

ST. JOHNS COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT PLAN

2016

Appendix K

Host Sheltering Plan | St. Johns County



St. Johns County Host Sheltering Plan

I. INTRODUCTION

The definition of a “Host Shelter in a County” is described as a safe facility in a county that will not be impacted by the disaster. The Host County will be sheltering individuals from other counties and communities to provide a safe place from the event.

St. Johns County is bordered on the east by the Atlantic Ocean and the St. Johns River on the west. St. Johns County is vulnerable to hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires, nor’easter storms, flooding and numerous other natural and human caused hazards. Due to the geographic location of St. Johns County, it may not be an optimal location for host sheltering.

II. HISTORY

St. Johns County has only opened host shelters during one event in recent history. During Firestorm 98, Flagler County was forced to evacuate its entire population and hundreds of residents traveled to St. Johns County to stay in shelters. Two schools were opened for three days housing hundreds of Flagler County residents.

III. AUTHORITY

St. Johns County will utilize the same authority to institute a Host Sheltering Plan that is used for opening evacuation shelters for our population, Local Ordinance 94-25.

If St. Johns County is requested by the Governor’s Office to provide Host Sheltering, St. Johns County will request to be included in the Governor's Executive Order. The St. Johns County BOCC will be encouraged to declare a Local State of Emergency for potential financial reimbursement reasons to recover costs if there is a Presidential Declaration.

IV. DIRECTION AND CONTROL

The Emergency Management Director (EMD) is responsible for activating and managing the Host Sheltering Plan. The EMD will be responsible for the following actions:

- A. Notify the County Administrator’s Office and St. Johns County School District
- B. Activate the EOC and appropriate ESF’s
- C. Activate the PIO
- D. Address the BOCC, if necessary

V. MUTUAL AID

St. Johns County is a participant in the Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement. The EMD will monitor all requests for assistance and will determine if the request is appropriate. The EMD will monitor the use of all requested resources during the operation.

VI. EVACUATION

St. Johns County could receive citizens / visitors from all parts of Florida that have been impacted by a disaster. The evacuation could come with or without warning. In the case of the Wildfires of 1998, Flagler County directed a total County evacuation and only gave the surrounding Counties minimal preparation time to shelter the evacuees.

It would benefit the county to have as much time as possible to prepare for the evacuee's arrival. Immediately after the request is made for St. Johns County to provide host sheltering, the EMD will put this plan into action.

VII. TRAFFIC CONTROL

The St. Johns County Sheriff's Office will be primarily responsible for traffic control within St. Johns County along with the municipalities providing law enforcement within the City limits. Law Enforcement will be responsible for the following:

- A. Establish Traffic Control Points
- B. Monitor Evacuation Routes
- C. Place tow-trucks on standby

VIII. SHELTER OPENINGS

Opening shelters for a host situation will be treated very similar to opening shelters for a County evacuation. The following steps will be taken by Emergency Management to Open a Host Shelter.

- A. Notify Administration / BOCC
- B. Notify School District
- C. Activate EOC and ESF's
- D. Plan for food / water at each shelter
- E. Establish security at the shelter
- F. Establish communications with each shelter
- G. Coordinate opening time of each shelter
- H. Place shelter identification signs to guide public
- I. Notify American Red Cross and Salvation Army

IX. SHELTER SELECTION PROCESS

Host Sheltering can happen at any time of the year. St. Johns County's evacuation shelters are public schools, as such the schools may be in session when the host sheltering is requested. All sheltering options should be explored when the request is received:

- A. St. Johns County Public Schools
- B. St. Johns County Agricultural Center
- C. St. Johns County Convention Center
- D. Local Churches
- E. Hotels / Motels

Emergency Management will be responsible for contacting each facility and requesting permission to use the building for host sheltering.

Emergency Management will be responsible for situation reports to the SEOC that will include number of shelters, number of sheltered individuals, number of pets, number of injuries and any resources needed. This report will be transmitted at least twice a day to the SEOC.

X. SHELTER CLOSURE

The host shelters will close when the threat has passed and the evacuees can return to their homes. Emergency Management will inform the Shelter Managers of the decision to close the shelters and a time for closing.

Emergency Management will be responsible for the following:

- A. Deactivating the EOC and ESF's
- B. Arrangements for cleaning the shelters
- C. Coordinating transportation assistance
- D. Financial Details / Recovery
- E. Final Shelter Report to the BOCC, Administration and SEOC
- F. Request PIO issue a final press statement