



BALDWIN COUNTY COMMISSION

POLICY #2.26	
Subject	Policy for Internal Communications and Tracking Resources and Cost Expenditures for a Potential or Actual Emergency Declaration
Date Adopted	August 19, 2025
Agenda Item	TBD
Obsolete Versions	All policies regarding this subject prior to the date adopted on this document. <u>Original adoption / previous revisions:</u> N/A

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy establishes procedures for internal communications when a potential or actual local state of emergency is declared by the Baldwin County Commission. It defines notification protocols, confidentiality standards, and communication responsibilities to ensure a coordinated and efficient emergency response.

I. PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS PRE-EMERGENCY DECLARATION

When discussions arise regarding the possibility of an emergency declaration by the County Commission, the County Administrator and/or County Engineer must initiate internal communications to key personnel for preliminary preparations.

Notification Process

The following staff members will be notified via group email or text:

- **Administration Department**
 - Administrative Services Manager
 - Assistant Administrative Services Manager
 - Public Information and Communication Specialist
- **Citizen Service Center**
 - Customer Relationship Manager
- **Personnel Department**
 - Personnel Director
- **Emergency Management Agency (EMA)**
 - Director, Baldwin County EMA
 - Public Information and Communication Specialist
- **Finance & Accounting Department**
 - Director of Finance

If the County Administrator or County Engineer is unavailable, a designated alternate official will assume responsibility for notifications.

II. CONFIDENTIALITY & INFORMATION SHARING

All discussions within the group will be conducted with strict confidentiality. Information must not be shared externally without explicit authorization from the County Administrator and/or County Engineer.

Unauthorized Disclosure Consequences

Any staff member who discloses information without authorization may face disciplinary action in accordance with Baldwin County policies.

III. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES DURING ACTIVATION

Each department will have designated responsibilities leading up to and during an emergency declaration or activation:

A. Administration Department

- Draft and distribute emergency declaration documents and public notices.
- Prepare agendas for emergency commission meetings.
- Maintain official correspondence related to commission actions.
- Provide administrative support to the County Administrator and Engineer, as requested.

B. Citizen Service Center & Public Information

- Coordinate all external messaging to ensure accurate, timely, and unified communication.
- Prepare press releases, social media updates, and emergency phone recordings.
- Ensure consistency and clarity in public notifications.

C. Personnel Department

- Disseminate information to county employees regarding work schedules, responsibilities, and emergency policies.
- Establish an employee hotline in coordination with Communications and Information Systems (CIS) and Citizen Service Center.
- Prepare payroll documentation for potential cost reimbursement under the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) guidelines.

D. Emergency Management Agency

- Coordinate emergency response efforts by working with county departments to ensure timely activation of emergency procedures.
- Provide situational awareness updates to key personnel and local agencies, ensuring informed decision-making during an emergency.
- Facilitate resource allocation by assisting departments in requesting and deploying necessary equipment, personnel, and emergency supplies.

E. Finance & Accounting Department

- Activate TRACE Mode (Tracking Resources and Cost Expenditures) cost structure for tracking emergency expenditures.
- Communicate TRACE Mode protocols to all departments.

IV. EMERGENCY COST TRACKING & DOCUMENTATION

To ensure proper financial accountability, all departments must adhere to Baldwin County's TRACE Mode guidelines for tracking resources and expenditures, including:

- 1) Labor Costs for Emergency Personnel – Time Clock and ICS Form 214
- 2) Volunteer Hours and Duties – Time and Activity Log (ICS Form 214)
- 3) Purchasing Guidelines during a Declared Emergency
- 4) General Ledger Account Structure and Usage
- 5) Budget Constraints – Effective During a Declared Emergency

The Finance & Accounting Department will oversee financial documentation to support potential federal and state reimbursement efforts.

V. PUBLIC COMMUNICATION APPROVAL PROCESS

All public information must be reviewed and approved before dissemination to ensure accuracy and alignment with Baldwin County's emergency response strategy.

- Official emergency notifications must be reviewed by the County Administrator, County Engineer, or designated spokesperson.
- Press releases and social media statements must follow pre-established emergency communication protocols.
- Release of notifications are to be approved by the Chairman of the County Commission.

ATTACHMENTS

N/A