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| **Introduction to the REMS TA Center**The REMS TA Center is administered by the U.S. Department of Education’s (ED) Office of Safe and Healthy Students (OSHS). The Center serves as a hub of information and services (e.g., guidance, training, tools, resources) to support K-12 schools and institutions of higher education (IHEs), both public and private, as well as partners at the local, state, and Federal levels, in developing and maintaining comprehensive, all-hazard, and high-quality campus and school EOPs. The EOPs capture the work being done to continually building higher education and school safety, security, and emergency management preparedness in the 5 mission areas: Prevention, Mitigation, Protection, Response and Recovery and prepares for protecting the whole school community before, during and after possible emergencies. **Introduction to the *School Guide***On June 18, 2013, several Federal departments and agencies, including the U.S. Departments of Education (ED); Justice (DOJ); led by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); Homeland Security (DHS), led by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); and Health and Human Services (HHS), released the [Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans](http://rems.ed.gov/docs/REMS_K-12_Guide_508.pdf) (*School Guide*).This document aligns and builds upon years of emergency planning work by the Federal government, and is the first joint product of these departments and agencies. The *School* *Guide* incorporates lessons learned from recent incidents, and responds to the needs and concerns voiced by stakeholders following the shootings in Newtown and Oak Creek and the tornadoes in Oklahoma. Schools are encouraged to use the *School* *Guide* to create new plans as well as to revise and update existing plans and align their emergency planning practices with those at the national, state, and local levels.**The *School Guide’s* Approach to Planning****Six Step Planning Process:***Step 1: Form a Collaborative Planning Team**Step 2: Understand the Situation**Step 3: Determine Goals and Objectives**Step 4: Plan Development (Identifying Courses of Action)**Step 5: Plan Preparation, Review, and Approval**Step 6: Plan Implementation and Maintenance***Functional Annexes** such as:

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| 1.Communications | 6.Reunification |
| 2.Evacuation | 7.Continuity of Operations |
| 3.Shelter-in-Place | 8.Security |
| 4.Lockdown | 9.Recovery |
| 5.Accounting for All  Persons | 10.Health and Medical |

**Threat - and Hazard-Specific Annexes** such as**:**

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| 1.Hurricane or Severe  Storm | 5.Mass Casualty Incident 6.*Active Shooter* |
| 2.Earthquake | *7.*Cyber Attack |
| 3.Tornado | 8.Pandemic or  |
| 4.Hazardous  Materials Incident |  Disease Outbreak |

The guidance provides key principles of school emergency preparedness planning and an overview of a recommended six-step planning process for developing a high-quality school emergency operations plan (EOP). Planning teams can progress through the six steps as follows. After a planning team is formed (Step 1: Form a Collaborative Planning Team), the team may identify through assessments, such as culture and climate assessments, that specific threats and hazards need to be addressed in the EOP (Step 2: Understand the Situation). Goals can be created that identify desired outcomes for before, during, and after these incidents and objectives can be established that are specific and measurable actions to achieve those goals (Step 3: Determine Goals and Objectives). Courses of action are then developed to accomplish those objectives (Step 4: Plan Development [Identifying Courses of Action]). A draft of the EOP is then written, including a basic plan, functional annexes, and hazard- and threat-specific annexes, and approved—see the text box above (Step 5: Plan Preparation, Review, and Approval), schools and districts can implement the activities described in the EOP, including conducting exercises and training (Step 6: Plan Implementation and Maintenance). More information on the six-step planning process can be found by clicking [here](http://rems.ed.gov/K12PlanningProcess.aspx). **REMS TA Center Resources**To assist the field in developing high-quality school EOPs by implementing the *School* *Guide*’s contents, the REMS TA Center has developed several resources and training opportunities to make the guidance easier to learn, understand, and implement. These are hyperlinked and described in brief below. * [Interactive Map](http://rems.ed.gov/StateResources.aspx). This map on the REMS TA Center’s Website provides school and higher ed emergency management staff information on state-level information related to emergency preparedness, including the topics of safety, security, and emergency management. For example, you will find specific information for your state on state emergency management resources, safety and security mandates and policies, and state/field offices of state and federal partners.
* [EOP Interactive Tools](http://rems.ed.gov/EOPinteractivetools.aspx). These tools can help schools assess, evaluate, and create comprehensive, high-quality school EOPs that address a range of threats and hazards:
	+ [EOP ASSESS](http://rems.ed.gov/Assessment/K-12/A_Demographic.aspx) is an online, interactive tool that can help planning team members assess their current understanding of how to create a high-quality EOP. The tool asks a few questions about emergency planning and at the end provides a customized report, which provides information to help increase knowledge of the planning process and how to create an EOP.
	+ [EOP ASSIST 3.0 Software](http://rems.ed.gov/EOPASSIST/EOPASSIST.aspx) can be hosted on a state’s, district’s, or school’s server and directs planning team members through a process that will result in the output of an EOP according to the Federal guidelines for developing a high-quality school EOP. An IT professional with an intermediate level of expertise or knowledge related to networking, Web server and database systems is needed to configure and install the software.
	+ [EOP ASSIST Interactive Workbook](http://rems.ed.gov/EOPASSISTInteractiveWorkbook.aspx) is the low-tech version of the EOP ASSIST 3.0 Software. The Interactive Workbook has the same content as the software, but is comprised of Word documents that can be filled out offline. The workbook also comes with a PDF set of instructions.
	+ [EOP Evaluate](http://rems.ed.gov/EOPinteractivetools.aspx). This HTML-based tool is designed to help schools and IHEs evaluate an established EOP. Tool users are prompted through the Federally recommended six-step planning process to determine whether there are areas where an existing EOP can be improved.
	+ [SITE ASSESS](https://rems.ed.gov/SITEASSESS.aspx) Our newest, free tool to conduct a site assessment is the OSHS and REMS TA Center [SITE ASSESS](https://twitter.com/hashtag/siteassess?f=tweets&vertical=default) (described further below in Section A under “Additional OSHS and REMS TA Center Resources for Developing School EOPs”). While a site assessment may lead to the most visible change in the school's preparedness efforts, the other assessments are equally important to consider as you’ll gain a better understanding of the range of threats and hazards that may impact your school district.
* SITE ASSESS Webpage: <https://rems.ed.gov/SITEASSESS.aspx>
* SITE SSESS Flyer: <https://rems.ed.gov/docs/SITE_ASSESS_Flyer.pdf>
* [Conducting K-12 Site Assessments With SITE ASSESS Webinar](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cmadeline.sullivan%5CDesktop%5C%EF%82%A7%09https%3A%5Crems.ed.gov%5CSITEASSESSWebinar.aspx)
* Informational Fliers. Also attached to this email is a flier that highlights some of the key resources and support provided by the REMS TA Center. In addition to information on the EOP Interactive Tools, the flier describes the:
	+ [Community of Practice (CoP)](http://rems.ed.gov/COP/Default.aspx). This online forum is a place for practitioners at schools, school districts, state education agencies, and their community partners to share ideas, experiences, lessons learned, and engage with one another on the topic of preparedness
	+ [On-site Trainings by Request (TBRs)](https://rems.ed.gov/TA_TrainingsByRequest.aspx). We offer a variety of free TBRs for delivery on-site at schools and districts on topics such as *Developing School Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs)* and *School Behavioral Threat Assessments: An Introduction.*
	+ [Virtual Trainings](http://rems.ed.gov/TA_VirtualTrainings.aspx). On this Web page are links to a series of [Online Courses](http://rems.ed.gov/trainings/CoursesHome.aspx) that guide users on federally recommended information and processes for high-quality emergency plan development and related topics in comprehensive preparedness. The page also links to our [Webinars](http://rems.ed.gov/TA_Webinars.aspx) page, which provides archived Webinars with accompany resources on similar topics.
	+ [Tool Box](http://rems.ed.gov/ToolBox.aspx). The Tool Box is an online repository of tools and resources developed by practitioners in the field and pertinent to the needs of school and higher ed practitioners as they engage in the process of school and higher ed emergency management planning.
	+ Technical Assistance (TA). For answers on emergency preparedness, individuals can contact the REMS TA Center for TA. The team can be reached at info@remstacenter.org, through our toll-free number, 1-855-781-REMS (7367), or by submitting an online [TA Request Form](http://rems.ed.gov/TA_Submissions/TASubmissionForm.aspx).

We also encourage you to share this information, including the flier, and our contact information with the schools you support. For additional resources and information on school and district preparedness, including the topics of safety, security, and emergency management, please visit the TA Center [Website](http://rems.ed.gov/default.aspx) or call us toll-free at 1-855-781-REMS [7367]. And, consider following us on Twitter, [@remstacenter](https://twitter.com/remstacenter) , to learn more about us, our resources and services, as well as those of our Federal partners!  |
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