

# New York State Response to Disaster

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*Editor's Note: This Chapter is the continuation of an adaptation of a state plan for disaster preparation and response. In total, the original chapter comprises Chapters, 1, 14, 16-18.*

## The Regional and State Response

In some situations, a community or health care facility may not be able to fully initiate or sustain its disaster response due to the scope and magnitude of a disaster and the resources required to bring the incident under control. In those circumstances, communities and their health care facilities may need additional assistance and the incident response is raised to the next level.

When the incident requires resources that exceed what the community can expend, the Incident Commander or County Emergency Manager will look to the resources of neighboring communities or the state for assistance.

When resources from the state are requested, the *State Emergency Management Office* (SEMO) will activate the *State Emergency Operation Center*. Typically, the County EOC has been in close communication with its regional SEMO representative and this individual is a conduit between the County EOC and the *State EOC*. The regional SEMO representative provides the state with the necessary information to determine when and if State resources will be needed.

When the mental health or public health resources of a community or health care system are limited or the disaster exceeds that which can be adequately provided, the County Departments of Mental Health and Public Health may also need to raise their response to the next level.

## State Office of Mental Health and Department of Health

During large-scale disasters, the County Mental Health and Public Health Directors continually evaluate and monitor the mental and public health of the community and advise County officials when additional mental health and public health resources are needed. When a health care facility determines that its mental health or public health resources have been depleted, additional resources may be requested from the County Mental Health or Public Health Directors. Should such county mental health or public health resources become depleted or unsustainable, the County Mental Health or Public Health Directors work in collaboration with their respective *Regional Field Offices* and *State Offices* to evaluate and request additional resources.

## State Emergency Management Office (SEMO)

<http://www.semo.state.ny.us/>

The mission of the New York State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) is to protect the lives and property of the citizens of New York State from threats posed by natural or man-made events. To fulfill this mission, SEMO coordinates emergency management services with other federal and State agencies to support county and local governments. SEMO routinely assists local government, volunteer organizations, and private industry through a variety of emergency management programs. These programs involve hazard identification, loss prevention, planning, training, operational response to emergencies, technical support, and disaster recovery assistance.