

LHD PLANNING STEPS FOR MASS GATHERING EVENTS

Based on Jackson County Health Department's Eclipse 2017 (and 2024) Experience

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Gather information

- From media, elected officials, emergency management, law enforcement, public works, economic development, tourism, Chamber of Commerce, State agencies, large employers, destination locations

Participate in planning meetings

- The bigger the planned event, the greater the lead time and the # of planning partners

Assess the impacts

- Based on the available information, assess direct impacts on LHD and impacts on community
- Continuously reassess based on latest information

Impacts on LHD

- What planned activities does your dept. regulate? Are new local ordinances needed?
- What public information role can your dept. play? What threats/hazards do visitors need to be prepared for? Any particular concerns with event location/amenities, ingress/egress, participant demographics, planned or illicit activities?
- Do you have enough staff to conduct necessary activities? If not, how can you access support? Can volunteers help?
- What staff training is necessary to accomplish the mission? What equipment, supplies & forms are needed?
- Will staff communications be impacted by peak demand on cellular towers? Will traffic impact staff arrival/departure at office or at events?
- What's the plan for staff encountering unlicensed/unpermitted activities in the field?
- What's the plan for event surveillance, monitoring & reporting?
- *From a different perspective:* what can your LHD do to make the event fun or memorable for staff?

Impacts on community

- What planned activities might impact your community partners, especially those not represented at the planning table? How will you share information and provide suggestions?
- How will events impact access to hospitals, EMS routes, mass transit, and emergency sheltering should it be needed? Make sure public health and healthcare partners (inc. regional healthcare coalition) are at the table and thinking about these issues.
- What can your dept. do to better prepare partners and the community? (Examples: provide training on Narcan, first aid, CPR, Stop the Bleed; distribute eclipse glasses; assist with tabletop drills)
- How can your available staff & volunteers help support EMA and other jurisdictional partners leading up to and during the event?

- What if cascading events occur which greatly expand incident complexity and resource needs?

Prepare staff

- Determine needed staff training, determine staffing plan, implement training
- Develop Incident Action Plan (IAP) with communications plan, utilize ICS
- Develop & disseminate FAQs for LHD staff, esp. those answering phones

Execute plans

- Conduct (at least one) operations briefing with staff
- Key staff provide periodic situational reports (“SITREPS”) to Incident Command during event for real-time feedback, adjust plans as needed

Post-event actions

- Hold post-event incident debriefing (“hotwash”)
- Develop After Action Report-Improvement Plan (AAR-IP), take actions to implement improvements
- Share Lessons Learned with staff, partners

- BONUS -

Well before the event, determine what PHEP capabilities your LHD has not exercised during the current five-year cycle, that might be possible to exercise during this real-world event. Some capabilities may naturally lend themselves to being exercised in relation to a mass gathering event (such as Community Preparedness, Emergency Operations Coordination, Emergency Public Information & Warning, Information Sharing, Mass Care, Responder Safety & Health, Volunteer Management). Work with community partners which also have exercise requirements, as well as event organizers.

General Resources

ASPR TRACIE “Topic Collection: Mass Gatherings/Special Events”

<https://asprtracie.hhs.gov/technical-resources/85/mass-gatherings-special-events/0>

“Mass Gatherings: Are You Prepared?” free online 90-minute course

<https://www.nwcphp.org/training/mass-gatherings-are-you-prepared>

Eclipse-Specific Resources

ASPR TRACIE “Solar Eclipses: Planning Resources”

<https://files.asprtracie.hhs.gov/documents/aspr-tracie-solar-eclipse-resources.pdf>

“Community Solar Eclipse Planning” White Paper, 2nd Edition, 2022

<https://www.beinginthesadow.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/WHITE-PAPER-SECOND-EDITION.pdf>

American Astronomical Society <https://eclipse.aas.org/>

NationalEclipse.com <https://nationaleclipse.com/overview.html>