

Emergency & Disaster Declarations

Quick Reference Guide



Terminology

- **Emergency:** The imminent threat of a disaster causing immediate peril to life or property that timely action can avert or minimize.
- **Disaster:** The occurrence or imminent threat of widespread or severe damage, injury, or loss of life or property resulting from any natural or artificial cause, including ...
- **Political Subdivision:** any county, city, town, or other legally constituted unit of local government in this state.
- **Principal Executive Officer:** the mayor, presiding officer of the county commissioners, or other chief executive officer of a political subdivision. **Must be elected official, chief executive officer applies to consolidated MT governments.*

Initiation Process

- Contact Emergency Management Duty Officer.
- Identify the intended outcome of the declaration.
 - Suspension of normal operations.
 - Fiscal Costs.
 - Public recognition of incident.
 - Implement Authorities of Principal Executive Officer.
- Utilize declaration templates in consultation with legal counsel.
- Sign by Principal Executive Officer (typically ratified by full governing body when possible).
- Notify and provide declaration to Montana Disaster and Emergency Services.
- File with Clerk for political subdivision.

Considerations

- Think about the purpose and desired outcome from issuing a declaration. Many times, there is no inherent benefit other than public recognition of an incident.
- If significant costs are expected to be incurred, specific records and business practices will need to be followed for maximum cost recuperation. Coordinate this with Emergency Management early.
- In order to access public agency fiscal support from the State of Montana, or the US government, the emergency tax as outlined in 10-3-405, MCA must be levied.
- Principal Executive Officers have very specific authorities listed under 10-3-406, MCA that should be implemented through consultation with legal counsel.

Reference

- [General Provisions and Administration, 10-3-1, MCA](#)
- [Local and Interjurisdictional Planning and Execution, 10-3-4, MCA](#)
- [Declaration Templates](#)