



SECTION 7 PLAN MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES

This section describes the plan update process since 2015 (Section 7.1); the system that Chester County and all participating jurisdictions have established to monitor, evaluate, and update the Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) (Section 7.2); and the strategy to continue public involvement for plan maintenance (Section 7.3).

7.1 UPDATE PROCESS SUMMARY

Monitoring, evaluating, and updating the HMP is critical to maintaining its value and supporting the success of Chester County's hazard mitigation efforts. Ensuring effective implementation of mitigation activities paves the way for continued momentum in the planning process and supports future resiliency.

The Steering Committee reviewed the 2015 plan maintenance procedures and carried them forward to the current HMP update process, as described in the sections below. Going forward, the plan will continue to be available on the Chester County Department of Emergency Services (DES) website (<https://www.chesco.org/217/Emergency-Services>). The 2021 plan maintenance procedures also describe the ways in which this plan may be integrated into other planning mechanisms in the county.

7.2 MONITORING, EVALUATING, AND UPDATING THE PLAN

The Chester County HMP Planning Team intends to remain intact as the organization responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and updating this plan. The DES Emergency Preparedness Coordinator will serve as HMP Coordinator for the Planning Team. Each participating jurisdiction is expected to retain a municipal hazard mitigation representative to support the jurisdiction's input to the monitoring, evaluating, and updating responsibilities identified in this section. Members of the Planning Team are listed in Section 3.

Understanding that individual commitments change over time, each jurisdiction and its representatives are responsible for informing the Chester County HMP Coordinator of any changes in representation by formal letter. The HMP Coordinator will strive to ensure that the Planning Team is made up of representatives from planning partners and stakeholder organizations within the county. The HMP Coordinator will maintain a record of the current membership of the Planning Team on the Chester County DES website (<https://www.chesco.org/217/Emergency-Services/>) or in publicly-accessible county records. During the planning process, the HMP can be found at <https://www.chestercountypahmp.com/>. Upon approval by FEMA, the HMP can be found on the Chester County DES website.

The following sections describe the monitoring, evaluating, and updating processes and protocols for the Chester County HMP.

7.2.1 Monitoring

The Planning Team will be responsible for monitoring implementation, evaluating the effectiveness of the HMP, and documenting this information in an annual progress report. Prior to Planning Team progress meetings (detailed below), Planning Team representatives may collect information from departments, agencies, and organizations involved with the mitigation activities identified in Section 6 of this plan. The representatives will make phone calls and conduct meetings with persons responsible for initiating and/or overseeing the mitigation projects to obtain progress information. Copies of any grant applications filed on behalf of any of the participating jurisdictions will be requested by the Planning Team. Further, the representatives shall obtain from their municipal supervisor, mayor, or councilperson any public comments made on the plan and provide them to the Planning Team for inclusion in the progress report.



Planning Team representatives will be expected to document the following, as needed and as appropriate:

- Additional stakeholders (such as planning agencies and business representatives) who should be invited to participate in the planning process;
- Additional local assets (such as major employers, local points of interest, and residential areas) to consider in the risk assessment and mitigation strategy, so that the HMP can include more details regarding the vital assets of each municipality;
- Hazard events and losses occurring in their jurisdiction, including their nature, extent, and the effects that hazard mitigation actions have had on impacts and losses;
- Progress on the implementation of mitigation actions, including efforts to obtain outside funding for mitigation actions;
- Any obstacles or impediments to the implementation of actions;
- Additional mitigation actions believed to be appropriate and feasible;
- Ways in which each municipality conducts floodplain management in accordance with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) (through completion of the NFIP Survey worksheet); and
- Public and stakeholder input and comments on the plan.

Planning Team representatives may use the progress reporting forms (Worksheets #1 and #3 in the Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA] 386-4 guidance document¹) to facilitate collection of progress data and information on specific mitigation actions.

7.2.2 Evaluating

The evaluation of the HMP is an assessment of whether (1) the planning process and actions have been effective, (2) the plan's goals are being reached, and (3) changes are needed. The plan will be evaluated on an annual basis to determine the effectiveness of the programs and to reflect changes that may affect mitigation priorities or available funding.

The status of the HMP will be discussed and documented at annual plan review meetings of the Hazard Mitigation Planning Team. At least 1 month before the progress plan review meeting, the Chester County HMP Coordinator will advise Planning Team members of the meeting date, agenda, and expectations of the members. The Chester County HMP Coordinator may also distribute additional flood mitigation survey and mitigation project opportunity forms for jurisdictions that may have new information or jurisdictions that did not participate in the update process.

The Chester County HMP Coordinator will be responsible for calling and coordinating the progress plan review meeting and assessing progress toward achieving plan goals and objectives. These evaluations will assess whether:

- Goals and objectives address current and expected conditions;
- The nature or magnitude of the risks has changed;
- The HMP has been implemented into land use guidance and/or regulations on the county and municipal levels;
- Current resources are appropriate for implementing the HMP, and whether different or additional resources are now available;
- Actions are cost effective;
- Schedules and budgets are feasible;

¹ https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1521-20490-9008/fema_386_4.pdf



- Implementation problems exist—such as technical, political, legal, or coordination issues with other agencies;
- Outcomes have occurred as expected;
- Changes in county or municipal resources have impacted plan implementation (for example, funding, personnel, and equipment);
- New agencies, departments, or staff should be included, including other local governments as defined under 44 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR), Section 201.2;
- Documentation has been completed for any hazards that occurred during the last year.

Specifically, the Planning Team will review the mitigation goals, objectives, activities, and projects using the following performance-based indicators:

- New agencies or departments created that have authority to implement mitigation actions or are required to meet goals, objectives, and actions;
- Project evaluation based on current needs of the mitigation plan;
- Project completion regarding progress of proposed or ongoing actions;
- Under or over-spending regarding proposed mitigation action budgets;
- Achievement of the goals and objectives;
- Resource allocation to note whether resources are required to implement mitigation activities;
- Timeframe comments on whether proposed schedules are sufficient to address actions;
- Budget notes (in other words, if budget basis should be changed or is sufficient);
- Lead or support agency commitment notes (if there is a lack of commitment on the part of lead or support agencies);
- Resource comments regarding whether resources are available to implement actions; and
- Feasibility comments regarding whether certain goals, objectives, or actions prove to be unfeasible.

Finally, the Planning Team will evaluate the ways other programs and policies have conflicted or augmented planned or implemented measures, and will identify policies, programs, practices, and procedures that could be modified to accommodate hazard mitigation actions (described further in Section 5.2.6). These other programs and policies can include those that address the following:

- Economic development;
- Environmental preservation and permitting;
- Historic preservation;
- Redevelopment;
- Health and/or safety;
- Recreation;
- Land use and zoning;
- Public education and outreach; and
- Transportation.

The Planning Team may refer to the evaluation forms (Worksheets #2 and #4 in the FEMA 386-4 guidance document¹) to assist in the evaluation process.

The Chester County HMP Coordinator will be responsible for preparing an annual HMP progress report that will summarize information included on the local progress reports provided by each jurisdiction, information presented at the Planning Team meeting, and other information as appropriate and relevant. These reports will



provide data for the 5-year update of this HMP and will assist in identifying implementation challenges. By monitoring the implementation of the plan, the Planning Team will be able to assess which projects are completed, are no longer feasible, or may require additional funding.

The progress report will apply to all planning partners who have provided input, and as such, will be developed according to an agreed-upon format and with adequate allowance for input and comment of each planning partner prior to completion and submission to the State Hazard Mitigation Officer. Each planning partner will be responsible for providing this report to its governing body for their review.

During the Planning Team meeting, the HMP Coordinator will establish a schedule for the development, review, comment, amendment, and submission of the HMP progress report to the State Hazard Mitigation Officer.

The plan will also be evaluated and revised, if needed, following any major disasters to determine whether the recommended actions remain relevant and appropriate. The risk assessment will also be revisited to see if any changes are necessary based on the pattern of disaster damages, or if data listed in the Section 4.3 (Hazard Profiles) of this plan have been collected over the performance period to facilitate the risk assessment. Revisiting the risk assessment is an opportunity to increase the community's disaster resistance and build a better and stronger community.

7.2.3 Updating

Section 44 CFR 201.6.d.3 requires that local hazard mitigation plans be reviewed, revised (as appropriate), and resubmitted for approval to remain eligible for benefits awarded under the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000). The Chester County Hazard Mitigation Planning Team updates this plan on a 5-year cycle from the date of plan adoption.

To facilitate the update process, the Chester County HMP Coordinator (with support from the Planning Team) will hold a meeting 3 years from the date of plan approval to develop and commence with the implementation of a detailed plan update program. The Chester County HMP Coordinator will invite representatives from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) to this meeting to provide guidance on plan update procedures. This program will, at a minimum, establish (1) the parties responsible for managing and completing the plan update effort, (2) features needed to be included in the updated plan, and (3) a detailed timeline with milestones to ensure that the update is completed according to regulatory requirements.

At this meeting, the Planning Team will determine the resources needed to complete the update. The Chester County HMP Coordinator will be responsible for ensuring that needed resources are secured.

The Chester County HMP Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the plan evaluation portion of the meeting, soliciting feedback, collecting and reviewing the comments, and ensuring their incorporation in the 5-year plan update, as appropriate. The Chester County HMP Coordinator will work with municipal representatives to provide additional opportunities for members of the public to learn about the hazards they face, and to provide information to be incorporated into the HMP. FEMA's National Flood Hazard Layer tools can be used as an interactive tool to facilitate this process. Additional meetings may also be held as deemed necessary by the Planning Team. The purpose of these meetings would be to provide an opportunity for the public to express concerns, opinions, and ideas about the HMP.

7.3 CONTINUED PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Chester County and participating jurisdictions are committed to the continued involvement of the public in the hazard mitigation process. Therefore, the plan will be posted on the DES website (<https://www.chesco.org/217/Emergency-Services>), and copies of the plan will be made available for review during normal business hours at DES's main office. Chester County will make electronic copies of the plan available for local municipalities to provide public access.



Following each 5-year update of the HMP, the updated plan will be distributed for public comment. After all comments are addressed, the HMP will be revised and distributed to all Planning Team members and the Pennsylvania State Hazard Mitigation Officer.

The Chester County HMP Coordinator will be responsible for receiving, tracking, and filing public comments regarding this HMP. The public will have an opportunity to comment on the plan at the review meeting for the HMP and during the 5-year plan update. Chester County will maintain an active link on the DES website to collect public comments.

The Planning Team representatives are responsible for ensuring the following:

- Public comment and input on the HMP (and hazard mitigation in general) are recorded and addressed, as appropriate. An opportunity to comment on the plan will be provided directly on the DES website, and provisions for public comment submitted in writing will also be made. All public comments shall be addressed to:
Gabby Ratliff
Emergency Planning Coordinator
Chester County Department of Emergency Services
601 Westtown Road, Suite 012
West Chester, PA 19380
- Copies of the latest approved version of the plan are available for review at the municipal buildings along with instructions to facilitate public input and comment on the plan.
- Appropriate links to a Chester County HMP website (www.chestercountyhmp.com) will be maintained. The website will be monitored throughout the course of the HMP update process, and a draft copy of the plan will be posted for public comment. Upon conclusion of the update, appropriate links to the county HMP will be maintained on the DES website (<https://www.chesco.org/4261/Plans>).
- Public notices will be made, as appropriate, to inform the public of the availability of the plan, particularly during plan update cycles.

The Chester County HMP Coordinator will ensure the following:

- Public comment and input on the HMP (and hazard mitigation in general) will be recorded and addressed, as appropriate.
- HMP content on the DES website will be maintained and updated, as appropriate.
- All public and stakeholder comments received will be documented and maintained.
- Copies of the latest approved plan will be available for review at DES, along with instructions to facilitate public input and comment on the plan.
- Public notices, including media releases, will be made (as appropriate) to inform the public of the availability of the plan, particularly during plan update cycles.