

Memorandum of Understanding

***Between Lake County, Illinois, and Metropolitan
Emergency Support Services, Inc. (MESS)***

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to create a working relationship between The Metropolitan Emergency Support Services, Inc. (herein referred to as "MESS") and the Lake County Emergency Management Agency (herein referred to as "EMA") in preparing for and responding to disaster situations at all levels and assisting emergency response efforts, where necessary. This agreement describes the broad framework for cooperation between the two organizations to provide assistance and support services to incident personnel so they can more safely engage in extended operations, and to coordinate emergency preparedness activities where practical and beneficial. Coordinated support enables personnel to operate over longer time periods at large or lengthy incidents.

II. Concept of Operations

Each party to this MOU is a separate and independent organization. As such, each organization retains its own identity in providing service, and each organization is responsible for establishing its own policies and financing its own activities.

III. Organizations

A. Lake County (Emergency Management Agency)

Lake County, through its Emergency Management Agency (EMA), operates a county-wide emergency preparedness program. The Lake County Emergency Operation Plan (EOP) addresses major hazards and defines the structure for coordinated disaster response utilizing all county resources including communications, police, fire and rescue units, hospitals, and religious and charitable organizations. The EOP is practiced regularly by conducting exercises and drills that simulate an array of hazards including natural, technological and intentional. During periods of disaster and major emergencies, the Emergency Management Agency acts as the county's primary liaison to the Illinois and Federal Emergency Management Agencies.

As part of the county's preparedness, the Emergency Management Agency maintains and updates an emergency resource database, listing items and facilities that may needed be during disaster response.

The agency also provides emergency planning assistance to local governments and has an active program for public education.

B. Metropolitan Emergency Support Services, Inc.

MESS is a non profit corporation, led by volunteers, that provides responder rehabilitation and relief services (rehab), to personnel working at emergencies. MESS authority to perform rehab services was formalized with the organization's incorporation in 1993 to serve Emergency

Services personnel throughout Lake County and northern Cook County, Illinois, encompassing more than 65 different communities and entities.

IV. Powers and Responsibilities

A. Lake County Emergency Management Agency

The Lake County Emergency Management Agency has been assigned the County's responsibility for the preparation and implementation of the Disaster Preparedness Plan required under the authority provided by the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) Act as amended and IEMA Administrative Rules regarding local and inter-jurisdictional disaster preparedness plans. Through its Emergency Management Agency Ordinance, Lake County assigns responsibility for the preparation, coordination and implementation of the plan to the Lake County Emergency Management Agency Coordinator.

B. Metropolitan Emergency Support Services, Inc. (MESS)

To the extent of its abilities, Metropolitan Emergency Support Services Inc., at no charge to disaster relief personnel or local municipalities, will provide assistance including emergency mass care and rehabilitation services with urgent and verified disaster-caused needs, as well as short or long term emergency support services. Assistance is provided to sustain human life, reduce the harsh physical and emotional distress that prevents emergency personnel from meeting their own basic needs, and promote the recovery of emergency service personnel when such relief assistance is not available from other resources.

Metropolitan Emergency Support Services, Inc. functions independently of any local, state or federal emergency or disaster declaration. All Metropolitan Emergency Support Services, Inc services are provided in accordance with the Metropolitan Emergency Support Services, Inc. Regulations and Procedures. Metropolitan Emergency Support Services, Inc. will maintain administrative and financial control over its activities.

In providing emergency support services, Metropolitan Emergency Support Services, Inc has both a legal and a moral mandate that it has neither the authority nor the right to surrender. Metropolitan Emergency Support Services, Inc has both the power and the duty to act in disaster, and its prompt action is clearly expected and supported by the public.

V. General Coordination of Services

There are some similarities in Lake County EMA and MESS emergency management duties. As such, the LCEMA and MESS agree to coordinate whenever possible to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and/or resources. Both parties agree that:

- A. Close liaison will be maintained between LCEMA and MESS by conference, telephone, facsimile, e-mail, and other means to facilitate the coordination of resources, both human and material, and the cooperation of the parties in areas of mutual interest.
- B. In the performance of their duties, LCEMA and MESS recognize the responsibilities of the other and, to the extent possible, will assist the other in the performance of these duties to ensure that effective assistance is provided to all disaster victims and that resources are utilized efficiently.
- C. LCEMA will encourage other Villages and Townships to cooperate with MESS by coordinating activities and providing physical facilities and other support as needed and available in time of major emergency or disaster.
- D. LCEMA and MESS will include a representative of the other organization in its committees, task forces, and working groups formed to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters and other emergencies.
- E. Recognizing the need to provide a clear and concise message to the public regarding the operation of both organizations, MESS and LCEMA will make efforts through their Public Information Offices to keep the public informed of their cooperative efforts and activities.
- F. Cooperative arrangements for emergency planning, training, exercising, response, recovery, mitigation, and community emergency preparedness and response education will be developed and maintained by LCEMA and MESS.

VI. Emergency Program Coordination

A. Preparedness

- LCEMA and MESS will make available to the extent possible to the other, training, educational and development opportunities for their respective personnel.
- Each organization will pursue joint Disaster training, exercising, community and business emergency preparedness education programs and other areas of cooperative efforts for Villages and Townships.

B. Planning

MESS will work with LCEMA to coordinate Logistics and Rehab services for Lake County and partners.

C. Response

- MESS will provide LCEMA use of its Emergency Support Services resources during a response to a major emergency. MESS will operate and arrange for rehab feeding and other appropriate support, as available and requested.
- LCEMA and MESS agree to keep the other informed of developing disaster and emergency situations and of any known emergency responder needs relating to the disaster or emergency situation.
- During major emergency events or disasters where MESS services are deemed necessary by Lake County EMA, MESS and LCEMA will advise each other on the actions they have taken, in order to ensure effective assistance to all emergency services personnel to ensure efficient use of resources.
- During emergency operations, LCEMA may provide workspace for liaisons of MESS in the LCEMA's Emergency Operations Center and other locations as appropriate, and the MESS agrees to supply such liaison personnel, if requested, to facilitate the communication between agencies, and vice versa.

D. Recovery

Recovery continues until all operations return to normal or improved levels, or unless terminated by proper incident authority.

VII. Use of Metropolitan Emergency Support Services Inc. Name and Emblem and Lake County Name and Logo

Both parties will coordinate regarding the use of each other's name and logo, and will obtain prior written approval for the use thereof.

VIII. Metropolitan Emergency Support Services Inc Fundraising

LCEMA recognizes that MESS is dependent primarily upon voluntary public financial support to carry out its programs. LCEMA will be sympathetic with the position of MESS in conducting special appeals and campaigns for funds.

IX. Agreement Review and Update

Representatives of MESS and LCEMA will meet annually, on or around the date of this agreement, to evaluate the progress in the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding and to revise and develop new plans, goals or agreements as appropriate.

This agreement shall be effective immediately upon the signature of the last party of the agreement.

It is understood by both parties that at any time this Agreement may be terminated by written notification from either party to the other.

X. Term of Memorandum of Understanding

This MOU shall be effective as of the date it is approved by both parties, and shall be in force for one year. The agreement shall automatically renew, for additional one-year periods, on each anniversary of its original approval, unless terminated by either party, or jointly modified by both parties, in writing.

This Memorandum of Understanding does not create a partnership or a joint venture, and neither party has the authority to bind the other.

_____ (date)

Suzi Schmidt
Chairman
Lake County Board

_____ (date)

Terry B. Cox
Chief of Operations
Metropolitan Emergency
Support Services, Inc.