



# Annex K: Emergency Support Function #11 – Animals & Agriculture

August 2018

---

## Coordinating Agency

Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District

## Supporting Agencies

Hamilton County Auditor's Office  
Hamilton County Public Health  
Cincinnati Animal CARE Humane Society  
Cincinnati Veterinary Medical Association  
Ohio State University Extension  
Tri-State County Animal Response Team (CART)

## Introduction

### Purpose

The purpose of Emergency Support Function (ESF) #11 – Animals & Agriculture is to establish how activities related to animals and agricultural concerns will be coordinated during and after disasters to meet the emergency needs of Hamilton County, OH. This ESF describes the operational components as well as roles and responsibilities of the agencies necessary to fulfill the duties of ESF #11.

### Scope

Emergency Support Function #11 – Animals & Agriculture serves to coordinate activities related to animal and agricultural welfare in Hamilton County during the response and recovery phases of the emergency management cycle. During and shortly after the incident, ESF #11 is responsible for providing for the safety and well-being of domesticated animals including livestock; responding to economically significant losses to livestock or crops; and the coordination of animal care resources in the Hamilton County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and in support of Incident Command as requested.

Activities of ESF #11 include the identification and support of emergency animal shelters, coordination of animal reunification, monitoring and assessment of animals for diseases, monitoring and assessment of impacts to natural resources, and coordinating the response to economically significant losses to livestock or crops.

### Situation

In addition to the Hamilton County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) Basic Plan, this annex is based on the following information:

- For the purposes of this annex, the term "domesticated animals" includes household pets and livestock but does not include any dangerous wild animals and snakes as defined by the Ohio Revised Code Chapter 935: Possession of Wild Animals and Snakes.
- Per the Hamilton County Auditor's Office, there are just under 43,000 dogs registered in Hamilton County. The Auditor's Office does not believe this represents all the dogs in Hamilton County.
- As of the 2017 United States Department of Agriculture Census, the most recent data available:
  - There are 318 farms in Hamilton County with a total land area of 17,970 acres.

- There are 987 cattle and calves, 1,145 layers, and 1,223 horses and ponies, and an unknown number of chickens and turkeys.
- The total annual market value for crops & livestock sold by Hamilton County is \$23,037,000.

### Assumptions

Planning requires assumptions based on statistics, history, behavior patterns and likely future trends. The following assumptions were made as consideration for ESF #11 – Animals & Agriculture:

- Disasters occurring have the potential to affect domestic and non-domestic animals, crops, livestock, and food supplies.
- Disasters may create natural resource issues such as potential contamination of the water and/or soil, as well as plants and animal life.
- Veterinary hospitals in the immediate and surrounding areas will serve as primary medical facilities.
- Successful management of animal care during an emergency improves citizen cooperation with evacuation directives and lessens the chance of disease transmission to humans.
- Each animal shelter will identify resources for potable water, food, medical, cleaning, and shelter supplies in advance of an emergency.
- Specially trained assistance would be needed to assist with the capture, containment, and treatment of animals whenever necessary.

### Concept of Operations

ESF #11 – Animals & Agriculture consists of five broad activities in relation to the Hamilton County Emergency Operations Plan. These activities are:

ESF #11 Activities	
1.	<b>Identifying and Supporting Emergency Animal Shelters</b>
2.	<b>Coordinating Animal Reunification</b>
3.	<b>Monitoring and Assessing Animals for Diseases</b>
4.	<b>Monitoring and Assessing the Impacts to Natural Resources</b>
5.	<b>Coordinating the Response to Economically Significant Losses to Livestock or Crops</b>

#### Identifying and Supporting Emergency Animal Shelters

Displaced individuals and households who are forced to evacuate from their home should take reasonable steps to shelter and provide for animals under their care however, this may not always be the case. Often times displaced persons will bring their domesticated animals with them when they evacuate.

As outlined in ESF #6 – Mass Care, some displaced individuals and households may require emergency shelters. However, these shelters cannot accommodate domesticated animals, only service animals in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Other domesticated animals will still require sheltering. This need can be fulfilled through the establishment of emergency animal shelters.

An emergency animal shelter, as used in this ESF, is any shelter established to care for displaced domesticated animals. Much like emergency shelters are for displaced individuals and households, emergency animal shelters exist to ensure that animals that have been displaced have a safe location that meets their most basic needs.

Upon notification that there are displaced animals in need of shelter, one of the first and most important responsibilities of ESF #11 is to identify the location of potential emergency animal shelters. Emergency animal shelters may be established at existing animal shelters, such as those owned by nonprofit organizations within Hamilton County. If the number of displaced animals is small, it may make more sense logistically to have displaced animals transported to existing shelters rather than attempting to establish a new emergency animal shelter somewhere else. Existing animal shelters will care for displaced animals per their normal standard operating procedures.

If ESF #6 is working with its Supporting Agencies on developing an emergency shelter, ESF #11 should work closely with ESF #6 to determine if an emergency animal shelter can be co-located with the emergency shelter, or if one can be established in close proximity. Displaced individuals and households will be more comfortable if their domesticated animals are close by where they can visit them. In addition, having the owners located close to the animals means the owners can assist in caring for their animals.

When establishing emergency animal shelters, ESF #11 should work to ensure that the agency establishing the shelter is following the *Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters* as written by the Association of Shelter Veterinarians as well as other best practices. Emergency animal shelters will require running water, adequate lighting, proper ventilation, and where possible, backup power.

Once the emergency animal shelter is established, it is the responsibility of ESF #11 to work with its Coordinating Agencies and other partners to support the needs of the shelter. This includes ensuring the animals have adequate food and water, are given adequate space and time to exercise and be active and are safe from one another. In addition, emergency animal shelters should have some veterinary care available onsite, both to offer oversight on the health and wellbeing of the animals, as well as to consult with first responders on injuries from frightened or aggressive animals and possible disease transmissions. ESF #11 can work with the Logistics Coordination Section of the EOC to obtain necessary resources in support of this mission.

ESF #11 should also support service animals in emergency shelters by providing the same level of support and material resources, including access to medical care. ESF #11 should work with ESF #6 to identify any service animals in those shelters.

Animals that are brought to the emergency animal shelter should be registered with their owner's contact information and as much medical information as can be provided (i.e. current rabies vaccinations, etc.). Animal owners may also bring supplies for their pets, which should be utilized when possible. Any animals that arrive at the emergency animal shelter showing signs of neglect or abuse will be investigated by the humane agent in Hamilton County.

ESF #11 should work with ESF #13 – Law Enforcement, to coordinate the physical security of each emergency animal shelter.

### Coordinating Animal Reunification

Some animals that arrive at emergency animal shelters may not be brought in by their owners. Some animals will be brought by specialized teams of animal retrieval specialists who rescue the animals from hazardous areas in the County. Others may be domesticated animals who are separated from their owners due to the disaster and are brought in by well-intentioned individuals.

The agency tasked with managing the emergency animal shelter will work with ESF #11 to ensure the appropriate resources are utilized to identify the animals and reunite them with their owners. This includes working with ESF #6 to identify any displaced individuals or households who have lost their domesticated animals. Some resources available may include the Hamilton County Auditor's pet licensing information as well as microchips embedded in the animals.

Any unclaimed animals remaining in the emergency animal shelter after the shelter has been closed will be taken to established animal shelters within Hamilton County so continued attempts at reunification can be made.

### Monitoring and Assessing Animals for Diseases

Animals at emergency animal shelters should be monitoring for any potential illnesses or diseases. ESF #11 will be responsible for coordinating the response to any illness or disease that poses a risk to the health of the animals. ESF #11 will coordinate with ESF #8 – Public Health & Healthcare Facilities regarding the response to any zoonotic diseases, those illnesses that may be transmitted from animals to people. Animals showing signs of illness, injury, or aggression may be transported to an alternate facility including an animal shelter or a veterinary clinic.

Diseases may appear in domesticated and wild animals in locations other than emergency animal shelters. Those agencies that are normally responsible for monitoring and reporting zoonotic diseases should continue to do so as outlined in the *Ohio Animal and Zoonotic Disease Reporting Reference*. During a disaster, ESF #11 should coordinate with its Supporting Agencies to ensure all agencies involved in animal care are aware and following proper reporting procedures.

### Monitoring and Assessing the Impacts to Natural Resources

Within Hamilton County, the Soil & Water Conservation District is the legal subdivision responsible for the conservation of natural resources. The definition of natural resources is broad and includes everything from forest to aquatic resources, from animal to microbial resources, from edaphic to crop resources. The Soil & Water conservation district focuses on soil and water resources and assists landowners with planning and applying conservation practices on land.

#### FEMA's Core Capabilities – ESF #11

- [Natural and Cultural Resources](#) – Protect natural and cultural resources and historic properties through appropriate planning, mitigation, response, and recovery actions to preserve, conserve, rehabilitate, and restore them consistent with post-disaster community priorities and best practices and in compliance with applicable environmental and historic preservation laws and Executive orders. Though this Core Capability is in the Recovery Mission Area, ESF #11 should begin to address the impacts to natural resources, which will enhance the recovery efforts outlined in the *Hamilton County Disaster Recovery Framework*.

Follow a disaster, many of the natural resources in Hamilton County may be affected or compromised. ESF #11 and its partner agencies will monitor and assess any potential impacts to natural resources. Hamilton County Soil & Water will act as the Subject Matter Expert on determining the impacts and what response and recovery actions can be undertaken. Soil & Water Conservation will work closely with other ESF #11 Supporting Agencies and state

partners like the Ohio Department of Agriculture to determine what are the best steps to preserve, conserve, rehabilitate, recover and restore natural resource.

### Coordinating the Response to Economically Significant Losses to Livestock or Crops

Though the agricultural sectors of Hamilton County are smaller than other components of the economy, the importance of agriculture to many residents of Hamilton County cannot be understated. For some of the more rural areas of Hamilton County, the biggest impact of disasters may be losses of livestock or crops due to damage from the hazards, diseases, or pests.

ESF #11 is tasked with coordinating the response livestock or crop losses that have a significant economic impact on the county. This includes working with impacted farmers to identify the cause of livestock or crop loss (if unknown) and working with partner agencies to identify potential resources to assist in the

recovery. The Ohio State University Extension has an office in Hamilton County and can work with farmers to identify best practices for replacing losses.

## Organization and Assignment of Responsibilities

Hamilton County Soil & Water has the primary responsibility for the animals and agriculture function in Hamilton County. SPCA Cincinnati will serve as the coordinating agency for this ESF.

### Coordinating Agency Responsibilities

Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District will:

1. Coordinate the activities of Support Agencies within ESF #11 to fulfill operational objectives.
2. Direct the activities of the ESF #11 in conjunction with assistance from ESFs at the local, State, or Federal levels as applicable.
3. Collaborate with other Coordinating Agencies to ensure an effective response between ESFs.
4. Designate sufficient representatives (no less than three) to support/staff 24-hour operations at the Hamilton County EOC. The Hamilton County EMHSA will maintain listings of these personnel, 24-hour contact information, and directions for contacting them in the event of communication outages.
5. Develop and train all staff responsible for implementing ESF #11 on standard operating procedures.
6. Share ESF #11 activity information with appropriate EOC personnel.
7. Prioritize ESF #11 operational strategies in alignment with the EOC and on scene objectives.
8. Assess and evaluate the impacts of disasters on the natural resources in Hamilton County.
9. Receive, manage, and track resource requests for ESF #11 in accordance with established resource management procedures.
10. Coordinate with ESF #15 – Emergency Public Information for the inclusion of appropriate information for public dissemination.
11. Assist in the development of the After-Action Report. This report is a detailed, written analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of county-level emergency response and short-term recovery activities based upon extensive research of the event and interviews with participating assessment, response, and short-term recovery personnel.

### Supporting Agencies Responsibilities

Hamilton County Auditor's Office will:

1. Utilize the Auditor's database of licensed dogs to assist in reuniting lost animals with their owner.

Hamilton County Public Health will:

1. Assist in the investigation of animal bites with regard to rabies quarantine, and provision of post-exposure rabies prophylaxis to rescue personnel, if not available through regular medical services.
2. Conduct disease surveillance in animals to monitor for indications of a biological outbreak.
3. Provide subject matter expertise to a local response involving vector-borne or zoonotic disease outbreak.
4. Coordinate the disposal of deceased animals that may impact public health.
5. Consult with the appropriate state agencies in order to test and/or coordinate disposal of contaminated food, livestock and agricultural products.
6. Consult with the appropriate state agencies in order to coordinate food inspections, investigations and advisories.
7. Coordinate with the Ohio Department of Health and the Ohio Department of Agriculture to establish the process for emergency food inspections and distribution.
8. Coordinate with the Ohio Department of Health to provide health and medical advisories, recalls, and news releases; and health and medical-related information to the public as it relates to the consumption of food.
9. Coordinate with ESF #15 to provide public information regarding food safety and agricultural/animal safety.

Cincinnati Animal CARE Humane Society will:

1. Maintain contact with emergency animal shelters to coordinate ongoing operations and identify potential resource needs.
2. Oversee animal reunification operations in coordination with Supporting Agencies.
3. Ensure all appropriate and proper protocols are followed in all established emergency animal shelters.
4. Coordinate with ESF #6 to identify emergency animal shelter locations that are co-located or in close proximity to Emergency Shelters.
5. Receive, manage, & track resource requests for ESF #11 in accordance with established resource management procedures.
6. Coordinate with ESF #15 – Emergency Public Information for the inclusion of appropriate information for public dissemination.
7. Ensure all Supporting Agencies are following appropriate procedures for reporting animal and zoonotic diseases.
8. Assist in the development of the After Action Report. This report is a detailed, written analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of county-level emergency response and short-term recovery activities based upon extensive research of the event and interviews with participating assessment, response, and short-term recovery personnel.

Cincinnati Veterinary Medical Association will:

1. Forward requests for personnel and resource support in emergency animal shelters to association members.
2. Forward requests to veterinary clinics if animals at emergency animal shelters are in need of more advanced medical care and need to be relocated.

Ohio State University Extension will:

1. Assist in conducting agricultural assessments of impact areas to determine agricultural needs and priorities.
2. Report any issues affecting food processing plants, fertilizer storage, and grain storage and processing.
3. Provide logistical support to farm bureau personnel in the impact areas.
4. Coordinate with ESF #15 to provide public information regarding agricultural advisories.

Tri-State County Animal Response Team (CART) will:

1. Assist in identifying and setting up emergency animal sheltering locations.
2. Assist in the care of domesticated animals in emergency animal shelters.
3. Support the acquisition of emergency animal sheltering supplies, including fences, crates, food bowls, litter boxes, etc. from private sector and nonprofit partners.
4. Coordinate animal volunteers to assist in emergency animal sheltering locations.
5. Work with emergency animal shelters to identify and track domesticated animals.
6. Assist in the rescue and recovery of animals from the impacted areas.

## References

- American Veterinarian Medical Association. (2012). *U.S. Pet Ownership Statistics*.  
<https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Statistics/Pages/Market-research-statistics-US-pet-ownership.aspx>
- Association of Shelter Veterinarians. (2010). *Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters*.  
<https://oacu.oir.nih.gov/sites/default/files/uploads/disaster-planning/shelterguide.pdf>
- Ohio Department of Health and Ohio Department of Agriculture. *Ohio Animal Zoonotic Disease Reporting Reference*. <https://www.odh.ohio.gov/pdf/animdis/AnZooDisRef.pdf>

United States Department of Agriculture. (2019). *2017 Census of Agriculture. County Profile: Hamilton County, Ohio*. [https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Online\\_Resources/County\\_Profiles/Ohio/cp39061.pdf](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Ohio/cp39061.pdf)

United States Department of Justice. (July 26, 2007). *Americans with Disabilities Act: ADA Checklist for Emergency Shelters*. <https://www.ada.gov/pcatoolkit/chap7shelterchk.pdf>