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**Arizona Department of Economic Security  
Child Care Administration**

**Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan**

**September 2019**



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**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY**

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*Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona*

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## **Agency Description**

The Arizona Department of Economic Security (ADES) is Arizona's human services agency, comprised of five program divisions: Aging and Adult Services, Benefits and Medical Eligibility, Employment and Rehabilitation Services, Developmental Disabilities, and Child Support Services. ADES assists more than 2.9 million Arizonans by way of more than 7,600 dedicated ADES employees statewide. The ADES True North is: All Arizonans who qualify receive timely DES services and achieve their potential.

The Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Services (DERS) plays an integral role to the ADES True North by assisting individuals who are unemployed and underemployed, and those with barriers to employment, to prepare for and obtain gainful employment, thereby improving Arizona's workforce. The Child Care Administration (CCA), within DERS, administers child care programs that help eligible families with the cost of child care to enable parents to participate in the workforce or specific education and training activities related to employment. CCA is equally committed to providing access to high quality child care and promoting continuity of care to support the development and education of Arizona's children.

## **Coordination of Effort in Disaster Response**

Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order 2013-06, Continuity of Operations and Continuity of Government Planning, ADES has a viable Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) that will ensure the essential governmental services are provided during emergencies and disasters and that normal operations are restored in a timely manner. As used in this plan, the term "emergency" is a state of emergency declared by the Governor, or a major disaster or emergency defined by section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. 5122.

In addition to the ADES COOP, the disaster response functions are established at the local government level and at the child care provider level. It is required that all Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) child care providers and ADES contracted providers have emergency preparedness plans written and individualized to the child care facility and hours of operation, reviewed annually with child care staff, and updated as needed. These plans must be available for parental review.

CCA has developed the CCA Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan to ensure coordinated emergency response and to identify potential gaps in emergency support. The CCA Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan provides specific instruction and actions that CCA may take in emergency preparedness, disaster response, and disaster recovery. It is a sub-plan of the ADES COOP, and a reinforcement to local and provider level plans. CCA will adhere to the processes and procedures outlined in the CCA Disaster Plan, as well as those in the ADES COOP.

## **Disaster Response Structure**

The CCA Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan is structured around a central CCA Emergency Management Team that oversees three distinct disaster function teams: Communications Team, Operations Continuity Team, and the Post-Disaster Recovery Team. The CCA Emergency Management Team activates the disaster teams and approves the actions to be executed. All three disaster function teams have responsibilities for the planning and implementation of functions required before, during, and after the disaster or emergency.

### **I. DISASTER RESPONSE ACTIVATION PROCESS**

Based on the type and severity of the emergency situation, the CCA Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan may be activated by one of the following methods:

- ⇒ The Governor or the Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA) may initiate state continuity activation
- ⇒ County executive or local government may initiate continuity activation at the local level
- ⇒ The DERS Assistant Director or designee, may initiate the CCA Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan activation for part or the entire administration, based on an emergency or threat directed at the agency, division, or administration

If CCA is alerted to the possibility of an impending disaster, the CCA Emergency Management Team will put staff on alert, and ask for disaster function team leads to review the plan, verify contact lists, identify steps they might take to respond to the specific scenario, and contact partners to walk through how they might work together to respond to the disaster.

### **II. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE**

CCA will use a team structure to plan and oversee its disaster response. The Emergency Management Team will provide oversight and specific disaster response and recovery tasks will be managed by position specific disaster function teams. A team leader is designated by position for each disaster function and will report on the CCA Emergency Management Team.

The CCA Emergency Management Team will make important decisions about emergency strategies, policies, and resources. Examples of decisions which Management Team may assist:

- ⇒ Activation of disaster function teams, which vary per function
- ⇒ Approval of new disaster responses and policies as required for a specific emergency
- ⇒ Approval of requests for emergency resources such as funding, personnel, and equipment
- ⇒ Approval of temporary reassignment of staff as needed to cope with a disaster or participate as part of a functional team
- ⇒ Approval of press releases, disaster updates, and other written communications

- ⇒ Review and approval the annual update of the CCA Disaster Plan
- ⇒ Approval of additional functions consistent with its overall mission in order to meet the needs of children, families, and child care providers affected by a disaster

### **III. DISASTER TEAMS AND FUNCTIONS**

CCA may undertake the following disaster functions in order to fulfill the Division's role in supporting child care providers and providing families with safe and healthy alternatives for child care during and after disasters or emergencies.

#### **A. COMMUNICATIONS TEAM**

The Communications Team will help develop and disseminate emergency preparedness information to child care providers in areas affected by a disaster. Information regarding emergency child care and other types of assistance will be shared to inform parents in the affected areas.

The ADES website and the Arizona Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) website will be CCA's main communications sites to help inform families and providers of the interim office locations and emergency procedures. If communication with providers or potential temporary care providers is interrupted, the Communications Team may work with partners to send an alert to emergency management and through the media, or request for the local office supervisors to make contact on-site if possible.

#### **COORDINATION OF DISASTER-RELATED COMMUNICATIONS**

*Ensure that child care providers, the general public, and partners are aware of CCA and other assistance. Facilitate communication among partner agencies to improve collaboration and avoid duplication.*

#### **A. Partners to Assist with Disaster Functions**

- Arizona Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R)
- Arizona Department of Health Services
- Arizona Department of Child Safety
- Arizona Department of Education
- Arizona Head Start Association
- Arizona Tribes and the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona
- First Things First

#### **B. Before a Disaster**

- Develop and maintain the Emergency Escalation Matrix that outlines how information will be disseminated
- Establish critical information necessary to gather in the event of a disaster

**C. During a Disaster**

- Request assistance from emergency management resources, as applicable, using the AZDES Emergency Preparedness Web Map and AZ Emergency Bulletin: <https://ein.az.gov/emergency-bulletins>
- Disseminate relief and recovery efforts information via the ADES website, upon approval from the Emergency Management Team
- Coordinate with partner agencies to assist with communication efforts across media outlets in the affected areas
- Work closely with local partners to disseminate information and make partners' disaster efforts known to child care providers and families

**D. Following a Disaster**

- Provide routine updates of the recovery process to help identify any remaining gaps in emergency support.

**COORDINATION OF ASSISTANCE WITH RELIEF AND RECOVERY EFFORTS**

*Serve as a central point of contact to ensure emergency personnel have accurate information. Alert child care providers in the threatened areas about the emergency response efforts and provide information on available assistance.*

**A. Partners to Assist with Disaster Functions**

- Arizona Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R)
- Arizona Department of Child Safety
- Arizona Department of Health Services

**B. Before a Disaster**

- Identify data and specific information, such as lists of child care facilities by county and estimates of the number of children at each facility, that may be helpful for emergency response
- Establish a process to utilize the ADES GIS mapping and the CCR&R website information to identify child care facilities impacted by the disaster or emergency
- Obtain a list of locations designated by local authorities in advance as possible relocation/evacuation sites where affected children in child care arrangements could be taken

**C. During a Disaster**

- Obtain information as to where evacuating providers are relocating and coordinate communication to parents or emergency personnel

- Coordinate with CCR&R to ensure that all providers in the area are aware of any evacuation actions and inform providers of assistance available to transport children to the designated relocation site
- Coordinate records on the location and status of children who were evacuated
- Disseminate information to parents as quickly as possible concerning where their children are and the process for parents to pick up their children

**D. Following a Disaster**

- Confirm recovery efforts have taken place and children are accounted for and safely reunited with their families

**B. OPERATIONS CONTINUITY TEAM**

The Operations Continuity Team will evaluate the impact to CCA operations. This information will be shared with the Emergency Management Team so that the appropriate emergency response is activated to allow CCA to continue receiving and processing eligibility applications and referrals, and providing reimbursement to child care providers that care for children authorized for CCA subsidy.

**CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY AND REIMBURSEMENT FOR SUBSIDIZED CHILD CARE**

*Evaluate how CCA's ability to function (staff, equipment, offices) has been affected by the emergency. Ensure that families can continue to apply for and receive child care assistance during an emergency or disruption of CCA operations. Ensure that child care providers are reimbursed as quickly as possible.*

**A. Partners to Assist with Disaster Functions**

- ADES Division of Technology Services
- ADES Office of Facilities Management
- Arizona Child Care Resources & Referral
- CCA Eligibility
- DERS Contracts Monitoring
- DERS Payment Processing Unit

**B. Before a Disaster**

- Reference the ADES Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) to align with the emergency response plan for affected ADES offices and operations, and the continuation of CCA eligibility and payment
- Maintain the network and files backup storage of the Arizona Child Care Automated Tracking System (AzCCATS) to the LAN server, in accordance with state procedures

**C. During a Disaster**

- Determine how CCA field staff have been affected, what resources are needed to resume

- operations, and any information about the status of providers and partners in their areas
- Work with the Emergency Management Team to identify impacts on staff, the offices, and computer/phone systems and what emergency response is appropriate
  - Contact partner agencies to determine the status of their local counterparts
  - Follow ADES directives regarding the necessary emergency actions required
  - Establish communication with the Emergency Management Team with information on the extent and estimated duration of the disruption
  - Relocate CCA personnel to alternate ADES sites
  - Process eligibility applications and referrals manually and retained in the case record until data entry into the AzCCATS system can resume
  - Assure essential payments by issuing hand warrants and maintaining hard copy records until data entry into the AzCCATS system can resume

#### **D. Following a Disaster**

- Review and assess the effectiveness of the emergency response operations and report findings to the Emergency Management Team
- Reconcile the manual eligibility and payment processing within AzCCATS system

### **C. POST-DISASTER RECOVERY TEAM**

The Post-Disaster Recovery Team will assess and support the child care providers and families in the area impacted by the disaster. The recovery efforts will include the assessment of damages, the temporary establishment of child care, and the implementation of emergency child care subsidy.

### **ASSESSMENT OF CHILD CARE PROVIDER DAMAGES AND NEEDS**

*Evaluate the extent of damage to child care facilities affected by the disaster.*

#### **A. Partners to Assist with Disaster Functions**

- Arizona Department of Health Services
- Arizona Child Care Resources & Referral

#### **B. Before a Disaster**

- Establish the assessment process and define roles in collaboration with CCA and ADHS to assess the needs and damages of child care facilities and homes

#### **C. During a Disaster**

- Collect information about licensed, certified, and non-certified relative child care providers in the area
- Develop implementation plan for conducting the assessments in collaboration with CCA, ADHS, and CCR&R

- Manage and update a centralized tracking spreadsheet with the status of affected providers
- Share data and assessment reports with the Eligibility Management Team

**D. Following Disaster - Steps to Implement Special Response**

- Provide the Emergency Management Team with the latest information on needs in order to develop appropriate responses
- Assessments are continued or repeated periodically until child care providers have resumed normal operations

**ESTABLISHING TEMPORARY CHILD CARE**

*To protect the health and safety of children, as well as promote family and community efforts to recover from natural disasters. Work with partners to ensure that healthy and safe child care arrangements are accessible to meet the needs of children and parents.*

**A. Partners to Assist with Disaster Functions**

- Arizona Department of Child Safety
- Arizona Department of Health Services
- Arizona Child Care Resource & Referral
- CCA Contracts Monitoring
- Red Cross Greater Phoenix Chapter (the lead chapter for the State)

**B. Before a Disaster**

- Establish conditions and develop procedures under which temporary child care and emergency subsidy may be allowed
- Promote ongoing awareness of the importance of emergency preparedness and provide links to information and resources
- Determine process to track and request emergency child care funds that could be made available to help local partners finance temporary care arrangements

**C. During a Disaster**

- Determine what kind of temporary child care arrangements are needed
- Assist providers, parents, and emergency personnel to implement their ADHS required emergency plans
- Work with partners to facilitate local agencies' development of temporary care arrangements
- Provide technical assistance to any of the largely unaffected providers who are willing to provide care for additional children
- Enroll new or temporary providers into the subsidized child care program or the temporary expansion of capacity of current subsidized child care providers

- Provide emergency child care reimbursement information to temporary providers so that eligible costs can be tracked and submitted to CCA

**D. Following Disaster**

- Provide technical assistance to child care providers who sustain damages to determine if they can continue operating, must temporarily close or reduce enrollment, or need to relocate
- Maintain communication and oversight of temporary child care until it is no longer needed

**EMERGENCY CHILD CARE SUBSIDY**

*Identify the needs of families' currently receiving subsidy services, and implement procedures to process new applications for families needing assistance as a result of the emergency.*

**A. Partners to Assist with Disaster Functions**

- Arizona Child Care Resource & Referral
- CCA Eligibility Team
- DERS Finance and Business Operations
- DERS Payment Processing Unit

**B. Before a Disaster**

- Review criteria for the activation of emergency child care procedures

**C. During a Disaster**

- Contact the Local Eligibility Supervisors in affected areas to determine the situation and provide a recommendation to the Emergency Management Team about the local conditions and needs
- Upon approval from the Emergency Management Team, implement the emergency child care procedures and notify the CCA Eligibility staff that emergency child care procedures have been activated
- Establish temporary eligibility functions in locations to best serve the impacted population
- Verify the funding available for emergency child care and establish the necessary tracking and reporting processes

**D. Following a Disaster**

- Confirm that operations have resumed to normal functioning and establish a clear end date for the emergency child care subsidy
- Verify that the emergency funding is appropriately tracked and reported to the required state and federal standards

#### **IV. REGULAR REVIEW AND UPDATE OF DISASTER PLAN**

The CCA Disaster Plan will be reviewed annually. The CCA Disaster Coordinator will oversee the annual review of the plan, which will involve review by disaster function teams with input from partner agencies to update team member and partner lists as needed, and draft recommended changes to the plan. After approval from the CCA Emergency Management Team, the finalized revised plan will be distributed to CCA staff and partners.

The Disaster Coordinator will review and update the CCA Emergency Management Team list with names and contact information each quarterly. This document will be confidential and only be shared with the ADES leadership and CCA Emergency Management Team members.

#### **V. TRAINING AND ONGOING EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AWARENESS**

The Department performs routine evacuations and drills in all ADES offices across the state annually. The Division will complete periodic testing of the CCA Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan on an annual basis. This testing will focus on likely scenarios for the area being tested, such as counties prone to extreme weather and natural disasters such as fires or floods. Emergency preparedness and response awareness will be ongoing and include CCA staff and key partners.

The Department and the Division performs table top exercises, functional simulation exercises, and full-scale exercises with DEMA and FEMA in the annual evacuee Reception and Care Center exercise with the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station. The one-day practice and training familiarizes continuity personnel with their roles and responsibilities in support of the performance of essential functions during a continuity event. Periodic testing ensures that equipment and procedures are kept in a constant state of readiness.

All CCA Emergency Management and Regional Team members, CCA staff members, and key partners will have access via CCA's Intranet and the CCR&R website to the Disaster Plan. Prior to the update of the Disaster Plan each year, a subgroup consisting of the disaster function team leads and key partners will be asked to walk through a given disaster scenario and identify the steps they would take to respond to the situation. The CCA Disaster Coordinator is responsible for planning and facilitating table- top drills. After the drill, each disaster team would discuss the challenges it faced and how, in a real disaster, the response could be improved. Teams will be encouraged to use the disaster scenario drills to test their procedures and develop recommendations to improve the plan.