

**Orleans-Essex
REGIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE BYLAWS**

Article I. Name

The Regional Emergency Management Committee for Orleans County and Upper Essex County, Vermont created by [Act No. 52 \(H.122\)](#) of 2021 under [20 V.S.A. § 6](#), shall be known as the “Orleans-Essex Regional Emergency Management Committee” (herein referred to as the “Emergency Management Committee”). The Emergency Management Committee includes all of Orleans County municipalities as well as the towns of Bloomfield, Brighton, Brunswick, Canaan, Lemington, Maidstone, Norton, and the Unified Towns and Gores from Essex County.

Article II. Purpose

The duties and purposes of the Emergency Management Committee are those set forth pursuant to Vermont Statutes ([20 V.S.A. § 6](#)). Emergency Management Committee shall perform all the duties delineated by [Act No. 52 \(H.122\)](#), including coordination of emergency planning and preparedness activities to improve the county’s ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from all disasters. To this end, the Emergency Management Committee will maintain an all-hazards emergency management plan in accordance with guidance set forth by the Division of Emergency Management.

Article III. Officers and Duties

Section 1. Officers

The officers of the Orleans-Essex Regional Emergency Planning Committee shall consist of a Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer. These officers form the Executive Committee, in the event an Executive Committee meeting is required. The role of Secretary will be performed by a member of the local Regional Planning Commission staff (NVDA).

Section 2. Support Staff

Administrative services for the Emergency Management Committee shall be provided by a representative of the Northeastern Vermont Development Association, the Regional Planning Commission for Caledonia, Essex, and Orleans Counties, funded by Vermont of Emergency Management. However, this does not preclude any of the *ex officio* members' agencies or departments from providing administrative support to the Emergency Management Committee.

Section 3. Duties

The Chair shall be responsible for calling and presiding over all meetings of Emergency Management Committee. The Vice Chair shall serve as Chair and shall perform all duties assigned to the Chair in the absence of the Chair.

An NVDA Regional Planning Commission representative shall be responsible for supporting the Chair, maintaining a list of voting and non-voting members, securing meeting space, advertising meetings and agendas, taking & disseminating minutes, and documenting the Regional Emergency Management Committee decisions in the Regional Plan & submitting the regional plan to Vermont Emergency Management. Draft minutes shall be posted and sent out in advance for approval at the next regular meeting of the Emergency Management Committee.

Section 4. Vacancies

Vacancies due to resignation or other causes can be filled, with the concurrence of the remaining elected officers, by appointment.

Article IV. Membership

The Emergency Management Committee shall consist of voting and non-voting members.

Each municipality in the region is required to designate two voting representatives to the Emergency Management Committee and is encouraged to invite additional stakeholders to ensure broad-based perspective across the region.

Section 1. Voting Membership

The local emergency management director or designee and one representative from each town and city in the region shall serve as the voting members of the Emergency Management Committee. As required by [20 V.S.A. § 6](#), a representative from a town or city shall be a member of the town's or city's emergency services community and shall be appointed by the town's or city's executive or legislative branch.

Section 2. Nonvoting Membership

Other representatives from the following organizations serving within the region: fire departments, emergency medical services, law enforcement, media, transportation, regional planning commissions, hospitals, the Department of Health's district office, the Division of Emergency Management, organizations serving vulnerable populations, and any other interested public or private individual or organization.

Article V. Meetings

Section 1. Regular Meetings.

The Emergency Management Committee shall meet at least quarterly for regular meetings. Meeting dates shall be established in advance by the Chair, working with a representative from NVDA.

Meetings shall be held at a time and location determined by the Chair. Meetings canceled due to unforeseen circumstances may be rescheduled by the Chair and conducted within 45 days of the regular meeting date, if required to meet the business needs of the Emergency Management Committee.

Section 2. The Chair shall preside at all meetings that he/she attends. In the case of the Chair's absence, the Vice Chair shall preside.

Section 3. Quorum.

A quorum shall consist of at least half plus one of the voting members from the established Emergency Management Committee positions, either by attendance at a regular meeting or by proxy. A quorum shall be required to hold an official meeting, hold elections, or transact business. Attendance at a regular or special meeting also may be via telephone, teleconference, or any electronic means by which the voting members can see and/or hear one another. In the absence of a quorum, the Emergency Management Committee may still meet and discuss any issue that may come before them, but no such action shall be the official decision of the Emergency Management Committee unless later ratified by a quorum.

Section 4. Notice of Meetings.

- (1) Notice of Emergency Management Committee meetings shall comply with Vermont Statutes Annotated, 1 V.S.A. §310, §311, §312, §313, and §314 (collectively known as the Open Meeting Law). All meetings of the Emergency Management Committee shall be open to the public. Notice of regular, quarterly meetings shall be posted in the local press at least a week prior to each meeting.
- (2) In accordance with the provisions of Title 1 Vermont Statutes Annotated § 312(c)(2) special meetings may be called at times other than as set forth in Article V, Section 1 above, by the Chair or in the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair. The time, place, and purpose of a special meeting subject to this section shall be publicly announced at least 24 hours before the meeting. The Emergency Management Committee shall post notices of special meetings in or near the clerk's offices of its member towns and in at least two other designated public places in each such municipality at least 24 hours before the special meeting. The Emergency Management Committee shall post notice of a special meeting in the local press, if practicable, but such posting shall not be required. In addition, notice shall be given, either orally or in writing, to each delegate to the Emergency Management Committee at least 24 hours before the meeting, except that a member may waive notice of a special meeting, and attendance at such meeting shall be deemed waiver of such notice.
- (3) In accordance with the provisions of Title 1 Vermont Statutes Annotated § 312(c)(3) emergency meetings may be called by the Chair, or in the absence of the Chair by the Vice Chair without public announcement, without posting of notices, and without 24-hour notice to members, provided some public notice thereof is given as soon as possible before any such meeting. Emergency meetings may be held only when necessary to respond to an unforeseen occurrence or condition requiring immediate attention by the public body.

Section 5. Rules of Order.

The deliberation of all meetings of the Emergency Management Committee and its various committees shall be governed by the small boards and committees provisions of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, when not inconsistent with these bylaws, or with special rules of order adopted by the Emergency Management Committee.

Section 6. Minutes of Meetings.

Minutes of all Emergency Management Committee meetings shall be maintained by the Secretary. Minutes shall include, but not be limited to, a record of all Emergency Management Committee motions and votes, a record of Emergency

Management Committee members in attendance or absent from all meetings and a summary of pertinent discussion. Meeting schedules and copies of approved minutes will be posted on the NVDA website at: <http://www.nvda.net>.

Section 7. Participation of Members of the Public.

All meetings shall be open to the general public unless an executive session is invoked under Vermont Statutes Annotated, 1 V.S.A. §313. Members of the public shall be encouraged to attend all regular and special meetings. Public notice of meetings shall be consistent with the provisions of the Open Meeting Law. An opportunity shall be provided at each meeting for members of the public to address the Emergency Management Committee.

Article VI. Voting procedures

Voting is required for financial matters of the Emergency Management Committee, electing of officers, and electing individuals to represent the Emergency Management Committee. Informal appointments of officers and representatives of the Regional Emergency Management Committee may be made up until June 1, 2022.

Matters that require a vote of the Emergency Management Committee must be approved by the majority of Emergency Management Committee voting members in attendance at a duly warned meeting, as provided for in these bylaws. Voting proxies for a particular town may be delegated to the other board member within the represented city or town.

Article VII. Elections

The Emergency Management Committee shall elect officers to the positions of Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer. The chair shall develop a meeting schedule, agenda, and facilitate each meeting. The vice chair shall fill in for the chair during the chair's absence.

The Emergency Management Committee shall also elect from membership one or more individuals to fill the following three roles:

- 1 individual to represent Emergency Management Committee on the statewide Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). This individual will receive information about Hazardous Materials within their region and share it with Regional Emergency Management Committee members.
- 1 individual to represent Emergency Management Committee in the Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment and Stakeholder

Preparedness Review (THIRA/SPR). This individual will report on the current capabilities and gaps in the region's response to threats/hazards. • 1 individual to represent Emergency Management Committee in the Integrated Preparedness Planning Workshop (IPPW). This individual will report on the plans, trainings, & exercises needed or planned for the region over the next 3 years.

The Emergency Management Committee will conduct these elections in the first quarterly meeting following Town Meeting Day each year. These positions will be held for one year (July 1-June 30).

Officers and representatives shall be elected by a majority of voting members in attendance or represented by proxy at the meeting or by any other voting method allowed by these bylaws. Nominations may be made in advance by committee members or accepted from the floor. All officers and representatives may run for re-election.

Article VIII. Subcommittees

Officers may appoint subcommittees, list duties and establish deadlines as deemed necessary. Subcommittees may include committees for planning, training, exercising, and other tasks as appropriate.

Article IX. Finances

For financial purposes, Emergency Management Committee will operate on a fiscal year beginning July 1st. Only the Treasurer shall receive money into and disburse money from the Emergency Management Committee's accounts. Any Emergency Management Committee accounts must be non-interest bearing to be eligible to receive grant allocations. Authorization for the Treasurer to disburse funds requires a minimum of the concurrence of *two* (2) standing officers and one member, or as a result of a motion passed at any regular Emergency Management Committee meeting. The Treasurer shall make a report of current financial status available to the Committee at each regularly scheduled meeting. In the event the Treasurer is unable to perform any of these duties, they may be performed by the Chair who shall also be a signatory on all Emergency Management Committee bank accounts.

For specific projects identified to close capability gaps, the Emergency Management Committee may have access to competitive grant funding including, but not limited to, Homeland Security Grant Program and Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs. At the time of application, Regional Emergency Management Committees will determine a fiscal agent, and may create a Memorandum of Understanding between those contributing funding or benefiting from the project.

Article XI. Requests for Information

In the event the Emergency Management Committee receives a Public Records Act request relating to the release of Stakeholder Preparedness Review or other security related documents that originate with Vermont Emergency Management, the Emergency Management Committee will inform Vermont Emergency Management who will adjudicate these requests to assist the Emergency Management Committee.

Any requests received by Emergency Management Committee for chemical inventory information provided under the requirements of EPCRA shall be directed to the statewide LEPC.

Article XII. Changes to Bylaws

Changes to these bylaws may be made after each Emergency Management Committee member has been notified of the impending changes in writing. The changes may be then voted on at a meeting to be scheduled at least two weeks after the initial notice. Changes in bylaws must be approved by a majority of Emergency Management Committee members entitled to vote, in person or by proxy as authorized by these bylaws.

