
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1200 (Caloza) - Emergency services: disaster preparedness

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Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 18, 2025

Policy Vote: G.O. 15 - 0

Mandate: No

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Bill Summary: AB 1200 requires the Office of Emergency Services (OES) to biennially convene key personnel and agencies that have emergency management roles and responsibilities to participate in tabletop exercises to discuss and evaluate participants' emergency preparedness plans under various simulated catastrophic disaster situations, as specified.

Fiscal Impact: OES reports total costs of approximately \$3.57 million in the first year and \$2.82 million annually ongoing for 11 new positions in OES's California Specialized Training Institute and Community Emergency Response Team (General Fund). Other costs include ongoing travel expenses, technology licenses, and training materials, as well as for workload associated with curriculum development.

Background: OES is responsible for addressing natural, technological, or manmade disasters and emergencies, and preparing the State to prevent, respond to, quickly recover from, and mitigate the effects of both intentional and natural disasters. As part of their overall preparedness mission, OES is required to develop a State Emergency Plan (SEP) and State Hazard Mitigation Plan (SHMP), and maintain the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the Emergency Management Mutual Aid System (EMMA). OES, in coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and local partners, has developed four Catastrophic Plans to augment the SEP.

The SEP describes how response to natural or human-caused emergencies occurs in California. The plan is a requirement of the Emergency Services Act, and describes methods for conducting emergency operations, the process for rendering mutual aid, emergency services of government agencies, how resources are mobilized, how the public is informed, and how continuity of government is maintained during emergency. The SEP further describes hazard mitigation, as well as preparedness and recovery from disasters. The SEP defines Emergency Support Functions (ESF), which are discipline-specific groups that develop functional annexes to set goals, objectives, operational concepts, capabilities, organization structures, and related policies and procedures. Under the SEP, there are 18 ESFs led by a state agency and represent an alliance of state government and other stakeholders with similar functional responsibilities.

There are different types of exercises that can be used to evaluate program plans, procedures and capabilities. There are walkthroughs, workshops, and orientation seminars for basic training of team members, which are designed to familiarize individuals with emergency response, business continuity, and crisis communication plans. Tabletop exercises focus on discussion-based sessions where team members

meet in an informal, classroom setting to discuss their roles during an emergency and their responses to a particular emergency situation. Functional exercises allow personnel to validate plans and readiness by performing their duties in a simulated operational environment during specific scenarios. Full-scale exercises simulate real emergency situations, and are often lengthy and take place on location using the equipment and personnel that would be called upon in a real event.

Proposed Law:

- Requires OES to biennially convene key personnel and agencies that have emergency management roles and responsibilities to participate in tabletop exercises to discuss and evaluate participants' emergency preparedness plans under the following simulated catastrophic disaster situations:
 - The Northern California Catastrophic Flood Response Plan published in 2018; the Bay Area Earthquake Plan published in 2016; the California Cascadia Subduction Zone Earthquake and Tsunami Response Plan published in 2013; and the Southern California Catastrophic Earthquake Response Plan published in 2010.
- Requires OES to invite governmental agencies, educational entities, military installations, private businesses, and nonprofit organizations that operate or own concerns in various sectors that provide fundamental services in the community that, when stabilized, enable all other aspects of society to function to participate in the tabletop exercises.
- Requires the tabletop exercises to be designed by OES to enhance the capabilities of the participants to do, at a minimum, four of the following:
 - Plan to engage the communities that they each serve, as appropriate, in the development of executable strategic, operational, or tactical-level approaches to meet defined disaster response objectives.
 - Provide coordinated, prompt, reliable, and actionable information through the use of clear, consistent, accessible, and culturally and linguistically appropriate methods to effectively relay information regarding any threat or hazard, as well as the actions being taken and the assistance being made available, as appropriate.
 - Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities.
 - Manage the security and resilience of supply chains that deliver essential commodities, equipment, and services in support of impacted communities and survivors, including emergency power and fuel support, as well as the coordination of access to community staples. Synchronize logistics capabilities and enable the restoration of impacted supply chains.

- Conduct appropriate measures to ensure the protection of the health and safety of the public and workers, as well as the environment, from all hazards in support of responder operations and the affected communities.
- Provide transportation, including infrastructure access and accessible transportation services, for response priority objectives, including the evacuation of people and animals, and the delivery of vital response personnel, equipment, and services into the affected areas.
- Provide decision makers with relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard, cascading effects, and the status of the response.
- Provide fatality management services, including decedent remains recovery and victim identification, working with local, state, tribal, territorial, insular area, and federal authorities to provide mortuary processes, temporary storage, or permanent internment solutions, sharing information with mass care services for the purpose of reunifying family members and caregivers with missing persons or their remains, and providing counseling to the bereaved.
- Provide structural, wildland, and specialized firefighting capabilities to manage and suppress fires of all types, kinds, and complexities while protecting the lives, property, and environment in the affected area.
- Stabilize critical infrastructure functions, minimize health and safety threats, and efficiently restore and revitalize systems and services to support a viable, resilient community.
- Provide life-sustaining and human services to the affected population, including hydration, feeding, sheltering, temporary housing, evacuee support, reunification, and distribution of emergency supplies.
- Deliver traditional and atypical search and rescue capabilities, including personnel, services, animals, and assets, to survivors in need, with the goal of saving the greatest number of endangered lives in the shortest time possible.
- Ensure a safe and secure environment through law enforcement and related security and protection operations for people and communities located within affected areas and also for response personnel engaged in lifesaving and life-sustaining operations.
- Ensure the capacity for timely communications in support of security, situational awareness, and operations, by any and all means available, among and between affected communities in the impact area and all response forces.
- Provide lifesaving medical treatment via emergency medical services and related operations and avoid additional disease and injury by providing targeted public health, medical, and behavioral health support and products to all affected populations.

- Restore and improve health and social services capabilities and networks to promote the resilience, independence, health, including behavioral health, and well-being of the whole community.
- Return economic and business activities, including food and agriculture, to a healthy state and develop new business and employment opportunities that result in an economically viable community.
- 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.
- Requires OES to report on each tabletop exercise it conducts to the committee on budget, the Assembly Committee on Emergency Management, and the Senate Committee on Governmental Organization by February 1, 2028 and biennially thereafter of the calendar year following each biennial simulation and evaluation.
- Requires OES, to the extent possible, to use federal preparedness grant funding to offset the state, local, and tribal government costs associated with conducting the tabletop exercises.
- Requires OES, in cooperation with California Volunteers, to annually coordinate with local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) programs to conduct community disaster preparedness training in vulnerable regions in California.
 - Requires vulnerable regions to be identified based on FEMA's National Risk Index and a community vulnerability index, or similar risk assessment tools.
 - Requires each training event to coordinate with any established CERT program serving the region in which the training takes place.
 - Requires each training event to emphasize actions to increase community resilience to disasters, utilize community green or open space for drills and preparedness activities whenever feasible, and promote inclusive engagement of community members, including individuals with disabilities and those from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
 - Requires each training event to include testing of community emergency notification systems in the area.

Related Legislation: AB 1071 (Rodriguez, 2021) was substantially similar to this bill and would have likewise required OES to biennially convene key personnel and agencies that have emergency management roles and responsibilities to participate in tabletop exercises to discuss and evaluate participants' emergency preparedness plans under various simulated catastrophic disaster situations. AB 1071 was held on the Suspense File in this committee.