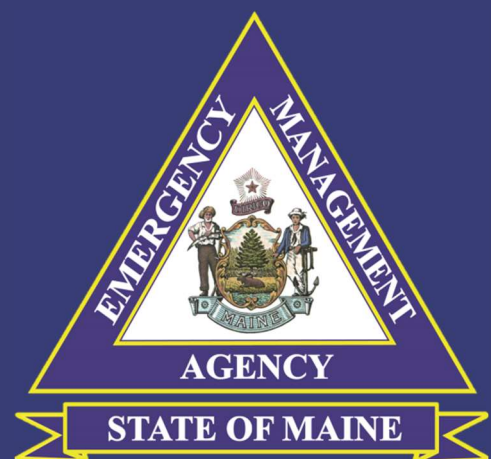




Maine Emergency Management Agency

NIMS Compliance Guide

2025-2026



Section 1: What is NIMS?

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) guides all levels of government, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to work together to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to and recover from incidents.

NIMS provides stakeholders across the whole community with shared vocabulary, systems and processes to successfully deliver the capabilities described in the National Preparedness System. NIMS defines operational systems that guide how personnel work together during incidents.

Section 2: What is NIMS Compliance?

Local, state, tribal and territorial jurisdictions are **required** to adopt NIMS in order to receive federal Preparedness Grants. FEMA has defined implementation objectives to guide jurisdictions in their implementation of NIMS. NIMS Compliance must be certified annually by all federal grant recipients and sub-recipients.

All federal preparedness grant funds require recipients to be NIMS compliant. This includes grants from FEMA (Homeland Security, AFG, SAFER), DOJ, CDC and others. If you receive a federal audit, and cannot demonstrate being NIMS compliant, you will have to pay back all the federal money (dollar value at award time) you have received. This could also include civil or criminal penalties.

Section 3: FEMA Implementation Objectives

The NIMS Implementation Objectives reflect the concepts and principles contained in NIMS and aim to promote consistency in NIMS implementation across the Nation. The NIMS Implementation Objectives clarify the NIMS implementation requirements in FEMA preparedness grant Notices of Funding Opportunity. As recipients and subrecipients of Federal preparedness (non-disaster) grant awards, jurisdictions and organizations must achieve, or be actively working to achieve, all of the NIMS Implementation Objectives.

In addition to the Implementation Objectives, the following chart outlines a vision for each NIMS component and example indicators for each objective. The visions outline the intended end state of the activities under that component. The indicators are examples of characteristics that are frequently associated with jurisdictions and organizations that have achieved the objective. They are not requirements criteria, nor are the indicators intended as a checklist for achieving the objectives. The indicators are a tool to assist jurisdictions and organizations in meeting the new Implementation Objectives.

	NIMS Implementation Objectives	Example Indicators
<p>General</p> <p>Vision: Policies and processes are in place to support NIMS implementation</p>	1. Adopt the National Incident Management System (NIMS) throughout the jurisdiction or organization to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from incidents.	A current and valid legal authority indicating that NIMS is the system of choice for the jurisdiction or organization.
	2. Designate and maintain a point of contact (POC) to serve as the principal coordinator for the implementation of NIMS.	Stakeholder notification including contact information for a current NIMS point of contact responsible for the overall coordination and development of NIMS related activities and documents for the jurisdiction.
	3. Ensure that incident personnel receive pertinent NIMS training in alignment with the NIMS Training Program.	Official training guidance that specifies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which training courses incident personnel must take; • How long they have to complete the training after they join the jurisdiction or organization; and • Frequency of refresher training.
<p>Resource Management</p> <p>Vision: Consistent, interoperable identification, management, and sharing of incident resources.</p>	4. Identify and inventory deployable incident resources consistent with national NIMS resource typing definitions and job titles/position qualifications, available through the Resource Typing Library Tool. (http://www.fema.gov/resource-management-mutual-aid)	Up-to-date resource inventory (such as the Incident Resource Inventory System) that uses NIMS resource-typing definitions for all shareable or deployable resources.
	5. Adopt NIMS terminology for the qualification, certification, and credentialing of incident personnel. Developing or participating in a qualification, certification, and credentialing program that aligns with the National Qualification System (NQS) is recommended, but not required	Official guidance document specifying how incident personnel are qualified, certified, and credentialed consistent with NIMS terminology.
	6. Use the NIMS Resource Management Process during incidents (identify requirements, order and acquire, mobilize, track and report, demobilize, reimburse and restock).	Current standard operating procedures align with the NIMS Resource Management Process. Exercise or real-world incident documentation indicating the appropriate use of NIMS Resource Management process and NIMS resource typing definitions.
	7. At the jurisdictional level, develop, maintain, and implement mutual aid agreements (to include agreements with the private sector and non-governmental organizations).	Mutual aid agreements are up-to-date and in effect, covering neighboring jurisdictions, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations.

<p>Command and Coordination</p> <p>Vision: Integrated decision making and unity of effort among all incident personnel</p>	8. Apply ICS as the standard approach to the on-scene command, control, and coordination of incidents	<p>Exercise or real-world incident documentation or after-action reports indicating consistent use of NIMS principles, procedures, and structures including the Incident Command System (ICS), Multiagency Coordination (MAC) Groups, and Joint Information Systems (JIS). Standard operating procedures and emergency operations plans that reflect NIMS guidance such as the NIMS Management Characteristics, ICS, MAC Groups, and JIS.</p>
	9. Implement JIS for the dissemination of incident information to the public, incident personnel, traditional and social media, and other stakeholders.	
	10. Use MAC Groups/Policy Groups during incidents to enable decision making among elected and appointed officials and support resource prioritization and allocation.	
	11. Organize and manage EOCs and EOC teams consistent with pertinent NIMS guidance.	
<p>Communications and Information Management</p> <p>Vision: Information gets to who it needs to, when it needs to, and in a means they can understand.</p>	12. Apply plain language and clear text communications standards.	SOPs, standard operating guidelines, and training program materials direct the use of plain language and clear text for incident communications.
	13. Enable interoperable and secure communications within and across jurisdictions and organizations.	<p>Exercise and/or real-world incident documentation and/or after-action reports indicate that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications and information systems are reliable and scalable and can function in any type of incident; • Communications systems are resilient and redundant; • Incident data, networks, and systems are appropriately protected and secure; • Appropriate communication guidance is incorporated into EOPs or supporting plans or annexes; and • Incident communications personnel have experience establishing and supporting interoperable communications.
	14. Develop, maintain, and implement procedures for data collection, analysis, and dissemination to meet organizational needs for situational awareness.	Exercise or real-world incident documentation indicate that incident personnel are collecting, analyzing, and disseminating situational awareness effectively and consistently with NIMS guidance. Data collection plans and SOPs align with NIMS guidance on information management and NIMS command and coordination structures.
<p>https://www.fema.gov/national-incident-management-system</p>		

Section 4: NIMS Training Responsibilities

The interconnectivity of NIMS components allows personnel in diverse geographic areas with differing roles and responsibilities and operating within various functions of ICS or EOCs to integrate their efforts using a common set of structures, terminologies, and processes. Since incident management is decentralized, collaborative efforts across state, local, tribal, territorial, Federal, nonprofit, and private sector organizations are important.

Training delivery is also decentralized, and effective training is crucial to ensure that all personnel and organizations understand their incident responsibilities and are able to collaborate and respond.

The NIMS Implementation Objectives for Local, State, Tribal, and Territorial Jurisdictions reflect the concepts and principles contained within NIMS. They provide goals for state, local, tribal, and territorial governments to pursue to promote consistency nationwide. The implementation objectives clarify the NIMS implementation requirements in FEMA preparedness grant notices of funding opportunity (NOFO). Federal departments and agencies, which also play an important role in effective NIMS implementation, can refer to the NIMS Implementation Objectives and Metrics for Federal Departments and Agencies.

As recipients and subrecipients of Federal preparedness grants, jurisdictions and organizations must achieve, or be actively working to achieve, all of the NIMS Implementation Objectives. These objectives require the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) to ensure that all incident personnel receive training pertinent to their incident responsibilities, in alignment with the NIMS Training Program.

NIMS implementation does not affect any public assistance or other Federal funding that an organization or community would receive in the wake of a disaster or other emergency. FEMA provides grants to prepare state, local, tribal, and territorial governments and first responders—as well as ports, transit systems, and nonprofit organizations—to protect against, prevent, respond to, and recover from a variety of man-made and natural disasters. Preparedness grants allow these entities to develop and maintain lifesaving capabilities in advance of a catastrophic event through planning, purchasing equipment, providing training, conducting exercises, hiring personnel, and supporting operational costs.

An AHJ can create and administer processes to qualify, certify, and credential personnel for incident-related positions. AHJs include state, tribal, territorial, and Federal government departments and agencies, along with training commissions, NGOs, companies, and local organizations such as police, fire, public health, and public works departments.

AHJs build on FEMA's minimum NIMS training standards and recommendations to determine training necessary for incident personnel under their purview. AHJs are responsible for the following:

- Specifying NIMS training requirements beyond FEMA's minimum standards, as appropriate;
- Establishing training and experience standards for instructors;

- Certifying instructors that meet the AHJ's standards;
- Determining necessary refresher training for personnel;
- Issuing training certificates for non-FEMA courses;
- Determining equivalency of third-party training courses by validating that they meet or exceed the FEMA-approved curriculum; and
- When implementing NQS: Referring to the NIMS Guideline for the NQS, NQS Job Titles/Position Qualifications, and NQS PTBs.

Section 5: NIMS Core Curriculum

NIMS training develops incident personnel capable of performing necessary functions in their AHJ and assisting when mutual aid is necessary. Because incident personnel have diverse responsibilities and different knowledge and skill requirements, the NIMS Training Program provides customized training progressions for personnel in each of the four NIMS Command and Coordination systems:

1. **ICS** – responsible for tactical activities on-scene
2. **EOC** – responsible for operational and strategic coordination, resource acquisition, and information gathering, analysis, and sharing
3. **Public Information Officers (PIO)** operating within the Joint Information System (JIS) – responsible for outreach and communication to the media and public • JIS ICS PIOs • JIS EOC PIOs
4. **Policy Group** – responsible for policy guidance and senior-level decision-making.

These systems guide how personnel work together during incidents. Courses for these systems are organized into Focus Areas. Focus Area training progressions include baseline training for all personnel, multiple levels of supervisory training based on an individual's level of incident responsibility, and advanced training for individuals seeking advanced position qualifications.

An AHJ may determine that additional advanced training is necessary to meet the requirements for a qualification program (such as NQS), but FEMA does not require this additional training for preparedness grant eligibility.

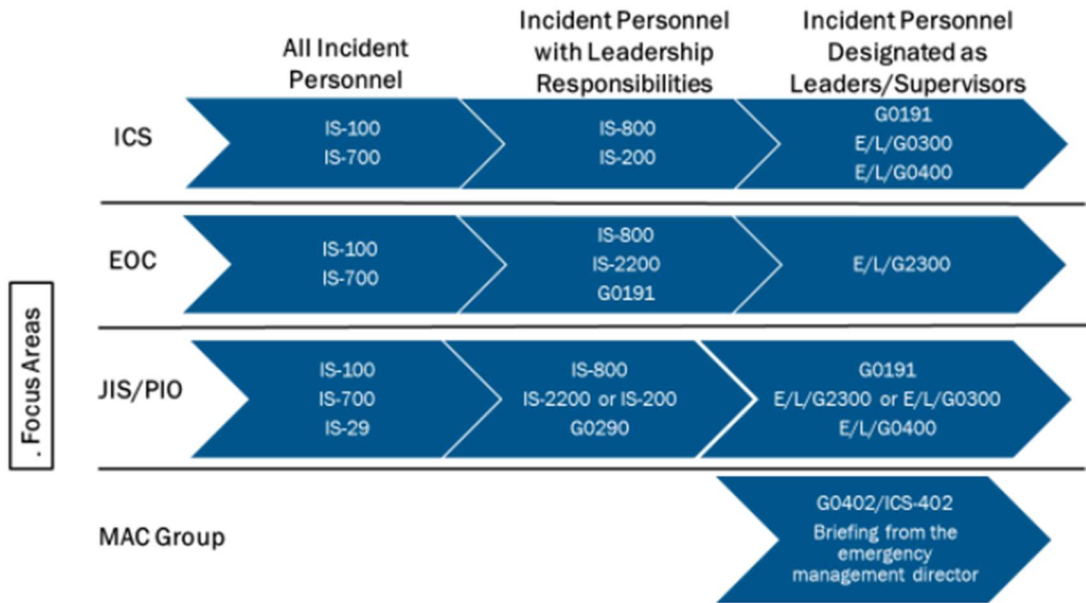
Each AHJ determines which personnel will take which courses. Organizational leaders should base their determination on an individual's level of incident responsibility and the organization's relevant emergency management plans. AHJs should coordinate their efforts with local and state emergency management agencies.

Regardless of Focus Area, all NIMS training falls into three basic categories, which share many of the same foundational courses:

- **All Incident Personnel:** Associated courses provide the foundational knowledge to help nonsupervisory incident personnel understand where they fit in the overall incident structure. Many incident personnel never advance beyond these baseline courses.
- **Incident Personnel with Leadership Responsibilities:** Associated courses provide additional background on external incident management systems for mid-level incident personnel responsible for establishing the initial incident command or for those preparing for a future supervisory role.

• **Incident Personnel Designated as Leaders/Supervisors:** Courses provide enhanced knowledge and increased comfort in using NIMS structures and processes, for senior level incident personnel. Trainees are typically those designated as ICS or EOC leaders/supervisors for large or complex incidents that extend beyond a single operational period and generate an Incident Action Plan (IAP).

Personnel should complete all courses for their Focus Area and level. Advanced training is available for all Focus Areas but is not necessary for FEMA preparedness grant eligibility. AHJs may have additional requirements.



ICS Training Progression

Personnel who will operate within ICS (field personnel) follow the ICS training progression. Each AHJ determines how far individuals need to progress based on their role within ICS and the size and complexity of the incident.

All ICS Personnel: All incident personnel working within the ICS should complete the following courses for foundational knowledge of incident response:

- IS-100: Introduction to the Incident Command System, ICS 100 – This course introduces ICS and provides the foundation for higher-level ICS training.
- IS-700: National Incident Management System, An Introduction – This course introduces NIMS concepts and principles.

ICS Personnel with Leadership Responsibilities: Supervisory personnel working within the ICS should complete the following courses for additional background in incident management systems with leadership responsibilities:

- IS-800: National Response Framework, An Introduction – This course introduces participants to the concepts and principles of the National Response Framework (NRF).
- IS-200: Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response, ICS-200 – This course enables personnel to operate efficiently within the ICS during an incident or event.

ICS Personnel Designated as Leaders/Supervisors: Leaders who could be responsible in complex incidents should complete this level of training. These courses apply higher-level concepts, methods, and tools for larger, more complex incidents:

- G0191: Emergency Operations Center/Incident Command System Interface – This course provides an opportunity for emergency management and response personnel to begin developing an ICS/EOC interface for their communities.
- E/L/G0300: Intermediate Incident Command System for Expanding Incidents, ICS-300 – This course provides training for personnel who require advanced ICS knowledge.
- E/L/G0400: Advanced Incident Command System for Command and General Staff–Complex Incidents, ICS-400 – This course provides training in managing large, complex incidents or events.

– FEMA recommends that students not take ICS-400 immediately following ICS-300 but instead wait to take ICS-400 after gaining additional ICS experience.

ICS Advanced Training: This training is above and beyond what is necessary for FEMA preparedness grant eligibility. Students participating in these advanced courses will broaden their understanding of emergency management concepts:

- E/L0950-0987 – See Appendix B for additional advanced training options.
- O-0305: U.S. Fire Administration (USFA)/National Fire Academy (NFA) Type 3 All-Hazards Incident Management Team (AHIMT) – Type 3 AHIMT training develops state, regional, and tribal AHIMTs who can function under NIMS during a large or complex incident or major event. This course is designed for those who are assigned to function in a Type 3 AHIMT during a large/complex incident, typically one covering multiple operational periods.

EOC Training Progression

Personnel who staff an EOC follow the EOC training progression. Each AHJ determines how far individuals need to progress based on their role within the EOC and the size and complexity of incidents they will support.

All EOC Personnel: All incident personnel working within an EOC should complete the following courses for foundational knowledge of incident response:

- IS-100: Introduction to the Incident Command System, ICS 100 – This course introduces ICS and provides the foundation for higher-level ICS training.
- IS-700: National Incident Management System, An Introduction – This course introduces NIMS concepts and principles.

EOC Personnel with Leadership Responsibilities: Supervisory personnel working within an EOC should complete the following courses for additional background in incident management systems with leadership responsibilities:

- IS-800: National Response Framework, An Introduction – This course introduces participants to the concepts and principles of the NRF.
- IS-2200: Basic EOC Functions – This course prepares incident personnel working in an EOC to understand the role and functions of an EOC during incident response and the transition to recovery.

– FEMA recommends that personnel with leadership responsibilities in an EOC complete IS-2200 instead of IS-200.

- G0191: Emergency Operations Center/Incident Command System Interface – This course provides an opportunity for emergency management and response personnel to begin developing an ICS/EOC interface for their communities.

EOC Personnel Designated as Leaders/Supervisors: EOC leaders need enhanced knowledge. This course applies higher-level concepts, methods, and tools for larger, more complex incidents:

- E/L/G2300: Intermediate EOC Functions – This course describes the role, design, and function of EOCs as components of a Multiagency Coordination System (MACS).

EOC Advanced Training: This training is above and beyond what is necessary for FEMA preparedness grant eligibility. Students participating in these advanced courses will broaden their understanding of emergency management concepts:

- FEMA’s Emergency Management Professional Program (EMPP) – This program includes three academies: Basic, Advanced, and Executive.
- Emergency Management Institute (EMI) Integrated Emergency Management Course (IEMC) – This is an exercise-based training series for EOC personnel.

JIS/PIO Training Progression

The JIS integrates incident information and public affairs into a cohesive organization to provide coordinated and complete information before, during, and after incidents. A JIS cuts across the three levels of incident management (on-scene/tactical, center/coordination, and policy/strategic) and helps ensure coordinated messaging among all incident personnel.

JIS/PIO personnel, whether assigned to work in an ICS or an EOC environment, should follow the JIS/PIO Training Progression. Each AHJ determines how far individuals need to progress based on their role within incident command, and the size and complexity of incidents they are preparing for.

All JIS/PIO Personnel: These courses provide baseline training for all incident JIS personnel. Some personnel assigned to JIS roles but not assigned as a PIO may not progress beyond these courses. For those who do, these courses provide the foundation upon which higher-level training builds:

- IS-100: Introduction to the Incident Command System, ICS 100 – This course introduces ICS and provides the foundation for higher-level ICS training.
- IS-700: National Incident Management System, An Introduction – This course introduces NIMS concepts and principles
- IS-29: Public Information Officer Awareness – This course provides introductory information for JIS personnel.

JIS/PIO Personnel with Leadership Responsibilities: These courses provide basic training for JIS personnel with leadership responsibilities—not only individuals serving in designated leadership positions, but also personnel preparing for a future supervisory role:

- IS-800: National Response Framework, An Introduction – This course introduces participants to the concepts and principles of the NRF.
- IS-2200: Basic EOC Functions – This course prepares incident personnel working in an EOC to understand the role and functions of an EOC during incident response and the transition to recovery.

– FEMA recommends that EOC PIOs complete IS-2200 instead of IS-200.

- IS-200: Basic Incident Command System for Initial Response, ICS-200 – This course enables personnel to operate efficiently within the ICS during an incident or event. – FEMA recommends that ICS PIOs complete IS-200 instead of IS-2200.
- E/L-0105: Public Information Basics – This course prepares participants to function as PIO.

JIS/PIO Personnel Designated as Leaders/Supervisors: These courses, designed for JIS leaders and supervisors—such as EOC PIOs or PIOs rostered on an Incident Management Team (IMT)—apply higher-level concepts, methods, and tools for larger, more complex incidents:

- G0191: Emergency Operations Center/Incident Command System Interface – This course provides an opportunity for emergency management and response personnel to begin developing an ICS/EOC interface for their communities.
- E/L/G2300: Intermediate EOC Functions – This course describes the role, design, and function of EOCs as components of a MACS. – FEMA recommends that EOC PIOs complete E/L/G2300 instead of E/L/G0300.
- E/L/G0300: Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents, ICS-300 – This course provides training for personnel who require advanced ICS knowledge.
 - FEMA recommends that ICS PIOs complete E/L/G0300 instead of E/L/G2300.
- E/L/G0400: Advanced Incident Command System for Command and General Staff–Complex Incidents, ICS-400 – This course provides training in managing large, complex incidents or events.
 - FEMA recommends that students not take ICS-400 immediately following ICS-300 but instead wait to take ICS-400 after gaining additional ICS experience.

JIS/PIO Advanced Training: This training is above and beyond what is necessary for FEMA preparedness grant eligibility. Students participating in these advanced courses will gain exposure to and understanding of broader emergency management concepts:

- E0388: Advanced Public Information Officer – This course focuses on PIO responsibilities in large-scale emergency situations, especially escalating incidents, and includes incident action planning related to the JIC.
- EMI IEMC – This is an exercise-based training series for EOC personnel.
- E/L0952: NIMS ICS All-Hazards Public Information Officer – This course focuses on developing a strong set of core PIO skills.
- O-0305: U.S. Fire Administration (USFA)/National Fire Academy (NFA) Type 3 All-Hazards Incident Management Team (AHIMT)

Policy Group Training Progression

Policy Groups typically consist of agency administrators or organizational executives or their designees. Executives and senior officials, whether elected or appointed, must have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for successful emergency management and incident response. To that end, it is vital that they receive NIMS training.

All Policy Group Personnel: One course provides baseline training for senior officials. In addition, Policy Group personnel need a briefing from the emergency management director:

- G0402/ICS-402: ICS Overview for Senior Officials (Executives, Elected, and Appointed) – This course provides an orientation to NIMS components for senior officials.

- Briefing from the emergency management director – Policy Group members should meet with their emergency management director to understand the jurisdiction’s threats and hazards, as well as their role in emergency response.

Policy Group Advanced Training: This training is above and beyond what is necessary for FEMA preparedness grant eligibility. Students participating in these advanced courses will broaden their understanding of emergency management concepts:

- G0191: Emergency Operations Center/Incident Command System Interface – This course provides an opportunity for emergency management and response personnel to begin developing an ICS/EOC interface for their communities.

- IS-100: Introduction to the Incident Command System, ICS 100 – This course introduces ICS and provides the foundation for higher-level ICS training.

- IS-700: National Incident Management System, An Introduction – This course introduces NIMS concepts and principles.

- EMI IEMC – This is an exercise-based training series for EOC personnel.

Annex A: Summary of Training Recommendations

ICS Focus Area

ICS personnel may also take EOC courses, based on AHJ plans, risk, or specific areas of interest.

Courses → Incident Positions ↓	IS-100	IS-700	IS-800	IS-200	G 0191	E/L/G 0300	E/L/G 0400	Position-specific PTB training
All incident personnel supporting ICS	X	X						
ICS personnel with leadership responsibilities	X	X	X	X				
ICS personnel with leadership responsibilities preparing for additional responsibility	X	X	X	X	X	X		
ICS personnel in leadership/supervisory roles	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
IMT unit, strike team, resource team, or task force leaders preparing for complex incidents	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
IMT command, section, branch, division, or group leaders preparing for complex incidents	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

EOC Focus Area

EOC personnel may also take ICS courses, based on AHJ risk or specific areas of interest.

Courses → Incident Positions ↓	IS-100	IS-700	IS-800	IS-2200	G 0191	E/L/G2300	EMI Integrated Emergency Management Course	Emergency Management Professional Program (EMPP)
All incident personnel supporting EOCs	X	X						
EOC personnel with leadership responsibilities	X	X	X	X	X			
EOC personnel in leadership/supervisory roles	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Jurisdictional emergency managers, EOC directors, senior EOC staff	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

PIO Focus Area

Advanced and master PIO courses are available for ICS and EOC PIOs.

Courses → Incident Positions ↓	IS- 100	IS- 700	IS- 29	IS- 800	IS- 2200	IS- 200	G 0290	G 0191	E/L/G 0300	E/L/G 2300	E/L/ G 0400	E 0388	EMI IEMC	E/L 0952	O- 0305
All PIO incident personnel	X	X	X												
EOC PIOs with leadership responsibilities	X	X	X	X	X		X								
ICS PIOs with leadership responsibilities	X	X	X	X		X	X								
EOC PIOs in leadership/supervisory roles	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X					
ICS PIOs in leadership/supervisory roles	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X				
EOC PIOs for complex incidents	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X		X	X		
ICS PIOs for complex incidents	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X			X	X

Policy Group Focus Area

Advanced courses are available for MAC Group leaders seeking additional, advanced training.

Courses → Incident Positions ↓	Briefing from emergency management director	G0402/ICS- 403	G0191	IS- 100	IS- 700	IS- 800	IS-200 or IS-2200	EMI IEMC
MAC Group/Policy Group members/senior officials	X	X						
MAC Group/Policy Group members/senior officials that want additional training based on jurisdictional risk or specific interest	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X