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**Subject:** Regional Emergency Social Services Plan  
**Report to:** Public Health and Social Services Committee  
**Report date:** Tuesday, May 12, 2020

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## **Recommendations**

1. That this report **BE RECEIVED** for information.

## **Key Facts**

- Niagara Region is legislated by the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, 1990, to develop and implement an Emergency Management Program which includes an Emergency Response Plan and procedures for the safety or evacuation of persons affected by an incident or emergency event.
- Niagara Region's Community Services Department is responsible for planning, leading, coordinating and managing the delivery of emergency social services (ESS) through the Regional Emergency Social Services Plan – which serves as Annex D to the Niagara Region Emergency Management Plan.
- The Regional Emergency Social Services Plan and its sub-plans, provides a service delivery framework which outlines the response Niagara Region shall provide to meet the essential needs of people during and following an emergency.
- The delivery of ESS is provided through partnerships with first responders, local area municipalities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), other Regional departments and community partners.
- The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information regarding an update to the Regional Emergency Social Services Plan and its sub-plans, local community partners involved in ESS delivery, and current capacity and training within Community Services.

## **Financial Considerations**

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. Resources required to plan for the delivery of emergency social services are accommodated within the 2020 Community Services Department operating budget.

## Analysis

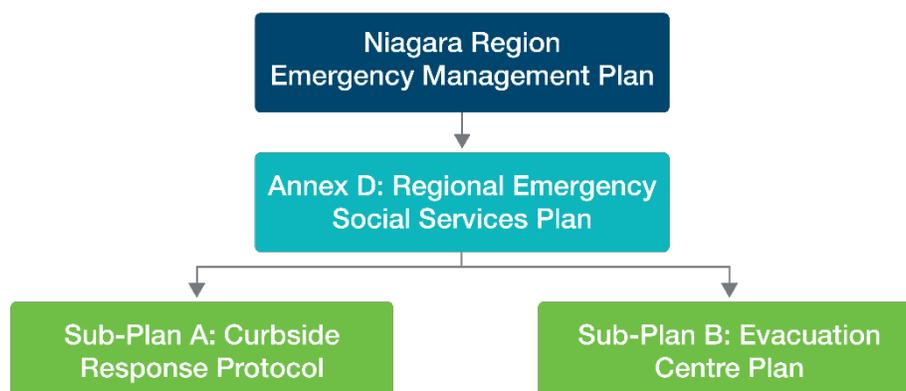
The role of the Community Services Department is to plan, lead, coordinate and manage the delivery of ESS to those affected by a small or large scale incident in Niagara. Emergency social services consist of both standard and specialized services.

- Standard services: reception and information; registration and inquiry; family reunification; food; clothing; lodging; and, personal services.
- Specialized services: first aid; psychosocial support; financial assessment; culturally specific and language services; vulnerable people and unattended children; public health (i.e. infection, disease prevention and control); animal care; and, recreation.

## ESS Plan and Sub-Plans

To support the Regional Emergency Social Services Plan (Appendix 1), additional plans and procedures exist that provide more detailed information on how Regional and community partners collaborate and respond within different service delivery settings to provide emergency social services. The Region's ESS Plan consists of two sub-plans (Appendix 2, 3) and standard operating procedures (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Emergency Social Services Plan and Sub-Plans



There are a number of ways to deliver ESS to those affected and in need. Each type of response may be considered in relation to the nature and scale of the incident, preparedness of households, vulnerability of those affected, anticipated level of displacement, and proximity to community resources (rural or urban environments). For those who are not displaced, ESS may be provided through a door-to-door response to support those sheltering in place. In the event of displacement, ESS may be provided through a 'curbside' response and/or at an evacuation centre.

It is important to note that there may be incidents where all three responses are used at different points of time or simultaneously (e.g. delivering a curbside response as an evacuation centre is being prepared to open), depending on the population and as the incident evolves or unfolds (e.g. affecting a growing number of people over a period of time).

### **Sub-Plan A: Curbside Response Protocol**

If the on-scene Incident Command determines a safe area exists to support the ESS needs of those affected, a curbside response may be appropriate. A curbside response can occur on busses, the sidewalk or street, at a nearby park, etc. Should the level of demand for service outgrow the designated safe area, or if there is not a safe and appropriate area for those affected to gather / congregate, then a reception / evacuation centre may be established. A curbside response may also be used while an evacuation centre is being established.

### **Sub-Plan B: Evacuation Centre**

In the event of a large scale incident where people are unable to shelter-in-place and a curbside response is not appropriate or does not meet the demand for service, then the activation and opening of an evacuation centre(s) may occur. Niagara Region, in collaboration with local area municipalities, have designated a number of facilities to be used as evacuation centres (typically community centres, arenas, other municipally owned venues, or high schools).

The evacuation centre may be used to receive people after an evacuation (e.g. of an apartment building or neighbourhood). As a base of operations for ESS delivery, the evacuation centre serves as a source of public information and a resource centre over the course of the emergency until evacuees can return home or find appropriate lodging. The provision of services within the centre is to meet the immediate needs of those displaced, and therefore, not every form of emergency social service will necessarily be provided in each emergency event.

### **Community Partnerships**

Niagara Region's Community Services Department is responsible for coordinating emergency social services in collaboration with local municipalities and external providers, such as non-profit organizations, that provide a specific service to evacuees during an emergency. Local organizations involved in the delivery of emergency social services include:

- Canadian Red Cross
- The Salvation Army – St. Catharines
- St. John Ambulance: Niagara Region Branch and Niagara Falls Branch
- Animal Protection and Care Agencies: Fort Erie SPCA, Lincoln County Humane Society, and Niagara SPCA & Humane Society
- Victim Services Niagara
- INCommunities

Additional partnerships with the Pharmacists' Association of Niagara, Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant (HNHB) Home and Community Care Support Services (formerly the HNHB Local Health Integration Network Home & Community Care) and Niagara Health, are being developed to support non-acute medical needs of evacuees presenting at evacuation centres.

Community Services collaborates with the Public Health and Emergency Management Services Department, specifically the Environmental Health and Mental Health divisions, to ensure respectively, food safety and the provision of psychosocial support to individuals in an evacuation centre.

### **Capacity & Training**

On February 19, 2019, Council approved Regional staff to execute an agreement with the Canadian Red Cross that seeks to build capacity for the provision of emergency social services within the Region and ensures that the desired level of service would be available in the event of an emergency. Capacity-building and preparedness activities under the agreement include participation in emergency exercises, assessments of facilities for evacuation centres, training activities, recruitment of volunteers, pre-positioning of emergency sheltering supplies and the delivery of personal preparedness workshops.

The Community Services Department has established an internal Emergency Social Services Team, comprised of 41 staff trained to support the provision of ESS during an incident requiring the activation of an evacuation centre. If called upon, the Community Services Department ESS Team will acknowledge and respond to a notification as soon as possible, and will deploy within two hours of notification to the assigned location of the evacuation centre.

In 2020, Community Services plans to explore opportunities to design and conduct a human services-based emergency exercise to test the procedures and processes contained in the updated ESS Plan.

## **Alternatives Reviewed**

No alternatives reviewed.

## **Relationship to Council Strategic Priorities**

Healthy and Vibrant Community - 2.1 Enhance Community Wellbeing

## **Other Pertinent Reports**

- COM 05-2019: Emergency Social Services – Canadian Red Cross Agreement

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*This report was prepared in consultation with Cathy Cousins, Director, Homelessness Services and Community Engagement, and reviewed by Patricia Martel, Emergency Management Program Specialist.*

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 Emergency Social Services Plan
- Appendix 2 Sub-plan A: Curbside Response Protocol
- Appendix 3 Sub-plan B: Evacuation Centre

Annex D of Niagara Region Emergency Management Plan

# EMERGENCY SOCIAL SERVICES PLAN



# Amendment Procedure

This Plan will be reviewed annually. Updates and revisions must be approved by the Commissioner of Community Services, unless revisions are related to ordinary maintenance such as updating contact information, title changes or resource information.

It is the responsibility of each party named within this Plan to notify the Community Services Department Homelessness and Emergency Services Advisor of any administrative changes or revisions that may result in a change to this Plan or its appendices.

Please refer to Appendix A: Amendment Table.

## Testing Procedure

An annual regional emergency simulation exercise shall be conducted in order to test the overall effectiveness of the Niagara Region Emergency Management Plan, in which Community Services Department staff will participate. Debriefing and lessons learned from such exercises may also inform recommendations to be incorporated into this Plan.

## Plan Distribution

The Community Services Department Homelessness and Emergency Services Advisor will distribute a new version directly to all holders via email as updates are made. The Plan will also be available in the M: Drive under the HSCE folder. Each Plan holder will be responsible for maintaining the most current version.

## Emergency Contact Information

Specific contact and resource information referred to in this document is contained in a series of confidential documents within the Community Services Department and Regional contact lists that are not intended for widespread distribution. The following contact lists will be emailed to those who require them:

- Community Services Department Emergency Social Services Team confidential contact list
- Community Services Department Emergency Social Services community partners confidential contact list

### Niagara Region Community Services Contact Information

#### Director, Homelessness Services and Community Engagement

905-980-6000 ext. 3807

#### Manager, Homelessness Services

905-980-6000 ext. 3863

#### Homelessness and Emergency Services Advisor

905-980-6000 ext. 3821

#### Manager, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities

905-980-6000 ext. 6089

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# 1.0 Introduction

The Region's Community Services Department leads a collaborative effort together with internal and external stakeholders to provide emergency social services to people affected by an incident/emergency event in Niagara. The Emergency Social Services Plan serves as Annex D to the Niagara Region Emergency Management Plan and establishes a service delivery framework for the provision of emergency social services.

## 1.1 Scope

This Plan outlines the response the Region shall provide to meet the essential needs of people during and following an emergency until they may re-establish themselves. The role of the Community Services Department is to plan, lead, coordinate and manage the delivery of emergency social services to those affected by a small or large scale incident in Niagara. The delivery of emergency social services is provided through partnerships with First Responders, Local Area Municipalities, non-governmental organizations, other Regional departments and community partners.

### 1.1.1 Legislative Authority

The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, 1990 ('EMCPA') defines an "emergency" as a situation or an impending situation that constitutes a danger of major proportions that could result in serious harm to persons or substantial damage to property and that is caused by the forces of nature, disease or other health risk, an accident or an act whether intentional or otherwise. In Ontario, the EMCPA also establishes the legislative framework under which municipalities respond to emergencies by delivering emergency social services.

## 1.2 Emergency Social Services

Emergency social services consists of both standard and specialized services.

### 1.2.1 Standard Services

- Reception and Information
- Registration and Inquiry/Family Reunification
- Food
- Clothing
- Lodging
- Personal Services

### 1.2.2 Specialized Services

- First Aid
- Psychosocial Support
- Financial Assessment
- Culturally-Specific and Language Services
- Vulnerable People and Unattended Children
- Public Health (e.g. infection, disease prevention and control)
- Animal Care
- Recreation

## 1.3 Types of Emergency Social Services Response Settings

There are a number of ways to deliver emergency social services to those affected and in need. Each type of response may be considered in relation to the nature and scale of the incident, preparedness of households, vulnerability of those affected, anticipated level of displacement, and proximity to community resources (rural or urban environments). For those who are not displaced, emergency social services may be provided through a door-to-door response to support those sheltering in place. In the event of displacement, emergency social services may be provided through a curbside response or at a temporary location (e.g. evacuation centre). It is important to note that there may be incidents where all three responses are used at different points

of time or simultaneously (e.g. deliver curbside response as an evacuation centre is being prepared to open), depending on the population and as the incident evolves or unfolds (e.g. affecting a growing number of people over a period of time).

**It is important to note that an evacuation centre may be activated to support with emergency social services delivery (e.g. reception and information services) in situations where off-site lodging is available to accommodate those displaced (also referred to as ‘reception centres’). In other instances, an evacuation centre may be activated and may provide on-site lodging to evacuees.**

### 1.3.1 Shelter-in-Place

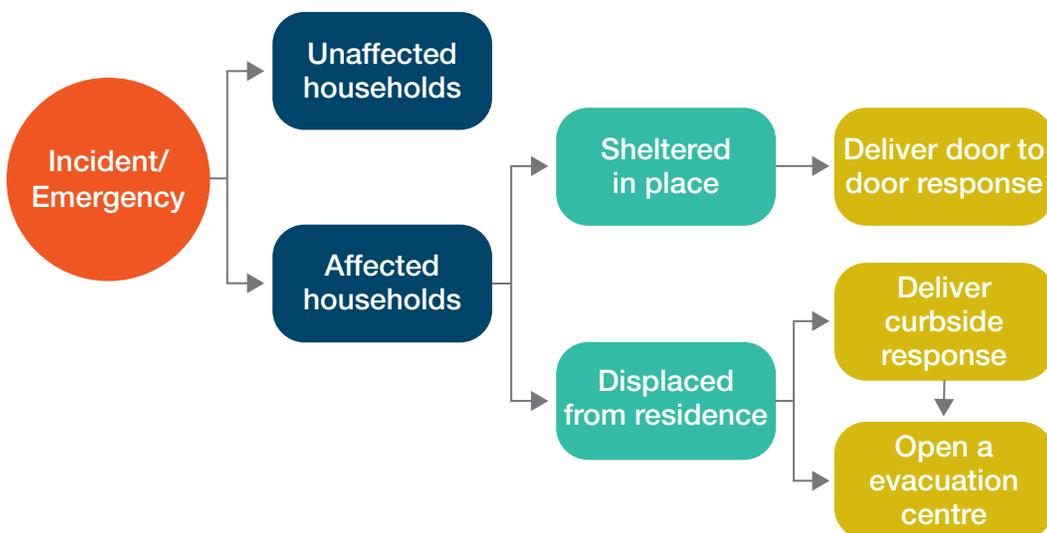
People who are able to or may be required to shelter-in-place within their homes may still need emergency social services to meet their essential needs.

#### 1.3.1.1. Door-to-Door Response (Wellness Checks)

A door-to-door response through the use of wellness checks may support the identification of vulnerable populations and/or those who require additional supports to sustain their safety and well-being while remaining at home. The decision to conduct wellness checks will be made by the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member (with the primary Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member being the Commissioner of Community Services) in consultation with, but not limited to, the following stakeholders:

- Niagara Region Community Services Department Senior Leadership Team
- Niagara Regional Police Service
- Niagara Region Public Works Department
- Niagara Region Public Health Department
  - Niagara Region Emergency Management
- Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network (HNHB LHIN) - Home and Community Care
- Local Area Municipality(s) Community Emergency Management Coordinator(s)

**Figure 1: Emergency Social Services Responses**



Wellness checks may be performed by Regional field staff, First Responders, the Canadian Red Cross, St. John Ambulance and/or other non-government organizations. Before conducting wellness checks, the geographic area to be covered must be safe, well defined, and information collected or disseminated must be reviewed by the appropriate department in collaboration with the Emergency Information Officer and affected Local Area Municipality(s).

The Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member is responsible for acting as the point of contact, or designating a Community Services Department emergency social services team staff member as the point of contact, for the field team conducting wellness checks to monitor their progress and resource needs. If found eligible, households may receive standard emergency social services. This could include support to access food, income assistance, pet supplies, etc. Households may also require specialized services as required, such as home care provided through Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network (HNHB LHIN) Home and Community Care – Niagara Branch.

## **1.3.2 Displacement**

Should people be displaced, services may be provided in a safe area outside of the incident site either at the curbside or at an evacuation centre.

### **1.3.2.1 Curbside Response**

If the on-site Incident Command (Fire, Police or EMS) determines a safe area exists to support the emergency social services needs of those affected, a curbside response may be appropriate. A curbside response can occur on buses, on the sidewalk or street, at a nearby park, etc. Should the level of demand for service outgrow the designated safe area, or if there is not a safe and appropriate area for those affected to gather/congregate, then an evacuation centre may be established. A curbside response may also be used while an evacuation centre is being established.

### **1.3.2.2 Evacuation Centre**

In the event of a large scale incident where people are unable to shelter-in-place and a curbside response is not appropriate or does not meet the demand for service, then the activation and opening of an evacuation centre(s) may occur. The Region in collaboration with Local Area Municipalities have designated a number of facilities to be used as evacuation centres (typically community centres, arenas, other municipally-owned venues, or high schools).

The evacuation centre may be used to receive people after an evacuation (e.g. of an apartment building or neighbourhood). As a base of operations for emergency social services delivery, the evacuation centre serves as a source of public information and a resource centre over the course of the emergency until evacuees can return home or find appropriate lodging. The provision of services within the centre is to meet the immediate needs of those displaced, and therefore not every form of emergency social service will necessarily be provided in each emergency event.

## 2.0 Plans and Procedures

To support the Region's Emergency Social Services Plan, a number of additional plans and procedures exist that provide more detailed information on how Regional and community partners collaborate and respond within different service delivery settings to provide emergency social services. The Region's Emergency Social Services Plan consists of two sub-plans and standard operating procedures.

### 2.1 Sub-Plan A: Curbside Response Protocol

The Curbside Response Protocol outlines the steps required to identify, coordinate and provide emergency social services to people in Niagara who are impacted by an incident. The Protocol can be activated for small scale (25 people or less impacted) and large scale (more than 25 people) incidents in Niagara. Broadly, there are three (3) steps involved in activating and providing curbside response.

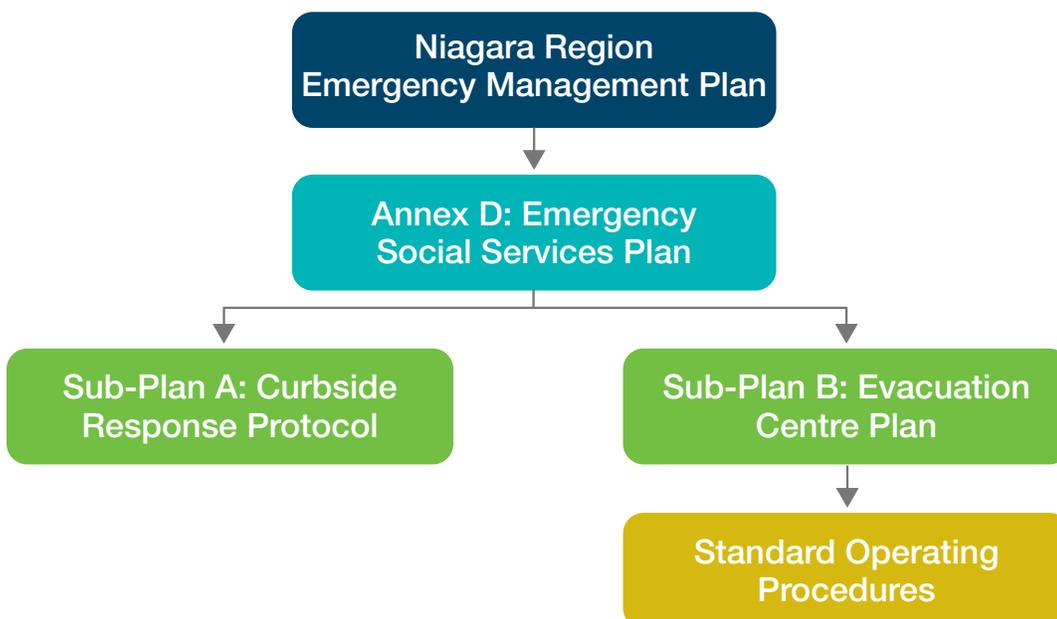
**Step 1:** The on-site Incident Command (Fire, Police or EMS) is responsible for identifying the number of people that require emergency social services and activating the Protocol by calling

the Canadian Red Cross. The Incident Command may request local area municipal public transit or Niagara Specialized Transit support to provide buses for temporary shelter from the elements or transportation to another site.

**Step 2:** The Canadian Red Cross will document the information provided by the on-site Incident Command and, if over 25 people have been impacted, will notify the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member (Community Services Department staff). The Canadian Red Cross will provide emergency social services through their Personal Disaster Assistance Program for up to 72 hours and can fulfill all standard emergency social services (lodging, food, clothing, transportation, etc.) along with referrals to other community partners and support agencies in small scale events.

**Step 3:** The Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member will assess the response required based on the numbers of people impacted or anticipated to be impacted and arrange for additional or continued support, as needed.

**Figure 2: Emergency Social Services Plan and Sub-Plans**



## 2.2 Sub-Plan B: Evacuation Centre Plan

The Evacuation Centre Plan outlines the steps required to identify, coordinate and provide emergency social services to people in Niagara during and immediately following a large scale incident where 25 or more people are impacted.

**Depending on the nature of the incident and the needs of evacuees, the emergency social services provided at these sites will vary across standard and specialized services (e.g. the Evacuation Centre may not provide on-site lodging and therefore may also be referred to as a ‘reception centre’).**

An emergency evacuation centre is activated by the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member with authorization by the Local Area Municipality’s Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or the Regional CAO. The operation of an evacuation centre is led by the Community Services Department in partnership with multiple internal and external stakeholders. In large scale incidents, it is likely that both standard and specialized emergency social services are required to meet the needs of those affected.

## 2.3 Standard Operating Procedures

For each facility owned and operated by a Local Area Municipality, school board or other entity, that is designated as a preferred evacuation centre in the event of a large scale emergency, Standard Operating Procedures will be used to support Regional, Local Area Municipal and non-government organization staff to set up and operate emergency social services within that setting.

## 2.4 Business Continuity Plans

The activation of the Evacuation Centre Plan will require the reallocation of staff resources to ensure the continued delivery of critical functions and services during a significant disruption.

**Figure 3: Evacuation Centre Reporting Structure**



## 3.0 Activation and Notification

This section outlines the criteria, process, strategy and stakeholders involved in activation and notification of emergencies in Niagara. In partnership with stakeholders, the Community Services Department leads the coordination and response to provide emergency social services to people impacted by an incident.

### 3.1 Emergency Activation Levels

There are four Emergency Activation Levels for Niagara Region's Emergency Management designed to monitor, support and respond to an incident. The different levels identify triggers requiring diversion of resources from regular operations to response and recovery activities. The four activation levels are:

- 1. Routine monitoring** – No incident has occurred. The Emergency Operations Centre is not activated.
- 2. Enhanced monitoring** – An incident that requires monitoring and information coordination has occurred, with a possibility of escalation. This level does not require Emergency Operations Centre staffing to complete a response.
  - The Curbside Response Protocol (Sub-Plan A), may be activated for less than 25 people, triggering the need for enhanced monitoring in case of escalation.
- 3. Partial activation** – An emergency activation has occurred where an Emergency Operations Centre may be activated with several but not all Departments coordinating a response.
  - The Curbside Response Protocol (Sub-Plan A) may be activated as the first step in implementing the Evacuation Centre Plan (Sub-Plan B).

- 4. Full activation** – An incident has a major impact and requires significant coordination of information and activities. The Emergency Operations Centre is fully activated to provide centralized emergency management.

Depending on the Emergency Activation Level, Community Services Department staff may be notified and deployed to respond as appropriate. See Appendix B: Levels of Activation.

- The Evacuation Centre Plan (Sub-Plan B) may be activated in one or more Local Municipalities to provide emergency social services for more than 25 people impacted by an incident as part of a partial activation.

### 3.2 Incident Notification

During Enhanced Monitoring, Partial Activation or Full Activation, stakeholders may need to be notified and placed on stand-by, or activated. This may include but is not limited to the following:

#### Government

- Niagara Regional Departments
- Local Area Municipalities

#### Non-Governmental Organizations

- Canadian Red Cross
- The Salvation Army – St. Catharines
- St. John Ambulance (Niagara Region Branch; Niagara Falls Branch)
- Animal Protection and Care Agencies (Local Affiliate Humane Societies and SPCAs)
  - Fort Erie SPCA
  - Lincoln County Humane Society
  - Niagara SPCA and Humane Society
- Victim Services Niagara
- INCommunities
- Additional stakeholders where required

### **3.3 Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member**

When an incident occurs where people must leave their home, a First Responder will call the Canadian Red Cross to activate the Curbside Response Protocol. If over 25 people are impacted due to one or more incidents, Canadian Red Cross staff will notify the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member (Commissioner of Community Services or alternate) to relay the information provided by the First Responder. The Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member will:

- Respond to acknowledge notification and gather information
- Activate the appropriate response based on the number of people impacted by the incident, including whether the Evacuation Centre Plan requires activation to support over 25 people that are unable to return to their homes

The activation of the Curbside Response Protocol will trigger a need for Enhanced Monitoring or other levels of activation.

The Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member may also be contacted related to incidents where residents are advised to shelter-in-place.

### **3.4 Community Services Department Emergency Social Services Team**

Niagara Region's Emergency Social Services Team is comprised of Community Services Department staff trained to support the provision of emergency social services during an incident requiring the activation of the Evacuation Centre Plan. If called upon, the Community Services Department Emergency Social Services Team will:

- Acknowledge and respond to a notification as soon as possible
- Once contacted and provided with emergency information, deploy within two hours of notification to the assigned location of the Evacuation Centre

Community Services Department Emergency Social Services Team staff are responsible to have access to appropriate equipment to support their response (e.g. personal go-bags, Regional mobile device – if necessary, etc.).

The Homelessness and Emergency Services Advisor will hold and maintain the confidential Community Services Department Emergency Social Services Team staff list.

## 4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Section 4.0 outlines the general roles and responsibilities of emergency social services stakeholders. Specific details are expanded in the Evacuation Centre Plan and within the Standard Operating Procedures written for each of the evacuation centres.

### 4.1 Internal Stakeholders

#### 4.1.1 Commissioner of Community Services

When the Commissioner of Community Services is notified of an Enhanced Monitoring, Partial or Full Activation Level he/she may contact the Community Services Department Senior Leadership Team to discuss the situation within the department. The Community Services Department Senior Leadership Team will:

- Assess potential impact on programs and services
- Be prepared to support the activation of the Evacuation Centre Plan

#### Community Services Department Senior Leadership Team includes:

- Commissioner of Community Services
- Director of Children's Services
- Director of Homelessness Services and Community Engagement
- Director of Seniors' Services
- Director of Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities
- Human Resources Consultant
- Program Financial Analysts
- Communications Consultant

#### 4.1.2 Community Services Department

As the lead department for emergency social services, Community Services Department is responsible for planning, coordinating and managing the delivery of emergency social services response to small and large scale incidents. The Community Services Department will provide 24-hour support and coordination of emergency social services response through the Community Services Department Emergency Social Services Team. All Community Services Department staff with assigned roles in the delivery of emergency social services will maintain an appropriate level of emergency preparedness.

#### 4.1.3 Other Regional Staff

In the event of a large scale incident that exceeds the capacity of the Community Services Department to respond, other Regional staff may be asked to support in the delivery of emergency social services including the operation of an evacuation centre. Staff will be oriented to assigned roles and responsibilities.

### 4.2 External Stakeholders

#### 4.2.1 Non-Governmental Organizations

The Community Services Department works with non-government organizations to provide emergency social services in the event of a small or large scale incident. These services are delivered in accordance with written Memoranda of Understanding and service agreements. Personnel will be scheduled and supplied by non-government organizations to provide a 24 hour presence at an evacuation centre unless otherwise specified.

The non-government organizations may include but are not limited to the following:

- Canadian Red Cross
- Salvation Army – St. Catharines
- St. John Ambulance (Niagara Region branch; Niagara Falls branch)
- Animal Protection and Care Agencies (Local Affiliate Humane Societies and SPCAs)
  - Fort Erie SPCA
  - Lincoln County Humane Society
  - Niagara SPCA and Humane Society
- Victim Services Niagara
- INCommunities

Refer to Appendix C: Non-Government Organization Alliance of Ontario, for a network of non-governmental organizations across the province that are active participants in Ontario’s Emergency Management landscape.

### **4.2.2 Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network (HNHB LHIN)**

The HNHB LHIN will support a health system emergency response when notified or requested by an affected health care facility. The HNHB LHIN will assist in locating available long-term care and hospital beds within Niagara Region or other neighbouring municipalities to provide alternate locations for the delivery of care for persons with complex medical care needs. HNHB LHIN Home and Community Care will ensure existing clients receiving care are provided with continued services at an evacuation centre, if appropriate. Niagara region falls within the Hamilton-Niagara-Haldimand LHIN-Brant boundary.

### **4.2.3 Pharmacists’ Association of Niagara**

The Pharmacists’ Association of Niagara will notify members during a large-scale incident, facilitate requests for replacement medications, and may be available at an evacuation centre to support with gathering information related to medical histories.

### **4.3 First Responders**

First Responders within Niagara region are comprised of:

- Niagara Region Emergency Medical Services
- Niagara Regional Police Service
- Fort Erie Fire Department
- Grimsby Fire Department
- Lincoln Fire Department
- Niagara Falls Fire Department
- Niagara-On-The-Lake Fire Department
- Pelham Fire Department
- Port Colborne Fire Department
- St. Catharines Fire Department
- Thorold Fire Department
- Wainfleet Fire Department
- Welland Fire Department
- West Lincoln Fire Department

The On-site Incident Commander is responsible for ensuring that the Canadian Red Cross is notified if people from a residential dwelling are impacted by an incident. The Canadian Red Cross will contact the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member and provide incident information to activate the appropriate emergency social services response.

### **4.3.1 Niagara Regional Police Service**

Niagara Regional Police Service will (depending on available resources) provide traffic control to facilitate the movement of emergency vehicles and access/egress from a small or large evacuation area and support an evacuation centre when there is an escalated incident that requires a police presence. Niagara Regional Police Service will oversee the repatriation of large numbers of displaced people back into their homes once it is safe to do so. Police may also support with the security and safety at an evacuation centre.

### **4.3.2 Local Municipal Fire Departments**

Local Municipal Fire Departments are responsible for protecting the lives, property and environment of Niagara residents impacted by fire, explosion, hazardous materials incidents or other fire-related incidents.

### **4.3.3 Niagara Region Emergency Medical Services**

Niagara Region Emergency Medical Services' (EMS) primary role is to triage and treat people in need of medical care, including transportation to hospital. EMS can also organize and transport people from long term care homes to more secure shelter, if required. If resources are available, EMS may also support with the medical needs of those presenting at an evacuation centre.

# Appendix A: Amendment Table

Number	Date	Version	Amended by	Commissioner approval	Sections updated	Nature of the update
1	10/02/2005	0.0	Scott Laughher		All	
	10/29/2009	0.1	Scott Laughher		All	
	09/15/2011	0.2	Scott Laughher		All	
	12/07/2015	0.3	Scott Laughher		All	
2	02/01/2020	0.0	Michelle Johnston		All	Comprehensive review

# Appendix B: Levels of Activation

Level	Description	Examples of Events/ Triggers	Plan/ Procedure Activation	Minimum Staffing
Routine Monitoring	No event or incident has occurred. Local Area Municipal and Regional Emergency Operations Centre are not activated.	N/A	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emergency Management</li> </ul>
Enhanced Monitoring	<p>An event that requires monitoring and information coordination.</p> <p>There is a possibility of escalation.</p> <p>This level does not require Emergency Operations Centre staffing to complete response.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planned or unplanned events/incidents in Niagara and/or in other jurisdictions with an associated risk that could threaten public safety, public health, the environment, property, critical infrastructure and economic stability</li> <li>Severe weather watches and warnings</li> <li>Displacement of less than 25 people due to an isolated incident or cumulative number of incidents</li> <li>Sheltering-in-place order</li> <li>Loss of utilities (electricity, water, gas) to an area of a Local Area Municipality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curbside Response Protocol</li> <li>Put non-government organizations and other departments on standby</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emergency Management</li> <li>Community Services</li> <li>Communications Team</li> </ul>

Level	Description	Examples of Events/ Triggers	Plan/ Procedure Activation	Minimum Staffing
Partial Activation	An emergency declaration can be made by a Local Municipality. An Emergency Operations Centre may be activated to support response.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evacuation requiring the lodging of 25+ individuals</li> <li>• Acting as a host community for evacuees from surrounding jurisdictions</li> <li>• Request to open an evacuation centre</li> <li>• Evacuation of any resident home areas within a long-term care home with 1-2 days of displacement</li> <li>• Prolonged loss of utilities (gas, water, electricity) for 1-2 days within one or more Local Area Municipalities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curbside Response Protocol</li> <li>• Evacuation Centre Plan</li> <li>• Standard Operating Procedures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency Operations Centre Director</li> <li>• Emergency Information Officer</li> <li>• Community Services</li> <li>• Emergency Management</li> <li>• Other positions, as required</li> </ul>
Full Activation	The event has a major impact and requires significant coordination of information and activities that requires Emergency Operations Centre activation to provide centralized emergency management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requirement for a large scale evacuation of people within one or more Local Area Municipalities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evacuation Centre Plan</li> <li>• Standard Operating Procedures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Emergency Operations Centre positions are fully staffed</li> <li>• Community Services</li> <li>• Other positions, as required</li> </ul>

# Appendix C: Non-Government Organization Alliance of Ontario

The Non-Government Organization Alliance of Ontario is a network of non-governmental organizations that are active participants in Ontario's Emergency Management landscape.

The purpose of the Non-Government Organization Alliance of Ontario is to support municipal and provincial emergency planning and preparedness, response and recovery efforts through coordination, cooperation, collaboration, and communication.

NGO Alliance of Ontario Handbook:  
[oaem.ca/sub-blogs/ngo-alliance-of-ontario/ngo-alliance-of-ontario-handbook](https://www.ontario.ca/sub-blogs/ngo-alliance-of-ontario/ngo-alliance-of-ontario-handbook)

Annex D of Niagara Region  
Emergency Management Plan

# EMERGENCY SOCIAL SERVICES PLAN

Niagara  Region

February 2020

Emergency Social Services Plan

# SUB-PLAN A: CURBSIDE RESPONSE PROTOCOL

# Amendment and Distribution Procedure

This Plan will be reviewed annually. Updates and revisions must be approved by the Commissioner of Community Services, unless revisions are related to ordinary maintenance such as updating contact information, title changes or resource information.

The Community Services Department, Homelessness and Emergency Services Advisor will prepare and distribute amendments to the Curbside Response Protocol as required.

Please refer to Appendix A: Amendment Table.

**Niagara Region  
Community Services  
Contact Information**

**Director, Homelessness Services and  
Community Engagement**  
905-980-6000 ext. 3807

**Manager, Homelessness Services**  
905-980-6000 ext. 3863

**Homelessness and Emergency  
Services Advisor**  
905-980-6000 ext. 3821

**Manager, Social Assistance and  
Employment Opportunities**  
905-980-6000 ext. 6089

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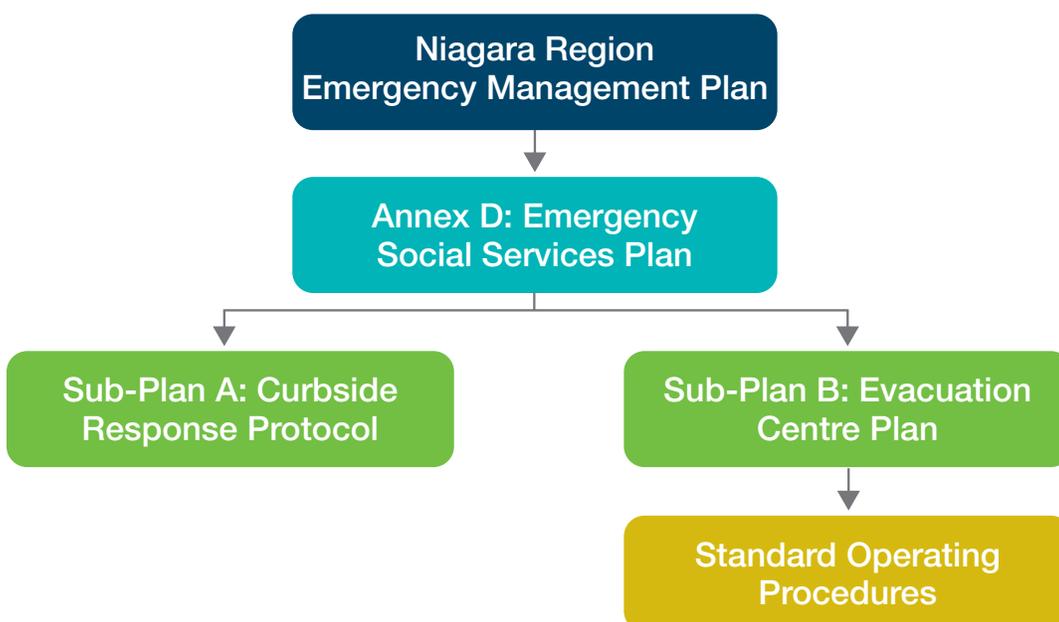
# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

To support Niagara Region’s Emergency Social Services Plan, a number of additional plans and procedures exist that provide more detailed information on how Regional and community partners collaborate and respond within different service delivery settings to provide emergency social services. The Region’s Emergency Social Services Plan consists of two sub-plans and standard operating procedures.

The Curbside Response Protocol outlines the steps required to identify, coordinate and provide emergency social services to people in Niagara who are impacted by an incident. The Protocol can be activated for small scale (25 people or less impacted) and large scale (more than 25 people and/or 10 dwellings) incidents in Niagara.

**The activation of the Curbside Response Protocol may be the first step in the eventual activation of the Evacuation Centre Plan. The Evacuation Centre Plan can be activated for centres that provide off-site lodging (e.g. ‘reception centres’).**

**Figure 1: Emergency Social Services Plan and Sub-Plans**



# 2.0 Curbside Response Partners and Services

Three partners support the delivery of emergency social services at the curbside of an incident or disaster.

## 2.1 Fire, Police and Paramedics (First Responders)

First Responders arrive at the scene of an incident focused on maintaining the health, safety and well-being of people impacted. When it is determined that a residence(s) has been impacted by an incident, the On-site Incident Commander will call Canadian Red Cross.

## 2.2 Canadian Red Cross

The Canadian Red Cross provides emergency social services at the curbside and in evacuation centres to people impacted by an incident. If more than 25 people and/or 10 dwellings are impacted by an incident, the Canadian Red Cross provides incident information to the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operation Centre Member to ensure the appropriate activation of emergency social services. Depending on the type and size of the incident, Canadian Red Cross may provide one or more of the following services at the curbside:

- Reception and information – provide a place to receive evacuees and provide information on-site related to the incident and other services
- Registration and inquiry/family reunification – record demographic information, assess emergency social services needs, respond to inquiries regarding the location of other impacted people through registration information
- Emergency food – food/grocery vouchers or pre-paid cards for grocery or restaurant meals
- Emergency clothing – one set of new, basic, seasonally-appropriate clothing through vouchers or pre-paid cards for purchase at local stores. Access to laundry services and referrals to community resources for additional clothing may also be provided.
- Emergency lodging – safe, temporary lodging for those who cannot return home and cannot find alternate accommodations for up to 72 hours (pet friendly where possible/needed)
- Personal services may include:
  - Providing hygiene kits (toothpaste, toothbrush, deodorant, shampoo, razors, etc.), baby products and adult incontinence products as needed. Towels and washcloths may be provided to those staying with friends or family.
  - Facilitating access to health care items and may include paying for one refill of essential medication, replacement/repair of eyeglasses, hearing aids, dentures, etc., and when no other financial support is available. Referral to community resources may also be provided.
- Transportation – assist people in securing or arranging transportation (e.g. vouchers or pre-paid cards for buses or taxi services), where regular means of transportation are unavailable

- Other assistance or specialized services may be considered depending on needs identified during assessment. Canadian Red Cross does not duplicate assistance and personal insurance should be used as primary form of support where available. Referrals to community resources are provided.

Canadian Red Cross volunteers will contact the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operation Centre Member to assist in securing services outside their scope of service delivery.

## **2.3 Community Services**

If over 25 people and/or 10 dwellings are impacted by an incident and/or if the identified needs of those displaced are complex and require specialized services that are beyond the scope of the Canadian Red Cross, Community Services is notified to coordinate emergency social services and additional services. The Emergency Social Services Emergency Operation Centre Member, coordinates the Community Services Department Emergency Social Services Team to support a response, and notifies additional Regional stakeholders in the event that there is a need to prepare for possible escalation (e.g. the activation of an evacuation centre).

# 3.0 Activation Process

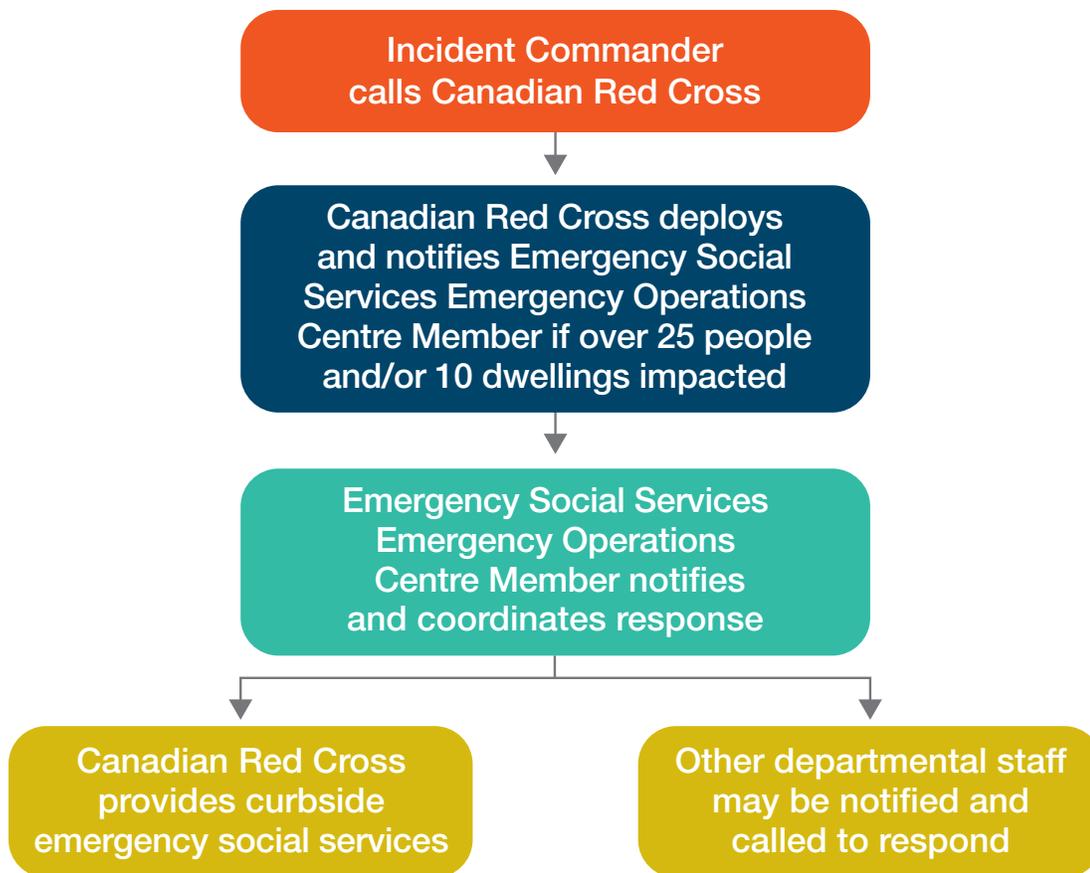
## 3.1 Trigger for Activation

When individuals and/or families must leave their residential dwelling temporarily due an incident.

The number of people impacted and the type of incident will determine if an additional level of response is required by the Region.

## 3.2 Notification Process

The following diagram demonstrates the notification process:



# 4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

## 4.1 On-Site Incident Commander

1. The Site Incident Commander gathers the following incident information:
  - Estimated number of adults, older adults, youth and children impacted
  - Type of incident and the address
  - Estimated duration of the incident (if known)
  - Location where the Canadian Red Cross volunteers can meet with impacted people either on-site, at a nearby safe location, on a municipal bus, etc.
  - Identify if media is on site
2. To activate the Curbside Response Protocol, the On-site Incident Commander must call Canadian Red Cross and state that their assistance is required.
3. The On-site Incident Commander:
  - Must assign a designate if he or she is unable to personally call Canadian Red Cross to request their assistance through the activation of the Curbside Response Protocol
  - Inform impacted people that Canadian Red Cross is on the way
  - May also request local transit to provide accessible buses to temporarily shelter impacted people from the elements, if required
  - May call Canadian Red Cross back to provide incident information updates
  - If over 25 people and/or 10 dwellings impacted, may make a request to the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operation Centre Member to provide updates regarding actions taken

### Note: Homelessness/ Eviction

This is not an activation of the Curbside Response Protocol. If a first responder identifies an individual (16 or older) or family that is homeless or has been evicted from their home and requires emergency shelter:

- Call 211
- Request shelter services for the individual or family

The 211 staff will transfer the call to the after hours emergency shelter line to secure appropriate shelter based on the information provided.

If homelessness is a result of a building closure due to non-compliance of the Ontario Building Code or Fire Protection and Prevention Act (including the Ontario Fire Code), whereby the building is determined to be unsafe and inhabitable, then the Incident Commander will call the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operation Centre Member directly.

## 4.2 Canadian Red Cross

Upon receiving a call from the Incident Commander, the Canadian Red Cross shall:

1. Gather incident information from the Incident Commander and deploy at least two volunteers to the scene of the incident. Information required includes:
  - Incident Commander name, position and contact information
  - Estimated number of adults, older adults, youth and children impacted
  - Type of incident and the address
  - Estimated duration of the incident (if known)
  - Location where Canadian Red Cross volunteers can meet with impacted people
  - Whether media on site
2. If the incident impacts more than 25 people and/or 10 dwellings, Canadian Red Cross immediately notifies Emergency Social Services Emergency Operation Centre Member that the Curbside Response Protocol has been activated, provides incident information, and is placed on stand-by pending the activation of the Evacuation Centre Plan.

### 3. On-site, Canadian Red Cross volunteers will:

**3.1** Set up a temporary meeting place as identified by the Incident Commander, a reasonable distance from the incident.

**3.2** Conduct a registration and needs assessment to identify and provide the specific emergency social services required by each individual and/or family.

**3.3** Update the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operation Centre Member regarding services provided, actual number of adults, older adults, youth and children requiring emergency social services, any additional requests for specialized services and if media on-site.

4. **If the Evacuation Centre Plan is not activated**, continue providing emergency social services at the curbside. Follow-up with impacted person(s) within 72 hours:

**4.1** Reassess if additional/extended services are required.

**4.2** Update the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operation Centre Member of the results of the follow up call(s) and if impacted people request Regional assistance.

**If the Evacuation Centre Plan is activated, please refer to Sub-Plan B.**

## 4.3 Emergency Social Services Emergency Operation Centre Member

Upon receiving a call from Canadian Red Cross, the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operation Centre Member shall:

1. Inform Community Services Senior Leadership Team of the incident and the actions taken, as required.
2. Determine whether to:
  - Activate the Evacuation Centre Plan
  - Direct the Canadian Red Cross to continue to provide emergency social services for the impacted people

3. Remain on standby:
  - To receive an update from the Canadian Red Cross regarding services provided, actual number of adults, older adults, youth and children requiring emergency social services, any additional requests for specialized services and if media on-site.
4. Notify the appropriate Emergency Information Officer (Municipal or Regional), if the Canadian Red Cross identifies media on-site.
5. Direct or designate Community Services Department emergency social services staff to direct/assist Canadian Red Cross to:
  - Transport people to the nearest hospital, if impacted persons require non-emergency health care support. For example, adult /older adult with cognitive impairment, mobility challenges, person with special needs.
  - Access telephone interpretation services through Corporate Services or INCommunities (on-site interpretation services) to assist impacted people requiring language or cultural services
  - Access animal care and boarding through local SPCA and humane societies such as the Fort Erie SPCA, Lincoln County Humane Society and/or Niagara SPCA and Humane Society
6. Contact the Incident Commander to provide an update as to actions taken, as requested.
7. If the Evacuation Centre Plan was not activated, continue to liaise with the Canadian Red Cross:
  - To determine if further assistance is needed and/or arrange for Community Services staff (e.g. SAEO Hostel Worker, Seniors Community Outreach Worker, etc.) to contact the impacted person(s) to assist, as necessary

## 5.0 Incident Reporting

The Emergency Social Services Emergency Operation Centre Member will keep Community Services Senior Leadership Team informed of actions taken to resolve an incident, as required, as well as allow time to plan and respond where additional supports may be required if:

- The incident escalates
- Media are present at the scene of an incident
- Specialized services beyond the existing capacity and scope of services provided by Canadian Red Cross are required to support impacted person(s), such as, Seniors Services' Community Support Workers, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities Hostel Workers, or Children's Services' Early Childhood Educators

# 6.0 Post Incident Debriefs

Debriefs may be requested by the Community Services Senior Leadership Team or the Canadian Red Cross when gaps in the provision of services are identified. Debriefs may include but are not limited to the following people, as appropriate:

- Incident Commander or designate
- Canadian Red Cross Site Manager
- Community Services Senior Leadership Team
- Community Services Homelessness and Emergency Services Advisor
- Local Area Municipality(s) Community Emergency Management Coordinator

The debrief discussion will include an After Action Report that documents:

- The incident response activities and timelines
- Lessons learned (what worked well, gap identification, opportunities for enhancement)
- Any recommended changes to improve communication and delivery of services

## Appendix A: Amendment Table

Number	Date	Version	Amended by	Community Services Senior Leadership Team Approval	Sections updated	Nature of the update
1	02/01/2020	1.0	Michelle Johnston		All	New Document

Emergency Social Services Plan

**SUB-PLAN A:  
CURBSIDE  
RESPONSE PROTOCOL**

February 2020

Niagara  Region

Emergency Social Services Plan

# SUB-PLAN B: EVACUATION CENTRE

# Amendment and Distribution Procedure

This Plan will be reviewed annually. Updates and revisions must be approved by the Commissioner of Community Services, unless revisions are related to ordinary maintenance such as updating contact information, title changes or resource information. The Community Services Department, Homelessness and Emergency Services Advisor will prepare and distribute amendments to the Evacuation Centre Plan as required.

Please refer to Appendix A: Amendment Table.

## Confidential Information

Information related to preferred sites/buildings to be used for the purposes of an evacuation centre, and information related to the operating of these sites are confidential and not intended for widespread distribution. The following documents will be emailed to those who require them:

- Community Services emergency social services evacuation centre site list
- Standard Operating Procedures for all preferred sites

## Niagara Region Community Services Contact Information

### Director, Homelessness Services and Community Engagement

905-980-6000 ext. 3807

### Manager, Homelessness Services

905-980-6000 ext. 3863

### Homelessness and Emergency Services Advisor

905-980-6000 ext. 3821

### Manager, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities

905-980-6000 ext. 6089

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# 1.0 Introduction

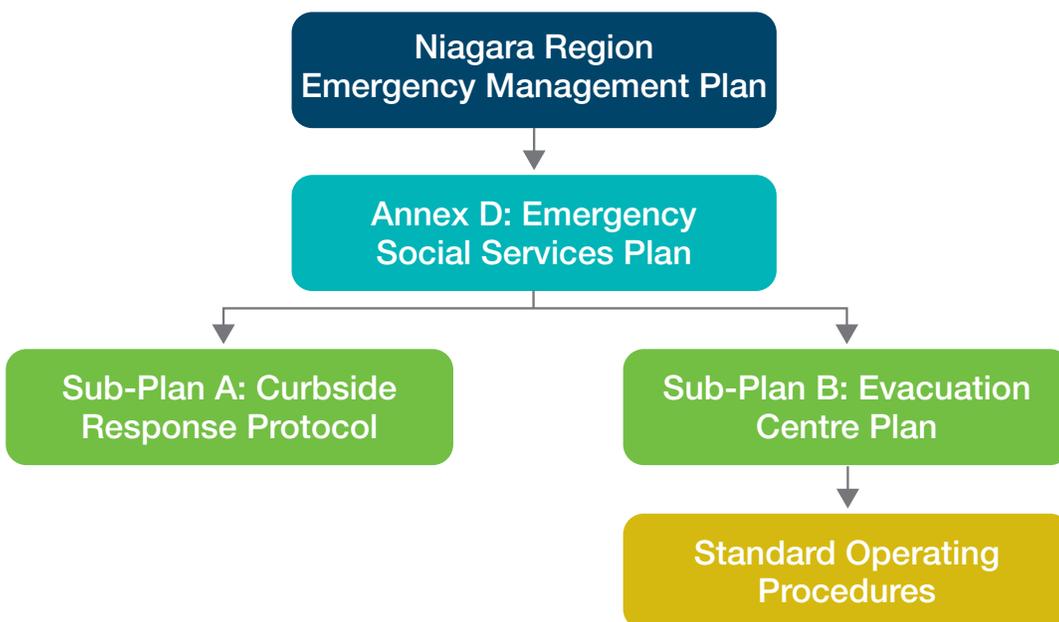
To support the Region’s Emergency Social Services Plan, a number of additional plans and procedures exist that provide more detailed information on how Regional and community partners collaborate and respond within different service delivery settings to provide emergency social services. The Region’s Emergency Social Services Plan consists of two sub-plans and standard operating procedures.

The Evacuation Centre Plan outlines the steps required to identify, coordinate and provide emergency social services to people in Niagara who are impacted by an incident. The Plan can be activated for large scale (more than 25 people) incidents in Niagara.

Local Municipalities have identified preferred facilities in each of their municipalities that can be used as an evacuation centre. Additional municipally-owned facilities and schools have been surveyed through the Canadian Red Cross should the preferred sites not be operational.

**Depending on the nature of the incident and the needs of evacuees, the emergency social services provided at these sites will vary across standard and specialized services (e.g. the evacuation centre may not provide on-site lodging and therefore may also be referred to as a ‘reception centre’).**

**Figure 1: Emergency Social Services Plan and Sub-Plans**



## 2.0 Evacuation Centre Activation

An evacuation centre is intended to provide temporary lodging and other emergency social services to more than 25 people in Niagara Region impacted by an incident.

Within Local Area Municipalities Emergency Operations Centres, the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member in consultation with or as requested by the Local Area Municipality's Chief Administrative Officer, will activate the Evacuation Centre Plan.

When a Regional Emergency Operations Centre has been activated, the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member in consultation with or as requested by the Regional Chief Administrative Officer, will activate the Evacuation Centre Plan.

# 3.0 Emergency Social Services at an Evacuation Centre

## 3.1 Types of Services

Emergency social services consists of both standard and specialized services.

### 3.1.1 Standard Services

- Reception and information
- Registration and inquiry/family reunification
- Food
- Clothing
- Lodging
- Personal services

### 3.1.2 Specialized Services

- First aid
- Psychosocial support
- Financial assessment
- Culturally-specific and language services
- Vulnerable people and unattended children
- Public health (e.g. infection, disease prevention and control, and pharmaceutical support)
- Animal care
- Recreation

## 3.2 Service Restrictions

Emergency social services assistance may be restricted to individuals where:

- Incidents of verbal abuse or physical violence occur, impacting people accessing emergency social services and staff or volunteers providing emergency social services
- A serious incident occurs arising from behaviours that cause safety concerns
- On demobilizing, a person refuses to leave an evacuation centre

The Site Manager and Evacuation Centre Liaison may be required to ban a person from the facility. The person(s) must be informed immediately of the reason for their ban and a letter may be issued to the person(s) on-site or forwarded to a temporary address. Assistance may be required from:

- On-site security
- Niagara Region Mental Health
- Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS)

## 3.3 Suspension of Services

Once an emergency is declared terminated or the Chief Administrative Officer (Municipal or Regional) and the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member has determined an evacuation centre is no longer required, demobilization activities may begin. Eligibility for further assistance will be determined by the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member and the Canadian Red Cross.

# 4.0 Roles and Responsibilities: General

The Evacuation Centre Plan identifies stakeholders that are responsible for effectively activating, coordinating, managing and providing standard and specialized services within an evacuation centre. The specific nature and size of the incident will determine the functions and staffing required. The Community Services Department emergency social services team is comprised of trained staff to support the delivery of emergency social services. When numbers of people seeking emergency social services are minimal and only one evacuation centre is in operation some staff leads may take on two roles such as the Evacuation Centre Liaison can act as the Specialized Services Lead. If the number of people seeking emergency social services increases all Community Services emergency social services roles may be implemented.

## 4.1 Transfer of Information between Staff/Volunteers

At the end of each shift, all staff must provide status update information to their replacements and any personnel coming on shift at the same time. This is also a time when tasks may need to be assigned to ensure a smooth transition into the work flow. Updates will include:

- The current operational status
- Any issues/concerns both outstanding and resolved
- Anticipated priorities and actions to be implemented
- Operational health and safety information

## 4.2 Documentation Management

All internal/external stakeholders who have a role in supporting the operation of an evacuation centre must:

- Document all actions taken using the logbook provided (e.g. notes to include details, dates and times)
- Participate in briefings as appropriate
- Follow all written procedures, protocols and plans, as applicable
- Refrain from speaking to the media, instead directing all media inquiries to the appropriate Municipal or Regional Emergency Information Officer

# 5.0 Roles and Responsibilities: Regional Support to the Evacuation Centre

The support staff in this section are not present at an evacuation centre.

## 5.1 Community Services: Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member

Evacuation centre(s) are supported by the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member, who assists in the activation and coordination of resources for the effective delivery of emergency social services. Where Community Services does not have specific resources to support service delivery in an evacuation centre, other Regional departments will be called upon to assist.

- Primary Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member – Commissioner, Community Services
- First Alternate Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member – Director, Homelessness Services and Community Engagement
- Second Alternate Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member – Director, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities

The Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member is the communication conduit between the Municipal or Regional Emergency Operations Centre and the Evacuation Centre Liaison. The Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member provides decision-making support and evacuation centre status updates, including reports from the Evacuation Centre Liaison back to the Emergency Operations Centre. In addition, the Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member is responsible to:

- Notify and request all non-government Organizations and any Regional departments who support the operations of an evacuation centre
- Contact, deploy and schedule Community Services staff to operate and support evacuation centre operations, leveraging **Human Resources staff** support as required
- Liaise with **Public Health Department** staff (via Emergency Operations Centre Director) to support the operations of evacuation centre(s) by providing expertise on health-related areas such as screening for communicable disease control, environmental hazards, food safety and handling, and pharmaceutical support. Individuals and families will be guided to community health resources as necessary. Public Health staff may be required to provide 24-hour presence at an evacuation centre.
- Liaise with **Communications staff** (via Emergency Operations Centre Director) to advise the public of the locations and operations of evacuation centre(s) during an incident and immediately after, to ensure the public has current and accurate information
- Order and/or arrange for delivery of supplies, materials and equipment to support evacuation centre(s) operations
- Receive and resolve issues that cannot be resolved at an evacuation centre

# 6.0 Roles and Responsibilities: Evacuation Centre

## 6.1 Evacuation Centre Reporting Structure

The delivery of emergency social services in an evacuation centre is achieved by Community Services staff working in partnership with Local Municipality staff, Niagara Regional staff, the Canadian Red Cross and other non-government organizations. Community Services lead in the evacuation centre activation and operations is the Evacuation Centre Liaison (Community Services staff) who works closely with the Site Manager (Canadian Red Cross) to make decisions. Together, they will be supported through four section leads who oversee a number of services and resources.

- Primary Evacuation Centre Liaison – Manager, Homelessness Services
- First Alternate Evacuation Centre Liaison – Advisor, Homelessness and Emergency Services
- Second Alternate Evacuation Centre Liaison – Manager, Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities

The Evacuation Centre Reporting Structure in Figure 2 represents all possible roles and services that may be activated at each designated site. While each service may be provided by two staff or volunteers, not all services may be required at activation. Services can be scaled up or down as needed.

### 6.1.1 Reporting Relationships

The reporting structure boxes in grey are evacuation centre supports that are not on site but are accessed throughout evacuation centre activation, operations and decommissioning as required.

- The Emergency Social Services Emergency Operations Centre Member will be working from the Regional or Municipal Emergency Operations Centre (or other designated emergency response control space) to provide information and where necessary direction and authorization
- The Evacuation Centre Liaison provides a communication link between the Emergency Operations Centre and the evacuation centre, and works with the Site Manager to oversee operation of the evacuation centre
- The Leads for Standard Services, Specialized Services and Logistics/Administration will report to the Site Manager and Evacuation Centre Liaison
- Responding Regional staff will report to their assigned evacuation centre leads
- Responding Local Municipality staff and non-government organizations will report to their assigned evacuation centre leads while also maintaining their normal reporting to their own organizations

**Figure 2: Evacuation Centre Reporting Structure**



## 6.2 Evacuation Centre Command

**Figure 3: Evacuation Centre Command**



The Site Manager and the Evacuation Centre Liaison are together responsible for providing leadership, direction and coordination during set-up, operations and the demobilization of an evacuation centre. The Standard Services Lead, Specialized Services Lead and Logistics Lead will report to the Site Manager and Evacuation Centre Liaison.

Site Manager staff will be provided on a 24-hour basis at the evacuation centre.

In situations involving on-site lodging, an Evacuation Centre Liaison will be provided on a 24-hour basis. In situations where off-site, commercial lodging is used (e.g. Reception Centre), an Evacuation Centre Liaison may or may not be provided on a 24-hour basis. Whenever possible each Evacuation Centre Liaison will be scheduled for no more than eight hours per shift with an overlap of 30 minutes to transfer information to the Evacuation Centre Liaison on the next shift.

The Site Manager and Evacuation Centre Liaison will provide direction and/or authorization for actions taken to secure appropriate care and accommodations for any vulnerable adults, older adults, children or unattended children identified through the registration process.

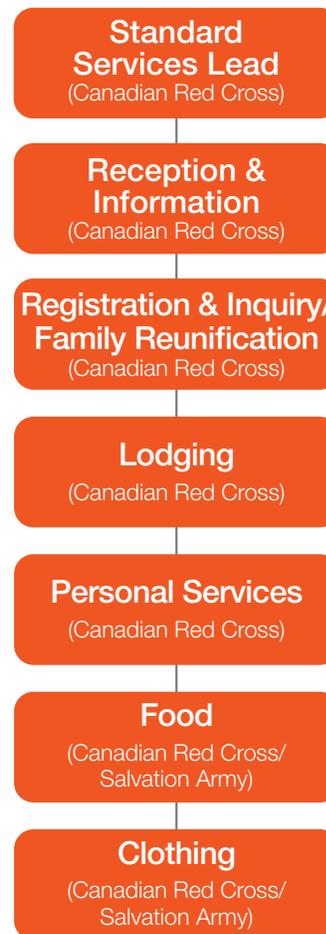
The Evacuation Centre Liaison will work with Niagara Region’s Human Resources to ensure an appropriate level of support is provided to Community Services staff at the evacuation centre related to critical incident stress management.

This may include designating a quiet, separate space for staff breaks, ensuring the Employee Assistance Program phone number is posted, watching for staff fatigue and stress, arranging for on-site psychosocial support if necessary, etc.

## 6.3 Standard Services

Standard Services are available to support the essential needs of people impacted by an incident.

**Figure 4: Standard Services**



### **6.3.1 Standard Services Lead: Canadian Red Cross**

The Standard Services Lead will oversee, initiate and collaborate with non-government organization personnel and facility staff providing Standard Services to impacted people. Standard Services will be provided on a 24-hours basis at the evacuation centre unless otherwise specified e.g., clothing services may not be required at all times. Based on the size of the evacuation centre, the Canadian Red Cross may have multiple Leads, designating a Lead for each type of Standard Service.

### **6.3.2 Reception and Information: Canadian Red Cross**

Reception and information services includes providing a place where people who have been impacted by an incident can receive information and services. This service also may include referring evacuees to other organizations or programs that can assist them, establishing a call centre or conducting outreach to provide information.

### **6.3.3 Registration and Inquiry/ Family Reunification: Canadian Red Cross**

If people with complex care or acute medical needs arrive for reception and information or, for registration and inquiry/family reunification, arrangements will be made for transportation to the nearest hospital.

Registration and inquiry is the first point of contact for impacted people that enter an evacuation centre seeking emergency social services. Through the registration process important information is gathered to assist in identifying the support required during and after the incident, and in identifying vulnerable populations such as people with disabilities and unattended children.

Where services within the evacuation centre cannot meet peoples' needs external service providers may be contacted to assist. The registration process is also the time when information will be provided regarding additional services and community supports available.

Family reunification services are dependent on people registering at an evacuation centre. This service assists in reuniting families and answering inquiries regarding the condition and whereabouts of missing persons.

### **6.3.4 Lodging: Canadian Red Cross**

Lodging services consists of off-site (commercial) and/or on-site lodging. On-site lodging includes the provision of sleeping cots and blankets. Through the registration process people who require overnight lodging will be assigned an appropriate sleep area.

Where there is an identified health and/or safety risk to individuals who require additional support, alternate accommodations may be arranged. Some examples may include: individuals experiencing addiction or engaging in substance use; individuals with serious mental illness; individuals who require consumable medical supplies such as incontinence supplies, formula, bandages, ostomy supplies, etc.; those who use mobility equipment such as wheelchairs, walkers, scooters, etc.; those who require a service animal; and/or, individuals with attendants or caregivers.

The Standard Services Lead will consult with the Site Manager and Evacuation Centre Liaison and appropriate Leads to determine if alternate accommodations such as hotel/motel or special care facilities would be more appropriate.

### **6.3.5 Personal Services: Canadian Red Cross**

Personal services consists of the provision of basic hygiene kits with infant supplies such as diapers and other essential and/or special supplies such as incontinence supplies for adults, as needed. Where there is an identified need for assistance accessing prescriptions and medical aids such as a medication refill, replacement or repair of eyeglasses, dentures and hearing aids, financial support may be provided to access such items when no other financial support is available.

Access to transportation may be required for people who have mobility issues or do not own a vehicle, to obtain more appropriate shelter, pickup medication, access the nearest walk-in clinic, etc.

Support to assist people coming into or leaving an evacuation centre will include information about how and where to access transportation as well as provide transit passes or taxi vouchers if required.

### **6.3.6 Food: Canadian Red Cross/Salvation Army – St. Catharines**

Meals will be prepared (in advance and/or on-site) by the Salvation Army at the evacuation centre for people impacted by the incident, staff and volunteers. Public Health Inspectors will ensure all food preparation and serving at an evacuation centre is in compliance with the relevant requirements and food handling legislation. Special dietary requirements for infants, people with diabetes, older adults, pregnant and nursing mothers and religious and cultural groups will be accommodated where possible. Nutritional snacks will be made available for people that have missed main meal times and young children who require snacks throughout their day.

The Canadian Red Cross will work with the Salvation Army in the event that a surge capacity for food is anticipated/needed. The Canadian Red Cross may also arrange for an external vendor or caterer to deliver meals.

### **6.3.7 Clothing: Canadian Red Cross/Salvation Army – St. Catharines**

Adequate clothing and footwear will be provided to meet immediate needs of people impacted by an incident to include at least one change of seasonal clothing per person and footwear as needed. Infants and young children may require two changes of seasonal clothing.

Should the requirements for emergency clothing exceed the Salvation Army's capacity to provide; the Canadian Red Cross will contact existing suppliers to assist, as needed.

## 6.4 Specialized Services

Specialized Services are additional supports that may be required to assist people that have more complex needs.

**Figure 5: Specialized Services**



### 6.4.1 Specialized Services Lead: Niagara Region Community Services

The Specialized Services Lead will oversee, initiate and collaborate with non-government organization personnel and facility staff providing specialized services to impacted people. Specialized Services will be provided on a 24-hour basis at the evacuation centre unless otherwise specified, such as recreation services may only be required during the day and early evening and/or culturally-specific and language services are required on an as needed basis.

### 6.4.2 First Aid: St. John Ambulance

Trained personnel will provide First Aid, CPR and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) coverage at first aid stations within an evacuation centre. As well, St. John Ambulance personnel will provide information to Niagara Region Emergency Medical Services when necessary for the care and transportation of persons who require medical treatment at a hospital.

Any narcotic medications or medications that require refrigeration will be stored in a locked box and managed by the Specialized Services Lead.

### 6.4.3 Public Health: Niagara Region Health Department

Public Health Department staff may be required to screen for communicable diseases, inspect food premises, provide pharmaceutical support, and monitor for health hazards, potable water and general sanitation at the evacuation centre. When communicable disease cases are identified at the evacuation centre, Public Health staff will provide education and recommendations for implementation of infection control measures.

#### **6.4.4 Psychosocial Support: Niagara Region Mental Health**

Niagara Region Mental Health will lead the delivery of mental health counselling and support for anyone within an evacuation centre, providing services in partnership with Victim Services Niagara. Where the needs of an individual cannot be safely met within the evacuation centre Niagara Region Mental Health staff and Victim Services Niagara staff will work together to determine the best option(s) for the individual and implement a plan of action.

#### **6.4.5 Financial Assessment: Niagara Region Community Services**

Through the Social Assistance and Employment Opportunities Division of Community Services, evacuees may be assessed to determine their eligibility for financial assistance. Households who are not recipients of Ontario Works benefits may be eligible for alternate benefits such as emergency and discretionary benefits to support their transition from the evacuation centre back into the community.

#### **6.4.6 Culturally-Specific and Language Services: Agencies**

Language interpretation services may be accessed over the phone using the interpreter telephone line through Corporate Services, in addition to in-person American Sign Language interpreters. On-site interpretation services provided by local interpreters may be accessed through INCommunities.

#### **6.4.7 Animal Care: Animal Protection Agencies**

Depending on the evacuation centre facilities, pets may or may not be accommodated within the centre. To safeguard the health and safety of both people and pets during an incident, pets may only be boarded in rooms which have separate ventilation systems and/or have a separate exit outside. Animal protection and care agencies (e.g. Fort Erie SPCA, Lincoln County Humane Society, Niagara SPCA and Humane Society and/or the OSPCA - Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) may be called upon for assistance in placing and caring for pets.

Only service animals as described by O. Reg. 191/11-Integrated Accessibility Standards are allowed to accompany their owner in an evacuation centre and will be the responsibility of the owner. Priority will be given to find appropriate lodging and animal care for individuals with service animals.

#### **6.4.8 Vulnerable People and Unattended Children: Niagara Region Community Services**

In the event that vulnerable people with special needs or an unattended child is identified at registration or discovered in the course of evacuation centre operations the Specialized Services Lead will maintain temporary responsibility until appropriate caregivers are identified (hospital transfer, Children's Aid Society, etc.). Supervision, support and the provision of appropriate care will be established in a secure, supervised area within the evacuation centre.

### 6.4.9 Recreation: Niagara Region Community Services/Local Municipal Facility Staff

Recreational activities may be provided to encourage lodgers to maintain their well-being and physical fitness, where possible. When an evacuation centre is in operation for an extended period of time, age-appropriate recreational activities may be organized and supervised by facility Recreation staff or Community Services staff (e.g. Children’s Services or Seniors Community Programs).

## 6.5 Planning

### 6.5.1. Planning Lead: Niagara Region Community Services

The Planning Lead responsibilities include collecting, analyzing and transferring of information, making recommendations for action, tracking resources, maintaining all documentation, supporting the various evacuation centre leads, and updating status boards with relevant information.

**Figure 6: Planning**



## 6.6 Logistics/Administration

Logistics/Administration is led by a Facility Manager or Supervisor with in-depth knowledge of the facility and its capacity to serve as an evacuation centre. The aim of the Logistics/Administration function is to keep the facility running at its optimum to support evacuees.

**Figure 7: Logistics**



### **6.6.1 Logistics/Administration Lead: Municipal/Regional Facility Manager**

The Logistics/Administration Lead will be responsible for making the facility available for operations as an evacuation centre and providing facility staff, ongoing maintenance and housekeeping activities for the duration of an evacuation centre's activation. Additionally, the Lead is responsible for managing the facility during evacuation centre operations to ensure office functions are running to track facility invoices, employee and contractor sign-in, providing program information, and ensuring administrative management of the facility is running smoothly.

Logistics/Administration will be provided on a 24-hour basis at the evacuation centre unless otherwise specified (e.g. Information Technology assistance may only be required on an as needed basis).

### **6.6.2 Facilities Maintenance: Local Municipal Staff/ School Board Staff**

The facilities staff will ensure the facility is clean, in good repair, safe to enter and exit and that all hygiene supplies (paper towels, soap, and hand sanitizers) are replenished regularly during evacuation centre operations. All present at the evacuation centre will work with facility staff to maintain a safe environment during evacuation centre operations.

### **6.6.3 Security: Municipal/ Regional Staff**

Staff may provide security services, working together with the Site Manager, Evacuation Centre Liaison and facility staff to maintain a level of personal and centre security. Should fire safety systems fail, personnel will be instructed to conduct "fire watches" until fire safety systems are operational.

### **6.6.4 Transportation: Municipal/Regional Staff**

Staff will arrange Niagara Specialized Transit, Local Area Municipal public transit, taxis or buses for evacuees who may require transportation.

### **6.6.5 Information Technology (IT): Local Municipal IT/ Regional IT**

The Logistics/Administration Lead will contact Municipal IT or Regional IT to coordinate the maintenance or service of IT equipment and assist staff in accessing the internet and other communications as needed.

# Appendix A: Amendment Table

Number	Date	Version	Amended by	Community Services Senior Leadership Team Approval	Sections updated	Nature of the update
1	02/01/2020	1.0	Michelle Johnston		All	New Document

Emergency Social Services Plan

# SUB-PLAN B: EVACUATION CENTRE

Niagara  Region

February 2020