

Prepublication Requirements

• Issued December 20, 2024 •



New and Revised Emergency Management Requirements for the ALC Accreditation Program

The Joint Commission has approved the following revisions for prepublication. While revised requirements are published in the semiannual updates to the print manuals (as well as in the online *E-dition*®), accredited organizations and paid subscribers can also view them in the monthly periodical *The Joint Commission Perspectives*®. To begin your subscription, call 800-746-6578 or visit <http://www.jcrinc.com>.

Please note: Where applicable, this report shows current standards and EPs first, with deleted language struck-through. Then, the revised requirement follows in bold text, with new language underlined.

APPLICABLE TO THE ASSISTED LIVING COMMUNITIES ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

Effective July 1, 2025

Emergency Management (EM) Chapter

EM.10.01.01

The organization's leader(s) provides oversight and support of emergency management activities.

Element(s) of Performance for EM.10.01.01

New EP 1 The organization's leader(s) provides oversight and support of the emergency management activities.

New EP 2 The organization's leader(s) identifies an individual(s) who will develop and maintain the emergency operations plan, coordinate emergency management education and training, and conduct exercises to evaluate the emergency operations plan and response procedures.

EM.11.01.01

The organization conducts a hazard vulnerability analysis utilizing an all-hazards approach.

Element(s) of Performance for EM.11.01.01

New EP 1 The organization conducts a hazard vulnerability analysis (HVA) using an all-hazards approach. The HVA identifies hazards that could occur at the organization, including missing residents, and in the community where the organization is located. The HVA is documented.

Note 1: If the organization has multiple sites, separate HVAs are required if the sites are in different geographic locations, have different hazards or threats, or the resident population or services offered are unique to this facility.

Note 2: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the organization's leader(s) collaborates with the system's emergency management program when developing the hazards vulnerability analysis that is specific to the organization.

New EP 2 The organization's hazard vulnerability analysis includes but is not limited to the following:

- Natural hazards (such as flooding, wildfires)
- Human-caused hazards (such as bomb threats or cyber/information technology crimes)
- Technological hazards (such as utility or information technology outages)
- Hazardous materials (such as radiological, nuclear, chemical)
- Emerging infectious diseases (such as those that have newly appeared in a population or are rapidly increasing in incidence, which may be localized to a community or widespread)

New EP 3 The organization evaluates and prioritizes the findings of the hazard vulnerability analysis to determine which hazards present the highest likelihood of occurring and the impacts those hazards will have on the operating status of the organization and its ability to provide services.

The findings are documented.

Note: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the organization's leader(s) collaborates with the system's emergency management program when evaluating and prioritizing hazards that are specific to the organization.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 4 The organization uses its prioritized hazards from the hazard vulnerability analysis to identify and implement mitigation and preparedness actions to increase the resilience of the organization and help reduce disruption of essential services or functions.

Note 1: Mitigation activities may include reviewing agreements with other health care facilities, establishing an alternative meeting place in the event the organization is not accessible, reviewing supplies on hand and vendor alternatives, and planning how to protect medical records and how to back-up electronic records.

Note 2: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the organization's leader(s) collaborates with the system's emergency management program when implementing mitigation and preparedness actions that are specific to the organization.

EM.12.01.01

The organization develops an emergency operations plan based on an all-hazards approach.

Note: The organization considers its prioritized hazards identified as part of its hazards vulnerability analysis when developing an emergency operations plan.

Element(s) of Performance for EM.12.01.01

New EP 1 The organization has a written all-hazards emergency operations plan (EOP) with supporting policies and procedures that provides guidance to staff on actions to take during emergency or disaster incidents. The EOP and policies and procedures include but are not limited to the following:

- EOP activation
- Communications plan
- Maintaining, expanding, decreasing, or closing operations
- Protecting critical systems and infrastructure
- Conserving and/or supplementing resources
- Surge plans (such as flu or pandemic plans)
- Sheltering in place
- Evacuating (partial or complete)
- Safety and security

Note: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the system's EOP includes policies and procedures that are specific to the organization.

Ⓧ Documentation is required

New EP 2 The organization's emergency operations plan (EOP) identifies the resident population(s) that it will serve, including at-risk populations, and the types of services it would have the ability to provide in an emergency or disaster event. Documentation is required.

Note: At-risk populations, such as the elderly, persons with dementia, dialysis patients, or persons with physical or mental disabilities, may have additional needs to be addressed during an emergency or disaster incident, such as medical care, communication, transportation, supervision, and maintaining independence.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 3 The organization's emergency operations plan (EOP) includes written procedures for when and how it will shelter in place or evacuate (partial or complete) its staff, volunteers, and residents. **Note 1:** Safe evacuation includes consideration of care, treatment, and service needs of evacuees; staff responsibilities; and transportation.

Note 2: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the system's EOP includes policies and procedures for when and how the organization will shelter in place or evacuate.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 4 The organization's emergency operations plan (EOP) includes written procedures for how the organization will provide essential needs (such as nutrition, water, medical and nonmedical supplies) for its staff, volunteers, and residents, whether they shelter in place or evacuate.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 5 The organization has a process for activating its emergency operations plan and identifies the individual(s) who is responsible for determining operational decisions during an emergency or disaster incident.

Note: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the health care system's activation and response procedures may be centralized as long as there is collaboration and coordination with the identified organization leader(s).

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 6 The organization's emergency operations plan (EOP) includes a process for cooperating and collaborating with other health care organizations, relevant community partners (such as fire, police, local incident command, public health departments), and relevant authorities (such as federal, state, tribal, regional, and local emergency preparedness staff) in an effort to leverage support and resources and to provide an integrated response during an emergency or disaster incident.

Note: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the system's EOP includes a process for cooperating and collaborating that is specific to the organization.

EM.12.02.01

The organization has a communications plan that addresses how it will communicate during an emergency.

Note: The organization considers prioritized hazards identified as part of its hazard vulnerability analysis when developing a communications plan.

Element(s) of Performance for EM.12.02.01

New EP 1 The organization maintains a contact list of individuals and entities that are to be notified in response to an emergency or disaster incident. The list of contacts includes but is not limited to the following:

- Staff
- Physicians and other licensed practitioners
- Volunteers
- Other health care and/or nursing care facilities
- Entities providing services under arrangement, including suppliers of essential services, equipment, and supplies
- Relevant community partners (such as fire, police, local incident command, public health departments)
- Relevant authorities (federal, state, tribal, regional, and local emergency preparedness staff)
- State licensing and certification agencies
- Office of the state long-term care ombudsman
- Other sources of assistance (such as health care coalitions)

Note 1: The type of emergency will determine which organizations/individuals need to be contacted to assist with the emergency or disaster incident.

Note 2: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the system's contact list includes contacts that are specific to the organization.

D Documentation is required

New EP 2 The organization's communications plan describes how it will establish and maintain communications to deliver coordinated messages and information during an emergency or disaster incident to staff, volunteers, residents, families, and others, as applicable.
Note: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the system's communications plan includes policies and procedures that are specific to the organization.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 3 The organization's communications plan describes how the organization will communicate with and report information about its organizational needs, available occupancy, and ability to provide assistance to relevant authorities.

Note: Examples of the organization's needs include shortages in personal protective equipment, staffing shortages, evacuation or transfer of residents, and temporary loss of part or all organization function.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 5 In the event of an emergency or evacuation, the organization's communications plan includes a method for sharing and/or releasing location information and medical documentation for residents under the organization's care to the following individuals or entities, in accordance with law and regulation:

- Resident's family, representative, or others involved in their care
- Disaster relief organizations and relevant authorities
- Other health care providers

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 6 The organization's communications plan identifies its primary and alternate means for communicating with staff and relevant authorities (such as federal, state, tribal, regional, and local emergency preparedness staff). The plan includes procedures for how and when alternate/backup communication methods are used.

Note: Examples of alternate/backup communication systems include amateur radios, portable radios, text-based notifications, cell phones, satellite phones, and reverse 911 notification systems.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

EM.12.02.03

The organization has a staffing plan for managing all staff and volunteers during an emergency or disaster incident.

Note: The organization considers its prioritized hazards identified as part of its hazard vulnerability analysis when developing a staffing plan.

Element(s) of Performance for EM.12.02.03

New EP 1 The organization develops a staffing plan for managing all staff and volunteers to meet resident care needs during an emergency or disaster incident. The plan includes the following:

- Methods for contacting off-duty staff
- Acquiring staff from its other health care facilities
- Use of volunteer staffing, such as staffing agencies, health care coalition support, and those deployed as part of the disaster medical assistance teams

Note 1: If the organization determines that it will never use volunteers during disasters, this is documented in its plan.

Note 2: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the system's staffing plan includes policies and procedures that are specific to the organization.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 2 The organization's staffing plan addresses the management of all staff and volunteers as follows:

- Reporting processes
- Roles and responsibilities for essential functions
- Integrating staffing agencies, volunteer staffing, or deployed medical assistance teams into assigned roles and responsibilities (as applicable)

Note: If the organization determines that it will never use volunteers during disasters, this is documented in its plan.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 6 The staffing plan describes how it will provide employee assistance and support, which includes the following:

- Staff support needs (for example, housing or transportation)
- Family support needs of staff (for example, childcare, elder care)
- Mental health and wellness needs

Note: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the system's policies and procedures for employee assistance and support include the organization's staff.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

EM.12.02.05

The organization has a plan for providing resident care and clinical support during an emergency or disaster incident.

Note: The organization considers its prioritized hazards identified as part of its hazard vulnerability analysis when developing a plan for resident care and clinical support.

Element(s) of Performance for EM.12.02.05

New EP 1 The organization's plan for providing resident care and clinical support includes written procedures and arrangements with other health care organizations or alternate housing facilities, how it will share resident care information and any medical documentation, and how it will transfer residents to other health care or alternate housing facilities to maintain continuity of care.

Note 1: The sharing of resident care information and medical documentation is in accordance with law and regulation.

Note 2: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the system's emergency operations plan includes policies and procedures for providing resident care and clinical support that are specific to the organization.

D Documentation is required

New EP 3 The organization's plan for managing deceased residents during an emergency or disaster incident includes coordinating with the local medical examiner's office, local mortuary services, and other local, regional, or state services, as applicable.

D Documentation is required

New EP 5 For organizations that elect The Joint Commission's Memory Care Certification option: The emergency operations plan addresses the special needs of residents diagnosed with dementia. The plan includes the following:

- How supervision will be maintained during evacuations
- How to manage agitation or anxiety when the environment or circumstances change
- How staff will maintain access to the resident's medical history, current medication orders, physician information, and family contacts

Note: The Alzheimer's Association recommends that organizations consider enrolling in a wandering response service.

EM.12.02.07

The organization has a plan for safety and security measures to take during an emergency or disaster incident. **Note:** The organization considers its prioritized hazards identified as part of its hazard vulnerability analysis when developing a plan for safety and security.

Element(s) of Performance for EM.12.02.07

New EP 1 The organization has a plan for safety and security measures to take during an emergency or disaster incident (such as identifying a location to shelter in place during severe weather or clear signage for evacuating the building safely). Refer to EC.02.01.01 for managing safety and security risks.

Note: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the system's emergency operations plan includes policies and procedures for providing safety and security measures that are specific to the organization.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 2 The organization's plan for safety and security measures includes a system to track the location of its on-duty staff and volunteers, and residents when sheltered in place, relocated, or evacuated. If on-duty staff, volunteers, or residents are relocated during an emergency, the organization documents the specific name and location of the receiving facility or evacuation location.

Note 1: The organization identifies a way to track residents who might be susceptible to wandering after emergency measures are activated.

Note 2: Examples of systems used for tracking purposes include the use of established technology or tracking systems or taking head counts at defined intervals.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

EM.12.02.09

The organization has a plan for managing resources and assets during an emergency or disaster incident.
Note: The organization considers its prioritized hazards identified as part of its hazard vulnerability analysis when developing a plan for resources and assets.

Element(s) of Performance for EM.12.02.09

New EP 1 The organization's plan for managing its resources and assets describes in writing which items are considered emergency resources and assets and how it will document, track, monitor, and locate these resources and assets during and after an emergency or disaster incident.

Note 1: The organization should be aware of the resources and assets it has readily available and what resources and assets may be quickly depleted depending on the type of emergency or disaster incident.

Note 2: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the system's emergency operations plan includes policies and procedures for managing resources and assets that are specific to the organization.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 2 The organization's plan for managing its resources and assets describes in writing how it will obtain, allocate, mobilize, replenish, and conserve its resources and assets during and after an emergency or disaster incident, including the following, based on the settings and services provided:

- Coordinating with a local health care system to request resources
- Coordinating with local supply chains or vendors
- Coordinating with local, state, or federal agencies for additional resources

Note 1: High priority should be given to resources that are known to deplete quickly and are extremely competitive to receive and replenish.

Note 2: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the system's emergency operations plan includes policies and procedures for managing resources and assets that are specific to the organization.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 3 The organization's plan for managing its resources and assets describes in writing the actions the organization will take to sustain its needs for up to 96 hours based on calculations of current resource consumptions.

Note: Organizations are not required to remain fully functional for 96 hours or stockpile 96 hours' worth of supplies. The 96-hour time frame provides a framework for organizations to evaluate their capability to be self-sufficient for at least 96 hours and for determining when to evacuate.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

EM.12.02.11

The organization has a plan for managing utility systems during an emergency or disaster incident.

Note: The organization considers its prioritized hazards identified as part of its hazard vulnerability analysis when developing a plan for utilities management.

Element(s) of Performance for EM.12.02.11

New EP 1 The organization's plan for managing utilities describes in writing the utility systems that it considers essential or critical to be able to continue to provide care, treatment, and services during an emergency or disaster incident.

Note 1: Essential or critical utilities to consider may include systems for electrical distribution; emergency power; heating, ventilating, and air conditioning; plumbing and steam boilers; and network or communication systems.

Note 2: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the organization's leader(s) collaborates with the system's emergency management program when determining essential or critical utility systems that are specific to the needs of the organization.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 2 The organization's plan for managing utilities describes in writing how it will continue to maintain essential or critical utility systems if one or more are impacted during an emergency or disaster incident.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 3 The organization's plan for managing utilities describes in writing alternative means for providing essential or critical utilities, such as water supply, emergency power supply systems, fuel storage tanks, or emergency generators.

Note: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the organization's leader(s) collaborates with the system's emergency management program when determining alternative utility systems that are specific to the needs of the organization.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 4 The organization's plan for managing utilities includes alternate sources for maintaining energy to the following:

- Heating and cooling systems to protect resident health and safety and for the safe and sanitary storage of provisions
- Emergency lighting
- Fire detection, extinguishing, and alarm systems
- Sewage and waste disposal

Note 1: It is important for organizations to consider alternative means for maintaining temperatures at a level that protects the health and safety of all persons within the facility. For example, when safe temperature levels cannot be maintained, the organization considers partial or full evacuation or closure.

Note 2: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the organization's leader(s) collaborates with the system's emergency management program when determining alternative sources for maintaining energy that are specific to the needs of the organization.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

EM.14.01.01

The organization has a disaster recovery plan.

Note: The organization considers its prioritized hazards identified as part of its hazard vulnerability analysis when developing a disaster recovery plan.

Element(s) of Performance for EM.14.01.01

New EP 1 The organization has a written disaster recovery plan that describes strategies, actions, and individual responsibilities necessary to restore the organization's care, treatment, or services after an emergency or disaster incident.

Note: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the system's disaster recovery plan addresses strategies that are specific to the organization.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

EM.15.01.01

The organization provides emergency management education and training.

Note: The organization integrates its prioritized hazards identified as part of its hazard vulnerability analysis into education and training.

Element(s) of Performance for EM.15.01.01

New EP 2 The organization provides initial education and training in emergency management to all new and existing staff, individuals providing services under arrangement, and volunteers that is consistent with their roles and responsibilities in an emergency. The initial education and training include the following:

- Activation and deactivation of the emergency operations plan
- Communications plan
- Emergency response policies and procedures
- Evacuation, shelter-in-place, and lockdown procedures
- Where and how to obtain resources and supplies for emergencies (such as procedures manuals or equipment)

Documentation is required.

Note: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the system provides initial education and training that is specific to the organization's staff roles and responsibilities.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 3 The organization provides ongoing education and training to all staff, individuals providing services under arrangement, and volunteers that is consistent with their roles and responsibilities in an emergency:

- At least annually
- When roles or responsibilities change
- When there are significant revisions to the emergency operations plan, policies, and/or procedures
- When procedural changes are made during an emergency or disaster incident requiring just-in-time education and training

Documentation is required.

Note 1: Staff demonstrate knowledge of emergency procedures through participation in drills and exercises, as well as post-training tests, participation in instructor-led feedback (for example, questions and answers), or other methods determined and documented by the organization.

Note 2: Organizations are not required to retrain staff on the entire emergency operations plan but can choose to provide education and training specific to the new or revised elements of the emergency management program.

Note 3: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the system provides ongoing education and training that is specific to the organization's staff roles and responsibilities.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

EM.16.01.01

The organization conducts exercises to evaluate its emergency operations plan and response procedures.

Note: The organization integrates its prioritized hazards identified as part of its hazard vulnerability analysis into the development of emergency exercises.

Element(s) of Performance for EM.16.01.01

New EP 5 The organization is required to conduct one annual exercise, either operations- or discussion-based exercise, to test and evaluate the emergency operations plan and response procedures. Exercises and actual emergency or disaster incidents are documented.

Note 1: The organization would be exempt from conducting its one annual operations- or discussion-based exercise if it experiences an actual emergency or disaster incident. An exemption only applies if the organization provides documentation that it activated its emergency operations plan.

Note 2: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, each organization may choose to conduct its own exercises or participate in the system's regional exercises.

Note 3: See the Glossary for the definitions of operations-based and discussion-based exercises.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

EM.17.01.01

The organization evaluates and revises its emergency operations plan.

Element(s) of Performance for EM.17.01.01

New EP 1 The organization reviews and evaluates all exercises and actual emergency or disaster incidents. The organization reviews after-action reports (AARs), identifies opportunities for improvement, and recommends actions to take to improve its emergency operations plan, policies, and procedures. The AARs and improvement plans are documented.

Note 1: An AAR provides a detailed critical summary or analysis of a planned exercise or actual emergency or disaster incident. The report summarizes what took place during the event, analyzes the actions taken by participants, and provides areas needing improvement.

Note 2: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the AARs and improvement plans may be developed at the system level.

Ⓓ Documentation is required

New EP 2 The after-action reports, any identified opportunities for improvement, and any recommended actions to improve emergency management are forwarded to the organization's leader(s) for review.

New EP 3 The organization reviews and makes necessary updates to the following items at least annually, or more frequently if necessary:

- Hazard vulnerability analysis
- Emergency operations plan, policies, and procedures
- Communications plan

Note: If the organization is part of a health care system (such as a corporate nursing care or senior health care organization) that has a unified and integrated emergency management program, the updates to the items listed may be developed at the system level with participation from the organization's leader(s).

Ⓓ Documentation is required
