

KNOX COUNTY OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

PUBLIC HEALTH

ANNEX H OF THE KNOX COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

8/26/2022



For all Agencies, Participant Organizations and Staff serving Knox County

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Public Health

Primary Agencies: Knox Public Health

Support Agencies: American Red Cross

Knox Community Hospital

Knox County Emergency Management Agency

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose

This annex discusses the provision for public health services during emergency situations. Factors such as disease control, water quality and sanitation are considered in this annex.

B. Scope

This plan applies to all participating agencies and organizations operating within the geographic boundaries of Knox County.

C. Policy

It is the policy of Knox County to develop plans and procedures that incorporate the concepts of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the Incident Command System (ICS) and the National Preparedness Goal.

D. Core Capabilities

This annex addresses the following Core Capabilities as defined in the National Preparedness Goal.

- Environmental Response/Health and Safety
- Logistics and Supply Chain Management
- Operational Coordination
- Public Health, Healthcare, and Medical Services

II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. Complications affecting the health of the community including diseases, sanitation problems, contamination of food and water may occur as a result of a disaster.
2. Knox Public Health (KPH) located at 11660 Upper Gilchrist Road, Mount Vernon, Ohio is a county-wide public health agency serving all communities in Knox County.

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3. Emergencies may lead to secondary events such as the release of chemical, biological or radiological materials that could seriously impact the community and overwhelm local public health response organizations.
4. KPH has first-line responsibility for public health related emergencies, except for chemical, radiological and explosive events. If KPH is overwhelmed during an emergency, it may request state support through Ohio Department of Health (ODH) and/or the local Emergency Management Agency (EMA).
5. In a large-scale Chemical, Biological, Nuclear, Radiological, Explosive (CBRNE) disaster which may overwhelm local resources, request for additional public health and medical resources will be coordinated through the Knox County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). KPH's Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Mass Prophylaxis/Vaccination plan provides guidance on activation and deployment of the SNS.
6. KPH is responsible for dispensing and/or administering medications and vaccines to identified populations in Knox County,
7. During declared emergencies, KPH may obtain crisis augmentation of health personnel from nearby counties, the Ohio Department of Health and the American Red Cross.
8. Knox County's Amish Community is an unvaccinated population and as such is at a higher risk of contracting preventable diseases that could create a county wide outbreak. Please see [Tab A - Infectious Disease](#)

B. Assumptions

1. This annex applies primarily to large-scale disasters, which would have a sufficient impact on the health of the citizens in Knox County.
2. Public health complications are often associated with disaster. Even when a primary hazardous event may not initiate a public health emergency, secondary events stemming from the initial event may do so.
3. There is an adequate local capability to meet the demands of most public health situations. However, a disaster may exceed the resources of KPH and the local medical community. When necessary, support will be available from State and Federal Health Agencies.
4. Emergency events may render the local health district inoperable.
5. The Knox County Emergency Management Agency (KCEMA) will notify KPH of emergencies in the county.
6. Disruption of sanitation services and facilities, loss of power and massing of people in shelters may increase the potential for disease and injury.
7. Requests for support will be coordinated through the Knox County EOC, when activated.
8. Catastrophic disasters may require the relocation of hospital and medical facilities.
9. Extended care facilities, home healthcare services, Knox Community Hospital, Emergency Medical Services, ambulance services, and other medical service providers will have in place standard operating procedures and mutual aid agreements for emergency situations.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. General

1. Local, State and Federal laws regulate the KPH. The Knox County District Board of Health appoints the Health Commissioner, who then assigns additional responsibilities to the local Public Health Emergency Response Team.
2. KPH will utilize the Incident Command System (ICS).
3. KPH will participate in Unified Command when multiple jurisdictions are involved in a response effort.
4. The Health Commissioner serves as the coordinator of public health services with the assistance of the agency's Emergency Response Team.
5. The Health Commissioner is responsible for assessing the hazard relating to any existing or anticipated public health threats and the environmental impact of an accident.
6. According to Ohio Revised Code Section 3707.04-32, the Health Commissioner in the jurisdiction in which the disaster occurred can use their authority to declare the need to evacuate or quarantine, and determine when an area is safe to reoccupy.
7. Public health emergencies will be determined by the Health Commissioner based upon established protocols within the agency.
8. KPH works closely with many agencies and organizations:
 - a. Local
 - (1) Knox County Emergency Management Agency (KCEMA)
 - (2) County emergency response and medical groups and associations
 - (3) All city, county, township and village level departments/agencies
 - (4) Elected and appointed officials
 - (5) American Red Cross and other volunteer organizations
 - b. State
 - (1) Ohio Department of Health (ODH)
 - (2) Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA)
 - (3) Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR)
 - (4) Ohio Emergency Management Agency (OEMA)
 - (5) Other state departments as needed
 - c. Federal
 - (1) Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
 - (2) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
9. Response in any emergency will follow established procedures identified in agency's local emergency response plan.

IV. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Organization

1. The Health Commissioner with authorization from the Knox County Board of Health is responsible for the planning and coordination of all public health services on a daily basis and is responsible for directing operational response of agency personnel during a major emergency.
2. The Health Commissioner oversees the operations of the agency and may assign additional program responsibility, as needed.

B. General Areas of Responsibility

1. Public Health Nursing
 - a. Involves home health care, investigation and control of communicable disease, maternal health, child health, nutrition services, accident prevention, health education, chronic disease control, genetic disease control, and disaster preparedness.
2. Environmental Health and Sanitation
 - a. Programs supported by state law or regulations include: the inspection of mobile home parks, campgrounds, swimming pools and beaches, food services and vending operations, household sewage disposal systems, safe water supplies, and schools. This area is responsible for rabies control, vector control, disaster preparedness, nuisance control (both solid water & sewage) and the investigation of other potential nuisance issues.
 - b. Other programs authorized by state or local ordinance or with direction from the Board of Health include: emergency response planning, sewage disposal and treatment, solid waste storage and collection, mosquito control/surveillance, and Vital Statistics (birth and death records).
3. Mobilization Procedures
 - a. When an incident occurs that requires a response by KPH personnel, the Health Commissioner is notified. Required personnel are notified utilizing the emergency call-down plan. Updated employee roster is maintained for all personnel and are included as part of KPH's internal SOP's.
 - b. If the County EOC is activated, the Health Commissioner or designee will report to the EOC. Otherwise, direction and control is provided from agency offices.
4. Notification
 - a. KPH under the authority of the Health Commissioner or designee will notify partner agencies, hospitals, and citizens of a public health emergency utilizing the following notification systems depending on the target audience for the alert:

- (1) Knox County's Wireless Emergency Notification System (WENS)
- (2) Local Health Alert Network (HAN)
- (3) Ohio Public Health Communication System (OPHCS)

C. Assignment of Responsibilities

1. Health Commissioner

- a. Provide direction and control for public health activities during emergencies and work with the local Public Health Emergency Response Team.
- b. Maintain liaison with all emergency response groups and volunteer organizations during emergencies.
- c. Implement the Public Health Annex of the Knox County Emergency Operations Plan when necessary.
- d. With the assistance of the agency's Emergency Response Team, develop resource plans for health services.
- e. Provide appropriate information on protective measures to be taken by the public to the agency's Public Information Officer (PIO).
- f. Provide support for other response forces, as necessary.

2. KPH

- a. Will evaluate the potential health risks associated with identified hazards and recommend appropriate correctional measures.
- b. Will conduct surveillance and situational assessments throughout the event to ensure an appropriate level of response.
- c. Inspect for purity and usability and quality control of vital foodstuffs, water, drugs and consumables.
- d. Coordinate with the water, public works or sanitation departments as appropriate, to ensure the availability of potable water and an effective sewage system, and sanitary garbage disposal.
- e. Establish preventative health services, including the control of communicable diseases.
- f. Provide epidemiological surveillance, case investigation, and follow-up.
- g. Monitor food handling, mass feeding and sanitation service in emergency facilities, including increased attention to sanitation in commercial food operations.
- h. Ensure adequate sanitary facilities are provided in emergency situations.
- i. Implement action to prevent or control vectors such as flies, mosquitoes, rodents and work with veterinarians to prevent the spread of disease through animals.
- j. Maintain sewage and water system inspections and consultation.
- k. Develop guidelines and/or resource information for supplemental water supplies, backup sanitation measures, water and food quality testing and garbage disposal and sewage treatment.
- l. Coordinate with neighboring counties and the ODH on matters requiring assistance from other jurisdictions.

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- m. Negotiate, coordinate, prepare and maintain mutual aid agreements.
 - n. Coordinate health-related activities among other local public and private response agencies or groups.
 - o. Coordinate operations for general or mass emergency immunizations or quarantine and isolation procedure.
 - p. Regularly review and update the Public Health Annex in the Knox County Emergency Operations Plan.
 - q. Develop and regularly update the agency's Standard Operating Procedures and Guidelines.
 - r. Maintain a stockpile of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in case of an emergency.
 - s. Conduct annual exercises and trainings to identify gaps and implement improvement plans.
 - t. Provide public awareness/education information programs.
 - u. Compile health reports as required by local, state, and federal officials.
 - v. Inspecting deactivated shelters for sanitation and vermin control.
 - w. Support cleanup and recovery operations following disasters.
3. Hospitals
- a. Maintain liaison with local health officials.
 - b. Provide additional nursing care, hospitalization, communication and other support as necessary.
4. American Red Cross
- a. Provide staff, as available and required.
 - b. Assist in handling injuries.
 - c. Handle inquiries and inform families on the status of individuals injured or missing due to the disaster.
5. School Systems
- a. Provide school facilities for emergency medical clinics or reception and care centers.
6. ODH
- a. Provide support to KPH as requested.
 - b. Provide supplies and resources as requested.
7. OEPA
- a. Monitor contamination and pollution of public water supplies.
 - b. Responsible for decontamination of public waterways for use as potable water supply.

V. DIRECTION AND CONTROL

A. EOC Activation

1. The Health Commissioner or designee will report to the county EOC upon its activation to coordinate response efforts for health-related activities, advise the decision-makers, and maintain contact with other emergency response groups.
2. KPH staff will follow agency policies and procedures.
3. Emergency field staff will report all appropriate information, including casualties, damage observations, evacuation status, radiation levels, chemical exposure, etc., to the EOC.

VI. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT

- A. The line of succession (Triad) for the Health Commissioner is as follows:
 1. Health Commissioner
 2. Environmental Health Director
 3. Director of Nursing

VII. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

- A. During an emergency, KPH will utilize all local resources. If additional assistance is required, the local partners from the Central Ohio Regional Public Health Emergency Response Group and ODH will be contacted.
- B. Laboratories that provide testing for water, food, environmental contaminants and diseases and sources for equipment, chemicals and medications related to health services activities are maintained at KPH.
- C. KPH maintains a resource manual listing and is continually updating this document.
- D. Data related to disease outbreaks will be collected and forwarded to appropriate State and Federal Officials.
- E. All testing will be accomplished under normal procedures used by agency.
- F. Inspections of critical facilities will be conducted in a normal fashion, but with increased frequency during emergencies.
- G. KPH maintains current notification rosters, maps and charts of Knox County.
- H. KPH protects all essential records in accordance with the agency record retention schedule.
- I. Assigned response personnel receive training as available and needed regarding emergency responsibilities.

VIII. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

- A. The Health Commissioner with the assistance of the Emergency Response Team and the Knox County EMA Director is responsible for reviewing this annex, ensuring that changes to this annex are prepared and coordinated based upon deficiencies identified by exercises, emergencies and changes in governmental structure.

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- B. The Knox County EMA will publish and distribute all changes to this annex and forward revisions to all applicable organizations.
- C. SOPs, mutual-aid agreements, and equipment inventories will be maintained and updated under the direction of the Health Commissioner and the Local Public Health Emergency Response Team.
- D. All agencies and organizations with responsibilities identified in this annex are responsible for developing and maintaining departmental SOPs, mutual aid agreements, and related equipment.

IX. AUTHORITY AND REFERENCES

A. Authority

- 1. Ohio Revised Code Section 3790, and local Board of Health Regulations
- 2. Ohio Revised Code Section 5502.21

B. References

- 1. The Public Health Response to Biological and Chemical Terrorism, July 2001, Interim Planning Guidance, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- 2. Threatened Human Biologic Incident: Ohio Guidelines, September 2002, State of Ohio Security Task Force.

XI. AUTHENTICATION

President
Knox County Commissioners

Date

Director
Knox County Emergency Management Agency

Date

Health Commissioner
Knox Public Health

Date

Safety Officer
Knox Community Hospital

Date