

Public Works as First Responders Recognition

BACKGROUND

In 2003, President George W. Bush issued Presidential Policy Directive 8 (PPD-8) officially recognizing public works as first responders.

In 2010, Mississippi, under House Bill (HB) 664, recognized public works professionals as first responders.

In 2017, the APWA Board of Directors approved the adoption of a national “Public Works First Responder” symbol for use throughout North America to identify public works personnel and acknowledge their federally mandated role as first responders.

In 2019, the US Senate passed Senate Concurrent Resolution 15 (S.Con.Res.15), “Expressing support for the designation of October 28, 2019, as Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day.” Public works is specifically included.

In 2022 New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu signed into law SB325, formally recognizing public works employees as first responders.

In 2022, New Hampshire passed HB 536, “An Act relative to death benefits for public works employees killed in the line of duty, and relative to workers’ compensation offsets for certain retirement system benefits.”

In 2023, Panama City, Florida formally recognized their Public Works department as first responders through resolution.

In 2025, Addison, Texas formally recognized their Public Works department as first responders through resolution.

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) lists public works alongside police, fire, and public.

DISCUSSION

Public Works is often overlooked as a first responder compared to police, fire, and EMS. However, our teams provide the essential initial support that enables those agencies to access and respond to other emergencies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To recognize Charlotte County Public Works employees as first responders through a resolution to further align with the 2003 Presidential Directive 8 (PPD-8).

Take Action in Your Community

Read how Addison, Texas, [formally recognized public works as first responders](#). Use the town's [official resolution](#) as a guide to recognize public works where you live.

Background

- In 2003, President George W. Bush issued Presidential Policy Directive 8 (PPD-8) officially recognizing public works as first responders.
- In 2010, Mississippi, under House Bill (HB) 664, recognized public works professionals as first responders.
- In 2017, the APWA Board of Directors approved the adoption of a national "Public Works First Responder" symbol for use throughout North America to identify public works personnel and acknowledge their federally mandated role as first responders.
- In 2019, the US Senate passed Senate Concurrent Resolution 15 (S.Con.Res.15), "Expressing support for the designation of October 28, 2019, as Honoring the Nation's First Responders Day." Public works is specifically included.
- In 2022 New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu signed into law SB325, formally recognizing public works employees as first responders.
- In 2022, New Hampshire passed HB 536, "An Act relative to death benefits for public works employees killed in the line of duty, and relative to workers' compensation offsets for certain retirement system benefits."
- Public works is often considered "the silent arm of public safety" ... usually without fanfare. Public works professionals are often the first on scene and the last to leave the scenes of disasters—no matter the peril.
- The National Incident Management System (NIMS) lists public works alongside police, fire, and public.



For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
December 17, 2003

December 17, 2003 Homeland Security Presidential Directive/Hspd-8

Subject: National Preparedness

Purpose

(1) This directive establishes policies to strengthen the preparedness of the United States to prevent and respond to threatened or actual domestic terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies by requiring a national domestic all-hazards preparedness goal, establishing mechanisms for improved delivery of Federal preparedness assistance to State and local governments, and outlining actions to strengthen preparedness capabilities of Federal, State, and local entities.

Definitions

(2) For the purposes of this directive:

(a) The term "all-hazards preparedness" refers to preparedness for domestic terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies.

(b) The term "Federal departments and agencies" means those executive departments enumerated in 5 U.S.C. 101, and the Department of Homeland Security; independent establishments as defined by 5 U.S.C. 104(1); Government corporations as defined by 5 U.S.C. 103(1); and the United States Postal Service.

(c) The term "Federal preparedness assistance" means Federal department and agency grants, cooperative agreements, loans, loan guarantees, training, and/or technical assistance provided to State and local governments and the private sector to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies. Unless noted otherwise, the term "assistance" will refer to Federal assistance programs.

(d) The term "first responder" refers to those individuals who in the early stages of an incident are responsible for the protection and preservation of life, property, evidence, and the environment, including emergency response providers as defined in section 2 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101), as well as emergency management, public health, clinical care, public works, and other skilled support

personnel (such as equipment operators) that provide immediate support services during prevention, response, and recovery operations.

(e) The terms "major disaster" and "emergency" have the meanings given in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122).

(f) The term "major events" refers to domestic terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies.

(g) The term "national homeland security preparedness-related exercises" refers to homeland security-related exercises that train and test national decision makers and utilize resources of multiple Federal departments and agencies. Such exercises may involve State and local first responders when appropriate. Such exercises do not include those exercises conducted solely within a single Federal department or agency.

(h) The term "preparedness" refers to the existence of plans, procedures, policies, training, and equipment necessary at the Federal, State, and local level to maximize the ability to prevent, respond to, and recover from major events. The term "readiness" is used interchangeably with preparedness.

(i) The term "prevention" refers to activities undertaken by the first responder community during the early stages of an incident to reduce the likelihood or consequences of threatened or actual terrorist attacks. More general and broader efforts to deter, disrupt, or thwart terrorism are not addressed in this directive.

(j) The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of Homeland Security.

(k) The terms "State," and "local government," when used in a geographical sense, have the same meanings given to those terms in section 2 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (6 U.S.C. 101).

Relationship to HSPD-5

(3) This directive is a companion to HSPD-5, which identifies steps for improved coordination in response to incidents. This directive describes the way Federal departments and agencies will prepare for such a response, including prevention activities during the early stages of a terrorism incident.

Development of a National Preparedness Goal

(4) The Secretary is the principal Federal official for coordinating the implementation of all-hazards preparedness in the United States. In cooperation with other Federal departments and agencies, the Secretary coordinates the preparedness of Federal response assets, and the support for, and assessment of, the preparedness of State and local first responders.

(5) To help ensure the preparedness of the Nation to prevent, respond to, and recover from threatened and actual domestic terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies, the Secretary, in coordination with the heads of other appropriate Federal departments and agencies and in consultation with State and local governments, shall develop a national domestic all-hazards preparedness goal. Federal departments and agencies will work to achieve this goal by:

(a) providing for effective, efficient, and timely delivery of

Federal preparedness assistance to State and local governments;

and

(b) supporting efforts to ensure first responders are prepared to

respond to major events, especially prevention of and response

to threatened terrorist attacks.

(6) The national preparedness goal will establish measurable readiness priorities and targets that appropriately balance the potential threat and magnitude of terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies with the resources required to prevent, respond to, and recover from them. It will also include readiness metrics and elements that support the national preparedness goal including standards for preparedness assessments and strategies, and a system for assessing the Nation's overall preparedness to respond to major events, especially those involving acts of terrorism.

(7) The Secretary will submit the national preparedness goal to me through the Homeland Security Council (HSC) for review and approval prior to, or concurrently with, the Department of Homeland Security's Fiscal Year 2006 budget submission to the Office of Management and Budget.

Federal Preparedness Assistance

(8) The Secretary, in coordination with the Attorney General, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the heads of other Federal departments and agencies that provide assistance for first responder preparedness, will establish a single point of access to Federal preparedness assistance program information within 60 days of the issuance of this directive. The Secretary will submit to me through the HSC recommendations of specific Federal department and agency programs to be part of the coordinated approach. All Federal departments and agencies will cooperate with this effort. Agencies will continue to issue financial assistance awards consistent with applicable laws and regulations and will ensure that program announcements, solicitations, application instructions, and other guidance documents are consistent with other Federal preparedness programs to the extent possible. Full implementation of a closely coordinated interagency grant process will be completed by September 30, 2005.

(9) To the extent permitted by law, the primary mechanism for delivery of Federal preparedness assistance will be awards to the States. Awards will be delivered in a form that allows the recipients to apply the assistance to the highest priority preparedness requirements at the appropriate level of government. To the extent permitted by law, Federal preparedness assistance will be predicated on adoption of Statewide comprehensive all-hazards preparedness strategies. The strategies should be consistent with the national preparedness goal, should assess the most effective ways to enhance preparedness, should address areas facing higher risk, especially to terrorism, and should also address local government concerns and Citizen Corps efforts. The Secretary, in coordination with the heads of other appropriate Federal departments and agencies, will review and approve strategies submitted by the States. To the extent permitted by law, adoption of approved Statewide strategies will be a requirement for receiving Federal preparedness assistance at all levels of government by September 30, 2005.

(10) In making allocations of Federal preparedness assistance to the States, the Secretary, the Attorney General, the Secretary of HHS, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the heads of other Federal departments and agencies that provide assistance for first responder preparedness will base those allocations on assessments of population concentrations, critical infrastructures, and other significant risk factors, particularly terrorism threats, to the extent permitted by law.

(11) Federal preparedness assistance will support State and local entities' efforts including planning, training, exercises, interoperability, and equipment acquisition for major events as well as capacity building for prevention activities such as information gathering, detection, deterrence, and collaboration related to terrorist attacks. Such assistance is not primarily intended to support existing capacity to address normal local first responder operations, but to build capacity to address major events, especially terrorism.

(12) The Attorney General, the Secretary of HHS, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the heads of other Federal departments and agencies that provide assistance for first responder preparedness shall coordinate with the Secretary to ensure that such assistance supports and is consistent with the national preparedness goal.

(13) Federal departments and agencies will develop appropriate mechanisms to ensure rapid obligation and disbursement of funds from their programs to the States, from States to the local community level, and from local entities to the end users to derive maximum benefit from the assistance provided. Federal departments and agencies will report annually to the Secretary on the obligation, expenditure status, and the use of funds associated with Federal preparedness assistance programs.

Equipment

(14) The Secretary, in coordination with State and local officials, first responder organizations, the private sector and other Federal civilian departments and agencies, shall establish and implement streamlined procedures for the ongoing development and adoption of appropriate first responder equipment standards that support nationwide interoperability and other capabilities consistent with the national preparedness goal, including the safety and health of first responders.

(15) To the extent permitted by law, equipment purchased through Federal preparedness assistance for first responders shall conform to equipment standards in place at time of purchase. Other Federal departments and agencies that support the purchase of first responder equipment will coordinate their programs with the Department of Homeland Security and conform to the same standards.

(16) The Secretary, in coordination with other appropriate Federal departments and agencies and in consultation with State and local governments, will develop plans to identify and address national first responder equipment research and development needs based upon assessments of current and future threats. Other Federal departments and agencies that support preparedness research and development activities shall coordinate their efforts with the Department of Homeland Security and ensure they support the national preparedness goal.

Training and Exercises

(17) The Secretary, in coordination with the Secretary of HHS, the Attorney General, and other appropriate Federal departments and agencies and in consultation with State and local governments, shall establish and maintain a comprehensive training program to meet the national preparedness goal. The program will identify standards and maximize the effectiveness of existing Federal programs and financial assistance and include training for the Nation's first responders, officials, and others with major event preparedness, prevention, response, and recovery roles. Federal departments and agencies shall include private organizations in the accreditation and delivery of preparedness training as appropriate and to the extent permitted by law.

(18) The Secretary, in coordination with other appropriate Federal departments and agencies, shall establish a national program and a multi-year planning system to conduct homeland security preparedness-related exercises that reinforces identified training standards, provides for evaluation of readiness, and supports the national preparedness goal. The establishment and maintenance of the program will be conducted in maximum collaboration with State and local governments and appropriate private sector entities. All Federal departments and agencies that conduct national homeland security preparedness-related exercises shall participate in a collaborative, interagency process to designate such exercises on a consensus basis and create a master exercise calendar. The Secretary will ensure that exercises included in the calendar support the national preparedness goal. At the time of designation, Federal departments and agencies will identify their level of participation in national homeland security preparedness-related exercises. The Secretary will develop a multi-year national homeland security preparedness-related exercise plan and submit the plan to me through the HSC for review and approval.

(19) The Secretary shall develop and maintain a system to collect, analyze, and disseminate lessons learned, best practices, and information from exercises, training events, research, and other sources, including actual incidents, and establish procedures to improve national preparedness to prevent, respond to, and recover from major events. The Secretary, in coordination with other Federal departments and agencies and State and local governments, will identify relevant classes of homeland-security related information and appropriate means of transmission for the information to be included in the system. Federal departments and agencies are directed, and State and local governments are requested, to provide this information to the Secretary to the extent permitted by law.

Federal Department and Agency Preparedness

(20) The head of each Federal department or agency shall undertake actions to support the national preparedness goal, including adoption of quantifiable performance measurements in the areas of training, planning, equipment, and exercises for Federal incident management and asset preparedness, to the extent permitted by law. Specialized Federal assets such as teams, stockpiles, and caches shall be maintained at levels consistent with the national preparedness goal and be available for response activities as set forth in the National Response Plan, other appropriate operational documents, and applicable authorities or guidance. Relevant Federal regulatory requirements should be consistent with the national preparedness goal.

Nothing in this directive shall limit the authority of the Secretary of Defense with regard to the command and control, training, planning, equipment, exercises, or employment of Department of Defense forces, or the allocation of Department of Defense resources.

(21) The Secretary, in coordination with other appropriate Federal civilian departments and agencies, shall develop and maintain a Federal response capability inventory that includes the performance parameters of the capability, the timeframe within which the capability can be brought to bear on an incident, and the readiness of such capability to respond to domestic incidents. The Department of Defense will provide to the Secretary information describing the organizations and functions within the Department of Defense that may be utilized to provide support to civil authorities during a domestic crisis.

Citizen Participation

(22) The Secretary shall work with other appropriate Federal departments and agencies as well as State and local governments and the private sector to encourage active citizen participation and involvement in preparedness efforts. The Secretary shall periodically review and identify the best community practices for integrating private citizen capabilities into local preparedness efforts.

Public Communication

(23) The Secretary, in consultation with other Federal departments and agencies, State and local governments, and non-governmental organizations, shall develop a comprehensive plan to provide accurate and timely preparedness information to public citizens, first responders, units of government, the private sector, and other interested parties and mechanisms for coordination at all levels of government.

Assessment and Evaluation

(24) The Secretary shall provide to me through the Assistant to the President for Homeland Security an annual status report of the Nation's level of preparedness, including State capabilities, the readiness of Federal civil response assets, the utilization of mutual aid, and an assessment of how the Federal first responder preparedness assistance programs support the national preparedness goal. The first report will be provided within 1 year of establishment of the national preparedness goal.

(25) Nothing in this directive alters, or impedes the ability to carry out, the authorities of the Federal departments and agencies to perform their responsibilities under law and consistent with applicable legal authorities and presidential guidance.

(26) Actions pertaining to the funding and administration of financial assistance and all other activities, efforts, and policies in this directive shall be executed in accordance with law. To the extent permitted by law, these policies will be established and carried out in consultation with State and local governments.

(27) This directive is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch of the Federal Government, and it is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the United States, its departments, agencies, or other entities, its officers or employees, or any other person.

GEORGE W. BUSH

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MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE
2010 Regular Session
To: Judiciary B
By: Representatives Holland, Stevens, Clark, Scott, Jones
(111th), Gardner, Clarke, Myers

House Bill 664

(As Passed the House)

AN ACT TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI SILVER ALERT SYSTEM ACT OF 2010; TO PROVIDE CERTAIN DEFINITIONS; TO PROVIDE THE CRITERIA TO REQUEST AN ACTIVATION FOR A SILVER ALERT; TO PROVIDE THE CRITERIA FOR ACTIVATION OF A SILVER ALERT; TO PROVIDE CERTAIN DUTIES OF LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY RELATING TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACT; TO PROVIDE THE PROCEDURE THAT LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY MUST FOLLOW WHEN A MISSING PERSON CASE DOES NOT MEET THE SILVER ALERT CRITERIA; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

SECTION 1. This act shall be known and cited as the "Mississippi Silver Alert System Act of 2010."

SECTION 2. The Legislature finds that:

(a) Wandering is a common behavior among those persons with dementia or other cognitive impairments that causes great concern for the families and caregivers of this state;

(b) This state is not currently equipped with the systems necessary to locate those with dementia or other cognitive impairments in a timely manner, with the unfortunate result that some individuals are never returned home to their families; and

(c) It is imperative that this state develops a plan to ensure that if an individual with dementia or other cognitive impairments is missing, the appropriate infrastructure is available and can be easily and timely activated to protect the health and safety of these vulnerable citizens.

SECTION 3. When used in this act, unless the context requires a different definition, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) "E911" means Enhanced Universal Emergency Number Service or Enhanced 911 Service, which is a telephone exchange communications service by which a Public Safety Answering Point

designated by the county or local communication district may receive telephone calls dialed to the telephone number 911.

(b) "First responders" means state and local law enforcement personnel, fire department personnel, emergency medical personnel, emergency management personnel and public works personnel who may be deployed to bioterrorism attacks, terrorist attacks, catastrophic or natural disasters and emergencies.

(c) "Originating local law enforcement agency" means a local police or sheriff's office that has jurisdiction over the area where a person became missing.

SECTION 4. (1) The Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Public Safety shall implement a statewide "Silver Alert System" that has the purpose of providing a tiered, rapid response system to notify the public about missing endangered adults, who are age 18 or older, with dementia or other cognitive impairments. The initial response may be local, statewide or national based on available information about the missing person.

(2) A Silver Alert activation request may be made only by a law enforcement agency, and the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Public Safety may only activate a Silver Alert after a request is made.

(3) To activate a Silver Alert, all of the following criteria must be met:

(a) The missing adult, age 18 or older, is believed to have dementia or other cognitive impairments;

(b) The person is believed to be missing and in imminent danger regardless of circumstance;

(c) The family, legal caregiver or custodian of the missing person has submitted a missing person's report to the local law enforcement agency in the jurisdiction where the person became missing, with all waiting periods being waived; and

(d) The law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction of where the person became missing reports the incident to the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Public Safety through the Mississippi Highway Patrol Headquarters Communication Center.

(4) To initiate a request to activate a Silver Alert, the family, legal caregiver or custodian of the missing person must file immediately a report of the missing person with the local law enforcement agency where the person became missing that includes the following information:

(a) A description of the missing person including physical characteristics, clothing and photos, if available;

(b) A description of the known circumstances under which the person became missing including the time, place, direction, possible destinations, whether the person is walking or in a vehicle, and all other pertinent information concerning where the person may have become missing; and

(c) Updates on the missing person as new information becomes available.

(5) The originating local law enforcement agency, after completing the investigation expeditiously and determining that the case meets the qualifying criteria prescribed in this section, shall:

(a) Waive in the case of a Silver Alert, any waiting periods for a missing person's report in order to galvanize the appropriate communities rapidly to assist in the search for and the safe recovery of the missing person;

(b) Notify the Mississippi Highway Patrol Headquarters Communication Center and electronically send to the center the completed Silver Alert forms and available photos, signed by the police chief, sheriff, commanding officer or his or her designee;

(c) Enter the information into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC);

(d) Using a tiered approach based on known circumstances, initiate an alert bulletin to all local law enforcement, E911 and first responder agencies to search the immediate area;

(e) Activate secondary alert systems to residents, businesses, and broadcast media in the immediate area;

(f) Provide a twenty-four-hour phone number to receive calls while continuing the investigation; and

(g) Update the family, legal caregiver or custodian of the missing person as new information becomes available.

SECTION 5. (1) After the Bureau of Investigation of the Department of Public Safety has been contacted by a local law enforcement agency requesting a Silver Alert activation, the Criminal Information Center shall consider before the activation of the Silver Alert procedures by the Silver Alert coordinator, or his or her designee, the information contained in the initial Silver Alert report form to ensure that it meets all criteria specified in Section 4, subsection (3) of this act. Elements of the missing person case to be considered are:

(a) Threat of imminent harm or death to the missing person because of age, health, mental or physical disability, environmental or weather conditions;

(b) Time of initial report in relation to the time of disappearance, including whether the disappearance is unexplained, involuntary or is under suspicious circumstances;

(c) Believed to be walking or in a vehicle;

(d) Witness information;

(e) Possible domestic dispute involving the missing person; and

(f) Other facts that indicate the missing person is in danger of serious injury or death, including whether there is possible criminal intent toward the missing person or whether someone witnessed the disappearance.

(2) Each case shall be reviewed on its own merits, and if there are extenuating circumstances, the required criteria in

this act may be amended or expanded depending on the merits presented.

(3) Only the Silver Alert coordinator, or his or her designee, may authorize activation of a statewide Silver Alert and if an activation is authorized, the Criminal Information Center shall:

(a) Prepare an announcement concerning the missing person;

(b) Contact the designated media stations to activate the alert; and

(c) Request the Mississippi Department of Transportation to activate electronic signs, if appropriate.

(4) If the missing person is believed to be in a vehicle, the Silver Alert coordinator shall send information and available photos via emails and fax to the statewide communications systems, news media, cellular telephone companies and other forms of public communication or electronic resources.

SECTION 6. (1) Following the initial alert, a Silver Alert broadcast shall be updated by television and radio stations as necessary until such time that an end of alert message is received from the law enforcement agency that requested the initial Silver Alert.

(2) Local and statewide broadcast stations shall exercise their own independent discretions as to whether to repeat the required broadcasts prescribed in this section more frequently and shall determine the frequency in which the alert is re-broadcast following the initial alert.

(3) The Silver Alert termination notification shall be issued twenty-four (24) hours after the airing of the latest and most current information or when the case has been resolved and verification from the originating local law enforcement agency has been received by the Department of Public Safety.

SECTION 7. (1) If the circumstances of a person's disappearance do not meet the criteria for a Silver Alert to activate statewide communication systems, the Bureau of

Investigation of the Department of Public Safety may offer an alternate form of mass notification as provided in this section.

(2) The alternate form of mass notification may be an email that includes a photograph and the Silver Alert initial reporting form that is sent through a statewide network of law enforcement and first responder agencies, news media offices and other forms of public communication.

(3) The email authorized in subsection (2) of this section shall contain information taken from the Silver Alert initial reporting form that is submitted by the originating local law enforcement agency.

(4) The email alerting news media and law enforcement agencies of a person's disappearance that does not meet the criteria of a Silver Alert activation shall include the following paragraph at the beginning of the email:

"The (name of law enforcement agency) has requested the following information be provided to the Mississippi news media and law enforcement agencies: At the present time, information being provided to the Mississippi Department of Public Safety by the (name of law enforcement agency) does not meet the criteria to activate a Silver Alert. It is left to the discretion of each law enforcement agency and news department receiving this email as to whether the attached information, regarding the disappearance of this person and/or the photograph of this person, will be released to the public."

(5) If further investigation into the disappearance produces evidence that may change the initial circumstances as reported to local law enforcement, the Department of Public Safety may reconsider activating a Silver Alert.

SECTION 8. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2010.

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. CON. RES. 15

Expressing support for the designation of October 28, 2019, as “Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 1, 2019

Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mr. COTTON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. PETERS, Ms. ROSEN, and Mr. LANKFORD) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

JUNE 4, 2019

Reported by Mr. JOHNSON, without amendment

JUNE 5, 2019

Considered and agreed to

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing support for the designation of October 28, 2019, as “Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day”.

Whereas first responders include professional and volunteer fire, police, emergency medical technician, and paramedic workers in the United States;

Whereas, according to a 2017 compilation of data on the Emergency Services Sector in the United States by the Department of Homeland Security, “The first responder community comprises an estimated 4.6 million career and volunteer professionals within five primary disciplines:

Law Enforcement, Fire and Rescue Services, Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Management, and Public Works.”;

Whereas first responders deserve to be recognized for their commitment to safety, defense, and honor; and

Whereas October 28, 2019, would be an appropriate day to establish as “Honoring the Nation’s First Responders Day”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*
2 *concurring), That Congress—*

3 (1) supports the designation of October 28,
4 2019, as “Honoring the Nation’s First Responders
5 Day”;

6 (2) honors and recognizes the contributions of
7 first responders; and

8 (3) encourages the people of the United States
9 to observe Honoring the Nation’s First Responders
10 Day with appropriate ceremonies and activities that
11 promote awareness of the contributions of first re-
12 sponders in the United States.

○

✦ AI Overview

Yes, it is accurate that in 2022, New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu signed Senate Bill 325 (SB 325) into law, formally recognizing public works employees as first responders. The bill, which passed with bipartisan support, includes public works professionals in the state's definitions of "emergency management" and "local organization for emergency management". This legislation acknowledges the critical role public works plays in disaster response and recovery efforts by providing essential support, such as clearing debris and maintaining roadways, allowing other first responders to access affected areas. [🔗](#)

Key Details of NH SB 325:

- **Sponsors:** The bill was sponsored by Senators Cavanaugh, Watters, Bradley, and Soucy. [🔗](#)
- **Date:** It was signed by Governor Sununu on June 7, 2022, and became effective on August 6, 2022. [🔗](#)
- **Purpose:** The bill's intent was to define first responders and include public works professionals, recognizing their essential functions during emergencies. [🔗](#)
- **Significance:** The law serves as an important morale booster for public works staff and formally acknowledges their vital contribution to public safety and emergency operations. [🔗](#)



Bill Text: NH SB325 | 2022 | Regular Session | Enrolled New Hampshire Senate Bill 325 (***Prior Session Legislation***)

Bill Title: Relative to local organization for emergency management and first responders.

Spectrum: Moderate Partisan Bill (Democrat 7-1)

Status: (*Passed*) 2022-06-08 - Signed by the Governor on 06/07/2022; Chapter 0166; Effective 08/06/2022 [SB325 Detail]

Download: New_Hampshire-2022-SB325-Enrolled.html

SB 325 - VERSION ADOPTED BY BOTH BODIES

02/24/2022 0705s

2022 SESSION

22-3060

07/04

SENATE BILL **325**

AN ACT relative to local organization for emergency management and first responders.

SPONSORS: Sen. Cavanaugh, Dist 16; Sen. Watters, Dist 4; Sen. Bradley, Dist 3; Sen. Soucy, Dist 18; Rep. Edgar, Rock. 21; Rep. Bucu, Carr. 2; Rep. Cushing, Rock. 21; Rep. Mullen, Hills. 7

COMMITTEE: Election Law and Municipal Affairs

AMENDED ANALYSIS

This bill defines first responders and includes first responders in the definitions of emergency management and local organization for emergency management within the division of homeland security and emergency management.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.

Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struck through~~].

Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

02/24/2022 0705s 22-3060

07/04

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Two

AN ACT relative to local organization for emergency management and first responders.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 Department of Safety; Homeland Security and Emergency Management; First Responders. Amend RSA 21-P:35 to read as follows:
21-P:35 Definitions. In this subdivision:

I. "Commissioner" means the commissioner of safety.

II. [Repealed.]

III. "Council" means the advisory council on emergency preparedness and security.

IV. "Director" means the director of the division of homeland security and emergency management.

V. "Emergency management" means the preparation for and the carrying out of all emergency functions, including but not limited to emergency response, ~~and~~ training functions, ***or the utilization of first responders, in order to prepare for***, prevent, minimize, and repair injury or damage resulting from the occurrence or threat of widespread or severe damage, injury, or loss of life or property resulting from any natural or human cause, including but not

limited to fire, flood, earthquake, windstorm, wave actions, technological incidents, oil or chemical spill, or water contamination requiring emergency action to avert danger or damage, epidemic, air contamination, blight, drought, infestation, explosion, terrorist act, or riot.

VI. "Local organization for emergency management" means an organization created in accordance with the provisions of this subdivision by state, county, or local authority to perform local emergency management functions, ***which may direct the utilization of first responders.***

VII. "Political subdivision" means counties, cities, towns, and duly established village precincts.

VIII. "State of emergency" means that condition, situation, or set of circumstances deemed to be so extremely hazardous or dangerous to life or property that it is necessary and essential to invoke, require, or utilize extraordinary measures, actions, and procedures to lessen or mitigate possible harm.

IX. "First responders" means state, county, and local governmental and nongovernmental emergency public safety fire, law enforcement, public safety telecommunications or dispatcher, emergency response, emergency medical services providers including hospital emergency facilities, emergency management, public health, clinical care, public works, and other skilled support personnel, such as equipment operators, that provide immediate support services necessary to perform emergency management functions.

2 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

RESOLUTION NO. 20230523.7

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PANAMA CITY, FLORIDA, TO RECOGNIZE PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEES AS FIRST RESPONDERS AS FEDERALLY MANDATED; AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE PUBLIC WORKS RESPONDER SYMBOL AS ADOPTED BY THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION; AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO DO ALL THINGS NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT THE AIMS OF THIS RESOLUTION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, former President George W. Bush issued Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 (HSPD-5), Management of Domestic Incidents, in 2003, in which a public works response to emergencies and disasters is recognized as an absolute necessity, and the federal government is directed to include public works in all planning and response efforts; and

WHEREAS, the City of Panama City Public Works employees, throughout various divisions, are involved in Disaster Response and Recovery and have demonstrated their skills and commitment multiple times throughout the years; and

WHEREAS, the City of Panama City believes to best provide for the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens, it is appropriate to designate those employees as first responders that put the citizens of the City of Panama City before themselves in times of emergency; and

WHEREAS, in response to the federal mandate, the City Commission of the City of Panama City would like to designate the City of Panama City Public Works employees as first responders; and

WHEREAS, on May 7, 2018, the American Public Works Association announced the Association's adoption of a national Public Works Responder Symbol to be used throughout North America to recognize public works professionals' federally mandated role as first responders; and

WHEREAS, the Public Works First Responder symbol uses the familiar colors of orange, black and white, with a design reminiscent of road construction signs, safety cones and orange construction barrels; and is expected to increase recognition of public works employees as first responders throughout North America; and

WHEREAS, by displaying the symbol wherever appropriate, public works agencies can raise awareness among all citizens, government officials, and other first responders about the critical role public works plays in emergency management efforts; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission of the City of Panama City would like to authorize the City of Panama City Public Works Department to use the Public Works Responder Symbol, as adopted by the American Public Works Association, and to ensure the symbol has maximum exposure in as many settings as possible such as on fleet vehicles, license plates, letterhead, hard hats, uniforms, identification badges, public buildings, and offices.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PANAMA CITY, FLORIDA, THAT:

Section 1. Recitals Adopted. The above recitals are hereby confirmed and adopted herein.

Section 2. The employees of the City of Panama City Public Works Department are hereby recognized as First Responders as federally mandated.

Section 3. The Public Works Responder Symbol, as adopted by the American Public Works Association, is hereby authorized for use by the City of Panama City Public Works Department.

Section 4. The City Manager is hereby authorized to do all things necessary to carry out the aims of this Resolution.

Section 5. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED by the City Commission at its meeting this 23rd day of May, 2023.

**CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PANAMA CITY,
FLORIDA**



Greg Brudnicki, Mayor

ATTEST:


Jan Smith, City Clerk-Treasurer

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND CORRECTNESS:



Nevin J. Zimmerman, City Attorney

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ADDISON, TEXAS, DESIGNATING PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEES AS FIRST RESPONDERS; AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE PUBLIC WORKS FIRST RESPONDER SYMBOL AS ADOPTED BY THE AMERICAN PUBLIC WORKS ASSOCIATION (APWA); AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Public Works plays a vital role in responding to emergencies by supporting public safety emergency response partners, helping protect essential services, and restoring those services following an emergency; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the American Public Works Association (“APWA”) created a national “Public Works First Responder” symbol to be used throughout North America to recognize Public Works professionals as “First Responders”; and

WHEREAS, the National Incident Management System (“NIMS”) lists Public Works alongside Police, Fire, and Public Health workers in its documentation; and

WHEREAS, the efforts of Public Works First Responders represent an essential function protecting our citizens and communities that no other agency provides; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Addison (“Town”) would like to authorize the Public Works and Engineering Department to use the “Public Works First Responder” symbol, as adopted by the American Public Works Association, to raise awareness among all citizens, government officials, and other first responders about the critical role Public Works plays in emergency management efforts; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds it in the public’s best interest to designate the Town’s Public Works and Engineering employees as First Responders.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ADDISON, TEXAS:

SECTION 1. The above recitals are confirmed, adopted, and incorporated herein and made a part of hereof by this reference.

SECTION 2. The Town of Addison Public Works and Engineering Department employees are hereby designated as First Responders. The Town’s Public Works and Engineering Departments are authorized to use the “Public Works First Responder” symbol, as adopted by the APWA.

SECTION 3. The City Manager is hereby authorized to take such action as may be necessary to implement the purpose and the provisions of this Resolution.

SECTION 4. This Resolution shall be effective from and after the date of passage.

DULY RESOLVED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the Town of Addison, Texas,
on this the 27th day of May 2025.

TOWN OF ADDISON, TEXAS

Bruce Arfsten, Mayor

ATTEST:

Valencia Garcia, City Secretary

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Whitt Wyatt, City Attorney

[ww.3.12.25]

[Home \(https://www.addisontx.gov/Home\)](https://www.addisontx.gov/Home) / Addison Formally Recognizes Public Works as First Responders

Addison Formally Recognizes Public Works as First Responders

Published on June 02, 2025

At the May 27 City Council meeting, Addison became one of the first cities in Texas to formally designate its Public Works employees as Public Works First Responders. This action authorizes the use of the American Public Works Association's national symbol, acknowledging the critical role these professionals play in public safety.



In a show of unity, the entire Public Works team attended the meeting wearing matching shirts and proudly carrying the Public Works First Responder flag. Often described as the “silent arm of public safety,” these professionals are among the first to arrive and the last to leave during emergencies, working to protect and restore essential services in the face of natural disasters, infrastructure failures, and other crises.

This recognition aligns with a 2003 presidential directive and longstanding national emergency management protocols that place Public Works alongside police, fire, and EMS as essential emergency responders. Addison's action both honors this vital role and gives the team the public acknowledgment they deserve.

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Community Safety