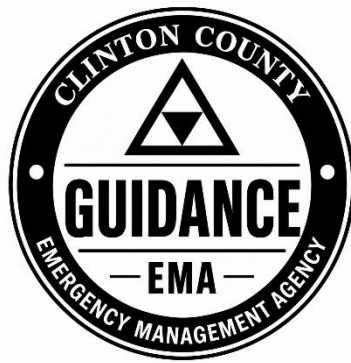




CLINTON COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (EMA) GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Clinton County Elected Officials Guide

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

Purpose: Provide elected officials with concise, Clinton County-specific guidance on their emergency management roles, responsibilities, authorities, and coordination expectations before, during, and after an emergency or disaster.

QUICK REFERENCE: First Operational Period

When Incident Command Identifies a Major Incident

When the Incident Commander—normally the responsible Fire Chief, Law Enforcement Chief, or their designee—reports that an incident is major, expanding, or likely to exceed normal jurisdictional capability, elected officials should prepare for increased coordination, public-information demands, emergency expenditures, resource requests, continuity issues, and possible EOC or MAC / Policy Group involvement.

Responders are appropriately focused on immediate life safety and incident stabilization. As a result, the broader or longer-term effects of the incident may not yet be fully recognized. Confirm that Clinton County EMA has been notified, even when no formal request for EMA support has yet been made. Early notification allows EMA to begin situational awareness, anticipate future needs, identify cascading impacts, and prepare support without interfering with Incident Command.

EMA notification does not automatically activate the EOC, create a countywide response, or transfer control of the incident. Incident Command remains responsible for tactical operations, and the affected jurisdiction retains its authority.

Elected officials may be required to remain engaged for an extended period while carrying out their statutory duties and responsibilities to the residents of their jurisdiction. Their household should therefore be prepared to function safely and independently during their absence, including the ability to communicate and sustain essential needs during disruptions.

When notified of a major or expanding incident:

1. **Remain reachable.** Ensure the Emergency Operations Center, jurisdictional departments, and your successor know how to contact you.
2. **Confirm household readiness.** Ensure your household is prepared to operate safely and sustain essential needs during your absence so you can remain focused on jurisdictional responsibilities.
3. **Confirm jurisdictional representation.** Identify who will represent your jurisdiction in the Emergency Operations Center if it is activated.
4. **Confirm succession.** Ensure another authorized official can act if you become unavailable.
5. **Appoint a spokesperson.** Identify the person who will serve as the jurisdiction's Public Information Officer or official spokesperson.
6. **Obtain verified information.** Use the established Incident Command, jurisdictional, or EOC information channel. Confirm when the information was last updated.
7. **Identify pending decisions.** Determine whether policy, legal, fiscal, or jurisdictional decisions require elected-official action.
8. **Coordinate public statements.** Do not release operational, casualty, investigative, or protective-action information before it is confirmed and coordinated.
9. **Begin financial documentation.** Confirm that personnel time, equipment use, purchases, contracts, materials, and other emergency costs are being documented.
10. **Avoid duplicate requests.** Do not independently seek the same information or resource from multiple agencies.
11. **Coordinate visits.** Pre-announce visits to the EOC, command post, or affected area whenever conditions allow.

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
0.1	6 July 2026	Initial Document Development	Began development of 10.03: Elected Officials Guide; established purpose, scope, intended audience, document structure, and ten-page planning target.	T. Breckel, EMA
0.2	8 July 2026	Sections 3–6	Added Clinton County-specific EMA formation, governance, Advisory Committee, Executive Committee, EOC, Incident Command, and MAC / Policy Group concepts.	T. Breckel, EMA
0.3	15 July 2026	Sections 6–10	Expanded elected-official responsibilities, policy-versus-tactical roles, jurisdictional representation, succession, public information, D4H use, and scalable EOC support.	T. Breckel, EMA
0.4	22 July 2026	Sections 10–18	Added disaster declarations, resource requests, emergency purchasing, financial documentation, damage assessment, recovery priorities, continuity, training, and EMA expectations.	T. Breckel, EMA
0.5	29 July 2026	Sections 3, 19–22; Quick Reference	Integrated the 1989 countywide EMA agreement, Clinton County ranked hazards, resident information links, debris-assistance link, references, contacts, and first operational period checklist.	T. Breckel, EMA
0.6	30 July 2026	Quick Reference; Sections 3.2–3.3	Added major-incident notification guidance, confirmation that EMA has been notified, and statutory Executive Committee membership requirements under R.C. 5502.26, including the nonelected representative.	T. Breckel, EMA

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ELECTED OFFICIALS GUIDE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to provide Clinton County Commissioners, municipal mayors, and township trustees with a concise explanation of their roles before, during, and after emergencies and disasters.

This guide focuses on the policy, fiscal, legal, public-information, continuity, and community-leadership responsibilities of elected officials. It does not provide tactical response procedures or replace the authority of Incident Command, local departments, governing bodies, legal counsel, or other officials acting under applicable law.

The Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan, OI: Basic Plan, is the controlling emergency management document. If this guide conflicts with the Basic Plan, applicable law, or an adopted jurisdictional policy, the controlling plan, law, or policy governs. The Basic Plan establishes Clinton County's coordination doctrine and the relationship among Incident Command, the Emergency Operations Center, and the Multi-Agency Coordination / Policy Group.

2. Scope

This guide is intended primarily for:

- Clinton County Commissioners;
- Mayors of Clinton County municipalities; and
- Clinton County township trustees.

The guide generally addresses these officials collectively as elected officials. Differences between county, municipal, and township authorities are identified only when necessary.

Each jurisdiction retains its own legal authority, governing structure, policies, personnel, property, funds, and responsibilities. Elected officials should consult their legal counsel regarding questions of statutory authority, emergency powers, procurement, meetings, declarations, liability, or other legal matters.

3. Clinton County Emergency Management Agency (EMA)

3.1. Formation

Clinton County Emergency Management Agency was established as a countywide emergency management organization through Resolution #881, signed on 8 December, 1989. The agreement was adopted by Clinton County and the participating municipalities and townships to coordinate emergency management activities throughout Clinton County.

The agreement created a countywide organization to support coordination among participating jurisdictions and with neighboring jurisdictions, the State of Ohio, the federal government, and private organizations. The statutory authority for the countywide emergency management structure is now contained in Ohio Revised Code §5502.26.

The creation of a countywide EMA did not eliminate the authority or responsibilities of county, municipal, or township governments. Clinton County EMA coordinates and supports participating jurisdictions; it does not replace their governing bodies or operating departments.

3.2. EMA Advisory Committee

The EMA Advisory Committee consists of the chief elected leadership of participating jurisdictions, including:

- The President of the Clinton County Board of Commissioners;
- Each municipal mayor; and
- The President of each township board of trustees.

The Advisory Committee normally meets near the end of each calendar year to elect the EMA Executive Committee. It may also advise the Executive Committee on countywide emergency management matters.

3.3. EMA Executive Committee

The EMA Executive Committee provides continuing direction and oversight of Clinton County EMA operations. Under Ohio Revised Code §5502.26, a countywide emergency management executive committee must include at least seven members:

- One Clinton County Commissioner, representing the Board of County Commissioners;
- Five chief executives representing the participating municipalities and townships; and
- One nonelected representative.

The countywide agreement may establish additional members and specify how they are selected.

For purposes of the Executive Committee, municipal and township chief executives are selected from the participating mayors and township leadership in accordance with the countywide agreement and the Advisory Committee's established selection process. The nonelected position provides representation outside the elected-official membership required for the other six statutory positions.

The Executive Committee:

- Provides general direction and control of the countywide emergency management program;
- Hires and oversees the EMA Director;
- Reviews agency priorities, plans, budgets, policies, and administrative matters;
- Supports implementation of the countywide emergency management program;
- Ensures the agency maintains an all-hazards Emergency Operations Plan;
- Supports the preparation and conduct of the required annual exercises; and
- Performs responsibilities assigned by Ohio law and the countywide emergency management agreement.

The EMA Director is responsible for coordinating, organizing, administering, and operating the countywide emergency management program, subject to the direction and control of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee oversees the agency and its emergency management program. It does not normally direct tactical incident operations, replace Incident Command, or perform the incident-specific role of the MAC / Policy Group.

3.4. Role of Clinton County EMA

Clinton County EMA is primarily a coordination and support organization. Its responsibilities include:

- Emergency planning and preparedness;
- Situational awareness;
- EOC coordination;
- Resource-request coordination;
- Public-information support;
- Damage-assessment coordination;
- Recovery coordination;
- Liaison with Ohio EMA and outside partners;
- Training and exercises;
- Hazard mitigation; and
- Documentation of county-coordinated emergency operations.

EMA support is scalable. It may support one municipality or township, several affected jurisdictions, or a countywide incident.

4. What EMA Does Not Do

Clinton County EMA does not:

- Command field responders;
- Replace Incident Command;
- Replace police, fire, EMS, public works, public health, utilities, or other organizations;
- Assume the legal authority of a county, municipality, township, special district, or department;
- Automatically take control when an emergency occurs;
- Guarantee that mutual-aid, state, federal, private-sector, or volunteer resources will be available;
- Guarantee reimbursement for emergency costs;
- Determine final state or federal assistance eligibility;
- Routinely speak on behalf of another jurisdiction without clear authorization; or
- Remove the affected jurisdiction's responsibility for its decisions, records, property, personnel, costs, and recovery actions.

EMA may advise, coordinate, document, connect, and support. The responsible jurisdiction remains accountable for decisions within its lawful authority.

5. Emergency Coordination Structure

Clinton County uses three related levels of emergency coordination:

1. **Incident Command** – Tactical operations.
2. **Emergency Operations Center** – Operational coordination.
3. **MAC / Policy Group** – Policy and strategic oversight.

These levels support one another but have different responsibilities.

5.1. Incident Command

Incident Command directs operations at or near the incident site. It determines how responders will conduct tactical activities and is responsible for managing assigned personnel, equipment, safety, operational objectives, and field coordination.

Incident Command priorities generally follow this order:

1. Life safety
2. Incident stabilization
3. Property conservation
4. Protection of the environment

Elected officials should not direct individual responders, tactical assignments, apparatus placement, rescue methods, traffic-control points, or other field actions unless they separately possess lawful operational authority within the incident organization.

5.2. Emergency Operations Center

The Emergency Operations Center supports the incident by coordinating:

- Situational awareness;
- Resources and logistics;
- Department and jurisdictional representatives;
- Public information;
- Policy support;
- to recovery.
- Damage assessment;
- Documentation;
- Planning for future operational periods; and
- Transition

The EOC does not command field responders.

An EOC activation is scalable and does not automatically mean that the entire county is involved. Clinton County EMA may activate or operate an EOC to support one municipality or township during a local emergency. Representatives from that jurisdiction and only those partner organizations needed for the incident may participate. Unaffected jurisdictions may continue normal operations.

Detailed EOC postures, activation levels, staffing structures, and procedures are contained in the Basic Plan and supporting documents.

5.3. MAC / Policy Group

The MAC / Policy Group addresses incident-specific policy, legal, fiscal, jurisdictional, and priority-setting matters.

The elected-official membership of the MAC / Policy Group is based on the jurisdictions affected by the incident. This may include the appropriate Clinton County Commissioner, municipal Mayor, or Township Trustee representing an affected

jurisdiction. If unavailable, the chief elected official may designate another member of the governing body, in writing, to act in their absence with the full authority of that position for the duration of the emergency or until the designation is withdrawn. Unaffected jurisdictions are not automatically included.

Its membership reflects the jurisdictions and organizations involved in the response. Participation may vary considerably:

- During a limited incident, members may receive one briefing and have no further duties.
- During a complex incident, members may remain highly engaged throughout multiple operational periods.
- Large incidents may require coordination among neighboring counties, Ohio agencies, federal agencies, utilities, hospitals, schools, private organizations, and other partners.

The MAC / Policy Group may address:

- Policy direction;
- Emergency expenditures;
- Legal questions;
- Competing jurisdictional priorities;
- Scarce-resource allocation;
- Disaster declarations;
- Continuity of government;
- Significant public messaging;
- Intercounty or state coordination;
- Long-duration impacts; and
- Recovery priorities.

The MAC / Policy Group does not replace Incident Command or direct field tactics.

5.4. Governance Groups Are Not the Same

The three elected-official structures have different purposes:

- **EMA Advisory Committee:** Meets near the end of the year and elects the EMA Executive Committee, unless a special meeting is required to fill a vacancy or replace an Executive Committee member.
- **EMA Executive Committee:** Provides continuing oversight of EMA operations.
- **MAC / Policy Group:** Forms or operates as needed during an EOC-supported emergency or disaster.

An elected official may serve in more than one of these structures, but the authority and purpose of each are different.

6. ROLE OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

During an emergency, an elected official's primary role remains that of Mayor, Commissioner, or Trustee.

The official's greatest value is not performing tactical response tasks. It is maintaining lawful government, representing the jurisdiction, resolving policy questions, supporting necessary fiscal decisions, providing community leadership, and helping maintain public trust.

Elected officials become particularly important when:

- No existing policy addresses the issue;
- Authority has not been delegated;
- A decision requires governing-body or chief-elected-official approval;
- A jurisdiction will pay, receive, deposit, or commit funds;
- Competing priorities cannot be resolved operationally;

- A local disaster declaration is being considered;
- A legal or jurisdictional question arises;
- A significant public statement requires leadership involvement;
- Continuity of government is threatened; or
- Long-term recovery priorities must be established.

When a lawfully adopted policy or delegation already identifies who may act, elected-official involvement should not unnecessarily duplicate or delay that action. For example, a jurisdiction may have already delegated authority for an evacuation recommendation, road closure, emergency purchase, utility action, or other time-sensitive decision.

6.1. Policy Direction Versus Tactical Direction

Elected officials may:

- Establish desired policy outcomes;
- Define legal, fiscal, or jurisdictional constraints;
- Approve jurisdictional commitments;
- Resolve competing priorities;
- Authorize expenditures when required;
- Establish recovery priorities; and
- Provide community-level leadership.

Elected officials should not:

- Direct tactical assignments;
- Bypass Incident Command;
- Independently redirect responders or equipment;
- Issue conflicting protective-action guidance;
- Promise resources that have not been confirmed; or
- Delay actions already delegated to qualified officials.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE AN EMERGENCY

Effective crisis leadership begins before the emergency.

Elected officials should:

- Understand their jurisdiction's emergency authorities;
- Know how to contact Clinton County EMA and key jurisdictional officials;
- Review the Clinton County EOP and applicable local plans;
- Understand who may act when the primary official is unavailable;
- Identify personnel who may represent the jurisdiction in an EOC;
- Prepare to appoint a jurisdictional spokesperson at the beginning of an incident;
- Understand existing emergency purchasing and contracting procedures;
- Support emergency planning, training, exercises, and mitigation;
- Ensure critical records can be accessed during disruptions;
- Understand the hazards most likely to affect the jurisdiction;
- Review the applicable Countywide or community Lifeline reference and understand the essential services, dependencies, and

potential cascading impacts within the jurisdiction; and

- Prepare their household to function safely and independently during their absence.

An elected official may be required to remain engaged for an extended period while carrying out statutory duties and responsibilities to the residents of the jurisdiction. Their household should therefore be prepared for emergencies, understand how to communicate when normal systems are disrupted, and be able to sustain itself without requiring the official to leave response or continuity duties to address avoidable household needs.

A local emergency that does not require countywide action may still require EMA support. If requested, Clinton County EMA may operate an EOC in support of the affected jurisdiction using the jurisdiction's representatives and appropriate county partners.

Each jurisdiction should identify individuals capable of serving in that EOC and maintain a clear succession for officials and representatives who may act when the primary person is unavailable.

8. RESPONSIBILITIES DURING AN EMERGENCY

During an emergency, elected officials should:

- Remain reachable;
- Maintain lawful decision-making authority;
- Confirm who represents the jurisdiction in the EOC;
- Appoint or confirm the jurisdiction's spokesperson;
- Obtain information through established channels;
- Participate in the MAC / Policy Group when their jurisdiction is affected and policy, legal, fiscal, jurisdictional, continuity, or priority-setting decisions require their involvement;
- Make timely policy and fiscal decisions;
- Support protective actions when authority has not been delegated elsewhere;
- Coordinate with other affected elected officials;
- Support accurate public communication;
- Document significant decisions and authorizations;
- Support emergency purchasing and financial tracking; and
- Avoid actions that interfere with Incident Command.

8.1. Current Information Matters

Emergency information changes quickly. An official statement may have been accurate when issued but may no longer reflect current conditions.

Elected officials should confirm:

- The source of the information;
- The date and time it was updated;
- Whether the information has been superseded;
- and
- Whether Incident Command, the EOC, or the responsible agency has confirmed it.

Officials should avoid contacting multiple agencies independently for the same information. Separate contacts made at different times may produce several technically “official” answers that reflect different moments in the incident.

8.2. Avoid Duplicate Resource Requests

Duplicate requests may:

- Create competing commitments;
- Cause multiple resources to respond to the same need;
- Confuse vendors or mutual-aid partners;
- Increase costs;
- Create inaccurate resource-status reporting; and
- Delay support to other affected areas.

Requests should move through the established Incident Command, EOC, or jurisdictional coordination channel.

8.3. Visits to Incident Sites and the EOC

Visits by elected officials should be pre-announced and coordinated whenever conditions allow.

Advance coordination permits Incident Command or EOC personnel to address:

- Safety;
- Access restrictions;
- Escorts;
- Personal protective equipment;
- Operational security;
- Media presence;
- Sensitive information; and
- The best time for the visit.

Uncoordinated visits can divert personnel, interrupt briefings, or expose visitors to unnecessary hazards.

9. PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

The public will look to elected officials for confidence, direction, and accountability. Officials should communicate calmly, accurately, and consistently.

Effective emergency communication should explain:

- What happened;
- What government is doing;
- What residents should do;
- What services are affected;
- What remains unknown;
- When another update is expected; and
- Where residents can obtain verified information.

9.1. Appointing a Jurisdictional Spokesperson

Each jurisdiction should be prepared to appoint a Public Information Officer or official spokesperson at the beginning of an incident. When no spokesperson has been appointed, the role may initially fall to an appropriate Police Chief, Fire Chief, administrator, or other senior official with jurisdictional authority and direct knowledge of the response.

The jurisdiction should make clear:

- Who is authorized to speak;
- Who approves policy-level statements;
- Who provides operational information;
- How messages are coordinated; and
- Who serves when the primary spokesperson is unavailable.

9.2. EMA Public-Information Support

Clinton County EMA has personnel available to support public-information activities. EMA may assist behind the scenes by:

- Drafting statements;
- Reviewing messages;
- Verifying facts;
- Coordinating releases;
- Monitoring misinformation;
- Supporting media preparation;
- Maintaining shared information; and
- Supporting a Joint Information function.

The affected jurisdiction should still designate its own spokesperson. A PIO from one organization speaking “on behalf of” another organization may create authority or liability concerns. EMA should not routinely serve as the public voice of another jurisdiction without clear authorization and appropriate consideration of those issues.

9.3. Information Requiring Coordination

Elected officials should not independently announce or speculate about:

- Names or numbers of casualties;
- Investigative information;
- Law-enforcement operations;
- Tactical details;
- Protective actions;
- Evacuation or re-entry instructions;
- Unconfirmed damage totals;
- Hazardous-material information not cleared for release;
- Utility restoration times;
- Resource arrival times; or
- State or federal assistance.

Operational details should be coordinated with Incident Command and the designated spokesperson. Policy statements should be coordinated with the jurisdiction and, when appropriate, the MAC / Policy Group or legal counsel.

9.4. D4H Situational Awareness

When Clinton County EMA is supporting an incident and D4H has been activated, D4H serves as the primary shared platform for EOC situational awareness.

Incident-specific links are generally provided to chief elected officials so leadership, spokespersons, and EOC personnel can work from the same information.

D4H may contain:

- Incident summaries;
- Current lifeline conditions;
- Maps;
- Situation reports;
- Public-information drafts;
- Resource information;
- Decision records; and
- Operational updates.

D4H may not be activated for a local event that is being managed without EMA support. In those situations, the jurisdiction uses its normal internal reporting and communication processes.

9.5. Managing Public Expectations

Government cannot immediately solve every problem created by a disaster.

During a widespread or long-duration incident:

- Utilities may require substantial time to restore service;
- Roads may be prioritized rather than cleared simultaneously;
- Sheltering capacity may be limited;
- Specialized resources may be unavailable;
- State and federal resources may be delayed;
- Assistance programs may not be authorized;
- Eligibility may be limited;
- Reimbursement may require local cost sharing; and
- Individual assistance may not replace all losses.

Elected officials should not promise outcomes beyond the jurisdiction's control. Public confidence is better served by clear, realistic information than by assurances that cannot be fulfilled.

10. EOC ACTIVATION AND DISASTER DECLARATIONS

An EOC activation and a disaster declaration are separate actions.

10.1. EOC Activation

An EOC activation is an operational coordination decision. It may occur to support:

- One jurisdiction;
- Several jurisdictions;
- A countywide incident;
- A planned event;
- A developing threat; or
- Recovery operations.

An EOC may be activated without a disaster declaration.

10.2. Local Disaster Declaration

A local disaster declaration is a legal and policy action taken by an authorized jurisdiction.

A declaration may be considered when:

- Incident impacts exceed normal capability;
- Extraordinary coordination or spending may be required;
- Existing authorities are insufficient or unclear;
- Outside assistance is needed;
- Damage information supports declaration consideration; or
- Catastrophic conditions are self-evident.

A local declaration does not automatically:

- Produce state or federal assistance;
- Guarantee reimbursement;
- Transfer local authority to Clinton County;
- Activate every county department;

- Require a full EOC activation; or
- Eliminate documentation and procurement requirements.

Each county, municipality, or township retains control of its own declaration and must follow its lawful approval process. The issuing jurisdiction should consider the declaration's purpose, scope, effective time, termination date, necessary clauses, legal review, distribution, and public release.

Detailed declaration procedures are contained in 06.05.05.3: Playbook – Disaster Declaration.

11. RESOURCE REQUESTS AND OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE

Local capability and established agreements are used first. When those resources are insufficient, support may be coordinated through Clinton County EMA.

A clear resource request should identify:

- What is needed;
- Why it is needed;
- Where it is needed;
- When it is needed;
- How long it may be required;
- Who will receive it;
- Who will manage it;
- Who will operate it; and
- Whether the requesting jurisdiction accepts associated costs.

Requests should not be based only on a general statement such as "send whatever you can." Specific requests are easier to validate, prioritize, source, track, and close.

The existence of a request does not guarantee fulfillment. During a regional or statewide emergency, neighboring jurisdictions and state agencies may be facing the same shortages.

The Basic Plan assumes local self-reliance may be necessary during the first 12 to 48 hours of a major disaster because outside assistance may be delayed.

12. EMERGENCY PURCHASING AND FINANCIAL DOCUMENTATION

Jurisdictions should use their existing emergency purchasing, contracting, and fiscal authorities.

The appropriate fiscal officer, administrator, department head, and legal counsel should be involved as early as practical.

Documentation should begin when the incident begins—not after assistance appears possible.

Jurisdictions should track:

- Regular and overtime personnel costs;
- Volunteer or temporary personnel, when applicable;
- Equipment use;
- Fuel and materials;
- Rental equipment;

- Contracts;
- Emergency purchases;
- Mutual-aid expenses;
- Debris operations;
- Emergency protective measures;
- Repairs;
- Donated resources;
- Insurance information; and
- Other incident-related costs.

Actual costs and estimates should be recorded separately and clearly identified.

Records may include:

- Time sheets;
- Equipment logs;
- Work orders;
- Contracts;
- Procurement records;
- Bids or quotes;
- Invoices;
- Receipts;
- Proof of payment;
- Photographs;
- Maps;
- Damage descriptions;
- Decision records; and
- Insurance documents.

Emergency costs are not automatically eligible for state or federal reimbursement. Eligibility may be affected by ownership, legal responsibility, insurance, procurement, documentation, maintenance history, environmental requirements, and other factors.

13. DAMAGE ASSESSMENT AND RECOVERY

13.1. Damage Assessment

Damage assessment supports decisions. It does not delay rescue, hazard control, emergency access, evacuation, warning, or other life-safety operations.

Clinton County's damage-assessment process may include:

- **Rapid Impact Assessment:** A quick determination of what happened, where, who is affected, and what immediate problems exist.
- **Individual Assistance (IA) Damage Assessment:** Assessment of residential damage, occupancy, displacement, insurance status, and household impacts.
- **Public Assistance (PA) Damage Assessment:** Assessment of public facilities, roads, bridges, utilities, debris, emergency work, equipment, and potentially eligible public costs.
- **Joint or Detailed Assessment:** Additional assessment coordinated with or determined by Ohio EMA when warranted.

Each jurisdiction is responsible for its own records and costs. Clinton County EMA coordinates countywide collection, review, situational awareness, and communication with Ohio EMA. Damage-assessment findings do not guarantee state or federal assistance.

13.2. Community Lifelines

Community Lifelines are the essential services and systems that support the continuous operation of government, businesses, and the community. Clinton County uses Lifelines to organize situational awareness, identify cascading impacts, communicate the severity and scope of disruptions, and support resource and recovery priorities.

01.01: Clinton County Lifelines explains the county's Lifeline framework, terminology, status reporting, and use during emergency operations. The framework addresses:

- Safety and Security;
- Food, Hydration, and Shelter;
- Health and Medical;
- Water;
- Energy;
- Communications;
- Transportation; and
- Hazardous Materials.

The supporting Lifeline references provide baseline information and planning considerations for the county and participating municipalities:

- 01.01.A: Countywide Lifelines
- 01.01.B: Blanchester Lifelines
- 01.01.C: Clarksville Lifelines
- 01.01.D: Martinsville Lifelines
- 01.01.E: Midland Lifelines
- 01.01.F: New Vienna Lifelines
- 01.01.G: Port William Lifelines
- 01.01.H: Sabina Lifelines
- 01.01.I: Wilmington Lifelines

Elected officials should be familiar with the Lifeline reference for their jurisdiction before an emergency. During an incident, Lifeline conditions help identify what is disrupted, where the disruption exists, who is affected, the expected duration, and which additional services may be placed at risk.

Lifeline status does not replace Incident Command, technical assessments, or jurisdictional decision-making. It provides a common operating picture that helps elected officials, the EOC, and the MAC / Policy Group understand community consequences and establish coordinated priorities.

13.3. Recovery Priorities

After immediate life-safety operations stabilize, elected officials may need to establish or affirm recovery priorities.

Resources may be insufficient to repair every road, public facility, neighborhood, or service at the same time.

Recovery priorities may include:

- Restoring essential utilities and services;
- Reopening emergency transportation routes;
- Supporting displaced residents;
- Restoring government operations;
- Repairing public facilities;
- Managing debris;
- Supporting schools, healthcare, agriculture, and businesses;
- Addressing unmet needs;
- Allocating limited funds and personnel; and
- Reducing future risk.

Priorities should be based on:

- Verified impacts;
- Life-safety and public-health consequences;
- Lifeline restoration;
- Legal responsibility;
- Available resources;
- Population needs;
- Duration of the disruption; and
- Cascading impacts.

The first request received, the loudest complaint, or the issue receiving the most public attention should not automatically become the highest recovery priority.

14. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT

Emergencies may disrupt government facilities, communications, staffing, records, and normal decision processes.

Each jurisdiction should be prepared to:

- Maintain lawful decision-making authority;
- Follow established lines of succession;
- Identify alternate officials and representatives;
- Continue essential government functions;
- Protect and access essential records;
- Operate from an alternate location if necessary;
- Maintain communications with departments and the EOC;
- Approve urgent expenditures;
- Conduct required public actions under applicable law; and
- Sustain operations during prolonged power, communications, facility, or staffing disruptions.

An official who is unavailable should not become a single point of failure. Successors and representatives should understand what authority they possess and when it may be exercised.

15. RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER AN EMERGENCY

After the immediate response, elected officials should:

- Continue accurate public communication;
- Support damage and cost documentation;
- Establish recovery priorities;
- Preserve official records;
- Review emergency purchases and contracts;
- Support assistance applications when appropriate;
- Monitor restoration of jurisdictional services;
- Address unresolved policy or legal issues;
- Participate in recovery coordination;
- Participate in after-action reviews; and
- Support corrective actions.

After-action review is valuable even when an incident was limited. Minor emergencies often reveal policy, communications, staffing, documentation, or coordination gaps that can be corrected before a larger event.

Corrective actions may include:

- Revising plans or policies;
- Clarifying delegated authorities;
- Improving succession;
- Updating contact lists;
- Obtaining equipment;
- Improving public-information procedures;
- Conducting additional training; or
- Addressing unresolved mitigation needs.

16. TRAINING AND EXERCISES

Elected officials should periodically participate in:

- Emergency management orientation;
- EOC familiarization;
- Tabletop exercises;
- Functional exercises;
- Continuity and succession discussions;
- Disaster-declaration discussions;
- Emergency authority reviews;
- Public-information exercises;
- Recovery discussions; and
- Corrective-action follow-up.

Participation does not require elected officials to become emergency management technicians. The purpose is to ensure they understand the decisions they may face, the information they will receive, and how their jurisdiction will function under stress.

17. WHAT EMA NEEDS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS

Clinton County EMA needs elected officials to provide:

- Availability during significant incidents;
- Timely policy, legal, and fiscal decisions;
- A jurisdictional representative for the EOC;
- A designated spokesperson;
- Clear identification of delegated authorities;
- Use of verified information;
- Coordinated public messaging;
- Support for recordkeeping and cost documentation;
- Realistic expectations regarding outside assistance;
- Participation in recovery decisions; and
- Support for after-action corrective measures.

18. WHAT ELECTED OFFICIALS CAN EXPECT FROM EMA

When Clinton County EMA is supporting an incident, elected officials can expect:

- Coordination, validation, prioritization, tracking, and closure of resource requests through established local, county, mutual-aid, state, private-sector, and volunteer channels;
- Scalable coordination support;
- Situational awareness;
- EOC support for one or multiple jurisdictions;
- Coordination of validated resource requests;
- Liaison with Ohio EMA and other partners;
- D4H access when activated and appropriate;
- Public-information planning and drafting support;
- Damage-assessment coordination;
- Recovery coordination;

- Guidance regarding emergency management processes;
- Assistance preparing declaration documents when requested;
- Documentation of county-coordinated actions; and
- Clear communication regarding known limitations and unresolved needs.

EMA support does not remove the jurisdiction's responsibility to govern, make decisions, manage its departments, document costs, and conduct recovery work within its authority.

19. CLINTON COUNTY'S TOP TEN HAZARDS

The Clinton County Hazard Mitigation Plan ranks the following as the county's top ten hazards for purposes of this guide:

1. Multiple Hazards
2. Utility Failure
3. Tornadoes and Severe Wind
4. Severe Winter Weather
5. Hazardous Materials
6. Flooding
7. Severe Summer Weather
8. Drought
9. Epidemic / Pandemic
10. Wildfire

The complete Hazard Mitigation Plan contains countywide and jurisdiction-specific rankings. A hazard's countywide position may differ from its importance to an individual municipality or township.

20. RESIDENT INFORMATION AND REPORTING LINKS

Elected officials and jurisdictional spokespersons may share the following resources with residents.

Clinton County Emergency Alerts — CCEA

Sign up for emergency alerts by text, telephone, or email. https://entry.inspironlogistics.com/clinton_oh/wens.cfm

SPOT Report

Report localized hazards, damage, flooding, blocked roads, utility concerns, or other incident information to Clinton County EMA. <https://www.cc-ema.org/spot>

Emergency Notice Page

View current Clinton County EMA emergency notices and public updates. <https://www.cc-ema.org/notice>

Cooling Centers

View information regarding available cooling locations during periods of extreme heat. <https://www.cc-ema.org/cooling>

Warming Centers

View information regarding available warming locations during periods of extreme cold. <https://www.cc-ema.org/warming>

What Is Damage Assessment?

Learn how local damage assessment works and what residents should expect after an incident. <https://www.cc-ema.org/post/damage-assessment>

Report Home Damage

Submit residential damage information for review following an emergency or disaster. <https://oh-clinton.orioncentral.com/SelfReporter>

Debris Assistance

View guidance and current information regarding disaster debris and available assistance. <https://www.cc-ema.org/debris>

21. KEY REFERENCES

The following documents provide additional detail:

- Ohio Revised Code §5502.26 – Countywide Emergency Management Agency
- Jurisdiction-specific laws, resolutions, ordinances, charters, policies, and continuity procedures
- Resolution #881 – Countywide Emergency Management Agreement
- Clinton County Hazard Mitigation Plan
- 01: Basic Plan – Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan
 - Applicable Reference Documents
 - 01.01: Clinton County Lifelines
 - 01.01.A–01.01.I: Countywide and Community Lifeline References
 - Applicable Functional Annexes
 - Applicable Hazard Annexes
 - Applicable Playbooks
 - 06.05.05: Playbook – Damage Assessment & Disaster Declaration
 - 06.05.05.1: Playbook – Individual Assistance Damage Assessment
 - 06.05.05.2: Playbook – Public Assistance Damage Assessment
 - 06.05.05.3: Playbook – Disaster Declaration