



TEXAS

Health and Human Services

Cecile Erwin Young, Executive Commissioner

**Request for Applications (RFA)
for
2-1-1 Texas Information and Referral Network Operations
RFA No. HHS0015545**

Exhibit D – Emergency Services and Escalation Centers Grant Requirements (ESEC)

1. EMERGENCY SERVICES AND ESCALATION CENTERS OVERVIEW

As shown in **Exhibit C, Grant Requirements**, Area Information Centers (AIC) must have the demonstrated capacity to implement and follow the *AIC Emergency Management Protocols* during disasters or other events that have the potential to or have resulted in property damage, deaths, and/or injuries in Texas communities. Additional capacity is needed to ensure a fully optimized disaster and event response that aligns with the Governor's Homeland Security Strategic Plan to provide hazard and emergency information to the public. Applicants awarded grant funds to serve as an Emergency Services and Escalation Centers (ESECs) must provide expanded disaster-related activities that include:

- A. Disaster/event monitoring
- B. Network communication
- C. Resource management
- D. Additional human resource capacity for responding to disasters/events.
- E. Year-round registration assistance enrolling customers into the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR)

2. ESEC OPERATIONS

2.1 Infrastructure, Staffing, and Service Provision

ESECs must have the capacity to “ramp-up” to twenty-four (24) hour operations during general operations and during disaster event periods. ESECs are required to expand infrastructure, staffing, and service capabilities to ensure an effective emergency response.

2.1.1 Infrastructure Requirements

The Grantee must:

- A. Provide physical facilities and necessary technology hardware/software to house the regular AIC required staff and at least twenty (20) additional volunteer staff that will volunteer simultaneously during emergency or disaster activation.
- B. Coordinate with the other ESECs to ramp up and maintain a single shared email address that automatically forwards important information to all Emergency Management Coordinators and active managers.
- C. Provide Emergency Management Coordinators and AIC management twenty-four (24) hour access to email and phone communications.
- D. Adhere to *AIC Emergency Management Protocols* and all other manuals and protocols as directed by HHSC/TIRN.
- E. Coordinate Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) training for new hires and assure completion within thirty (30) business days of hire date.

2.1.2 Staffing Requirements

Adequate and trained staff are critical to an ESEC's ability to respond to disaster events. The Applicant must:

- A. Add one-hundred and sixty (160) hours of Contact Specialist staff time per day, as needed and directed by HHSC. The additional Contact Specialist capacity must be added within a period not to exceed four hours or as directed by HHSC. An example of added Contact Specialist capacity could be adding twenty (20) volunteers to handle calls for eight (8) hours per day.
- B. Maintain a pool of at least twenty (20) trained volunteer staff to take calls during a disaster event. These individuals are in addition to the AIC's regular Information and Referral (I&R) Contact Specialist staff and must have the minimal skills necessary to respond to a disaster-related inquiry and accurately record call data as per requirements.
- C. Develop and maintain current procedures for recruiting and training volunteers which must be included in the ESEC plan.
- D. Ensure the ESEC's Resource Manager has the training and skills needed to oversee database-wide functions to assist and support local Resource Managers during a disaster. The ESEC must designate at least one resource management backup if key staff are unable to perform the required duties.
- E. Maintain compliance with the FEMA guidelines for National Incident Management System (NIMS) / Incident Command Structure (ICS) training as shown below. (Note: the ICS-100 and IS-700 training courses are standard requirements for all AICs.)

Staff Position	Required Training(s)
Program Director	IS-700, IS-800, ICS-100, ICS-200, and ICS-300
Contact Center Manager	IS-700, ICS-100, and ICS-200
Emergency Management Coordinator	IS-700, IS-800, ICS-100, ICS-200, ICS-300, IS-42, and IS-244
Resource Manager	IS-700, ICS-100, IS-42, and IS-244
I&R Contact Specialist	ICS-100

Training Course	Description
ICS-100 – Introduction to the Incident Command System (Required for all AICs)	Covers the principles and basic structure of ICS, its functional areas, staff roles, and the relationship between ICS and NIMS
ICS-200 – Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response	A review of the ICS, including the context for ICS within initial response. Supports higher level ICS training.

ICS-300 – Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents	Provides training and resources for personnel who require advanced knowledge and application of the ICS. This course expands upon information covered in the ICS-100 and ICS-200 courses
IS-42 – Social Media in Emergency Management	Provides best practices including tools, techniques, and a basic roadmap to build capabilities in the use of social media technologies by emergency management organizations to further their emergency response missions.
IS-244 – Developing and Managing Volunteers	Provides strategies for identifying, recruiting, assigning, training, supervising, and motivating volunteers before, during, and after a severe emergency or major disaster.
IS-700 – National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction (Required for all AICs)	Provides an overview of NIMS, including key concepts and principles, resource management, ICS organizational structures, communication standards and formats, interconnectivity of disaster agencies, and emergency operations functions.
IS-800 – National Response Framework, An Introduction	Introduces the concepts and principles of the National Response Framework and the ways it is applied in actual response situations.

2.1.3 Emergency Management Staff and Required Partnerships

Grantees must designate two staff who will function as Emergency Management Coordinators during a disaster/event. One coordinator will be designated as primary and the other as back-up, and both must be available twenty-four (24) hours a day, (7) seven days a week. The Emergency Management Coordinators will coordinate communications between the AIC and HHSC/TIRN, designated AIC ESECs, the statewide AIC network, and local and state emergency management organizations.

Grantees must develop and maintain professional relationships with the following emergency management organizations in the contracted region by establishing formal agreements.

- A. Local Offices of Emergency Management (OEM) (contact the city and/or county government offices in the AIC region).
- B. Local public health entities; and (see <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/regions/lhds.shtm>);
- C. Disaster District Coordinators (see https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/5fcfde680bd548c23d797aef/664d244e60a4550446e8cb60_DC%20Map%205_21_24.pdf));
- D. Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) (see <https://www.txvoad.org/>)

- E. American Red Cross chapters within the AIC region (see <https://www.redcross.org/find-your-local-chapter.html>)
- F. Other emergency and relief operations partners, as appropriate and/or required by HHSC/TIRN.

Formal agreements with these entities must outline the roles and responsibilities of each party. The agreements must be renewed annually and maintained on file and available for review by HHSC/TIRN upon request.

2.1.4 Service Provision

The Grantee must provide the following services before, during, and after a disaster/emergency event:

- A. Ensure that Emergency management operations are on a rotating schedule in which the ESEC will be on call and available to serve twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week, as directed by HHSC/TIRN.
- B. Monitor statewide weather and disaster/emergency events to provide network communication per the processes set forth in the *AIC Emergency Management Protocols*.
- C. Conduct I&R and resource management functions on behalf of AICs impacted by a disaster/emergency and unable to perform these functions.
- D. Conduct oversight for resource database-wide functions for disasters/emergencies, as directed in the *AIC Emergency Management Protocols*.
- E. Collect and disseminate emergency management related I&R to the network.
- F. Must conduct year-round registration assistance for the STEAR program. (See Section 2.1.4.1 STEAR Program in **Exhibit D, Emergency Services and Escalation Centers Grant Requirements (ESEC)** for additional detail on this requirement.)

2.1.4.1 STEAR Program

Applicants awarded grant funds to serve as an Emergency Services and Escalation Centers (ESECs) must provide year-round registration assistance enrolling customers into the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry (STEAR). STEAR registration assistance includes trained I&R Contact Specialists assist individuals over the phone to register in STEAR, as well as via fax and email.

Additionally, all ESECs are responsible for the following:

- A. Ensure staff receive STEAR training provided by HHSC/TIRN.
- B. Assign agents to receive STEAR calls via skilling to the appropriate Option 4 call queue.

- C. Develop and implement a plan to handle STEAR inquiries via fax and email.

The STEAR program is a free registry that provides additional information to local emergency planners and emergency responders regarding prospective evacuation needs in their communities. The registry is intended for individuals with disabilities and those with access and functional issues that may include:

- A. Limited mobility
- B. Communication barriers
- C. Additional medical assistance needs.
- D. Transportation assistance needs.
- E. Personal care assistance needs.

Individuals that choose to register must provide their name, address, phone number, and primary language. To ensure that vital information is captured for emergency planners and responders, individuals may be asked additional questions pertaining to:

- A. Emergency contact information
- B. Caregiver information
- C. Pets
- D. Transportation assistance for home evacuation
- E. Communication barriers
- F. Disability, functional or medical needs

Registry in STEAR is voluntary and all information provided by customers is kept completely confidential.