

Section V Communications and Information Sharing

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- I. **Purpose:** Sharing information with horizontal and vertical response partners supports situational awareness and decision-making at all levels of emergency management. Timely communication of incident information, including impact to the Public Health and Medical System, current and anticipated resource needs, and the capacity to respond are essential to developing common operating objectives.

See Section 1, Introduction, Authorities, for legal authority of the Health Officer.

II. Definitions

- A. **Public Health and Medical System** A system comprised of organizations, both public and private, which uses common operating procedures in order to be prepared to successfully respond to the public health and medical consequences of disasters.

III. Information Sharing

A. Day-to-Day Activities

Information routinely flows between Public Health and Medical System participants, including, but not limited to, health care providers and facilities, laboratories, other local health departments, environmental health departments, emergency medical services agencies, long term care facilities, social service agencies, law enforcement and fire services, county office of emergency services, agricultural commission, and State and Federal agencies. See [Figure 1](#) at the end of this chapter.

Communicable Disease monitoring data and other public health information such as periodic articles from CDPH, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and general medical literature will be posted by way of the California Health Alert Network (CAHAN) for access by local health care and emergency services personnel at will. See section on [CAHAN](#) within this chapter.

B. Unusual Events

Beyond ordinary day-to-day activities, unusual events may occur that do not rise to the level of an emergency, but warrant enhanced situational awareness and notification of partners. See [Figure 2](#) at the end of this chapter. An unusual event may be self-limiting or a precursor to emergency system activation. An unusual event is defined as an incident that significantly impacts or threatens public health, environmental health or medical services.

Definition of Medical and Health Unusual Event:

1. The incident significantly impacts or is anticipated to impact public health or safety
2. The incident disrupts or is anticipated to disrupt the Public Health and Medical System
3. Resources are needed or anticipated to be needed beyond the capabilities of the healthcare facility or facilities involved
4. The incident produces media attention or is politically sensitive
5. The incident leads to a Regional or State request for information

C. Emergency System Activation

Emergency system activation occurs when an incident leads to activation of a Department Operations Center (DOC) and/or Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Emergency system activation should trigger an enhanced level of information sharing to support the needs of the incident.

When an unusual event or emergency system activation occurs, providing incident information to response partners is critical. Prompt notification of response partners is likely to reduce incoming requests for information from multiple sources and allow response partners to anticipate the need for additional resources.

1. Response Partner Communications: Situational reporting provides the foundation for support and coordination of response activities and facilitates resource acquisition. The following described activities involve Medical and Health Situation Reporting and should occur during unusual events and emergency system activations.
2. Situation reporting conveys time-sensitive information to the Tuolumne County Medical Health Operational Area Coordinator (MHOAC). The MHOAC coordinates medical health event response and resources within the operational area and is the conduit to region, State and Federal resources. The Local Health Officer has the authority to request an inventory from healthcare organizations if needed.
 - a. Tuolumne County is a member of mutual aid Region IV. Region IV has an electronic bed management system. The database includes coalition partners to provide for electronic reporting. Links, passwords and instructions are distributed by the PHEP (Public Health Emergency Preparedness) or HPP (Healthcare Preparedness Program) Coordinator.
 - i. Coalition members are requested to make a phone call to the MHOAC at the onset of an incident.
 - ii. An electronic status eReport should be sent as soon as reasonably possible. This electronic report is automated and will alert the Public Health Emergency Preparedness team either by text (phone) or email. The eReport defines essential elements of information (EEI) such as Incident Command initiation, evacuation, structural damage and facility functionality.
 - iii. The eReport can be used for periodic updates during an event and/or when requested by the MHOAC.
 - iv. The eReport is utilized for resource requests to the DOC and/or Region IV.
 - v. A comment fill-in and functional status is viewed by all coalition members to improve information sharing and a shared operational common operating picture among healthcare partners.
See Instructions in Attachment 2

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- b. Redundancy in communications:
The Healthcare Organization Status Report (paper report) is used if the electronic system is unavailable. See Annex 9, Healthcare and Safety Coalition.
 - i. Healthcare organizations should complete the form according to instructions on the back of the form and fax to Public Health at (209) 533-7406 and confirm receipt of the report by calling one of the following:
 - a) Tuolumne County Health Department (209) 533-7401
 - b) Holidays/weekends/nights Duty Officer (209) 533-8055
 - c. The EMSystems hospital communication network is monitored and maintained by the Emergency Medical Services coordinator. This system has been adapted by the OES Region IV EMSAs to facilitate patient distribution during multi-casualty incidents, and inter-hospital communications, including HAvBED, for the purpose of assessing bed and patient care capacities.
- 3. California Health Alert Network (CAHAN): CAHAN is a secure, web-based communication and information system available on a 24/7 basis for distribution of health alerts, dissemination of guidance documents, coordination of disease investigation efforts, preparedness planning, and other activities that strengthen State and local emergency preparedness and response. CAHAN provides a collaborative work environment between local and state health agencies and local providers and partners. Primary CAHAN functions include alerting via multiple communication methods (pager, email, fax, land line, and cell phone); and a role-based directory that allows communication between specific groups.
 - a. All healthcare, safety, and social service partners in the community are encouraged to enroll at least one representative from their organization to participate in CAHAN. Enrollment can be facilitated by contacting the CAHAN Coordinator at the Public Health Department. The PHEP Coordinator is designated as the local CAHAN Coordinator and is responsible for organization and maintenance of the CAHAN database, outreach, and user training.
 - b. CAHAN alerts during unusual events or emergencies may be issued by a CAHAN user with alerting authority by completing the CAHAN Alert Form and submitting for approval by the County Health Officer or designee. The Hospital CAHAN program may send alerts according to their policies and procedures and do not require approval by the Health Officer. CAHAN alerts should only be sent in support of public health and safety.
- 4. Horizontal Communications
 - a. When a Public Health Department Operations Center (DOC) has been activated, the County Health Officer will contact County OES. A County OES representative is invited to participate in Health Department DOC operations.

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- b. Public Health Staff
 - i. The Health Officer or a duty officer are on call for the Health Department 24/7. The Health Officer or a Public Health Manager are available by cell phone or land line for on-call coverage at all hours.
 - ii. The Health Department utilizes a phone tree to activate the department’s emergency response activities 24/7. The TCHD Emergency Phone Contact List is available in the Resource Documents and is password protected.
- c. Disaster Healthcare Volunteers (DHV): The Disaster Healthcare Volunteers program is utilized when an event necessitates the need for local volunteer resources. The DHV program is a statewide volunteer registration system, whereby local volunteers can register and is coordinated locally by the EMS and PHEP Coordinators.
See Annex 10, Volunteer Management.

5. Vertical Communications

- a. Upon activation of a DOC or EOC, the MHOAC submits a Situational Report (SitRep) to the Regional Disaster Medical Health Coordinator (RDMHC) and to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and/or Emergency Medical Services Authority. The RDMHC and/or CDPH and EMA will respond and may alert Federal emergency response agencies according to *California Public Health and Medical Emergency Operations guidelines*. See Figure 3 at the end of this chapter and the Section 2, The 17 Essential Functions of the MHOAC Program.

6. Technological Equipment: Redundancy of communications systems provides assurance that linkages would be maintained even in the event of landline failure. See Contact Information document in the HEPReP Resource documents.

- a. The Public Health Radio System: Public Health maintains 24 UHF handheld radios to utilize in the event of emergency loss of landline communications. The Public Health Radio System shall be utilized between Incident Command personnel and healthcare partners. Due to the open and mountainous terrain of the county, higher frequency systems are less practical. One UHF repeater is installed. UHF Repeaters are utilized to maximize reception due to the nature of the geography/terrain within the operational area. Frequencies:

Channel	Receive Frequency	Transmit Frequency	Operating Mode	Name	Tone Mode	CTCSS	Rx CTCSS	Tx Power	Comment
1	453.1000	458.1000	FM Narrow	TC PH	T Sql	146.2 Hz	146.2 Hz	High	TC Public Health Repeated
2	453.1000	453.1000	FM Narrow	TC PH	T Sql	146.2 Hz	146.2 Hz	High	TC Public Health Simplex

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- b. Satellite Phones: The Health Department maintains 2 active-service satellite phones with 4 additional sets available for activation.
- c. County OES Radios: The County OES retains 28 mobile Motorola 5-watt VHS frequency radios to utilize in the event of landline failure.
- d. The county maintains a landline network telephone system with interagency extensions. The County Information Technology (IT) Department is responsible for maintenance of this system.
- e. Internet connections and the county computer network are serviced by the County IT Department. This department provides on-call coverage 24/7. See Resources document; Contact Information.
- f. Paging services are available through the Sheriff's Department Dispatch, or through private exchange services for on-call and supervising agency personnel.
- g. Amateur radio equipment is utilized through the local Amateur Radio Group in the event that it is necessary to expand standard communications capability.

D. Public Information-Risk Communication Plan

The purpose of the Tuolumne County Health Department Risk Communication Plan is to establish the framework for providing important public health guidance and information on protective measures to the public and to partnering agencies in response to an emergency or crisis event. See Annex 7, Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication Plan.

IV. Roles and Responsibilities, Table 1

Role	Responsibilities
MHOAC (Medical Health Operational Area Coordinator)	1. Notify the RDMHC Program in an unusual event or upon activation of a DOC/EOC 2. Notify the CDPH and/or EMSA Duty Officer programs, either directly or through the RDMHC Program. 3. See Section 2, Public Health Response, MHOAC Functions
Health Officer	1. Authorize any information/media to be released 2. Maintain availability to the PIO for public communications 3. Act as Incident Commander for any medical health emergency 4. Review all situation reports submitted by healthcare organizations 5. While the PIO provides coordination of public communications, it is the responsibility of the Health Officer/Incident Commander to maintain avenues of communication with his or her counterpart in Law Enforcement
Director of Public Health	1. May provide and authorize the release of public statements in the absence of the Health Officer, upon designation by the Health Officer 2. Supervise maintenance of radios retained by Public Health.
PIO (Public Information Officer)	1. Responsible for developing and releasing information about an incident to the news media, to incident personnel, and to other appropriate agencies and organizations, upon approval of the

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Role	Responsibilities
	<p>Incident Commander and when indicated, in collaboration with the County OES PIO. See Annex 7, Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication Plan for more details</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Oversee arrangement to assure that communications devices are accessible and functional
EMS Coordinator	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordinate ambulance and first responder radio communications through LEMSA Base Station QA process 2. Monitor the EMSystems hospital communication network 3. Prepare and provide emergency contact numbers for members of the local emergency response agencies
Law Enforcement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coordinate with Public Health Incident Command on release of information and instructions to the public
Tuolumne County Information Technology Department	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide support of hardware and software system allowing for internet connections with distant resources such as CDPH, CDC, CAHAN, etc. 2. Facilitate the posting of information to the County website
Healthcare Partner Infectious Disease Coordinators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain communications with the DOC/MHOAC to report any infectious disease outbreak or contamination of the hospital facility with an infectious agent
Hospital Disaster Coordinator	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Manage the EMSystems hospital data hardware & software
Emergency Room Mobile Intensive Care Nurse (MICN) or RN	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Process queries to assist with management of multi-casualty incidents that exceed the capacity of local hospital resources

Attachment 1: Figures, Information Flow

Figure 1. Information Flow during Day-to Day Activities

←-----→ Information flow in compliance with regulatory, statutory, and program requirements.

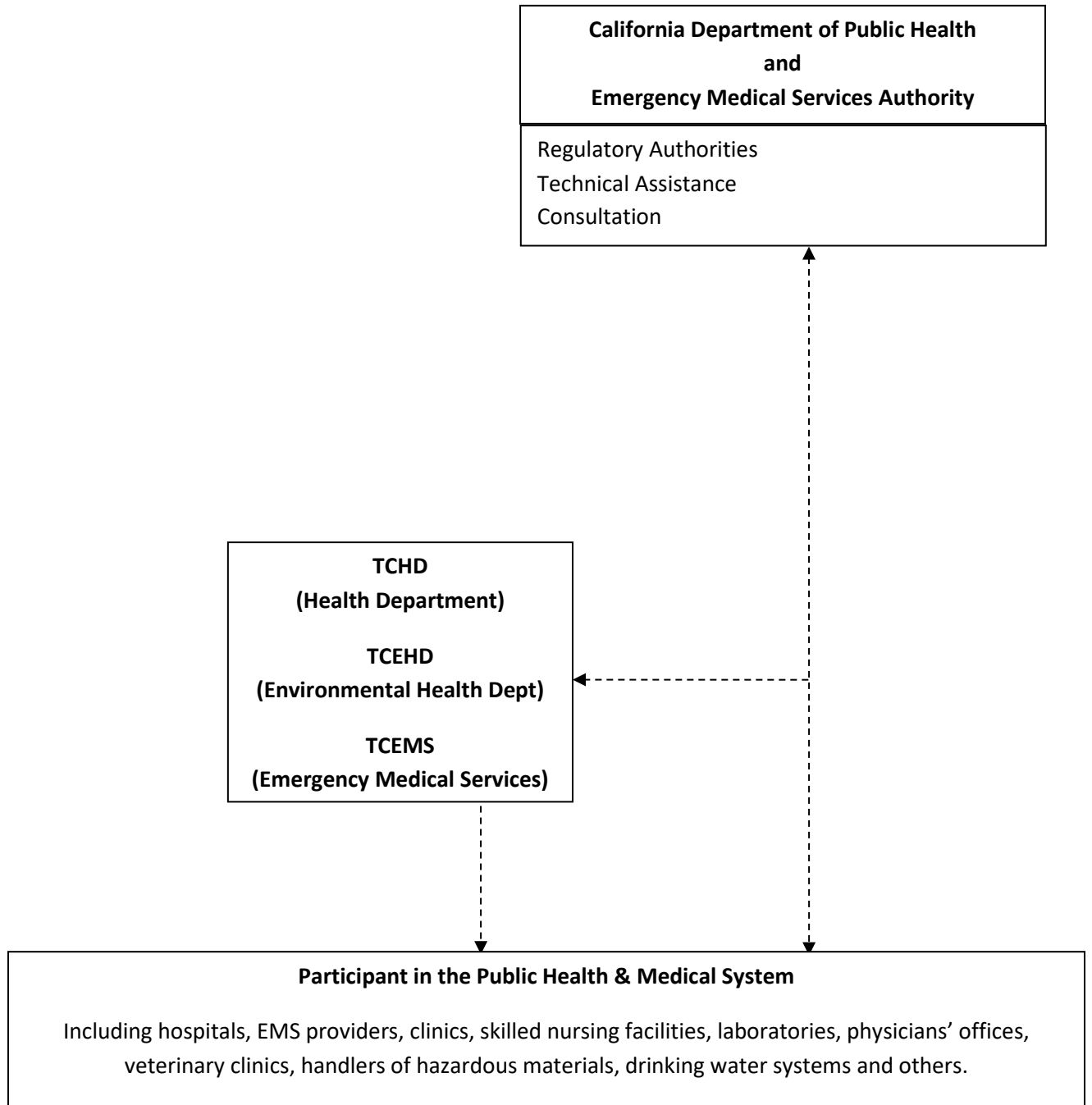
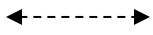


Figure 2.

Information Flow during Unusual Events



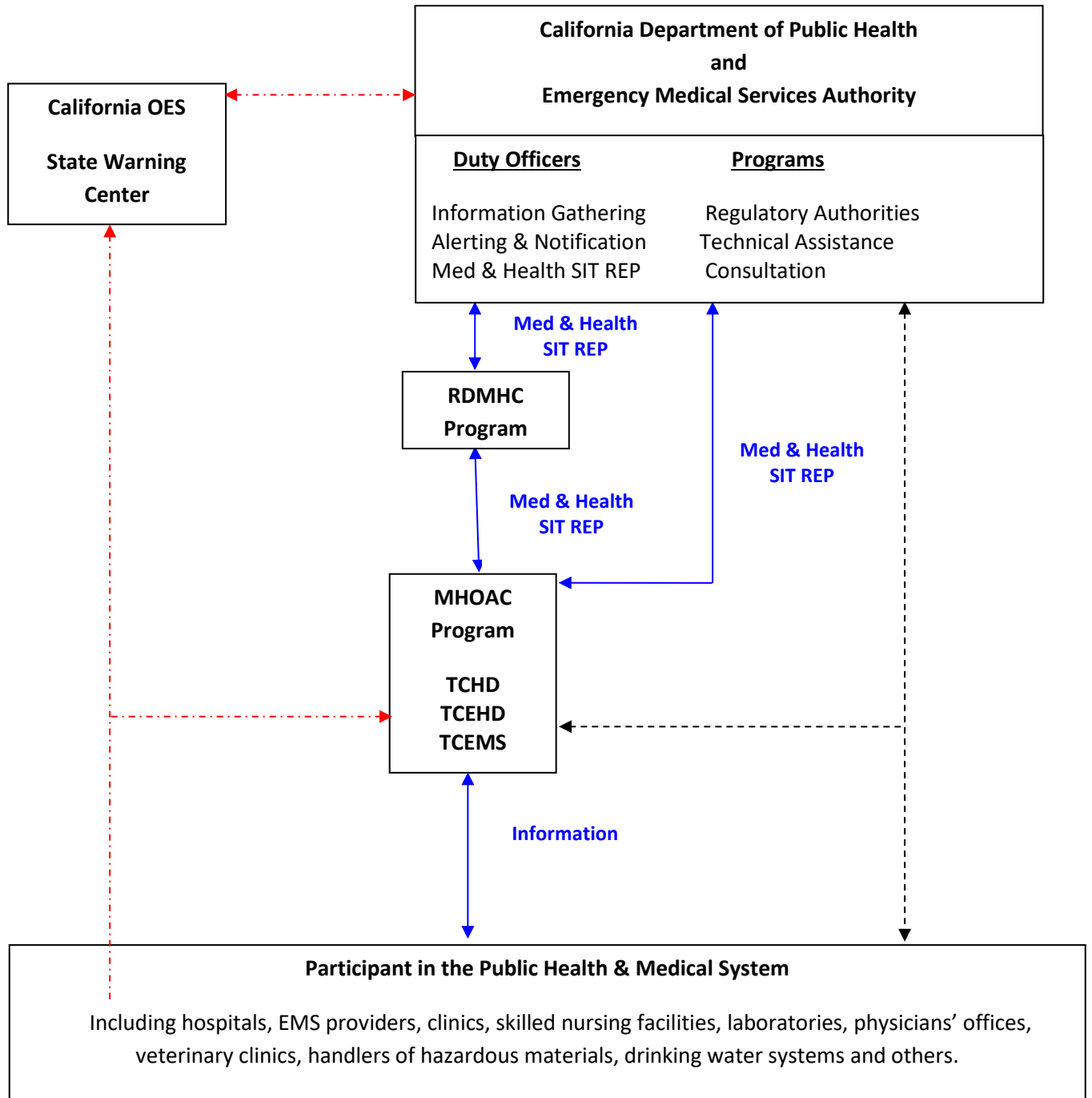
Information flow in compliance with regulatory, statutory, and program requirements.



Information flow including notification and medical and health situation reporting.



Direct notification between entities and the California OES State Warning Center in compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements (e.g., HazMat spills and releases).



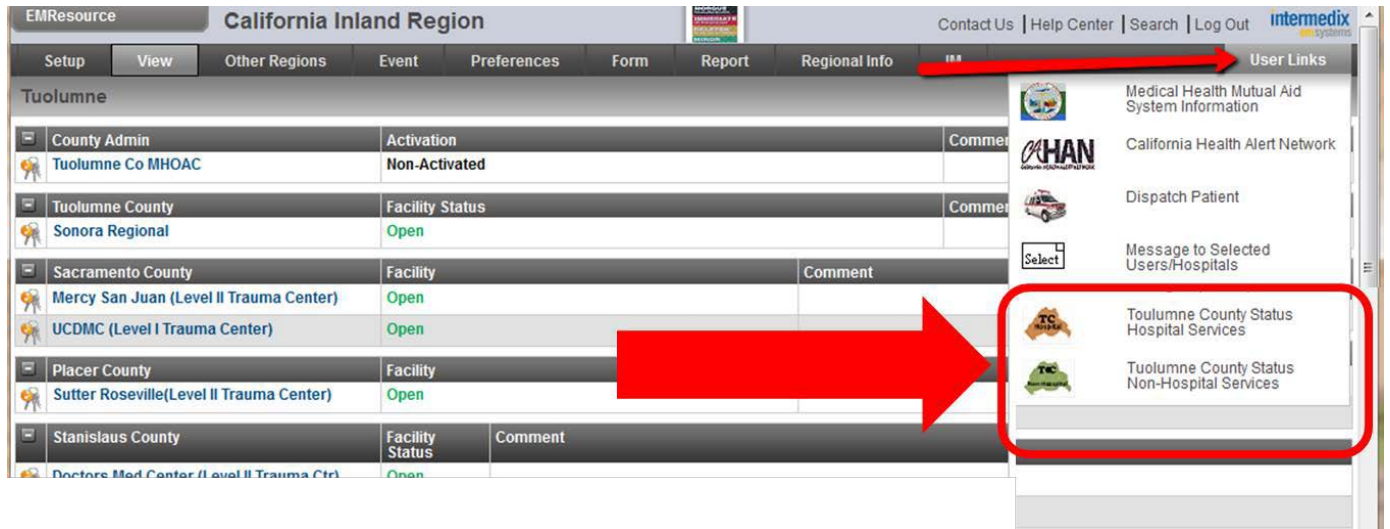
Attachment 2: Status eReport Instructions

Instructions for Tuolumne County
Status eReport for Hospital and Non-Hospital

1. Log onto the EMResource website <https://emresource.juware.com/login>
Practice/Demo Site is: <https://emresource.demo.juware.com/login>
2. Enter your Username and Password (Public Health can get this for you)



3. Click on the User Links and select the applicable facility report icon:
(Hospital or Non-hospital) from the drop down menus.
Note: you will only see the icons for the forms that you have permission to submit.



Note: Be sure your computer is set to allow popups from EMSystems so the form will open.

Tuolumne County EMResource Healthcare Facility Status Report Instructions

4. Complete the appropriate status report template

Tuolumne County Status Hospital Services

Complete and submit.

1. Date *	<input type="text" value="mm/dd/yyyy"/>
2. Time (use 24 hour clock) *	<input type="text"/>
3. Name of Incident *	<input type="text"/>
4. description of event	<input style="height: 20px;" type="text"/>
5. Event Type *	Choose from... <input type="button" value="v"/>
6. Facility Name *	Choose from... <small>Choose all that fit - hold down shift key to select more than one</small> All Acute SNF/TCU Home Health/Hospice/DME Prompt Care Forest Rd. Health and Wellness Clinic Services - indicate name in #7
7. Clinic Service	<input type="text"/>
8. Report Type *	Choose from... <input type="button" value="v"/>
9. Prognosis *	Choose from... <input type="button" value="v"/>
10. Primary Contact Name *	<input type="text"/>
11. Contact Phone *	<input type="text"/>
12. Fax	<input type="text"/>
13. Cell	<input type="text"/>
14. Contact email	<input type="text"/>
15. Alternate Contact	<input type="text"/>
16. other alternate contact information	<input type="text"/>
17. Is HCC Activated *	Choose from... <input type="button" value="v"/>
18. Contact for HCC	<input type="text"/>

Patient (Tuolumne County Status Hospital Services Form)

Indicate number of untreated immediate, delayed, and minor patients, as well as any treated minor patients on hand.

	Number
Untreated-Immed	<input type="text"/>
Untreated-Delay	<input type="text"/>
Untreated-Minor	<input type="text"/>
Treated-Minor	<input type="text"/>

Patients, Clients or Staff injured

20. Other *

21. Incident Type *

22. Are you evacuating? *

23. Resources Needed

24. Resources Available

Tuolumne County Status Non-Hospital Services

Complete the following form and submit to MHOAC.

1. Date *	<input type="text" value="mm/dd/yyyy"/>
2. Time - use 24 hour clock *	<input type="text"/>
3. Name of incident *	<input type="text"/>
4. Description of event	<input style="height: 20px;" type="text"/>
5. Event Type *	Choose from... <input type="button" value="v"/>
6. Name of Clinic *	Choose from... <input type="button" value="v"/>
7. Report Type *	Choose from... <input type="button" value="v"/>
8. Pronosis *	Choose from... <input type="button" value="v"/>
9. Primary Contact Name *	<input type="text"/>
10. Contact Phone *	<input type="text"/>
11. Fax	<input type="text"/>
12. Cell	<input type="text"/>
13. Contact email	<input type="text"/>
14. Alternate Contact	<input type="text"/>
15. Other alternate contact info	<input type="text"/>
16. Have you initiated an Incident Command Center *	Choose from... <input type="button" value="v"/>
17. Contact for Incident Command	<input type="text"/>
18. Estimate of patients, clients or staff ill or injured	<input type="text" value="1"/>
19. other info	<input type="text"/>
20. Incident Type *	Choose from... <input type="button" value="v"/>
21. Are you evacuating	Choose from... <input type="button" value="v"/>
22. Overall Facility Status *	Choose from... <input type="button" value="v"/>
23. Resources needed	<input style="height: 20px;" type="text"/>
24. Resources Available	<input style="height: 20px;" type="text"/>

5. Click on the Submit Form button located at the bottom of the form.



6. After you have submitted the form, the system will send it to the MHOAC for processing. Follow up with a phone call to the MHOAC to ensure situation report was received.

Main Page

Application Menu

Click on facility name for resource detail

Click on key icon to update facility status. Keys indicate user has update rights.

Click on Facility Status to modify or update

Triangle icon indicates notes. Hover over for details.

EMResource California Inland Region Contact Us | Help Center | Search | Log Out **intermedix** systems

View Other Regions Event Preferences Form Report Regional Info IM User Links

Merced print refresh

Merced County	Facility Status	Comment	Last Update
Memorial Hospital Los Banos	Advisory		07 Feb 08:23
Merced Mercy Merced Medical Center	Advisory		07 Feb 08:38
Mariposa County	Facility Status	Comment	Last Update
John C. Fremont	Advisory	CT Down	07 Feb 08:19
Yosemite Medical Clinic	Open		31 Dec 07:35
Stanislaus County	Facility Status	Comment	
Doctors Med Center (Level II Trauma Ctr)	Open		
Emanuel Med Center	Open	HOLDING 7 A	
Kaiser Permanente Modesto	Open		
Memorial Med Center (Level II Trauma Ctr)	Open		
Oak Valley Hospital District	Open	no ortho, no ne	
Stanislaus Control	Open		
Stanislaus Level II TC Destination	Open	Trauma Dest	
San Joaquin County	Facility Status	Comment	
Dameron Hospital		CT Down, Do	
Doctors Hospital of Manteca			07 Feb 08:03
Kaiser Hospital Manteca			07 Feb 08:05
Lodi Memorial			07 Feb 08:02
San Joaquin General			07 Feb 08:03
St. Josephs Med Center			07 Feb 08:02
Sutter Tracy Community			06 Feb 08:02

Comment
CT Down

Last Update: 07 Feb 08:19
Updated By: John C. Fremont

Attachment 3: HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATION (HCO) SITUATION REPORT (SITREP)/RESOURCE REQUEST FORM

Agency: _____ Date: _____

Reporter(s): _____

Complete **preferred** communication method:

Phone: _____ FAX: _____ E-mail _____

Report type:	<input type="checkbox"/> ADVISORY: No Action Required	<input type="checkbox"/> ALERT: Assistance may be needed, See Critical Issues
	<input type="checkbox"/> INITIAL REPORT	<input type="checkbox"/> UPDATED REPORT
		<input type="checkbox"/> FINAL REPORT

Name of Incident:	CURRENT STATUS: <input type="checkbox"/> NO CHANGE <input type="checkbox"/> IMPROVING <input type="checkbox"/> WORSENING
NATURE OF INCIDENT (describe the threat, risk or source of operational problems facing your facility):	
	Incident Type: Estimate number of population affected at your facility:

CRITICAL ISSUES (nearly exhausted or exhausted resources, specific health threat, functional status of utilities, etc):

RESOURCE REQUEST (request for support, such as equipment, supplies, volunteers or other resources):

OPERATIONAL STATUS		
<input type="checkbox"/> GREEN - Normal Operations: Situation Resolved	<input type="checkbox"/> ORANGE - SOME Assistance Required	<input type="checkbox"/> BLACK - NOT OPERATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> YELLOW - Under Control: NO Assistance Needed	<input type="checkbox"/> RED - SIGNIFICANT Assistance Required	<input type="checkbox"/> GREY - Unknown Conducting Assessments

System Function Specific Status - check box only if necessary						(If other than green, provide brief comment)
Drinking Water	<input type="checkbox"/> Green	<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow	<input type="checkbox"/> Orange	<input type="checkbox"/> Red	<input type="checkbox"/> Black	_____
Food Safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Green	<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow	<input type="checkbox"/> Orange	<input type="checkbox"/> Red	<input type="checkbox"/> Black	_____
Health Haz-Mat/Fumes	<input type="checkbox"/> Green	<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow	<input type="checkbox"/> Orange	<input type="checkbox"/> Red	<input type="checkbox"/> Black	_____
Liquid/Solid Waste Disposal	<input type="checkbox"/> Green	<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow	<input type="checkbox"/> Orange	<input type="checkbox"/> Red	<input type="checkbox"/> Black	_____
Structural Safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Green	<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow	<input type="checkbox"/> Orange	<input type="checkbox"/> Red	<input type="checkbox"/> Black	_____
Power Outage/HVAC	<input type="checkbox"/> Green	<input type="checkbox"/> Yellow	<input type="checkbox"/> Orange	<input type="checkbox"/> Red	<input type="checkbox"/> Black	_____

This report can be completed, printed and faxed (209) 533-7406. Please confirm report received by calling 533-7401 or 533-8055

PROCEDURE FOR COMPLETING HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATION SITUATION REPORT

The Medical Health Operational Area Coordinator (*MHOAC*) is the local jurisdictional access point for assistance from California Emergency Medical Services Authority Region IV, and then if needed, to the State and Federal Government. This report is to be used to convey time-sensitive information to the Tuolumne County MHOAC in the event of an urgent or emergent event at local healthcare facilities and organizations. The Medical Health Officer Area Coordinator (MHOAC) coordinates medical health resources within the operational area and is the conduit to the region, State and Federal resources. The Local Health Officer has the authority to request an inventory from healthcare organizations if needed.

1. This report is **NOT** used for day-to-day reporting, such as mandatory communicable disease reports. For such events the usual reporting mechanisms should be utilized.
2. This report **IS** to be used for *Medical and Health Unusual Events* and if an *Emergency System Activation* occurs. Definition of *Medical and Health Unusual Event*:
 - a. The incident significantly impacts or is anticipated to impact public health or safety
 - b. The incident disrupts or is anticipated to disrupt the Public Health and Medical **system**
 - c. Resources are needed or anticipated to be needed beyond the capabilities of the healthcare facility or facilities involved
 - d. The incident produces media attention or is politically sensitive
 - e. The incident leads to a Regional or State request for information

Definition of *Emergency System Activation*:

- a. *Emergency System Activation* occurs when a Public Health Department or a healthcare organization activates its Department Operation Centers (DOCs), Emergency Operation Centers (EOCs) or the equivalent(s). (1)
3. Complete this report as follows:
 - a. Complete identifying data including **date and time** of report and **preferred method of communication**
 - b. Check if **Advisory** (simply informational) or **Alert** (potential need for assistance exists)
 - c. Check if **initial, update or final report**.
 - d. Identify the **incident name**, such as "Rim Fire"
 - e. Identify the number of people involved and the nature of the incident, such as "Air Quality compromised"
 - f. Indicate whether conditions are improving, staying the same or getting worse in the '**Current Status**' check box, e. g., briefly describe the event under **Critical Issues**. If a natural disaster, such as a severe winter storm, has affected infrastructure, include that information.
 - h. Under **Resource Request**, if resources are lacking, describe what you need, how many and if you have transport or need delivery.
 - i. Under **Operational Status**, use **color coded boxes** to report OVERALL operational status.
 - j. Under **Status of Specific Systems**, indicate using the **same color code as above** whether any of the listed systems are affected.
 - k. Fax form to Public Health at 209-533-7406 and confirm receipt of the report by calling one of the following:

Tuolumne County Health Department (TCHD): 209-533-7401

Holidays/weekends/nights Duty Officer: 209-533-8055

(1)- Source: EOM 2011, (Emergency Operations Manual, CDPH, EMSA)