

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 23, 2025

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2025–26 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 1200

Introduced by Assembly Member Caloza

February 21, 2025

An act to add Article 4.2 (commencing with Section 8580) to Chapter 7 of Division 1 of Title 2 ~~of~~ *of, and to add Sections 8608.5 and 8608.6 to*, the Government Code, relating to emergency services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

AB 1200, as amended, Caloza. ~~State Lifelines Council. Emergency services: disaster preparedness.~~

Existing law, the California Emergency Services Act, authorizes the Governor to proclaim a state of emergency, and local officials and local governments to proclaim a local emergency, when specified conditions of disaster or extreme peril to the safety of persons and property exist. Existing law establishes the Office of Emergency Services (OES) within the office of the Governor and sets forth its powers and duties relating to responsibility over the state’s emergency and disaster response services for natural, technological, or man-made disasters and emergencies, including responsibility for activities necessary to prevent, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of emergencies and disasters to people and property.

This bill would require OES to biennially convene key personnel and agencies that have emergency management roles and responsibilities to participate in tabletop exercises in which the participant’s emergency preparedness plans are discussed and evaluated under various simulated catastrophic disaster situations, as specified.

This bill would require the tabletop exercises to be designed by OES to enhance the capabilities of the participants to do various things, including to engage the communities that they each serve, as appropriate, in the development of executable strategic, operational, or tactical-level approaches to meet defined disaster response objectives.

This bill would require OES to report on each tabletop exercise it conducts to the committees on budget, the Assembly Committee on Emergency Management, and the Senate Committee on Governmental Organization by February 1, 2028, and biennially thereafter of the calendar year following each biennial simulation and evaluation. The bill would require OES to use federal preparedness grant funding to offset the state, local, and tribal government costs associated with participation in the tabletop exercises to the greatest extent possible.

The bill would require OES to, in cooperation with California Volunteers, coordinate with local Community Emergency Response Team programs to conduct community disaster preparedness training in vulnerable regions of the state, as specified, to, among other things, increase community resilience to disaster. The bill would require those regions to be identified based on data from specified sources. The bill would require a training event to include testing of community notification systems in the area and would require OES to prioritize that testing in specified communities.

Existing law establishes the Alfred E. Alquist Seismic Safety Commission in the Office of Emergency Services OES and requires the commission to, among other things, work with specified agencies to identify key activities and responsibilities related to seismic safety.

This bill would require the Seismic Safety Commission to enter into a partnership with the Strategic Growth Council and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection to identify investments the State of California should make to ensure a rapid recovery from a major disaster, and would require the council to ~~complement~~ complement the work of local and regional lifelines councils and bring lifeline providers together to develop postevent performance standards for public and private utility providers. The bill would state related findings and declarations of the Legislature.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares the
2 following:

3 (1) The Federal Emergency Management Agency created
4 Community Lifelines to reframe incident information, understand
5 and communicate incident impacts using plain language, and
6 promote unity of effort across the whole community to prioritize
7 efforts to stabilize the lifelines during incident response. While
8 lifelines were developed to support response planning and
9 operations, the concept can be applied across the entire
10 preparedness cycle.

11 (2) Efforts to protect lifelines, prevent and mitigate potential
12 impacts to them, and build back stronger and smarter during
13 recovery will drive overall resilience of the nation. Applying the
14 lifelines construct allows ~~decision-makers~~ *decisionmakers* to (A)
15 prioritize, sequence, and focus response efforts towards maintaining
16 or restoring the most critical services and infrastructure, (B) utilize
17 a common lexicon to facilitate unity of purpose among all
18 stakeholders, (C) promote a response that facilitates unity of
19 purpose and better communication among the whole community,
20 including federal, state, tribal, territorial, and local governments,
21 and private sector and ~~non-governmental~~ *nongovernmental* entities,
22 and (D) clarify which components of the disaster are complex or
23 complicated, requiring cross-sector coordination.

24 (3) Lifelines are used to enhance the ability to gain, maintain,
25 and communicate situational awareness for the whole community
26 in responding to disasters; analyze impacts to the various lifelines
27 and develop priority focus areas for each operational period during
28 response; and identify and communicate complex
29 interdependencies to identify major limiting factors hindering
30 stabilization.

31 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature to establish the State
32 Lifelines Council, to be cochaired by the Seismic Safety
33 Commission, the Strategic Growth Council, and the Department
34 of Forestry and Fire Protection, to identify what investments the
35 State of California should make to ensure a rapid recovery from
36 a major disaster to ~~complement~~ *complement* the work of similar
37 local and regional lifelines councils and bring lifeline providers
38 together to develop a unified set of postevent performance

1 standards, both individually and collectively, for public and private
2 utility providers.

3 SEC. 2. Article 4.2 (commencing with Section 8580) is added
4 to Chapter 7 of Division 1 of Title 2 of the Government Code, to
5 read:

6
7 Article 4.2. State Lifelines Council
8

9 8580. (a) The Seismic Safety Commission shall enter into a
10 partnership with the Strategic Growth Council and the Department
11 of Forestry and Fire Protection to establish the State Lifelines
12 Council to identify the investments the State of California should
13 make to ensure a rapid recovery from a major disaster.

14 (b) The council shall ~~complement~~ complement the work of local
15 and regional lifelines councils and bring lifeline providers together
16 to develop a unified set of postevent performance standards, both
17 individually and collectively, for public and private utility
18 providers.

19 SEC. 3. Section 8608.5 is added to the Government Code, to
20 read:

21 8608.5. (a) *Biennially, the Office of Emergency Services shall*
22 *convene key personnel and agencies that have emergency*
23 *management roles and responsibilities to participate in tabletop*
24 *exercises in which the participant's emergency preparedness plans*
25 *are discussed and evaluated under various simulated catastrophic*
26 *disaster situations.*

27 (b) *The office shall invite governmental agencies, educational*
28 *entities, military installations, private businesses, and nonprofit*
29 *organizations that operate or own concerns in various sectors that*
30 *provide fundamental services in the community that, when*
31 *stabilized, enable all other aspects of society to function to*
32 *participate in the tabletop exercises. Those sectors include, but*
33 *need not be limited to, all of the following:*

34 (1) *Law enforcement, private security, fire suppression services,*
35 *search and rescue, government services, and community safety.*

36 (2) *Food, water, shelter, and agriculture.*

37 (3) *Medical care, public health, patient transportation, medical*
38 *supply providers, and fatality management.*

39 (4) *Utilities and fuel.*

1 (5) *Infrastructure, emergency responder communications, alerts,*
2 *warnings and safety messages, finance, 911 emergency response*
3 *systems, and dispatch.*

4 (6) *Hazardous materials management, facilities, pollutants, and*
5 *contaminants.*

6 (7) *Transportation infrastructure, motor vehicles, mass transit,*
7 *and railway, aviation, and maritime transportation.*

8 (c) *The simulated catastrophic disaster situations shall be based*
9 *upon the following disaster response plans for incidents that could*
10 *result in thousands of casualties, tens of thousands of evacuees,*
11 *overwhelm state and local response capabilities, and severely*
12 *disrupt lifeline infrastructure such as water, electricity, fuel, food,*
13 *cellular communications, and transportation developed by the*
14 *office and the Federal Emergency Management Agency:*

15 (1) *The Northern California Catastrophic Flood Response Plan*
16 *published in 2018.*

17 (2) *The Bay Area Earthquake Plan published in 2016.*

18 (3) *The California Cascadia Subduction Zone Earthquake and*
19 *Tsunami Response Plan published in 2013.*

20 (4) *The Southern California Catastrophic Earthquake Response*
21 *Plan published in 2010.*

22 (d) *The tabletop exercises shall be designed by the office to*
23 *enhance the capabilities of the participants to do, at a minimum,*
24 *four of the following:*

25 (1) *Plan to engage the communities that they each serve, as*
26 *appropriate, in the development of executable strategic,*
27 *operational, or tactical-level approaches to meet defined disaster*
28 *response objectives.*

29 (2) *Provide coordinated, prompt, reliable, and actionable*
30 *information through the use of clear, consistent, accessible, and*
31 *culturally and linguistically appropriate methods to effectively*
32 *relay information regarding any threat or hazard, as well as the*
33 *actions being taken and the assistance being made available, as*
34 *appropriate.*

35 (3) *Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated*
36 *operational structure and process that appropriately integrates*
37 *all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core*
38 *capabilities.*

39 (4) *Manage the security and resilience of supply chains that*
40 *deliver essential commodities, equipment, and services in support*

1 of impacted communities and survivors, including emergency
2 power and fuel support, as well as the coordination of access to
3 community staples. Synchronize logistics capabilities and enable
4 the restoration of impacted supply chains.

5 (5) Conduct appropriate measures to ensure the protection of
6 the health and safety of the public and workers, as well as the
7 environment, from all hazards in support of responder operations
8 and the affected communities.

9 (6) Provide transportation, including infrastructure access and
10 accessible transportation services, for response priority objectives,
11 including the evacuation of people and animals, and the delivery
12 of vital response personnel, equipment, and services into the
13 affected areas.

14 (7) Provide decisionmakers with relevant information regarding
15 the nature and extent of the hazard, cascading effects, and the
16 status of the response.

17 (8) Provide fatality management services, including decedent
18 remains recovery and victim identification, working with local,
19 state, tribal, territorial, insular area, and federal authorities to
20 provide mortuary processes, temporary storage, or permanent
21 internment solutions, sharing information with mass care services
22 for the purpose of reunifying family members and caregivers with
23 missing persons or their remains, and providing counseling to the
24 bereaved.

25 (9) Provide structural, wildland, and specialized firefighting
26 capabilities to manage and suppress fires of all types, kinds, and
27 complexities while protecting the lives, property, and environment
28 in the affected area.

29 (10) Stabilize critical infrastructure functions, minimize health
30 and safety threats, and efficiently restore and revitalize systems
31 and services to support a viable, resilient community.

32 (11) Provide life-sustaining and human services to the affected
33 population, including hydration, feeding, sheltering, temporary
34 housing, evacuee support, reunification, and distribution of
35 emergency supplies.

36 (12) Deliver traditional and atypical search and rescue
37 capabilities, including personnel, services, animals, and assets,
38 to survivors in need, with the goal of saving the greatest number
39 of endangered lives in the shortest time possible.

1 (13) *Ensure a safe and secure environment through law*
2 *enforcement and related security and protection operations for*
3 *people and communities located within affected areas and also*
4 *for response personnel engaged in lifesaving and life-sustaining*
5 *operations.*

6 (14) *Ensure the capacity for timely communications in support*
7 *of security, situational awareness, and operations, by any and all*
8 *means available, among and between affected communities in the*
9 *impact area and all response forces.*

10 (15) *Provide lifesaving medical treatment via emergency*
11 *medical services and related operations and avoid additional*
12 *disease and injury by providing targeted public health, medical,*
13 *and behavioral health support and products to all affected*
14 *populations.*

15 (16) *Restore and improve health and social services capabilities*
16 *and networks to promote the resilience, independence, health,*
17 *including behavioral health, and well-being of the whole*
18 *community.*

19 (17) *Return economic and business activities, including food*
20 *and agriculture, to a healthy state and develop new business and*
21 *employment opportunities that result in an economically viable*
22 *community.*

23 (18) *Protect natural and cultural resources and historic*
24 *properties through appropriate planning, mitigation, response,*
25 *and recovery actions to preserve, conserve, rehabilitate, and*
26 *restore them consistent with postdisaster community priorities and*
27 *best practices and in compliance with applicable environmental*
28 *and historic preservation laws.*

29 (e) (1) *The office shall report on each tabletop exercise it*
30 *conducts pursuant to this section to the committees on budget, the*
31 *Assembly Committee on Emergency Management, and the Senate*
32 *Committee on Governmental Organization by February 1, 2028,*
33 *and biennially thereafter of the calendar year following each*
34 *biennial simulation and evaluation.*

35 (2) *A report to be submitted pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be*
36 *submitted in compliance with Section 9795.*

37 (f) *The office shall, to the greatest extent possible, use federal*
38 *preparedness grant funding to offset the state, local, and tribal*
39 *government costs associated with participation in the tabletop*
40 *exercises described in this section.*

1 *SEC. 4. Section 8608.6 is added to the Government Code, to*
2 *read:*

3 8608.6. (a) *Annually, the Office of Emergency Services, in*
4 *cooperation with California Volunteers, shall coordinate with*
5 *local Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) programs*
6 *to conduct community disaster preparedness training in vulnerable*
7 *regions of the state.*

8 (b) *The vulnerable regions for training pursuant to this section*
9 *shall be identified based on data from the Federal Emergency*
10 *Management Agency's National Risk Index and a community*
11 *vulnerability index, or similar risk assessment tools.*

12 (c) *The office and California Volunteers shall ensure that the*
13 *annual training conducted pursuant to this section is coordinated*
14 *with any established CERT program serving the region in which*
15 *the training takes place.*

16 (d) *A training event shall emphasize actions to increase*
17 *community resilience to disasters, utilize community green or open*
18 *space for drills and preparedness activities whenever feasible, and*
19 *promote inclusive engagement of community members, including*
20 *individuals with disabilities and those from diverse linguistic and*
21 *cultural backgrounds.*

22 (e) *A training event shall include testing of community*
23 *emergency notification systems in the area. The Office of*
24 *Emergency Services shall prioritize testing in communities that*
25 *have experienced past challenges with emergency alerts or*
26 *evacuation warnings, including those observed during recent*
27 *wildfires in the state.*