

Tab 14 – Fatality Management

NATURAL DEATH SURGE

A natural death surge is a dramatic increase in the number of deaths due to a pandemic or other natural cause. This plan is in place to ensure that this region can handle the increase while providing dignity and respect for the deceased during a public health emergency.

Every county Coroner must submit a plan to the local Emergency Management office that details how his or her jurisdiction will manage, record, warehouse, and inter of mass fatalities. If the mass fatality incident is not widespread, Coroners may use resources such as the Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Teams, and/or the KY Coroner's Association, both deployed by KY Emergency Management. The Funeral Directors Association of Kentucky is also an option, deployed by a county Coroner.

Hospitals may be asked to store bodies in the morgue. Once hospitals have reached capacity, the Coroner's pre-designated alternate morgue sites will be utilized. Emergency Management will activate plans for refrigerated trucks/units if corpses need to be stored and/or transported.

BRDHD will look for guidance from the KY Department for Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as to how to store and dispose of biological agent fatalities.

I. PURPOSE AND MISSION

The Natural Death Surge Standard Operating Guidelines (NDS-SOG) are intended to supplement a Region's hospital and county/regional emergency management mass fatality plans that are limited in time and scope. This NDS-SOG is compliant with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and structured by the Incident Command System (ICS). The NDS-SOG provides guidelines for response to a large-scale public health emergency, such as a severe influenza pandemic, resulting in an extreme surge in death from natural causes over an extended period of time. This Region's NDS-SOG encompasses the ten (10) counties served by the following health departments:

Allen County Health Department

Monroe County Health Department

Barren River District Health Department

- Serves: Barren, Butler, Edmonson, Hart, Logan, Metcalfe, Simpson and Warren Counties

When mortuary services are predicted to be overwhelmed, the Department for Public Health will exercise their authority to activate this plan assuming that a State of Emergency has been declared.

II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

- A. The Governor will have declared a State of Emergency or the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will have made a National or a Kentucky Disaster Declaration before this plan is activated.
- B. Deaths from a pandemic or other public health emergency overwhelm existing mortuary capacity. It is assumed that there will be minimal state and federal assistance because the pandemic or other emergency situation would affect a significant number of outside resources, perhaps the entire nation.
- C. When mortuary services are predicted to be overwhelmed or pre-determined thresholds have been met, Public Health will activate this NDS-SOG. In a severe influenza pandemic having a 35% disease attack rate with 3.5% mortality, this Region could experience 3,000 fatalities in 60 days (50 deaths per day).
- D. During the period of activation, all human remains, influenza related or not, will be managed at one or more central facilities and private funeral services will most likely be postponed. Embalming and cremation will most likely not occur as normal during the period of activation.
- E. Under no circumstances would mass graves be permissible under this NDS-SOG. Each county is expected to designate an internment site(s) (emergency order authorizes Eminent Domain if needed) and establish an individual grave for each decedent with proper identification and documentation of the remains and the grave location. If this NDS-SOG is activated due to pandemic influenza, graveside services will not be provided or allowed during the period of activation due to required social distancing measures.
- F. Finger printing (electronic and/or manual), digital photographing and DNA sampling are all required to identify the deceased. GPS marking of gravesites is also required.
- G. Special planning considerations may be needed for the storage and movement of decedents for whom no identification is possible at the time of recovery (i.e. homeless persons, illegal aliens, victims of severe trauma or decomposition).
- H. Hospitals, funeral homes and delivery services will be expected to cooperate in the implementation of the NDS-SOG. Existing morgue space will likely be insufficient during an NDS event, requiring assistance in procuring resources for temporary cold storage of remains. Assistance will also be needed for site procurement as well as security and transportation during the period of activation.
- I. Funeral home personnel and targeted medical reserve corps volunteers (ex. forensic dentists, nurses, clerks, and phone-bank personnel) will be utilized as primary personnel resources with support, as available, from county coroner personnel. Region

4 could utilize retired coroners and deputies. Additional volunteers including CERT, rescue squads, and fire personnel could also be used to assist.

III. DIRECTION AND CONTROL

A. A declared state of Emergency empowers the Governor to suspend or augment statutory and regulatory provisions. For detailed information go to <http://www.lrc.ky.gov/KRS/039A00/CHAPTER.HTM>

B. Kentucky's Emergency Health Powers Act (KRS Chapter 39A) gives Public Health the authority to exercise certain powers during a declared State of Emergency.

As it relates to fatality management during a natural death surge, the Department for Public Health will coordinate efforts with the duly elected county coroner to:

- Possess and control any human remains
- Require any business or facility authorized to embalm, bury, cremate, inter, disinter, transport, and dispose of human remains, to accept any human remains or provide the use of its business or facility for this purpose.

C. This NDS-SOG is compliant with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and structured by the Incident Command System (ICS). For the purposes of this NDS-SOG, Allen, Monroe, and Barren River District Health Departments will operate under Area Command and will participate in a Joint Information Center (JIC) to promote consistent information to the general public in Allen County, Monroe County and the Barren River District.

D. Essential NDS-SOG functions include decedent transport and tracking including individual grave identification, provisional report of death form processing, and communication directly with healthcare facilities and decedent families and with the general public through the JIC.

E. At the local level, the local coroner will direct all operations pertaining to the processing of the dead. The coordination efforts will encompass the Local EM Director and staff, Local Health Department and the Area 3 KYEM manager.

F. The region will work collaboratively to manage fatality management.

IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. Area Command. The purpose of the area command is to provide a central location and adequate personnel for the administrative duties required during a natural death surge or other catastrophic event with overwhelming numbers of fatalities. Area Command will need the following equipment and supplies:

- Secure working environment for Area Command Staff with restroom facilities
- Secure working environment for Family Assistance Center with restroom facilities
- Usual and customary office supplies
- Electrical services from local utilities or generators
- Computers, Photocopy machine, paper, etc
- Phone and/or radio access to central collection/processing centers and internment sites
- General internet and telephone services
- Supply of provisional report of death forms

Area command will have adequate space and equipment to house the command staff and personnel who will manage the following duties:

- Arrange for all NDS staffing needs, task assignments, schedules and rotations
- Communicate any unmet resource needs to EMA or applicable parties & coordinate with county coroners, local funeral directors, and medical examiners as needed
- Manage incoming requests for decedent transport, collect and transmit detailed information on decedents to one of three Central Collection/Processing Facilities
- Arrange routes and time-tables for transport of decedents to one of the three Central Collection/ Processing Facilities
- Facilitate communication between CCPF command staff and the command staff at the internment site(s) as needed
- Coordinate capacity for temporary cold storage of remains at the CCPF site and coordinate movement of remains to the CCPF and from the CCPF to county internment sites
- Process completed chain of custody forms and information on each decedent
- Prepare daily NDS data reports
- Provide situation updates to the Joint Information Center (JIC)
- Manage the Family Assistance Center
- Provide security for the Area Command Headquarters and the Family Assistance Center

B. Central collection/processing facility. The purpose of the central/processing facility is to examine, identify, document, and prepare human remains for burial. The process includes preparation of all necessary and customary paperwork in reference to the death certificate, (determination of cause and manner of death) next of kin notification, etc. Organizing the mortuary expertise in one location allows for greater efficiency and the best use of limited resources.

Region 4 will have three (3) Central Collection/Processing Facility sites to cover the area.

The three sites will be broken down as follows:

- Simpson County: to collect from Simpson, Logan, and Allen
- Warren County: to collect from Warren, Butler, and Edmonson
 - Possible locations in Warren County include: HH & L Warehouse
- Barren County: to collect for Barren, Hart, Metcalfe, and Monroe

The county Coroners in each of the Collection Site counties will be responsible for identifying the primary and secondary site.

Bodies will be brought into one of the three Collection Site locations for processing ONLY. Once the body has been processed (fingerprinted, photographed, DNA sample, etc.) the body should be taken back to its respective county.

The Central Collection/Processing Facility (CCF) will need the following equipment and supplies:

- Equipment for each CCF team to document and identify deceased
 - Data entry forms
 - DNA sampling cards
 - fingerprint material
 - camera
 - ID marking and tags
 - Containers and forms for personal effects
- Usual and customary office supplies
- Electrical services from local utilities or generators
- Running water
- HVAC
- Adequate bathroom facilities
- Place to process death certificates
- Computers, photocopy machine, paper, etc.
- General internet and telephone service
- Phone and/or radio access to area command and internment sites
- Cold storage facilities for the deceased
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including;
 - Gloves
 - Goggles
 - Face masks
 - Gowns
- Heavy duty body bags with handles (regular and over-sized) to keep in CCF and in transport vehicles

- Tables for holding the deceased while they are being processed and identified
- Access to internet database or hard copy forms for recording decedent information

The central collection/processing facility (CCPF) will have adequate space and equipment to house the CCPF command staff and personnel who will manage the following duties:

- Arrange for all NDS staffing needs, task assignments, schedules and rotations
- Communicate any unmet resource needs to EMA or applicable parties & coordinate with county coroners, local funeral directors, and medical examiners as needed
- Coordinate incoming information regarding decedent transport.
- Collect detailed chain-of custody information and ante mortem information packets on decedents as they arrive at the Central Collection/Processing Facility
- Identify teams that will take pictures and issue death certificates.
- Conduct postmortem processing procedures prior to export to internment sites
- Coordinate storage of remains at the CCPF and movement of remains from CCPF to the internment site
- Process completed chain of custody forms and information on each decedent
- Process and establish protocol for personal effects
- Prepare daily data reports
- Provide situation updates to the Joint Information Center (JIC)
- Provide information to Area Command staff for dissemination to Family Members through the Family Assistance Center
- Facilitate communication between the Area Command staff, CCPF command staff, and internment site command staff as needed
- Provide security for the Central Collection/ Processing Facility

C. Transportation to bring deceased to the collection site and from there to the internment site. County Emergency Managers utilizing ESF-1 will meet the needs of the County Coroners. County ESF-1 will be responsible for the transportation plan in accordance with each county Emergency Operating Plan (BRDHD H:Drive/Disaster Preparedness/State and County Plans.):

- Look at transportation resources in each county.
- Ambulances should not transport the deceased.
- The Governor may limit transportation in/out of KY.
- Refrigeration is not required to move dead bodies.
- The deceased should be picked up from hospitals first and then from individual homes. Hospital bed space is the most critical.
- Transportation options:
 - Funeral home vehicles; vans, hearses
 - Panel trucks/box trucks
 - Buses
 - Flower vans

D. Internment site. The purpose of the internment site is to provide a marked and documented In-ground grave for each deceased individual or item of human remains. Arrangements for interring and transporting remains must be accomplished well in advance of a qualifying event.

Approximately 900 bodies can be buried per acre of land.

Equipment and supplies necessary at the internment site:

- Phone or radio access to NDS Area Command and CCPF
- GPS units (at least 2) per site
- Excavating equipment (preferably owned by excavators)
- Shovels
- Grave identification markers and possibly row or grid markers to identify larger area sections of the internment sites
- Digital camera for documenting body bag with case number in each specific labeled site
- If feasible, computer and internet access to NDS database for recording grave ID and GPS coordinates
- Personal Protective equipment for all personnel handling remains

The internment site must have adequate space and equipment to house the internment site command staff and personnel who will manage the following duties:

- Arrange for all NDS staffing needs, task assignments, schedules and rotations
- Communicate any unmet resource needs to EMA or applicable parties
- Manage incoming requests for decedent transport
- Arrange time-tables for transport of decedents from the Central Collection/Processing Facility
- Facilitate communication between CCPF command staff and the command staff at the interment site(s) as needed
- Process completed chain of custody forms and information on each decedent
- Inter the remains of each decedent with complete and thorough documentation
- Prepare daily NDS data reports
- Provide situation updates to the Joint Information Center (JIC)
- Provide security for the internment site
- Security will include preventing media from taking pictures and interrupting workers at the site.

Region 4 internment sites:

- Cemeteries
- County owned parks
- Rest stops or other county owned

County Death Surge Capacities

	Allen	Barren	Butler	Edmonson	Hart
Population	19,956	42,173	12,690	12,161	18,199
Mortuary Capacity Normal / Surge	8 / 18	5 / 8			
Hospital Capacity Normal / Surge	4 / 8	2 / (n/a)	none		
Embalming Capacity 8 hr / 24 hr day	?	5 / 46 per day	33 / 86 per day		
Cremation Capacity	n/a	n/a	n/a		
Primary Transportation Source	Funeral Home Vehicles	Funeral Home Vehicles	Butler Co Coroner		
Burial Capacity 8 hr / 24 hr day	UNK	UNK	29 / per day	UNK	UNK
Refrigeration for deceased (transport / storage)	None	Has an ice plant (do not know if they would participate) and possibly Houchens/IGA. Also Glasgow has a small rail yard with several team tracks for rail refrigeration cars that could be used for body storage and/or transport.	Morgantown Freight	None	None

	Logan	Monroe	Metcalfe	Simpson	Warren
Population	26,835	10,963	10,099	17,327	113,792
Mortuary Capacity Normal / Surge	2 / 2?	7 / 16		24 / 34	11 / 26
Hospital Capacity Normal / Surge	2 / 2?	n/a		60 / 75	12 (max capacity)
Embalming Capacity 8 hr / 24 hr day	6 / 12 weekly	9 / (n/a) per day	NONE	3 / 6 per day	39 / 165 per day
Cremation Capacity	n/a	n/a	n/a	(18-20) / (30-35) weekly	30 / 112 weekly
Primary Transportation Source	Coroner	Funeral Home Vehicles	NONE	Modular van Two hearses	Funeral Home Vehicles
Burial Capacity 8 hr / 24 hr day	20 / 20?	9 / 26 per day	NONE	3 / UNK per day	20 / 46 per day
Refrigeration for deceased (transport / storage)	None	Purity refrigeration trailer in co.	None	None	Has an ice plant, rental reefer units and private contractor agreements