



EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

BASIC PLAN

Published: August 2026

Administrative Handling Note: **UNRESTRICTED**

Legal review status: **Submitted 15 July 2026**

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

Purpose: This document provides the authoritative framework for how Clinton County coordinates emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation across all hazards, defining governance, coordination relationships, and operational doctrine. This coordination framework is supported by Ohio Revised Code §5502.26, which authorizes county emergency management agencies to coordinate preparedness, response, and recovery activities.

ELECTED OFFICIAL BRIEFING

01: BASIC PLAN

Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan

What This Document Is

The Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) – Basic Plan is the county's foundational framework for coordinating preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation across all hazards. It defines how Incident Command, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and elected leadership work together. It is the umbrella plan for Reference Documents, Functional Annexes, Hazard Annexes, Playbooks, Guidance Documents, and supporting planning documents.

Why It Matters to County Leadership

The Basic Plan establishes how the county will function under stress—when incidents exceed routine operations, affect multiple jurisdictions, or strain staffing and resources. It clarifies governance, coordination, legal authorities, and decision pathways, ensuring elected officials understand how policy oversight and emergency operations intersect during crises. This coordination role is supported by Ohio Revised Code §5502.26, which authorizes county-level emergency management coordination across jurisdictions.

Key Takeaways

- Clinton County primarily serves in a coordination and support role, not a command role, consistent with Home Rule authority.
- Local self-reliance is assumed for the first 12–48 hours of major disasters due to likely delays in state and federal assistance.
- Emergency operations prioritize life safety first, followed by stabilization of critical lifelines and delivery of clear, accurate, and timely public information.
- The plan recognizes real-world constraints: limited staffing depth, finite shelter capacity, fuel and logistics limitations, and responder fatigue.
- Decision-making is structured across three levels: Incident Command (tactical), EOC (coordination), and MAC / Policy Group (policy and legal oversight).

What This Document Does Not Do

This document does not provide tactical response instructions or field procedures, replace local Incident Command authority, list detailed activation triggers or thresholds (which are contained within Playbooks), or guarantee the availability of outside assistance during regional or large-scale disasters.

What Elected Officials Should Know

- Elected officials play a key role through the MAC / Policy Group, providing policy direction, legal and fiscal guidance, and priority-setting during complex incidents.
- County coordination may be activated when local capacity is exceeded, when impacts cross jurisdictional boundaries, or when policy or legal alignment is required.
- Public information, misinformation management, and public trust are treated as operational factors, not secondary concerns.
- This plan is intentionally conservative and realistic, designed to function even when resources are scarce and conditions are degraded.

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
N/A	8 January 2026	All	Outline started	T. Breckel, EMA
N/A	29 January 2026	All	Outline expanded and template started	T. Breckel, EMA
1.0	3 February 2026	All	Initial draft started with import of current version	T. Breckel, EMA
1.1	5 February 2026	All	Reorganize and filter	T. Breckel, EMA
1.2	6 March 2026	Command, Control, and Coordination	Rewrite	T. Breckel, EMA
1.4	20 March 2026	Plan Structure	Edited the supporting documents and elements of the plan	T. Breckel, EMA
1.5	23 March 2026	All	Move to new format	T. Breckel, EMA
1.6	30 April 2026	Planning Assumptions	Updated / Edited	T. Breckel, EMA
1.7	29 May 2026	Promulgation	Edited	T. Breckel, EMA
1.8	1-21 June 2026	All	Conducted a 21-day comment and review period with jurisdictional officials and department heads.	T. Breckel, EMA
1.9	15 July	1.1, 5.1, 6, 7, 11, 17, 19, Sources	(Adjudication) Integrated Reference Documents and Community Lifeline profiles throughout the Basic Plan.	T. Breckel, EMA
1.10	15 July 2026	15 July 2026	Clarified Enhanced Monitoring as a non-EOC posture and distinguished Administrative Response and Reachback from formal EOC activation.	T. Breckel, EMA

Contents

This plan is supported by Reference Documents (baseline information and community profiles), Functional Annexes (capabilities), Hazard Annexes (risk-specific considerations), Playbooks (operational decision guides), Guidance Documents, and supporting planning tools.

ELECTED OFFICIAL BRIEFING	2
RECORD OF CHANGES	3
PROMULGATION STATEMENT	6
1. PURPOSE	7
1.1. PLAN STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION	7
1.1.1. Basic Plan	8
1.1.2. Reference Documents	8
1.1.3. Functional Annexes	9
1.1.4. Hazard Annexes	9
1.1.5. Playbooks	10
1.1.6. Guidance Documents	10
1.1.7. Supporting Planning Documents and Tools	11
1.1.8. How the Pieces Work Together	11
1.1.9. Document Naming and Referencing Standard	11
2. SCOPE	12
3. DEFAULT TO COUNTY COORDINATION	12
4. COUNTY COORDINATION ROLE	13
5. SITUATION OVERVIEW	13
5.1. Key Operating Realities	13
6. PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS	15
6.1. County Operating Environment & Governance	16
6.2. Population & Community Characteristics	16
6.3. Emergency Response System	17
6.4. Infrastructure & Lifeline Dependencies	18
6.5. Transportation & Logistics Environment	20

6.6. Severe Weather	21
6.7. Environmental & Hazard Conditions.....	22
6.8. Long-Duration & Complex Incident Conditions.....	22
7. OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES.....	23
8. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS (CONOPS).....	24
8.1. Decision Framing	24
8.2. Operational Focus	24
9. COMMAND, CONTROL, AND COORDINATION	24
9.1. Incident Command – Tactical Operations	24
9.2. Unified Command.....	25
9.3. Emergency Operations Center – Operational Coordination.....	25
9.4. MAC / Policy Group – Strategic and Policy Oversight	25
10. PRIORITY OF REQUESTS.....	25
11. EMA AND EOC OPERATIONAL POSTURES.....	25
11.1. Enhanced Monitoring – No EOC Activation	26
11.2. Partial Activation	27
11.3. Full EOC Activation	27
12. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE AND REACHBACK.....	27
13. DIRECTION, CONTROL, AND SUCCESSION	28
14. COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT	28
15. RESOURCE, FINANCE, AND LOGISTICS.....	29
16. DECLARATIONS AND LEGAL AUTHORITIES.....	29
17. DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS	29
18. DEMOBILIZATION AND TRANSITION.....	30
19. AFTER-ACTION AND PLAN MAINTENANCE	30
SOURCES	30

PROMULGATION STATEMENT

This Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) establishes the framework by which Clinton County coordinates emergency management and civil defense activities (as historically defined), including preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation, for emergencies and disasters affecting the county. This plan supersedes all prior county emergency plans, drafts, annexes, and informal practices. When conflicts exist, this EOP governs.

This plan is adopted by the Clinton County Board of Commissioners and serves as the official Emergency Operations Plan for Clinton County. It applies to all county departments, political subdivisions, and participating agencies involved in emergency management activities.

This plan emphasizes life safety first, reduction of human suffering, protection of critical lifelines when they affect population well-being, and realistic assumptions about staffing, mutual aid, logistics, and public behavior.

All county departments and agencies are directed to support and operate in alignment with this plan. Political subdivisions and participating jurisdictions are expected to coordinate and operate in alignment with this plan, their respective roles, and applicable supporting EOP components.

Supporting Reference Documents, Functional Annexes, Hazard Annexes, Playbooks, Guidance Documents, and associated planning documents are incorporated by reference into this Emergency Operations Plan and are considered part of the overall county emergency management framework. These supporting documents may be updated administratively by the Clinton County Emergency Management Agency to reflect changes in authorities, organizational structures, procedures, resources, infrastructure, hazards, community conditions, or operational requirements, provided such updates remain consistent with the intent and framework established by this Emergency Operations Plan.

This plan supports both traditional emergency management functions and civil defense considerations, including large-scale or complex incidents that may impact critical infrastructure, public safety, or continuity of government operations.

This plan is consistent with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and supports the use of the Incident Command System (ICS) for on-scene operations.

Execution of this plan is authorized under applicable local, state, and federal authorities, including but not limited to Ohio Revised Code §5502.26 (county emergency management authority), §5502.27 (emergency management program responsibilities), Chapter 3750 (emergency planning and community right-to-know), and §305.30 (powers of county commissioners), and applicable emergency management agreements and resolutions, and shall be implemented in accordance with applicable laws and authorities.

Kerry R. Steed, President
Clinton County Board of Commissioners

Date

Mike McCarty, Vice President
Clinton County Board of Commissioners

Date

Brenda Woods, Commissioner
Clinton County Board of Commissioners

Date

BASIC PLAN

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to define how Clinton County coordinates emergency operations across all hazards in a manner that is practical, legally defensible, and executable under real-world conditions.

This plan establishes roles and responsibilities for county departments, municipalities, and partners. It defines coordination relationships between Incident Command, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and the Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) / Policy Group. It provides a framework for activation, escalation, de-escalation, and demobilization, and embeds a lifeline-focused, life-safety-first operational doctrine.

*A **Lifeline** is a critical system or service that supports life safety, public health, economic stability, and community functioning during an emergency or disaster. Lifelines include essential capabilities such as power, water, communications, transportation, healthcare, food supply, and public safety.*

Disruptions to lifelines can rapidly escalate impacts, especially for vulnerable populations, and often drive the severity, duration, and complexity of an incident. Protecting, restoring, and stabilizing lifelines is a core priority for emergency response and recovery operations.

This plan relies on Playbooks for named thresholds, escalation triggers, and decision logic. It is intentionally conservative, realistic, and grounded in operational reality, recognizing staffing limits, funding constraints, resource scarcity, fatigue, and competing priorities.

*A **Playbook** is a short, operational decision guide used to support time-sensitive actions during emergencies. Playbooks define activation thresholds, escalation triggers, decision logic, coordination steps, and response priorities so leaders can act quickly and consistently under pressure.*

Playbooks do not replace the Emergency Operations Plan. Instead, they translate the plan's doctrine into practical, step-by-step decision tools for the EMA Director, Incident Command, EOC leadership, and the MAC / Policy Group. They are designed to reduce uncertainty, improve speed of decision-making, and maintain consistency during complex or rapidly evolving incidents.

Playbooks are maintained as internal, operational documents and may contain sensitive information not intended for public release.

1.1. PLAN STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

The Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is organized into multiple components that work together to guide preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation activities. Each component serves a different purpose and provides a different level of operational or planning detail.

1.1.1. Basic Plan

The Basic Plan provides the overall framework for how Clinton County coordinates emergency operations. It defines authorities, roles, responsibilities, coordination relationships, operational priorities, and how decisions are made.

The Basic Plan establishes countywide doctrine but does not contain tactical instructions, detailed activation thresholds, or hazard-specific procedures.

The Basic Plan answers: “How does Clinton County organize and coordinate emergency operations?”

1.1.2. Reference Documents

Reference Documents provide the baseline information, analytical context, community profiles, planning factors, and common frameworks used to support emergency planning and decision-making.

Reference Documents may describe county characteristics, Community Lifelines, jurisdictional dependencies, infrastructure relationships, population considerations, operating conditions, governance responsibilities, or other information that applies across multiple incidents or planning documents.

Reference Documents support situational awareness, impact analysis, planning assumptions, resource coordination, public information, elected-official decision support, mitigation discussions, and emergency declaration conversations. They do not establish tactical procedures, replace Incident Command, direct field operations, or automatically trigger an emergency declaration.

The Clinton County Community Lifelines Reference series includes:

- 01.01: Reference – Clinton County Lifelines. Establishes the county’s Community Lifelines framework, including the lifelines and sub-sectors used by Clinton County, status and trend terminology, scope and impact reporting, and general lifeline assessment guidance.
- 01.01.A: Reference – Countywide Lifelines. Applies the Community Lifelines framework to countywide conditions, systems, services, dependencies, and planning concerns.
- 01.01.B: Reference – Blanchester Lifelines
- 01.01.C: Reference – Clarksville Lifelines
- 01.01.D: Reference – Martinsville Lifelines
- 01.01.E: Reference – Midland Lifelines
- 01.01.F: Reference – New Vienna Lifelines
- 01.01.G: Reference – Port William Lifelines
- 01.01.H: Reference – Sabina Lifelines
- 01.01.I: Reference – Wilmington Lifelines

The jurisdiction-specific profiles apply the common county Lifeline framework to the incorporated communities within Clinton County. Each profile describes local conditions, major dependencies, seasonal or event-related population factors, primary Lifeline concerns, cascading impacts, declaration conversation indicators, mitigation discussion points, planning assumptions, and items requiring future local review.

The jurisdiction-specific profiles complement 01.01: Reference – Clinton County Lifelines and 01.01.A: Reference – Countywide Lifelines. They do not replace the countywide framework or other applicable emergency plans.

Reference Documents answer: “What baseline information, dependencies, and planning conditions should decision-makers understand?”

1.1.3. Functional Annexes

Functional Annexes describe how the county performs key emergency management functions across all hazards. These annexes are capability-based and apply to multiple incident types.

Examples include:

- 02.01: Functional Annex – Transportation
- 02.02: Functional Annex – Communications
- 02.03: Functional Annex – Public Works
- 02.04: Functional Annex – [RESERVED]
- 02.05: Functional Annex – Direction & Control
- 02.06: Functional Annex – Mass Care & Sheltering
- 02.07: Functional Annex – Resource Management
- 02.08: Functional Annex – Health & Medical
- 02.10: Functional Annex – Hazardous Materials
- 02.11: Functional Annex – Agriculture & Livestock
- 02.12: Functional Annex – Energy & Fuel
- 02.13: Functional Annex – [RESERVED]
- 02.14: Functional Annex – Recovery
- 02.15: Functional Annex – Public Information
- 02.16: Functional Annex – [RESERVED]
- 02.17: Functional Annex – [RESERVED]
- 02.18: Functional Annex – [RESERVED]
- 02.19: Functional Annex – [RESERVED]
- 02.20: Functional Annex – Civil Defense

Functional Annexes answer: “How do we perform this function regardless of the hazard?”

1.1.4. Hazard Annexes

Hazard Annexes focus on specific threats or hazards that may impact Clinton County. They outline hazard characteristics, planning assumptions, and operational considerations unique to that hazard.

Examples include:

- Severe Weather
- Winter Storm / Extreme Cold
- Flooding
- Hazardous Materials Incident

- Long-Duration Power Outage

Hazard Annexes answer: "What is different about this hazard that we must plan for?"

1.1.5. Playbooks

Playbooks are short operational decision guides used during incidents. They define activation thresholds, escalation triggers, decision logic, coordination steps, and response priorities for time-sensitive situations.

Playbooks are designed for rapid use by leadership and are more action-oriented than the Basic Plan, Reference Documents, Functional Annexes, or Hazard Annexes.

Playbook's answer: "When do we act, and what actions should we take right now?"

Playbooks are maintained as a distinct component of the EOP under Section 06 and are not part of the public-facing plan structure.

1.1.6. Guidance Documents

Guidance Documents provide informational and operational-support material intended to improve preparedness, coordination, situational awareness, and operational consistency among partner organizations, private-sector entities, volunteer groups, nongovernmental organizations, event organizers, or the public.

Guidance Documents are generally advisory and do not establish regulatory authority, permitting requirements, tactical command authority, or mandatory operational standards unless specifically authorized by law or policy.

Guidance Documents may include:

- Preparedness guidance
- Coordination guides
- Operational best practices
- Situational-awareness support materials
- Voluntary planning recommendations
- Partner coordination information
- Public-facing preparedness

Examples include:

- 10.01: EMA Guidance - Special Events, Camps, and Temporary Gatherings
- 10.02: EMA Guidance - Clinton County NGO Field Ops Guide

Guidance Documents answer: "What information or recommendations will help partners operate more effectively before, during, or after emergencies?"

Guidance Documents are maintained as a distinct support category under Section 10 and are not operational command documents, tactical procedures, or hazard-specific response annexes.

1.1.7. Supporting Planning Documents and Tools

Additional planning documents and tools provide operational detail, technical information, governance support, specialized procedures, or systems supporting the EOP framework.

These may include:

- Clinton County Area Study
- Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment
- Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Damage-assessment tools
- Resource and incident-tracking systems, including D4H
- Standing Operating Guides
- Partner coordination materials
- Document Handling Notes
- Protected Planning Annexes for sensitive or restricted planning content
- Maps, forms, checklists, databases, and other operational tools

Supporting planning documents and tools provide additional depth and capability but do not replace the Basic Plan, Reference Documents, Functional Annexes, Hazard Annexes, Playbooks, or Incident Command.

1.1.8. How the Pieces Work Together

- The Basic Plan establishes countywide doctrine, authorities, priorities, and coordination structure.
- Reference Documents establish common frameworks, baseline information, community profiles, dependencies, and planning context.
- Functional Annexes describe capabilities used across multiple types of incidents.
- Hazard Annexes describe considerations unique to specific hazards.
- Playbooks translate plans into time-sensitive decisions, thresholds, and coordination actions.
- Guidance Documents provide advisory information and recommendations for partners and the public.
- Supporting Planning Documents and Tools provide technical detail, procedures, data, forms, systems, and specialized planning support.

Together, these components create an emergency management system that is flexible, scalable, and usable under real-world conditions.

1.1.9. Document Naming and Referencing Standard

Emergency Operations Plan components shall follow standardized naming and referencing conventions.

Reference Documents shall be referenced as:

- [Number]: Reference – [Title]

Jurisdiction-specific Lifeline profiles shall be referenced as:

- 01.01.[Letter]: Reference – [Jurisdiction] Lifelines

Functional Annexes shall be referenced as:

- [Number]: Functional Annex – [Title]

Playbooks shall be referenced as:

- [Number]: Playbook – [Title]

Guidance Documents shall be referenced as:

- [Number]: Guidance – [Title]

The full document number and title should be used where practical in narrative text, tables, citations, document lists, and cross-references. An abbreviated title may be used after the document has first been identified by its complete title.

2. SCOPE

This plan applies to Clinton County government departments, municipal governments and townships within the county, public safety agencies, special districts, nonprofit organizations, and volunteer groups engaged in emergency support.

Municipalities that maintain and activate their own emergency plans may operate independently. When operating independently, jurisdictions are expected to submit resource requests through Clinton County EMA, share situation reports, coordinate public information and messaging, and align on policy, legal, or fiscal decisions when impacts exceed local capacity.

Any municipality, township, public-safety district, or other participating jurisdiction may request county coordination or EMA operational support, including consideration of EOC activation.

3. DEFAULT TO COUNTY COORDINATION

Jurisdictions may default to county coordination when local capacity is exceeded or compromised. This may occur when staffing or leadership collapses, impacts affect two or more jurisdictions, a significant single-jurisdiction disruption creates countywide consequences, incident complexity exceeds local coordination or logistics capability, multiple Community Lifelines are simultaneously degraded, or policy, legal, fiscal, resource, or public-information coordination requires county involvement.

Detailed activation thresholds and escalation triggers are defined in Playbooks, not in this Basic Plan.

County coordination does not replace local Incident Command and is intended to support—not override—local operational control unless legally required.

If an affected jurisdiction does not activate its own EOC, that jurisdiction should be represented in the MAC / Policy Group when the group is activated for the incident. The Chief Elected Official or designee should provide policy representation. Legal, fiscal, utility, public-safety, or other subject-matter representatives may participate as incident requirements warrant. Jurisdictional personnel may also be assigned to EOC functions based on expertise and operational need.

Requests for county-level coordination or EOC support should be documented when practicable. The EMA Director or designee may activate the EOC when operational requirements exceed Enhanced Monitoring, Administrative Response, or Reachback. Board of Commissioners involvement should occur when policy, legal, fiscal, emergency-authority, or county-priority decisions require Board action.

A written request or documented justification from the municipality is required to support county EOC activation and serve as an official record. Activation requests are reviewed by the Board of Commissioners and, if approved, executed by the EMA Director. This process is supported by Ohio Revised Code §305.30, which grants county commissioners authority over county operations and emergency actions.

4. COUNTY COORDINATION ROLE

Clinton County generally serves in a coordination and support role rather than a command role, consistent with Home Rule authority. This coordination role is supported by Ohio Revised Code §5502.26, which authorizes county emergency management agencies to coordinate multi-jurisdictional response activities.

County coordination may be advisory in support of local Incident Command, directive when multi-jurisdictional alignment or legal authority requires centralized action, or process-driven when state or federal requirements mandate standardized operations.

The Emergency Operations Center coordinates countywide processes, resource prioritization, interagency synchronization, and policy support when scale, complexity, or legal authority requires centralized management.

5. SITUATION OVERVIEW

Clinton County includes urban, suburban, and rural communities with varying hazard exposure, infrastructure dependencies, and population vulnerabilities.

5.1. Key Operating Realities

The county faces recurring risks from severe weather, winter storms, flooding, drought and water scarcity, hazardous materials incidents, power outages, public health emergencies, and infrastructure disruptions, consistent with hazard trends identified in the *Clinton County Hazard Mitigation Plan* (2025). Drought conditions have demonstrated the ability to produce cascading impacts, including agricultural losses, water shortages, increased fire risk, and long-term economic stress within the county. Extended dry conditions increase wildfire and field fire risk, placing additional strain on fire service resources, particularly in rural areas.

Certain hazards present rapid-onset, high-consequence conditions with limited warning time. Dam failure scenarios represent a credible risk within the county, including both time-compressed and condition-driven threats. The potential failure of Cowan Lake Dam represents a scenario in which downstream areas, including the Village of Clarksville and properties along Cowan Creek, may experience life-threatening flooding within a short timeframe. This includes the

potential loss of critical infrastructure, restricted evacuation routes, and impacts to fire and EMS response capability due to facilities located within the hazard zone.

Additional high hazard dams within the county, including Blanchester Reservoir No. 3 and No. 4, present elevated risk due to known structural concerns and, in the case of Reservoir No. 4, the absence of a completed Emergency Action Plan. Failure of these structures may result in loss of life, widespread flooding of residential and commercial areas, disruption to transportation networks, damage to utilities and wastewater systems, and significant economic impacts. These scenarios may involve less predictable timelines but still require advance planning, situational awareness, and coordination with dam safety authorities.

These conditions require pre-planned, protective actions, including responder resource dispersal, coverage realignment, infrastructure protection, and redundant public warning systems to preserve life safety and operational continuity.

State and Federal mutual aid may be delayed 12 to 48 hours or unavailable during regional disasters, requiring a stronger initial emphasis on local self-reliance and prioritization of life-safety and lifeline stabilization (*Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2025). National Power Grid Reliability Briefing*).

Response capability is not expanding as fast as hazard complexity. Shelter capacity is limited, and long-term displacement options are constrained. Fuel, energy, communications, and logistics resilience are finite. Volunteer-dependent response capacity remains a structural vulnerability, particularly within fire and emergency services during sustained or multi-site incidents (*Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2025). Fire Service Vulnerability Brief*).

Approximately 1 in 21 county residents rely on electrically powered medical devices, including oxygen concentrators, electric beds, motorized mobility devices, IV infusion pumps, at-home dialysis (ESRD), and suction pumps. Nearly 500 of these residents live at home, increasing life-safety risk during extended power outages and reinforcing the importance of energy resilience and welfare-check prioritization (*National Power Grid Reliability Brief, 2025*).

High SNAP reliance increases food insecurity risk during prolonged disruptions. A federal shutdown or benefit delay could impact thousands of county residents, increase strain on nonprofit food networks, and elevate social-service and public-safety demand (*Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2025). SNAP Disruption Planning Brief*).

The county's agricultural base represents a significant economic and operational vulnerability. Weather extremes, drought, and supply disruptions can result in crop loss, livestock stress, and downstream economic impacts affecting both rural communities and the broader county economy.

The risk environment is evolving, including the potential for organized demonstrations and civil disruption events that may function as sustained, resource-supported activities rather than short-duration incidents. These events may impact emergency service access, strain public safety resources, complicate incident command, and introduce real-time legal, operational, and information-management challenges requiring coordinated, multi-agency response (*Rising Risk of Violence Background Paper, 2025; Houses of Worship Threat Assessment, 2025*).

Emergency response operations are vulnerable to access limitations, including roadway congestion, large public gatherings, infrastructure disruptions, or other conditions that may delay or restrict EMS, fire, and law enforcement

response. Maintaining access to critical facilities, including hospitals, dispatch centers, utilities, and public safety facilities, is a priority operational consideration.

Emerging infrastructure and economic developments — including future data-center expansion and regional grid strain — may introduce additional planning considerations related to power reliability, cyber-physical dependencies, emergency-service demand, and long-term resilience (*Data Center Impacts to EMA Brief, 2025; National Power Grid Reliability Brief, 2025*).

Public mistrust, misinformation pressures, and information-environment volatility remain persistent operational factors. Effective public information coordination and rumor-control capacity are essential to maintaining public confidence during incidents.

Public warning systems are layered and not all methods reach all populations equally. Outdoor warning sirens are designed primarily for outdoor notification and should not be relied upon as a sole warning method. Effective alerting requires the integration of multiple systems, including NOAA Weather Radio, emergency alerting platforms, and mobile-based notifications.

Detailed demographic, infrastructure, hazard, and Community Lifeline information is maintained in *03: Clinton County Area Study, 04 – Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment, 01.01: Reference – Clinton County Lifelines, 01.01.A: Reference – Countywide Lifelines*, and the jurisdiction-specific profiles maintained as 01.01.B through 01.01.I.

The Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment identifies priority hazards and risk conditions. The Clinton County Area Study provides baseline county conditions and system context. *01.01: Reference – Clinton County Lifelines* establishes the common Community Lifelines framework, *01.01.A: Reference – Countywide Lifelines* applies that framework to countywide conditions, and 01.01.B through 01.01.I describe community-specific conditions, dependencies, and planning factors.

These documents inform planning assumptions, operational priorities, impact assessment, situational awareness, and decision support but do not establish tactical direction, EOC activation thresholds, or automatic emergency declaration triggers.

6. PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

Emergency operations in Clinton County are guided by the following planning assumptions.

These assumptions establish the operational baseline for county preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation, and coordination activities. Reference Documents, Functional Annexes, Hazard Annexes, and Playbooks may expand upon these assumptions for countywide, jurisdiction-specific, hazard-specific, or operationally unique conditions. The 01.01: Reference series provides the countywide and community-specific Community Lifeline context used to interpret how these assumptions may apply during an incident.

These assumptions provide a planning baseline only. Actual decisions will be based on verified incident conditions, field reports, provider updates, Community Lifeline status, scope, trend, expected duration, resource requirements, and cascading impacts.

6.1. County Operating Environment & Governance

- Clinton County operates within a multi-jurisdictional emergency management environment involving municipalities, townships, county agencies, neighboring counties, special districts, regional organizations, state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, utilities, healthcare systems, schools, businesses, and private infrastructure owners.
- Incorporated jurisdictions and townships retain responsibility for their governmental functions, public services, local utilities, and local incident operations consistent with applicable authorities and Home Rule.
- Clinton County generally serves in a coordination and support role rather than a command role. Tactical incident management remains under Incident Command, while the EOC supports situational awareness, resource coordination, public information, Community Lifeline assessment, policy synchronization, and connection to regional or state partners.
- Local government, utility, public works, public safety, and administrative capacity varies significantly among jurisdictions. Smaller communities may have limited staffing depth, equipment, funding flexibility, technical expertise, and ability to sustain operations over multiple operational periods.
- Some communities, public safety districts, utility systems, transportation routes, school districts, and service areas cross or closely follow county boundaries. Significant incidents may therefore require early coordination with Warren, Highland, Fayette, Greene, Clermont, Brown, and other neighboring counties.
- Many infrastructure and lifeline systems affecting Clinton County are owned, operated, restored, regulated, or funded by organizations outside county or local government control.
- Local officials and Clinton County may document impacts, identify priorities, support public messaging, request resources, and coordinate with providers, but generally cannot direct utility restoration, private-sector operations, infrastructure repair schedules, or provider funding decisions.
- Clinton County and its jurisdictions should expect early local self-reliance during the first 12 to 48 hours of a major disaster.
- State, federal, contracted, regional, or mutual aid resources may be delayed, committed elsewhere, prioritized for greater impacts, or unavailable during regional, statewide, or nationwide incidents.
- Neighboring jurisdictions may be affected by the same incident, reducing mutual aid availability and increasing competition for personnel, apparatus, specialized teams, contractors, generators, fuel, transportation assets, healthcare capacity, sheltering support, and other limited resources.
- Information available to decision-makers will often be incomplete, delayed, conflicting, or rapidly changing. Situational awareness and Community Lifeline status must be updated as better information becomes available.
- Public expectations regarding government capability, resource availability, protective actions, and restoration timelines may exceed actual operational capacity during prolonged or widespread incidents.
- Public information, warning, rumor control, and expectation-setting are operational functions essential to life safety, public trust, and effective incident management.

6.2. Population & Community Characteristics

- Clinton County includes urban, suburban, small-community, and rural populations with differing hazard exposure, infrastructure dependencies, access to services, and ability to withstand prolonged disruptions.

- The rural operating environment results in dispersed populations, extended travel distances, limited public transportation, and heavy reliance on personal vehicles.
- Wilmington serves as the county's principal government, healthcare, commercial, employment, lodging, transportation, education, and public safety service center. A major disruption in Wilmington may therefore create countywide impacts.
- Blanchester, Sabina, New Vienna, and other communities provide important food, fuel, pharmacy, school, utility, employment, and commercial services to residents of surrounding rural areas. Disruptions within these communities may affect populations beyond their municipal boundaries.
- Many smaller communities have limited or no local hospital, urgent care, pharmacy, grocery, banking, lodging, or other essential commercial services. Residents may depend on transportation to Wilmington or communities in neighboring counties.
- Daytime, seasonal, and visitor populations may differ significantly from residential population estimates because of commuting, schools, Wilmington College, Wilmington Air Park, camps, hotels, major employers, Interstate travel, festivals, fairs, sporting activities, and regional events.
- Schools, colleges, camps, long-term care facilities, senior housing, mobile-home communities, large employers, hotels, and major events may create concentrated warning, transportation, sheltering, reunification, medical, public-information, and emergency-access needs.
- Aging residents, medically fragile individuals, medication-dependent residents, long-term care residents, homeless populations, residents with limited transportation, and households with limited financial resources may experience serious impacts sooner than the general population.
- Approximately 1 in 21 county residents relies on electrically powered medical devices or medical-support equipment.
- Power outages during extreme heat or cold may rapidly affect medically vulnerable residents, senior populations, long-term care facilities, mobile-home residents, and households without safe heating or cooling alternatives.
- Household preparedness varies significantly. Most households are not expected to sustain themselves beyond 7 to 14 days without outside support, while some households may require assistance much sooner.
- SNAP-dependent households and residents who rely on electronic payments, benefit-delivery systems, or limited local retailers may be disproportionately affected by power, communications, transportation, or supply-chain disruptions.
- Workforce commuting patterns, school closures, family obligations, illness, fuel availability, and household sustenance needs may reduce daytime staffing and workforce availability across public safety, healthcare, government, education, utilities, and private-sector organizations.
- Churches, community organizations, volunteer groups, and other trusted local institutions may become important sources of welfare checks, public information, volunteer coordination, donations management, and community support during prolonged incidents.
- Public compliance with evacuation, lockdown, shelter-in-place, detour, travel advisory, or other emergency guidance will vary based on trust, communications effectiveness, risk perception, stress, misinformation, household capability, and available resources.

6.3. Emergency Response System

- Emergency response capability depends heavily on volunteer fire and EMS personnel supplemented by limited career staffing.
- Fire, EMS, law-enforcement, dispatch, utility, and public works delivery models vary by jurisdiction. Operational capability may therefore differ by location, incident type, staffing level, time of day, and competing service demands.
- Staffing depth is limited, and daytime shortages, responder fatigue, cross-staffing, injury, illness, family obligations, and prolonged operations may significantly reduce capability.
- Automatic mutual aid and additional mutual aid are essential components of county response capability but should not be assumed to be immediate or continuously available.
- Cross-county fire and EMS districts, neighboring agencies, and regional mutual aid partners may require coordination across different dispatch centers, communications systems, operating procedures, and county emergency management structures.
- Clinton County relies primarily on the Clinton County Sheriff's Office and City of Wilmington dispatch centers. Complex or multi-jurisdictional incidents may require deliberate coordination among dispatch centers, Incident Command, responding agencies, utility providers, healthcare facilities, schools, and local officials.
- Law-enforcement capability varies by jurisdiction. Communities without municipal police departments depend primarily on the Clinton County Sheriff's Office, whose response may be affected by patrol location, countywide call volume, weather, transportation conditions, and competing incidents.
- Wilmington contains a substantial concentration of county government, law enforcement, courts, jail, healthcare, communications, and public safety functions. A significant citywide disruption may affect both municipal and countywide response capability.
- Clinton County EMA consists of one full-time staff member supported by a part-time position focused primarily on financial, administrative, and fiscal functions. EMA operates principally as a coordination and support organization rather than a field-response agency.
- EOC staffing and operational sustainment may become limiting factors during prolonged, concurrent, or multi-operational-period incidents.
- Specialized hazardous materials, technical rescue, environmental response, and other regional teams may require extended travel time into Clinton County and may be committed elsewhere during widespread incidents.
- Fire-suppression capability may be reduced by water-main failures, low system pressure, tower depletion, damaged hydrants, limited hydrant distribution, inaccessible water sources, or power loss affecting water systems. Tanker support, water-shuttle operations, or additional mutual aid may be required.
- EMS operations depend on access to healthcare facilities within and outside the county. Transportation disruption, hospital strain, communications failures, or regional incidents may increase transport times, transfer delays, and unit turnaround times.
- Emergency operations depend heavily on partner agencies, healthcare organizations, schools, utilities, volunteer organizations, nongovernmental organizations, businesses, and community support networks.
- Operational decisions must consider workload, cognitive strain, responder safety, staffing depth, and the ability to sustain personnel over multiple operational periods.

6.4. Infrastructure & Lifeline Dependencies

- Clinton County depends heavily on infrastructure systems, utility providers, healthcare networks, communications systems, transportation routes, supply chains, and commercial services extending beyond county boundaries.
- Disruption of electrical power may rapidly affect water production, wastewater treatment, communications, public warning, traffic signals, healthcare, medical equipment, fuel sales, refrigeration, electronic payments, schools, public safety, government services, businesses, and household sustainment.
- Utility-service models differ by jurisdiction. Some municipalities directly operate water, wastewater, or electric-distribution systems, while other communities depend entirely on regional utilities, county districts, special districts, or private providers.
- Municipal utility ownership creates direct local responsibilities for staffing, continuity, maintenance, restoration coordination, customer notification, emergency purchasing, and public information.
- Many township and unincorporated households, as well as the Village of Port William, rely on private wells and onsite septic systems rather than municipal water and wastewater service. Extended power outages may disable private-well pumps and reduce access to potable water, sanitation, livestock water, food preparation, and household hygiene even when nearby public water systems remain operational. Flooding, saturated soils, or system failure may also impair onsite septic systems.
- Water-system continuity depends on source water, intakes, treatment capability, qualified operators, pumping, electrical power, storage, towers, distribution lines, valves, hydrants, system isolation, maintenance, and repair capability.
- Main breaks, leakage, tower depletion, depressurization, contamination concerns, aging infrastructure, equipment failure, or loss of power may result in reduced service, fire-flow limitations, boil advisories, no-use advisories, alternate water requirements, and extensive public notification.
- Wastewater continuity depends on collection systems, lift stations, treatment capability, electrical power, qualified personnel, maintenance, and equipment reliability. Failure may create sanitation, environmental, and public-health impacts.
- Fire-flow capability must not be assumed during water-system disruptions. Water pressure, hydrant condition, tower level, distribution-system condition, and available alternate water supplies must be assessed.
- Backup power capability is finite. Generator availability, transfer switches, facility wiring, refueling access, equipment condition, fuel planning, and HVAC coverage vary by location. Backup generation should not be assumed to support all normal operations.
- Fuel availability may become a limiting factor for emergency response, public works, agriculture, healthcare, utility restoration, transportation, generator operations, businesses, and household sustainment.
- Fuel sales and electronic payment systems may be unavailable even when fuel is physically present because of electrical, communications, point-of-sale, or network failures.
- Communications systems may degrade because of power loss, infrastructure damage, congestion, cyber incidents, terrain, structure type, carrier limitations, or regional system failure.
- Public warning, 911 access, dispatch, responder coordination, utility restoration, healthcare communications, electronic commerce, and situational awareness may degrade simultaneously when communications infrastructure fails.

- Commercial services such as grocery stores, pharmacies, fuel stations, restaurants, hotels, financial institutions, and retail businesses support community resilience but depend on power, water, communications, transportation access, staffing, electronic payments, and product resupply.
- The concentration of healthcare, government, public safety, lodging, food, fuel, communications, financial, and commercial services in Wilmington—particularly along the Rombach Avenue/US-22 corridor—creates the potential for one localized disruption to degrade several countywide lifelines simultaneously.
- Schools, healthcare facilities, long-term care facilities, food-service operations, industrial users, municipal utilities, and resident's dependent on medical equipment may require priority notification and coordination during utility disruptions.
- Cyber incidents may create physical consequences affecting utilities, communications, fuel systems, transportation infrastructure, financial systems, healthcare, and public safety operations.
- Planned transmission improvements, industrial development, data-center or other high-load development, wastewater growth, and changing regional electric demand may alter infrastructure dependencies and emergency-response requirements over time.

6.5. Transportation & Logistics Environment

- Clinton County depends on Interstate 71, U.S. Routes 22 and 68, state routes, rural roads, bridges, rail corridors, Wilmington Air Park, and trucking operations for emergency response, commuting, healthcare access, agriculture, freight movement, utility restoration, and regional commerce.
- Wilmington functions as the county's principal multimodal transportation hub. A significant disruption involving Interstate 71, Wilmington Air Park, major trucking operations, or the Wilmington roadway network may create countywide effects.
- Many communities depend on one or two primary routes for access to healthcare, employment, schools, groceries, pharmacies, fuel, mutual aid, and government services.
- Road closures, flooding, bridge restrictions, construction, crashes, severe weather, or hazardous materials incidents may isolate communities, delay responders, lengthen EMS transport, interrupt utility repair, and restrict access to essential services.
- Alternate routes may be limited, indirect, or quickly overloaded. Rural roads and bridges may not support sustained commercial diversion traffic, heavy apparatus movement, or prolonged detour use.
- Major corridor incidents may create congestion, secondary crashes, stranded motorists, responder-access limitations, prolonged road closures, and public-information demands extending beyond the original incident location.
- Rail corridors pass through or near several communities and may bisect local response areas. Blocked crossings, switching operations, stopped trains, derailments, or rail infrastructure damage may divide communities, delay mutual aid, restrict apparatus movement, and require lengthy rural detours.
- Rail incidents may affect multiple jurisdictions and crossings simultaneously and may require prolonged coordination with railroad representatives, public safety agencies, environmental regulators, utility providers, and neighboring counties.
- Hazardous materials are routinely transported by highway and rail. Initial responders may encounter delayed, incomplete, or conflicting cargo identification.

- Agricultural operations create seasonal increases in heavy equipment, slow-moving vehicles, freight, fuel demand, chemical movement, grain traffic, and roadway use.
- Schools, colleges, camps, festivals, fairs, major events, hotels, Interstate travel, and visitor destinations may temporarily increase traffic, pedestrian movement, parking demand, emergency access needs, public safety staffing, and EMS activity.
- Transportation access is essential to fuel delivery, commercial resupply, pharmacy access, food distribution, healthcare operations, utility restoration, generator refueling, and mutual aid movement.
- Supply-chain disruption may rapidly affect food, fuel, medications, healthcare supplies, agricultural operations, municipal services, and other essential commodities.

6.6. Severe Weather

- Severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, damaging winds, lightning, extreme heat, extreme cold, winter storms, ice storms, heavy rainfall, and flooding will occur within Clinton County.
- Severe weather may develop rapidly, provide limited warning, and create immediate life-safety concerns before responders or public officials have complete situational awareness.
- Severe weather may simultaneously degrade electrical power, communications, transportation, fuel access, water systems, healthcare access, public safety operations, and commercial services.
- Ice storms represent one of the county's greatest risks for prolonged power outages, transportation disruption, communications degradation, and widespread infrastructure damage.
- Power outages during extreme heat or cold may create serious impacts faster than during moderate conditions because residents may lose heating, cooling, refrigeration, medical-equipment support, communications, and safe sheltering options.
- Tornadoes and damaging winds may create disproportionate risks for mobile homes, camp populations, outdoor events, schools, temporary structures, long-term care facilities, and residents without immediate access to substantial shelter.
- Heavy rainfall may create localized street flooding, low-water conditions, road closures, stalled vehicles, drainage-system overload, and access limitations even when widespread river flooding is not occurring.
- Flooding along streams and low-lying roads may isolate rural areas, delay response, restrict Camp Graham or school access, disrupt utility repairs, and force traffic onto unsuitable detour routes.
- Nighttime severe weather incidents may reduce public hazard recognition, warning reception, evacuation or protective-action coordination, responder visibility, damage reporting, and situational awareness.
- Severe weather may affect neighboring counties simultaneously, reducing mutual aid, utility restoration capacity, sheltering support, healthcare capacity, and availability of contractors or specialized resources.
- Clinton County's warning capability is layered and includes NWS products, NOAA Weather Radio, CCEA, cellular alerts, local public information, partner messaging, outdoor warning sirens, and direct outreach when necessary. No single warning method will reliably reach every person.
- Outdoor warning sirens are supplemental outdoor-warning tools and may be unavailable, inaudible indoors, damaged, or unreliable. Public warning must not depend on sirens alone.

- The National Weather Service Wilmington Forecast Office is an important regional warning and coordination asset, but local agencies remain responsible for receiving warnings, assessing local impacts, and communicating protective information to their populations.

6.7. Environmental & Hazard Conditions

- Hazardous materials incidents may occur at fixed facilities, agricultural operations, utility sites, highways, railways, aviation facilities, fuel locations, or through unknown-substance and contamination events.
- Clinton County's hazardous materials environment includes Tier II and Extremely Hazardous Substance facilities, industrial users, agricultural chemicals, fuel operations, Interstate traffic, rail freight, aviation activity, grain and transloading operations, and recurring hazardous materials shipments.
- Rail hazardous materials incidents, including incidents along the Greenfield Line and IDRY corridors, may require evacuation, shelter-in-place, traffic control, environmental monitoring, public warning, water-system protection, and regional response coordination.
- Weather conditions, wind direction, temperature, precipitation, terrain, and time of day may directly affect plume behavior, protective-action decisions, responder safety, and public messaging.
- Hazardous materials identification, quantity, container condition, responsible party information, or environmental impact may be incomplete during the initial response.
- Water contamination, source-water impacts, system depressurization, wastewater failure, stormwater contamination, unexplained sheen reports, or runoff from transportation and industrial incidents may require coordination with public health, environmental regulators, utilities, property owners, and the LEPC.
- Clinton County contains Class I dams, upground reservoirs, water-supply reservoirs, and downstream communities where dam, embankment, reservoir, or operating-condition concerns may require rapid notification, protective-action decisions, water-supply coordination, and public information.
- Reservoir operating restrictions, reduced pool levels, emergency drawdown, or other risk-reduction measures may reduce immediate danger while also affecting water storage, source-water availability, monitoring, maintenance, and public expectations.
- Drought may create agricultural losses, increased field and machinery fire risk, water-supply concerns, well impacts, reduced streamflow, environmental stress, supply-chain effects, and prolonged economic consequences.
- Agricultural and industrial operations may be affected by severe weather, drought, contamination, transportation disruption, utility failure, fire, or loss of water supply and may also create secondary hazardous materials or environmental concerns.
- Environmental and hazardous materials incidents may require sustained coordination with facility operators, railroad representatives, utilities, public health, Ohio EPA, fire departments, law enforcement, emergency management, the LEPC, contractors, and neighboring jurisdictions.

6.8. Long-Duration & Complex Incident Conditions

- Major incidents may require Clinton County and its jurisdictions to operate under degraded conditions for extended periods.
- Community Lifeline degradation may continue or worsen after the immediate life-safety phase and may outlast field-response operations.

- Long-duration incidents may require triage-based decision-making and prioritization of limited personnel, fuel, generators, transportation, water, healthcare access, contractors, communications capability, and public support.
- Prolonged or concurrent incidents may strain elected officials, local government staff, utility operators, responders, dispatch centers, healthcare providers, schools, businesses, volunteer organizations, and EOC personnel.
- Operational priorities may shift from routine service delivery toward life safety, responder sustainment, protection of critical users, maintenance of essential services, and stabilization of the most consequential lifeline impacts.
- Mutual aid, state resources, federal assistance, contractors, utilities, healthcare systems, transportation providers, and nonprofit organizations may be affected by the same regional or nationwide incident and unable to meet all requests.
- Fuel shortages, transportation disruption, supply-chain interruption, communications degradation, and financial-system failure may progressively reduce operational capability.
- Public-health concerns may increase because of sanitation failure, loss of potable water, food spoilage, heat or cold exposure, medication interruption, reduced healthcare access, environmental contamination, or inability to operate medical equipment.
- Financial systems, electronic payments, point-of-sale systems, procurement systems, banking services, and benefit-delivery systems depend heavily on electrical power and communications infrastructure.
- Limited local grocery, pharmacy, fuel, lodging, healthcare, and commercial services may cause residents of smaller communities to seek assistance or essential services elsewhere, increasing transportation and resource demands.
- Public expectations, political pressure, misinformation, rumors, and frustration may increase as outages, road closures, advisories, service interruptions, or restoration efforts continue.
- Organized demonstrations, civil disruption, theft, infrastructure targeting, fraud, or resource-driven disorder may emerge during prolonged infrastructure degradation or supply disruption.
- Public information must address what is known, what remains unknown, current protective actions, available services, realistic restoration expectations, and how the public can reduce demand on limited response resources.
- Recovery operations may begin while response and lifeline-stabilization operations remain underway, creating competing demands for personnel, funding, equipment, contractors, public information, and leadership attention.
- Recovery planning should reassess infrastructure vulnerabilities, utility dependencies, staffing limitations, resource shortfalls, and planning assumptions identified during the incident.

7. OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES

Emergency operations in Clinton County prioritize:

- Immediate threats to life
- Stabilizing lifelines when they affect human survival or safety
- Reducing suffering and protecting vulnerable populations

- Supporting Incident Command operations and responder safety
- Protecting critical infrastructure and essential services
- Stabilizing operations and preparing for recovery

Community Lifeline assessment and reporting will follow *01.01: Reference – Clinton County Lifelines*. Countywide and community-specific conditions may be informed by 01.01.A through 01.01.I, but current operational decisions must be based on verified incident conditions and provider information.

Community Lifelines represent the critical services necessary to maintain public safety, health, and economic stability. Disruption to one or more lifelines may result in cascading impacts across multiple systems.

Operational coordination prioritizes stabilization of lifelines alongside life safety, recognizing that prolonged disruption may exceed local capacity.

8. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS (CONOPS)

8.1. Decision Framing

Operational decisions prioritize what has happened, what is happening, and what is likely to happen next.

Severity precedes scale. Intensity precedes timing. Operational strain matters more than optics.

8.2. Operational Focus

Operations prioritize reducing harm first, supporting Incident Command for tactical operations, supporting the Mass Care and Sheltering Function (ESF-6) to reduce suffering, coordinating lifeline stabilization, and maintaining flexibility to escalate or de-escalate operational posture, as well as mobilize or demobilize resources and transition to recovery.

Operational escalation, activation thresholds, and time-sensitive decision points are defined in supporting Playbooks.

Playbooks translate hazard conditions, operational strain, and real-time indicators into specific actions, including EOC activation, resource prioritization, and coordination escalation.

The Basic Plan establishes structure and doctrine, while Playbooks provide time-sensitive execution guidance.

The EMA Director serves as the coordinating authority for county-level emergency operations. The MAC / Policy Group provides policy direction and resolves conflicts when time and conditions permit.

9. COMMAND, CONTROL, AND COORDINATION

9.1. Incident Command – Tactical Operations

Incident Command retains tactical control of on-scene operations, hazard mitigation, and life-saving actions. It is responsible for establishing incident objectives, directing operational resources, and maintaining situational awareness to support effective and coordinated response actions.

9.2. Unified Command

Unified Command is an application of Incident Command used when multiple jurisdictions or agencies share responsibility for an incident. It allows agencies with authority or functional responsibility to jointly establish objectives, strategies, and priorities while maintaining a single coordinated command structure. Unified Command is typically established at or near the incident and is supported by the EOC for coordination, resource support, and information management.

9.3. Emergency Operations Center — Operational Coordination

The EOC coordinates resource management (Resource Support Function — ESF-7), planning and situational awareness (Planning Function — ESF-5), logistics and sustainment, interagency synchronization, and policy support to Incident Command. These coordination functions align with the National Incident Management System (FEMA, 2017), which defines EOC roles as support and coordination elements rather than command structures

9.4. MAC / Policy Group — Strategic and Policy Oversight

The MAC / Policy Group provides policy direction, priority-setting, legal and fiscal guidance, conflict arbitration, and strategic oversight.

The MAC / Policy Group is engaged when incidents involve multi-jurisdictional impacts, legal or fiscal implications, competing priorities, or significant public information concerns.

Tactics happen in the field. Coordination happens in the EOC. Policy decisions happen at the MAC table.

10. PRIORITY OF REQUESTS

Incident Command requests supporting life safety take priority when resources compete.

When competing life-safety priorities exist, resource allocation decisions are based on immediacy of threat, population at risk, and likelihood of survivability.

Shelter and Mass Care requests (ESF-6) escalate when population suffering exceeds planning assumptions.

The EMA Director makes time-sensitive determinations and documents concurrence or non-concurrence. The MAC / Policy Group resolves conflicts when time permits.

11. EMA AND EOC OPERATIONAL POSTURES

Clinton County uses three scalable operational postures:

- Enhanced Monitoring — No EOC Activation

- Partial EOC Activation
- Full EOC Activation

The EMA Director or designee determines the appropriate posture based on anticipated or actual life-safety impacts, incident complexity, coordination requirements, information-management demands, resource strain, multi-jurisdictional impacts, government-service disruption, and Community Lifeline conditions.

The Emergency Operations Center may be activated at the direction of the Clinton County EMA Director or designee when operational requirements exceed what can reasonably be managed through Enhanced Monitoring, Administrative Response, or Reachback. This authority is supported by Ohio Revised Code §5502.26.

When a municipality formally requests county-level coordination, the request may be reviewed by the Board of Commissioners and, when approved, executed by the EMA Director.

Reference Documents may inform the assessment of potential or developing Community Lifeline impacts but do not independently establish an EOC activation threshold or automatic emergency declaration trigger.

Operational posture may be increased or reduced as conditions, consequences, staffing requirements, and coordination demands change.

11.1. Enhanced Monitoring — No EOC Activation

Enhanced Monitoring is an elevated EMA coordination posture used when a forecast threat, emerging condition, planned event, or ongoing incident requires greater attention than routine day-to-day monitoring but does not require formal EOC activation.

During Enhanced Monitoring, the EOC remains inactive. Clinton County EMA may:

- Increase monitoring of weather, incidents, infrastructure, Community Lifelines, public-safety activity, or regional threats
- Collect, validate, analyze, and share Essential Elements of Information
- Contact affected jurisdictions, public safety agencies, utilities, healthcare organizations, schools, private-sector partners, or state and regional partners
- Provide situation updates, decision support, public-information assistance, technical guidance, or resource coordination
- Establish or maintain an incident record in D4H when significant actions, decisions, coordination, or impacts require documentation
- Provide Administrative Response or Reachback support
- Brief elected officials or department heads without activating the MAC / Policy Group.

Incident Command retains tactical control of field operations. Partner agencies continue operating under their normal authorities and procedures.

Enhanced Monitoring may transition to Partial or Full EOC Activation when coordination requirements, staffing demands, resource requests, information-management needs, or Community Lifeline impacts exceed the practical capability of normal EMA operations.

11.2. Partial Activation

Partial EOC Activation uses targeted staffing based on incident requirements, Community Lifeline impacts, coordination strain, and resource-management needs.

Only the functions necessary to support the incident are activated. Staffing may be physical, virtual, hybrid, combined, or supported through mutual aid.

11.3. Full EOC Activation

Full EOC Activation uses expanded multi-function staffing to support sustained, complex, or multi-jurisdictional operations.

Full Activation may include active MAC / Policy Group engagement, structured operational periods, expanded planning and logistics functions, formal situation reporting, and increased coordination with state, federal, nongovernmental, and private-sector partners.

Named triggers and escalation thresholds are defined in applicable Playbooks. Operational activation procedures, staffing configurations, and EOC coordination mechanics are detailed in *02.05: Functional Annex – Direction & Control*.

Operational activation procedures, staffing configurations, and EOC coordination mechanics are detailed in *02.05: Functional Annex – Direction & Control*.

12. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE AND REACHBACK

When the EOC is not activated, Clinton County EMA may provide incident or threat-specific support through Administrative Response and Reachback under the Enhanced Monitoring posture.

Administrative Response is direct EMA coordination or support provided without formally activating the EOC. It may include:

- Advice or subject-matter assistance
- Planning and analysis support
- Public-information or warning support
- Resource-request coordination
- Situation reporting and documentation
- Coordination with utilities, healthcare organizations, schools, nongovernmental organizations, neighboring counties, Ohio EMA, or other partners
- Limited liaison or coordination support at an incident or partner location when appropriate

Administrative Response may be conducted from the EMA office, remotely, from a mobile location, or at another coordination location. It does not constitute tactical field command.

Reachback is remote support provided to Incident Command, a jurisdiction, partner agency, or field representative using voice, data, D4H, email, mapping, communications systems, or other available technology. Reachback may include messaging, analysis, research, planning assistance, technical guidance, documentation, or coordination activities.

Administrative Response and Reachback do not constitute EOC activation, establish a separate command structure, transfer tactical authority, or require full EOC staffing.

When support requirements exceed available EMA capacity or require sustained multi-agency staffing, the EMA Director may transition operations to Partial or Full EOC Activation.

13. DIRECTION, CONTROL, AND SUCCESSION

Incident Command, including Unified Command when established, retains tactical control of on-scene operations. In incidents where terrorism or criminal activity has not been ruled out, the jurisdictional Chief Law Enforcement Officer (ESF-13) will lead or co-lead Incident Command or Unified Command, consistent with investigative and public safety authority. This leadership applies to on-scene command and does not extend to control of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), which remains a coordination function. Law enforcement leadership in these cases is supported by Ohio Revised Code §2935.03, which establishes arrest and enforcement authority for peace officers.

The County Coordinating Official, responsible for county-level coordination outside of on-scene command, defaults to the County Administrator or designated elected official.

EMA Director succession follows this order:

- EMA Director
- EMA Executive Committee Chair
- Jurisdictional Chief of an involved response agency

If a Jurisdictional Chief of an involved response agency assumes EMA coordination responsibilities, they will be supported and advised by a neighboring county EMA Director or other qualified emergency management professional to ensure continuity of coordination, documentation, and compliance with emergency management requirements.

This support should be coordinated through existing mutual aid agreements or regional EMA coordination mechanisms when available.

Operational coordination structure and execution procedures are detailed in *02.05: Functional Annex – Direction & Control*.

14. COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

D4H serves as the system of record during Monitoring and EOC activation.

Dispatch centers operate independently and remain responsible for emergency call-taking and radio operations.

Public information operations are governed by *02.15: Public Information Functional Annex*. Joint Information Center (JIC) coordination will be established when needed to support multi-agency or multi-jurisdiction messaging. When the PIO or EOC is not activated, public messaging remains the responsibility of the lead department managing the incident.

Misinformation detection is everyone's responsibility. Not all misinformation can be corrected in real time; priority is given to correcting information that creates immediate life-safety risk or operational disruption.

- Message drafting and response coordination are led by the PIO (ESF-15)
- EOC functions and relevant departments provide subject-matter input as needed
- MAC / Policy Group review is conducted when messaging involves policy, legal, political, or high-impact public issues

The goal of misinformation response is to preserve public trust, reduce harm, and maintain operational credibility.

15. RESOURCE, FINANCE, AND LOGISTICS

Response actions depend on available funding and procurement authority.

Emergency procurement authorities are cited here and detailed in *02.07.1: Functional Annex – Logistics*. Emergency procurement actions are supported by Ohio Revised Code §307.86, which provides exceptions to competitive bidding requirements during emergencies.

Donations are managed by nonprofit organizations, not government. Volunteer coordination occurs under *02.07.3: Functional Annex – Volunteer & Donations Management*.

16. DECLARATIONS AND LEGAL AUTHORITIES

Disaster declarations and emergency authorities are addressed in the Disaster Declarations Annex. Disaster declarations enable access to emergency authorities, resource support, and financial mechanisms, but do not change Incident Command structure or operational control. Disaster declaration authority is supported by Ohio Revised Code §305.30 and §5502.28, which authorize local emergency actions and coordination with the State of Ohio.

Civil Defense authorities are referenced lightly here and detailed in *02.20: Functional Annex – Civil Defense*, framed as legacy authority reserved for extreme catastrophic or wartime contingencies.

Sensitive or restricted planning content may be maintained within the Protected Planning Annex (PIPA), which is not publicly distributed and is controlled in accordance with applicable laws and security considerations.

17. DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Formal decisions must be documented using D4H, ICS-214, Memo for Record, or email notifications to the Ohio EMA Watch Office when appropriate.

Documentation should record life-safety impacts and Community Lifeline status, trend, affected scope, estimated duration, cascading impacts, operational strain, and risk-management concerns in accordance with *01.01: Reference – Clinton County Lifelines*.

Clinton County utilizes D4H Incident Manager as the primary system of record for incident documentation, resource tracking, and operational coordination.

All agencies supporting EOC operations should align documentation practices to support consistent reporting, cost tracking, and after-action review.

18. DEMOBILIZATION AND TRANSITION

Demobilization follows a Demobilization Plan (Demob-Plan). Mutual aid demobilizes first, followed by contracted services, then government resources.

De-escalation and demobilization are separate actions. Hot Wash collection occurs at transition points.

19. AFTER-ACTION AND PLAN MAINTENANCE

After-Action Reports are due within 30 days. EMA owns the process, and action items are assigned to an Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR).

Significant findings are briefed to the EMA Executive Committee and then the Board of Commissioners. When revisions to the Basic Plan exceed 30 percent, the plan will be repromulgated. In addition, any incident within Clinton County involving a response conducted under this plan that results in loss of human life will trigger a formal review of this plan and its underlying assumptions, with consideration given to repromulgation based on findings. Reference Documents, Functional Annexes, Hazard Annexes, Playbooks, Guidance Documents, and supporting planning documents may be updated as necessary to remain current and do not require repromulgation, provided the updates remain consistent with the doctrine and authorities established by the Basic Plan. A record of changes and updates to the County EOP will be maintained and provided to plan partners for awareness. AARs become historical reference when the Basic Plan changes more than 30 percent or following a loss of life incident associated with a response under this plan that results in substantive plan revisions. Annual tabletop validation of this plan is required.

SOURCES

Emergency operations in Clinton County are conducted under applicable federal, state, and local authorities. These authorities establish the legal basis for emergency management, coordination, resource allocation, and disaster response activities.

- Federal Emergency Management Agency. (2017). National Incident Management System (3rd ed.).
- Federal Emergency Management Agency. (2019). National Response Framework (4th ed.).

- Federal Emergency Management Agency. (2023). Comprehensive Preparedness Guide (CPG) 101: Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plans (Version 3.0).
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security. (2022). Homeland Security Act of 2002.
- Office of Management and Budget. (2023). Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 C.F.R. Part 200).
- Ohio Emergency Management Agency. (n.d.). Emergency management program guidance and standards.
- Ohio Administrative Code 4501:3-6. (2024). Emergency management program requirements.
- Ohio Revised Code §2935.03. (n.d.). Authority of peace officers.
- Ohio Revised Code §305.30. (n.d.). Powers of county commissioners.
- Ohio Revised Code §307.86. (n.d.). Competitive bidding exemptions.
- Ohio Revised Code §3750. (n.d.). Emergency planning and community right-to-know.
- Ohio Revised Code §5502.26. (n.d.). County emergency management agency duties.
- Ohio Revised Code §5502.27. (n.d.). Emergency management program responsibilities.
- Ohio Revised Code §5502.28. (n.d.). Emergency powers of political subdivisions.
- Ohio Revised Code §5502.40. (n.d.). Emergency Management Assistance Compact.
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2021). Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan: Basic Plan (Rev. July 2021) [Superseded planning document]. Clinton County Emergency Management Agency.
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2025). Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA).
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2025). Clinton County Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2025). Clinton County Area Study Annex.
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2025). Planning and operational briefing documents (internal).
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2026). Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan: 01.01.A: Reference – Countywide Lifelines.
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2026). Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan: 01.01.B: Reference – Blanchester Lifelines.
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2026). Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan: 01.01.C: Reference – Clarksville Lifelines.
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2026). Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan: 01.01.D: Reference – Martinsville Lifelines.
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2026). Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan: 01.01.E: Reference – Midland Lifelines.
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2026). Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan: 01.01.F: Reference – New Vienna Lifelines.
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2026). Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan: 01.01.H: Reference – Sabina Lifelines.
- Clinton County Emergency Management Agency. (2026). Clinton County Emergency Operations Plan: 01.01.I: Reference – Wilmington Lifelines.
- Clinton County Board of Commissioners. (1989). Resolution #881 establishing the Clinton County Emergency Management Agency.

This plan operates under applicable local, state, and federal legal authorities, including Ohio Revised Code Chapter 5502.
Full citations and supporting legal references are maintained within this section and supporting planning documents.

DRAFT