

National Emergency Management Leaders Academy Curriculum



FEMA

Program of Instruction

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PROGRAM RATIONALE

The importance of effective assessment, coordination, management, communications and leadership of disaster processes and programs is at the forefront of national interest and effort. As emergency management (EM) programs become increasingly complex, there is a growing need for leadership level professionals who can successfully perform in management and leadership roles. Such EM leaders must not only have advanced experience in emergency management, but also possess strong leadership skills that allow them to manage and communicate high-level challenges while also handling the additional stresses of political pressures and public demands. In order to develop the abilities necessary for leading emergency management programs, emergency management leaders must obtain advanced training that focuses on leadership and managerial/leadership level responsibilities.

FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI) is building upon its current course offerings with the development of a National Emergency Management Leaders Academy (Leadership Academy) Curriculum and instructional products. The Leadership Academy program is part of a larger program, the Emergency Management Professional Program, the model for which also includes an EM Foundational Academy, EM Specialized and Technical training, and Strategic Leadership/Advanced Executive-level components. The Leadership Academy curriculum will: remain grounded in the principles of emergency management; incorporate fully-developed core competency levels that align to training; provide progressive career-long training and education; support further professionalization of the field of emergency management; utilize Federal, State, local, tribal, territorial, and other subject matter experts to serve as focus group members and instructors to both develop and deploy training; utilize training curriculum and materials under the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) curriculum management and instructional design system; incorporate participation from higher education and other training at EMI, Regional Training Offices, States, and other training locations.

PROGRAM GOALS

The goal of the Leadership Academy curriculum is to provide emergency management leaders with the skills critical to performing leadership responsibilities such as program management oversight, effective communication, integrated collaboration and strategic thinking. The Leadership Academy program will provide EM leaders with the essential skills needed to lead emergency management programs at the managerial/leadership level, and will be essential to building the foundation for collaboration by bringing EM leaders together to share their experiences and establish a network. Sharing best practices, lessons learned, tools and documentation will allow leaders to have a firm understanding of Federal, State and local emergency management programs, as well as how those programs can be effectively leveraged to support State and local needs and requirements.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to meet the following program objectives.

Management Qualities and Styles

- Identify the qualities of an effective EM leaders that are common across different management roles and types
- Identify different management styles and describe the relationship between management styles and management (in)effectiveness
- Use appropriate processes, tools, and approaches to address complex challenges as EM leaders

Management Planning and Processes

- Apply concepts in organizational design, organizational structure, and organizational planning to improve the effectiveness of the emergency management organization
- Define emergency management stressors and be able to contribute to the effective management of stress for self, staff, and stakeholders
- Use change management principles and change communications to successfully guide an EM organization through change
- Define strategic thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making, and the relationship between them within the context of emergency management
- Define group decision-making, consensus building, and crisis decision-making and understand when and how they can either facilitate or hinder the progress/success of the EM organization
- Describe the difference between strategic, operational, and administrative planning
- Create effective mission and vision statements for an EM organization
- Link budget planning to the strategic planning process, and identify risks and challenges to strategic planning and budgeting

Communication and Collaboration

- Describe why communication and collaboration are important to the emergency management organization and hence the emergency management leader
- Effectively facilitate intergovernmental, interagency, private sector, NGO, and Federal/State/local/tribal/territorial communication and collaboration for the emergency management organization
- Demonstrate effective public advocacy and public communication skills

Resource Management

- Manage resources, internally and externally to the EM organization as appropriate, including staff, fiscal resources, and physical resources
- Understand key HR issues and how to proactively address and actively respond to them (including liability, cultural diversity, EM workplace, and activation of HR during incidents)

Evaluation and Ethics

- Define the components of EM program evaluation, including performance measures, project tracking, staff evaluation, progress against strategic plan, situation awareness and intelligence/information sharing
- Understand ethical issues in emergency management and be equipped to mitigate and respond to them as an EM leader

Awareness and Application

- Identify personal strengths and areas for improvement in key competency areas for the EM leader
- Apply key learning concepts from the curriculum to their own professional development and organizational improvement through a structured, sequenced, and tailored action project
- Leverage the relationships they have built in the cohort for ongoing networking and collaboration as a reference point for continuing professional development and organizational improvement

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience for the group is Federal, State, tribal, territorial and local Emergency Managers as described in the table below.

The Leadership Academy Target Learner Population IS ...	
Federal, State, tribal, territorial, local, and private sector Emergency Managers, following the whole community concept	
<i>... and further defined as ...</i>	
The Leadership Academy Target Learner Population IS ...	And IS NOT ...
<p>Vetted Aspiring Managers who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • currently recognized as aspiring into the management role by job function • already working for the agency where the EM function resides and which determines and sponsors participants for enrollment • practiced/experienced in the field (regardless of “track”) – educational, emergency services, etc. • have made critical decisions based on critical synthesis of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic leadership above the Federal, State, tribal, territorial, and local Emergency management level • EM “specialists,” “workers,” “technicians,” “subject matter experts,” or the equivalent (unless serving in a management role as described below) • Entry level (must have “time in grade” first in order for Leadership Academy to be productive/valuable) • “Everyone” aspiring to work in EM or even aspiring to

<p>Experienced EM's and/or Peak Performers in the field who may be seeking refresher training or the Leadership Academy credential. (NOTE: The Focus Group noted that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Attracting this audience may require some creative marketing and incentives, and 2) This could be tied into accreditation through organizations such as NEMA, i.e. requirement for State agencies to have Leadership Academy-credentialed managers 	<p>(eventually) be a manager – i.e. <u>not</u> already currently on the career path to management</p>
<p>Others with EM Responsibility (<i>specifically who are designated in an management role</i>) (e.g. at local level – Police, Fire Chief)</p>	
<p>Federal (Division Chiefs, Division Directors, Deputy Directors)</p>	
<p>Private Sector (by exception/EMI approval)</p>	
<p><i>... and additional consideration will be given to program applicants who:</i></p>	
<p>Are Certified Emergency Managers (CEM)</p>	
<p>Have completed the Foundational Academy (NOTE: The Focus Group agreed that in the future, as the EM Professional Program is matured/rolled out, the Foundational Academy should be a required prerequisite)</p>	
<p>Have a degree / advanced degree (especially in EM or other related field)</p>	
<p>Have completed the EMI Professional Development Series (PDS) and/or other relevant training</p>	
<p>Have a substantial amount of professional experience, measured qualitatively in years</p>	

The aspiring EM leader who wants to progress, grow, and evolve into a true manager – and do so effectively – will easily be drawn to this curriculum. The curriculum has been designed to add value for seasoned or veteran emergency management leaders, as well, by addressing and incorporating real challenges, “daily frustrations,” and actionable solutions beyond merely theoretical learning.

Further, there is a variety of job roles/titles (such as “executive,” “manager,” “department head,” “director,” etc.). The application criteria and selection process takes this into consideration, focusing on scope of responsibility and level of experience over job title.

Other important distinctions made during the selection process include:

- technical/specialized training (and the task management / quality control required therein – to be taught at the technical/specialist layer within the EM Professional Program) – versus true management to be taught at the Leadership Academy level
- “Emergency management” as a field (using the term “management” broadly) versus true management as a job function
- Those *involved* with EM (peripherally) – not part of the Leadership Academy target audience – versus those working *in* EM (the Leadership Academy target audience)

PROGRAM FORMAT, DURATION, DEPLOYMENT AND DESIGN METHODOLOGY

The Leadership Academy program is a resident program. Resident training is designed to be delivered at EMI and consists of 4 (four) four-day long courses, offered periodically (once every six months) for a total duration of eighteen months for a maximum of thirty-five participants (and an ideal class of twenty to twenty-five participants).

The certification-granting program follows a “cohort” model, allowing for networking, collaboration, continuity, diversity of thought, and building a sense of “belonging” (in terms of building relationships over a long period of time even after the cohort ends) – as well as helping to build prestige for the program.

In the future, EMI may offer an option for those who cannot commit to a cohort due to the instability of their calendars or due to the inability to commit such a large amount of time over such a relatively short time span. For this audience, an alternate track would be available. This track would not be certification-granting but allow participants to attend just the first resident course in order to learn “the basics” without committing to the online learning experience, an Action Project (see below) or additional resident courses.

Key features of the resident program include the following:

- The program is rigorous, incorporating academic research and demonstrating the benefit of research in helping participants meet daily challenges as emergency management leaders (such as procuring resources from community leaders).
- Collaboration and application to the individual experiences and the job performance environment is a critical part of the program.
- Participants complete an Action Project that allows them to look critically at a problem/issue specific to themselves/their organizations, conduct some action planning and implementation, and report out on results. (See below.)

- Program content is modular but not in a purely chronological sense; i.e. key themes recur progressively and are presented across all four courses with specific applications that build upon previous concepts within the same theme. These themes are: Organizational Management; Decision-making and Problem Solving; Collaboration and Communication; Resource Management; Planning; Analysis and Evaluation; and Ethics.
- The resident program incorporates an overarching scenario that surfaces and resurfaces, building upon itself throughout the curriculum for continuity and application of complex, intertwining learning topics.
- High profile experts/speakers during the resident program add value, attract participants, and contribute to building brand/prestige for the Leadership Academy program.

An important part of the program is the Action Project. The Action Project asks participants to think critically about key learning concepts of the program relative to their own strengths/weaknesses and organizations, and apply learning to their own performance environments. The Action Project presents participants with the opportunities to:

- Think critically about the key learning concepts of the program relative to their own strengths/weaknesses and organization.
- Apply learning to their performance environment in a practical way.
- Identify short-term wins and sustainable long-term goals that build toward improved leadership practice to support a more effective EM organization.
- Ground personal leadership improvement in academic research in a meaningful way.

The participants will be allowed to choose their own Action Projects and will be provided with structured templates, and detailed examples of Action Projects to assist them with project selection. The Facilitators will also act as coaches/mentors during the project selection process to ensure participants choose a project that is feasible, practical, and impactful. The Action Project will span the four courses and consist of:

- **Course 1:** A high level overview of the Action Project will be presented. Participants will be instructed to begin thinking about the Action Project, but not to select a topic.
- **Course 2:** An in-depth overview of the Action Project will be presented. The facilitators will review examples of projects and the project template so that students can get some concrete ideas, and better understanding of the project and scope to make the decision whether to start their projects after Course 2, or wait until the end of Course 3. Throughout Course 2, facilitators will be available to meet one-on-one with participants to guide them toward the issues and problems that will lead them to select their Project. In addition to the facilitators, participants will be able to meet with their Action Project Accountability Teams (APATs) to formulate an idea for their project. Participants will be told that by the end of Course 3 they must be ready to choose their Action Project.

- **Course 3:** In one of the first few modules of Course 3, the facilitators will review the Action Project template and review the project timeline. The participants will be reminded that by the end of the course they will need to finalize their proposal and be able to present it to the class. Throughout Course 3, facilitators will be available to meet with participants to help them finalize their project statement/proposal. By the end of the course, the participants will have finalized their 6 month project plan and will present their Project proposal to the class.
- **Course 4:** Participants will come to Course 4 ready to report-out on their Action Projects. Time will be given during the course to allow participants to fine-tune their presentations. On the last day, the participants will present their Action Projects to the class.

Supporting all of the above are Action Project Accountability Teams, groups of three to five participants who link up at least once per day during the resident courses for reflection, discussion, perspective, networking, support, and assurance of accountability for project outcomes.

FACILITATOR QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for the Leadership Academy facilitation are as follows:

- There must be multiple facilitators (4+) per resident course, one of whom acts as the Lead Facilitator and the rest of whom are Instructor-presenters.
- The Lead Facilitator should have expert facilitation skills and experience facilitating groups.
- The Lead Facilitator, and ideally the Instructor-presenters, should have experience in adult learning/instruction in both resident (face to face, instructor led) and online courses.
- The Instructor-presenters should have appropriate subject matter expertise in emergency management and/or leadership development.
- The Instructor-presenters should have served in an EM management role and therefore have an understanding of theory and application / in practice.
- There should be a mix of Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial representation (depending on the demographics of the cohort).
- Facilitators may be paired into teams to meet the above requirements if not enough facilitators meeting all of the requirements are available.
- Facilitators should expect to spend a substantial amount of time between resident courses to facilitate online learning.

SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT

The following supplies and equipment are needed:

- Instructor Guide
- Student Manuals
- Projector, screen, and computer (visuals)

- Easel paper, easels, and markers
- Masking tape
- Name cards
- Pens and pencils
- Paper / notepads
- Culminating simulation materials (e.g. board game)

RECOMMENDED PREREQUISITES

Due to the varying degrees of experience, there are currently no required prerequisites for this course. However, recommended prerequisite courses and/or equivalent experience are:

- Certified Emergency Managers (CEM)
- FEMA EMI Foundational Academy
- Degree/ advanced degree in EM or related field
- FEMA EMI Professional Development Series (PDS) and/or other relevant training
- Substantial amount of professional experience, qualitatively measured in years

NOTE: Attendance at each course within the Leadership Academy requires attendance at the previous course, for instance participants in Course Two must have attended Course One.

In the future, these prerequisites may be required.

EVALUATION PLAN

Level I: At the end of each course, the EMI Resident Course Evaluation Sheet will be used to document participant feedback on overall quality of content, instruction, and facilities. The evaluation sheet uses a 1–5 rating system, with 5 being the highest.

Level II: This evaluation involves measuring and assessing learning that has taken place. Participants will demonstrate their proficiency in applying knowledge and/or skills learned through a self-assessment (competencies, behaviors and values), hands-on exercises, a pre/post-test (multiple choice), and the Action Project.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

NOTE: All course topics are competency-based and have been derived from the extensive work of a symposium group and focus group, who devised core EM leader competencies. These competencies are the driving force behind the overall curriculum design as well as individual course topics/content.

E0451: Leadership 1. Overview of Leadership in Emergency Management

Scope	During Course One, participants will complete the standard EMI Pre-Test (multiple choice) followed by an opening scenario that introduces effective management qualities, leading into a presentation and discussion on management styles. Strategic thinking, problem-solving, decision-making are addressed next, followed by strategic planning, budgeting, mission/vision statements, resource and risk management, stakeholder communication/collaboration/coordination, public advocacy/communication, and change management. The Course culminates with a lab for application of key learning concepts and outcomes of the self-assessment to the Action Project.
Structure and Instructional Methods	Course One will be a combination of instructor presentations, facilitated group discussion, group activities, and individual activities.
Summary of Units of Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and Introductions, Pre-Test • Opening Scenario: Management Qualities • Overview of the Leadership Academy Program • Introduction to Case Studies and Academic Research • Management Styles • Strategic Thinking, Problem-Solving, and Decision-Making • Introduction to Evaluation in Emergency Management • Strategic Planning • Budgeting • Mission and Vision Statements • Resource Management • Risk Management • Communication, Collaboration and Coordination within a Larger Context and Structures • Intergovernmental and Interagency Communication and Collaboration (Introduction) • Interoperability • Planning: Stakeholder Collaboration and Buy-in • Public Advocacy and Personal Influence • Public Awareness Communication • Stakeholder Coordination and Communication during an Incident • Introduction to Change Management • Lab: Action Projects • Post-test
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor Guides

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Manuals • Projector, screen, computer (visuals) • Easel paper, easels, and markers • Masking tape • Name cards • Pens and pencils
References & Remarks	N/A

E0452: Leadership 2. Application of Personal Leadership in Emergency Management

Scope	During Course Two participants will complete the standard EMI Pre-Test (multiple choice). Course Two will address personal leadership in emergency management. This course will revisit some of the topics/themes presented in the first course but will explore those topics in greater depth. This course will allow the participants to explore their personal leadership styles, and how they can become better leaders within the emergency management context.
Pre-work	Pre-work for Course 2 includes a 360-degree assessment that helps participants to identify personal leadership strengths and weaknesses in relation to the core competencies.
Structure and Instructional Methods	Course Two will be a combination of instructor presentations, facilitated group discussion, group activities, and individual activities.
Summary of Units of Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome Back/Recap of Course 1/Preview of course 2 • Understand You as a Leader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Leadership mindset <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be engaged; be visible – Leadership qualities, styles, and methods – What makes you a leader? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Discussion of pre-course evaluation instruments ▪ Leadership roles ▪ Knowing when to step-up and step-back (servant leadership) • Developing Critical Thinking Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Vision: the bigger picture; strategic thinking; beyond the individual – Taking different perspectives; expanding your considerations – Seeking information • Ethics, Values, and Accountability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Integrity – Personal judgment, discretion, and perception

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public scrutiny; transparency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lessons learned (ethical anecdotes; performance modeling) • Leadership Resiliency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Leading when things go wrong – Leading and adapting to change – Stress management and self-management • Decision-making and Creating Solutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Decision making models <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recognition-primed ▪ Rational ▪ Role of intuition – Decision making process (gathering information, committee vs. executive process) – “Analysis paralysis” – Communicating the decision to others- “clarity of command” • Leading and Motivating in Emergency Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Situational leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How to motivate others – Leading in routine vs. non-routine situations – Shared leadership/developing buy-in • Action Project Overview • Journaling and Self-reflection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What resources and opportunities do you have locally that could help you gain leadership skills? – Within the larger context, identify the members of your emergency management organization. (whole community) • Action Project Accountability Team Discussions
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor Guides • Student Manuals • Projector, screen, computer (visuals) • Easel paper, easels, and markers • Masking tape • Name cards • Pens and pencils
References & Remarks	N/A

E0453: Leadership 3. Leadership in the Emergency Management Organization

Scope	During Course Three participants will complete the standard EMI Pre-Test (multiple choice). Course three will address leadership in the Emergency Management organization. This course will build on the personal leadership competencies and topics discussed in the second course and have participants explore how they can use their personal leadership styles to improve their Emergency Management Organization. Course Three will present leadership challenges to the emergency management and explore creative solutions.
Pre-work	<p>Pre-work for course 3 includes an organizational assessment where participants will take personal evaluation and discuss their influence on the overall emergency management organization. Specifically participants will assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the leadership strengths and weaknesses of my organization? • What is my influence on the overall Emergency Management Organization? • How can I apply my leadership skills in my organization? • What leadership skills and opportunities have been underutilized in my organization? • What factors have influenced your leadership style or that of others in your organization? <p>Participants will also work to select the topic for their Action Project.</p>
Structure and Instructional Methods	Course Three will be a combination of instructor presentations, facilitated group discussion, group activities, and individual activities.
Summary of Units of Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-making • Consensus-building • Public Advocacy and Personal Influence • Cultural Diversity • Structures, Goals, Objectives, and Performance Measures • Informal and Formal Organizations • Vision and Mission Statements • Organizational Planning • Policy and Practice • Strategic Planning and Budgeting • Change Management • Organizational Ethics • Human Resource Needs • Motivating, Developing, and Assessing Staff; Selecting the Right Staff • Creative Use of Fiscal Resources • Creative Use of Physical Resources • Interoperable and Integrated Communications Strategies

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intra-agency Coordination and Collaboration • Effective Collaboration • Establishing and Maintaining Stakeholder Relationships • Journaling/Self-reflection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Develop a strategy for how to improve. How have I grown? How has the organization grown or changed? – What is the attitude within your organization toward leadership? – What value does your organization place on emergency management leadership? How does this affect your ability to develop as a leader? How does this affect your ability to obtain resources and support? <p>Action Project Accountability Team Discussions</p>
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor Guides • Student Manuals • Projector, screen, computer (visuals) • Easel paper, easels, and markers • Masking tape • Name cards • Pens and pencils
References & Remarks	N/a

E0454: Leadership 4. Emergency Management Leadership in the Community and Profession

Scope	<p>During Course Four participants will complete the standard EMI Pre-Test (multiple choice). During Course Four, participants will explore what it means to be a leader in their community and profession, and how they can impact both through their personal leadership. There will also be time allotted to allow participants to fine tune their Action Project presentation. The participants will present their Action Project to the cohort and engage in discussion/Q&A. Finally; participants will take the EMI course post-test.</p>
Pre-work	<p>Pre-work for Course Four includes a situational awareness assessment of your emergency management organization in relation to the larger community. Specifically participants will assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are you perceived by other members of your community? • Identify non-participating potential partners within the community government and organizations within your

	<p>community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities for leadership growth within your community.
Structure and Instructional Methods	<p>Course Four will be a combination of instructor presentations, facilitated group discussion, group activities, and individual activities. There will also be a hands-on “workshop” style session wherein participants can fine tune their presentation of their Action Projects. Participants will then present their Action Project to the cohort, followed by a Q/A session. Finally participants will take the post-test, complete the Course Four and Program evaluation forms, and receive their certificates.</p>
Summary of Units of Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Risk Management Inter-organizational Ethics (IAEM) Communicating with the Public Interoperable and Integrated Communications Strategies Public Communications Systems and Tools Inter-agency Coordination and Collaboration Effective Collaboration Establishing and Maintaining Stakeholder Relationships Journaling/Self-reflection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How does emergency management meet the standards of a profession? How does one demonstrate effective leadership within the profession? Action Project Work Session Action Project Presentations Post-Test Course Evaluation Forms
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructor Guides Student Manuals Projector, screen, computer (visuals) Easel paper, easels, and markers Masking tape Name cards Pens and pencils
References & Remarks	<p>Facilitators should be prepared to help steer the cohort discussion for each Action Project – allowing participants to “drive” the presentations and conversations, while offering guiding questions and helping the group to draw conclusions.</p>