The day following the event

Notification delivery may be impacted by cellular outages, power failures, weather conditions, internet disruptions, or technology limitations.

9. National Weather Service (NWS) Support

The National Weather Service Wilmington Forecast Office (ILN) may be able to provide weather support for larger events, camps, fairs, festivals, or outdoor gatherings.

Potential support may include:

- Event weather briefings
- Forecast coordination
- Hazard awareness information
- Planning support for severe weather threats

Requests for NWS support should be submitted at least one week prior to the event to allow coordination and staffing review.

10. Shelter and Protective Actions

Organizations should identify protective action options before activities begin.

Temporary structures, tents, picnic shelters, and open pavilions generally do not provide adequate protection during tornadoes or severe thunderstorms.

Organizations should consider:

- Severe weather shelter locations
- Transportation limitations
- Overnight notification procedures
- Accountability procedures
- Reunification planning
- Backup communications methods
- Methods for rapidly waking and notifying overnight occupants during emergencies

Organizations should develop a method to rapidly notify participants during both daytime and overnight periods.

11. Situational Awareness Information Requested

To improve coordination during emergencies or disasters, organizations are encouraged to provide basic situational awareness information to Clinton County EMA prior to the activity when practical.

Requested information may include:

- Event or activity name
- Dates and times
- Physical location
- Estimated attendance
- Overnight occupancy
- Primary adult contacts
- Severe weather sheltering plan
- Generator usage
- Cooking operations
- Access and functional needs considerations

This information may help improve situational awareness for:

- Clinton County EMA
- Law Enforcement
- Fire Department(s)
- EMS
- Public Health

during incidents affecting the county or surrounding areas.

Online Event Coordination Submission

Organizations are encouraged to submit basic event and activity information online prior to the event when practical to assist with emergency coordination and situational awareness.

Online submission form: <https://www.cc-ema.org/event-activity-information>

Information submitted may help improve situational awareness for Clinton County EMA, law enforcement, fire departments, EMS, and Public Health during incidents affecting the county or surrounding areas.

12. Participation and Support Limitations

Submission of information to Clinton County EMA does not constitute:

- Event approval
- Permitting
- Inspection
- Certification
- Guaranteed emergency response coverage

Weather notifications, alerting support, and situational awareness coordination are supplemental preparedness tools intended to improve awareness and coordination.

Event organizers and activity leaders remain responsible for participant safety and protective action decisions during emergencies.

SOURCES

- Federal Emergency Management Agency. (2021). *Comprehensive preparedness guide (CPG) 101: Developing and maintaining emergency operations plans* (Version 3.0). <https://www.fema.gov>
- National Weather Service. (n.d.). *Weather safety and preparedness guidance*. <https://www.weather.gov>
- Ohio Revised Code § 5502.26. (n.d.). County emergency management agency. <https://codes.ohio.gov>
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2026). *Clinton County Area Study Annex* (Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan, Annex 03, Draft). Clinton County Emergency Management Agency.
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2026). DTN Weather Observation Notification Support materials (Unpublished internal document).