

**2021 HURRICANE SEASON – EVACUATION OPERATIONS**  
**CHARLESTON COUNTY CONTINGENCY PLAN – SCHOOL BUS OPERATIONS**

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**I. PURPOSE**

- A. Address planned response actions by state agencies during the 2021 hurricane season.
- B. Provide posture to respond to local resource gaps and requirements in the event that an evacuation operation is needed.
- C. Reduce and mitigate risks to the public during the 2021 hurricane season through active coordination with public and private partners.
- D. Provide baseline guidance for school bus evacuation operations.
- E. This concept of operations, (CONOP), will only be executed if an outside contractor does not supply a fleet of motor coaches to execute any critical transportation needs, (CTN), evacuation mission for Charleston County and/or the County requires state assets to supplement CARTA/Durham local bus usage.

**II. MISSION**

Evacuation of citizens from Charleston County to pre-identified shelters, utilizing state owned, operated, and run assets where possible to protect citizens as part of the hurricane evacuation plan.

**III. ASSUMPTIONS**

- A. Based on the homeless and vulnerable household population in Charleston County requiring transportation, (CTN evacuees - population that lacks personal transportation and requires government-provided transportation to evacuate out of an at-risk area to a designated shelter), the planning numbers used for the purposes of the CTN mass transportation plan for Charleston County are, 2000 for a Cat 1 or 2 hurricane, 5,000 for a Cat 3 and 10,000 for a Cat 5. These numbers are for worst case scenarios for their respective categories and assume maximum compliance rates. For the purposes of this document, the planning number used is 2,000, being the most reasonable and likely estimate when considering storm track, intensity, size, storm surge and compliance rates, and this number correlates with the overarching SC Mass Transportation Base Plan. The Charleston County compliance spreadsheet contained within the 2021 CTN mass transportation plan, (located in annex B to the state hurricane plan), may be used to support and identify any changes to this estimate.
- B. 180 SC Department of Education school buses are available for use.
- C. South Carolina National Guard, (SCNG), will provide drivers and support movement of general population from county designated pick up points to shelters. Major Subordinate Command's, (MSC), will verify they can fulfill the requirement to have licensed bus drivers throughout subordinate units.

- D. Transportation Management Systems, (TMS), will support ESF 1 with command and control, support, and expertise.
- E. Motor coach contracts already held by the South Carolina Emergency Management Division, (TMS), will be used as a force multiplier if available and needed for the execution of this contingency plan.
- F. Intra-county pick up points will be supported by county assets, (Durham and Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority, (CARTA)).
- G. Hurricane severity and track will determine the number of evacuees and the evacuation timeline.

#### IV. SITUATION

- A. South Carolina as a South Atlantic state, coupled with its extensive 187-mile coastline, makes it highly vulnerable to tropical storms and hurricanes moving across the Atlantic Ocean.
- B. If the Governor of South Carolina orders an evacuation for one or more at-risk counties based on an impending hurricane, authorized state and local officials may be required to implement all or portions of the CTN evacuation plan.
- C. CTN evacuees are individuals who do not have access to personal transportation and will require government-provided transportation assistance to evacuate.
- D. An evacuation impacting multiple counties will undoubtedly pose a severe strain on the limited pool of local and state governmental resources. These resources may include but are not limited to sheltering, staffing at evacuee support sites, and transportation (government owned and numerous contractor owned) assets.
- E. In order to effectively coordinate any evacuation operation in a timely fashion, utilizing state owned assets may be the most effective means of executing this mission. Available resources for Charleston County school bus operations include:
  - 1. Each Major Subordinate Command, (MSC), will verify they can fulfill the requirement to have licensed bus drivers throughout subordinate units available for tasking to include command and control capability and logistics support. These bus drivers can leave the County.
  - 2. South Carolina National Guard will have as a minimum, fifty (50) licensed bus drivers that can be used for this contingency plan.
  - 3. SCDOE school buses from Charleston County, or a neighboring County. For planning purposes, each school bus is assumed to have a transportation capacity of 35, this considers luggage.

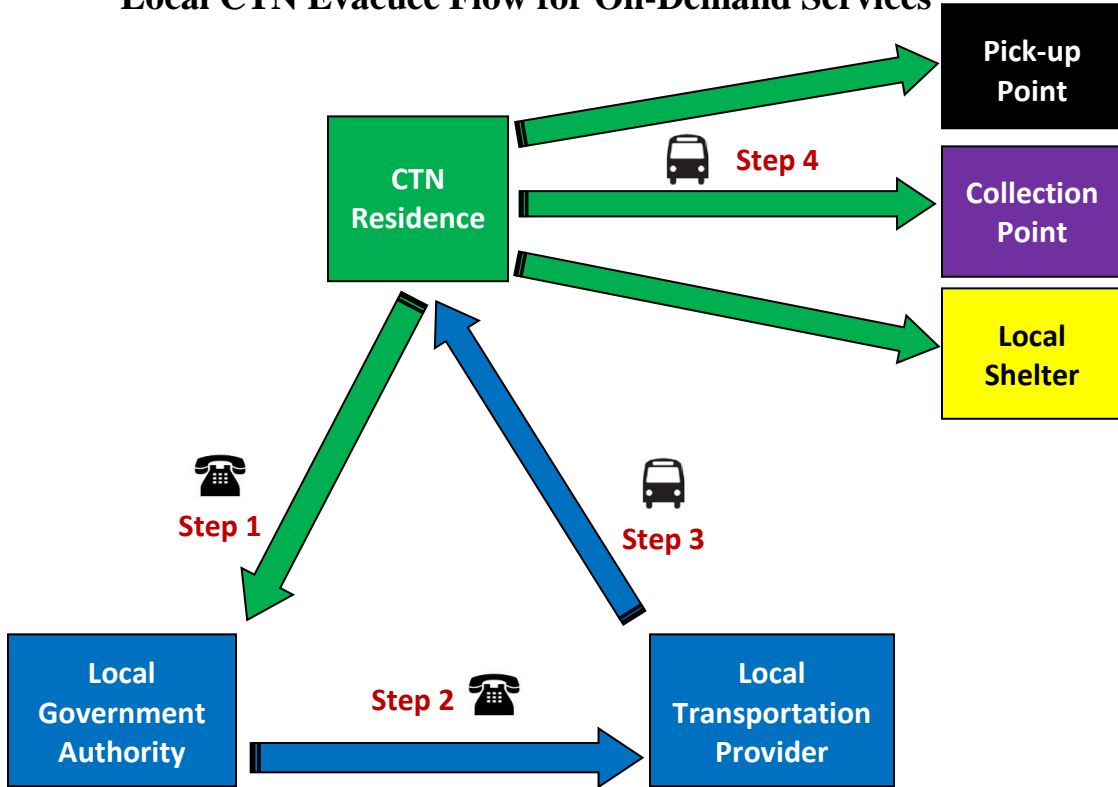
4. Additional school buses may be available from other counties, including Orangeburg as the situation dictates.
5. Staging area/collection point – North Charleston Convention Center.
6. SCNG local staging area – Orangeburg Armory.
7. Vehicle staging area available in Orangeburg if needed.
8. SCDOE will provide mechanical support for school buses.
9. Fuel provided by Department of Education.
10. SCNG personnel will only transport CTN personnel that are ambulatory and require no special medical equipment.

## V. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

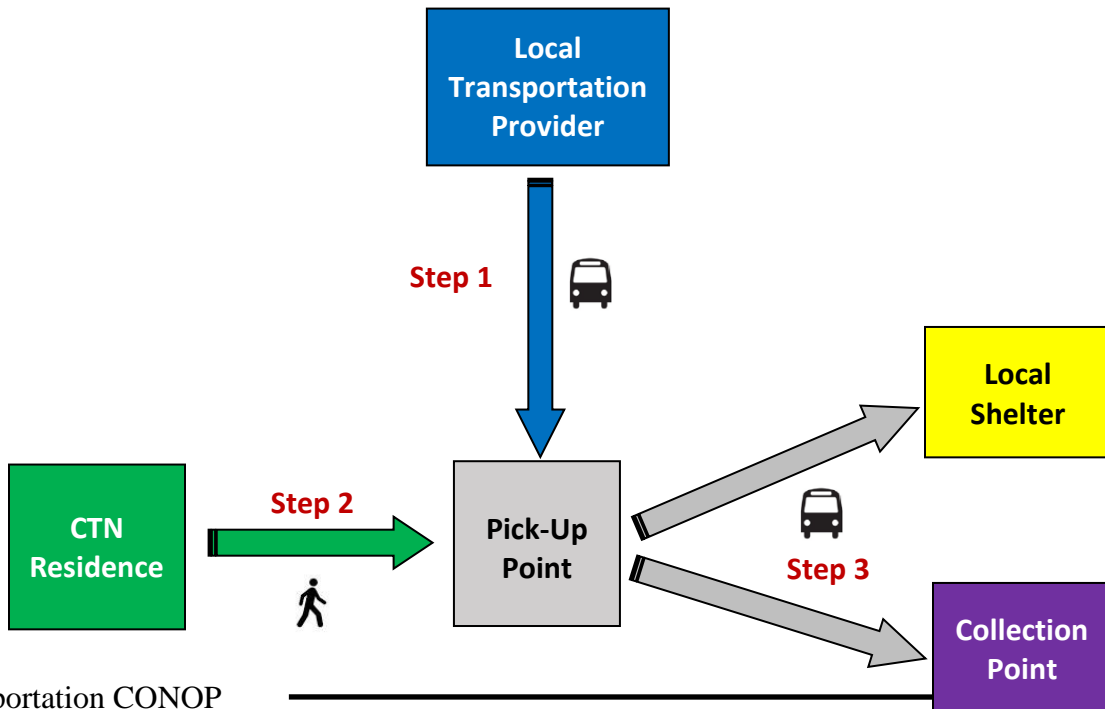
- A. The primary reason for executing a CTN evacuation within Charleston County is when it becomes apparent that shelter capacity within the county may be exceeded, this mission will be executed once shelter capacity exceeds 50%. When this occurs, the state may be required to assume a significant role in coordinating shelter locations and in providing transportation for a CTN evacuation.
- B. It is expected that the greatest level of CTN evacuation compliance will occur during the **second half** of the evacuation clearance time.
- C. The trigger point for activating this contingency plan will be once it is determined that in-county shelter capacity is insufficient, county officials may request state sheltering and transportation support. When this occurs and Charleston County's collection point becomes operational, (North Charleston Convention Center), local vehicles (i.e., those providing on-demand and pick-up-point service) transport CTN evacuees directly to the collection point. A pick-up point is a short-term use location (e.g., school bus stops, transit bus stops, etc.) within the evacuating county. Charleston County authorities may instruct CTN evacuees to walk from their residences to a pick-up point to obtain evacuation transportation, or evacuees may use in demand services to transport to an in-county shelter, host-county shelter, or collection point (if applicable). Frequency of pickups are based on multiple factors including the number of vehicles running routes, demand, and the circumstance of the incident.
- D. SCEMD/SCDOE will require 48hr advance notice in order inform, prepare, move resources and execute this mission.
- E. Upon determining that the CTN evacuation for Charleston County will require state support, utilizing state owned assets, state officials' immediate priorities include the following:

1. Identifying available shelters (based on local request for shelter support or anticipated need).
  2. Acquiring and deploying transportation resources (vehicles/drivers).
- F. Upon deployment, transportation resources travel from a school district transportation yard directly to a:
1. Forward Staging Area (FSA) located near the North Charleston Convention Center;
- OR
2. Pre-determined Vehicle Staging Area (VSA) and then onward to the FSA.
- G. At the collection point, staff will process, queue, and assign the evacuees to state-coordinated vehicles which are bound for a state-coordinated shelter.
- H. A collection point typically includes the following functional areas and associated tasks when it is established for an evacuation:
1. Arrival Area
  2. Screening Area
  3. Registration Area
  4. Queueing/Manifesting Area
  5. Frail Traveler/Medical Area
  6. Waiting Area
  7. Pet Processing Area
  8. Departure Area
- I. Charleston County will determine the collection point hours of operation and collection point operations must be ceased no later than E+48, due to the North Charleston Convention Center not being compliant with current ARC hurricane shelter standards.
- J. At the request of collection point staff, school buses will travel from the FSA to the collection point departure area where queued groups of CTN evacuees will board school buses. The buses transport the CTN evacuees to a state-coordinated shelter, which generally marks the end of the evacuation mission. School buses then return to their respective school district transportation yard(s) as needed, or return to provide a second transportation mission as needed. Drivers provided by the National Guard return to the Orangeburg Armory as covered later in this document.

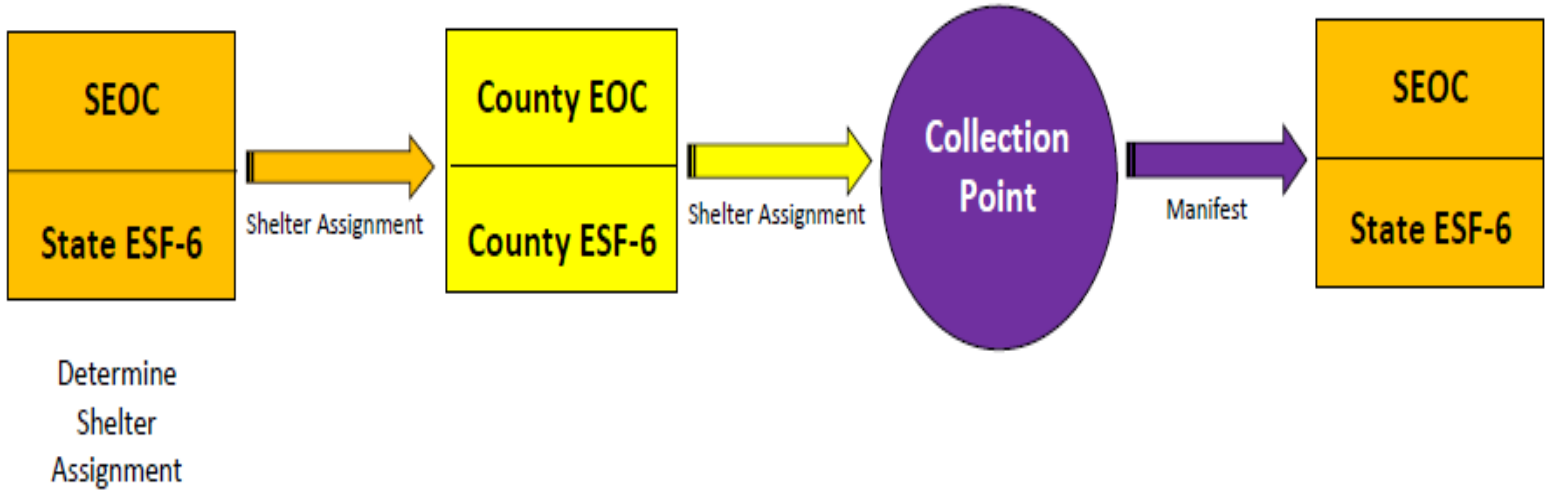
### Local CTN Evacuee Flow for On-Demand Services



### Local CTN Evacuee Pick-Up Services



**Shelter Assignment Process/Communication Flow**



**VI. RESPONSIBILITIES**

D. General

Upon activation of this plan, select state agencies involved in evacuation response will already be represented in the SEOC to respond to the operations and operations support sections.

E. South Carolina Emergency Management Division

1. Conducts mission analysis with state agencies and Charleston County to identify potential risks and resource gaps.
2. Provides updates to all stakeholders based on recurring state and national level assessments, training, and feedback to gain greater fidelity on potential impacts on lifeline systems.
3. Conduct and provide continuous assessment of the operational environment and evacuation requirements of Charleston County, based on stakeholder/county information and national level assessments during the planning and execution window.
4. Coordinate with federal agencies and states as the hurricane timeline moves forward towards an evacuation. Share information that may assist Charleston County in mission analysis and evacuation planning/re-entry coordination.

5. Upon request, coordinate operations to supplement Charleston County's evacuation plan as their shelters reach 50% capacity.
6. In liaison with Charleston County, execute plan when Charleston County shelters reach 50% capacity.
7. Assist ESF 1 with transport management provider integration.
8. Provide bottled water and meals ready to eat, (MREs), to support evacuees at the North Charleston Convention Center.

F. ESF 1

1. Integrate traffic management provider to support evacuation.
2. Support traffic management command and control, consisting of embarkation/disembarkation, tracking and manifests, utilizing emergency transportation management contractor support.
3. Source and utilize local state-owned school buses for evacuation operation.
4. SCNG drivers will move from Orangeburg to Charleston, utilizing SCDOE buses, in order to pick up local school buses to execute movement of evacuees in accordance with this contingency plan.
5. Provide mechanical support for the school bus evacuation operation.
6. Provide fuel for evacuation operations.
7. Liaison with ESF 6 for evacuee destinations.
8. Coordinate with SCNG in order to provide required training for licensing of SCNG personnel as bus drivers.
9. Other tasks as laid out in the state hurricane plan for evacuation operations.

G. ESF 6

1. Identify and coordinate inland shelters for North Charleston Convention Center evacuation traffic.
2. Coordinate with ESF 1 for routing instructions.

H. ESF 19

1. Deploy soldiers to Orangeburg Armory for mission support. Personnel sustainability and support operations are based out of the Orangeburg Armory.

2. SCNG drivers utilizing SCDOE buses will move the remaining amount of SCNG drivers from Orangeburg to Charleston to pick up buses, in order to execute movement of evacuees in accordance with the Hurricane Plan.
3. If necessary, be prepared to support Charleston Convention Center collection point operations in place of state forestry commission, utilizing South Carolina State Guard personnel and TMS personnel.
4. Provide wrecker support for school bus evacuation operations.

I. SC State Forestry Commission

1. Provide an Incident Management Team, (IMT), to manage the loading and control of people at the mass transportation loading area/Charleston Convention Center.
2. Deployed IMT will develop a site specific plan, in coordination with ESF 1 for loading and managing the control of evacuees at the Charleston Convention Center.
3. Command and control will be coordinated through ESF 1.

J. Charleston County

1. Works with SCEMD and state agencies to conduct mission analysis, identify resource gaps and unmet needs.
2. Estimate of 7,000 personnel requiring transportation is adjusted based on storm intensity and track, using the compliance spreadsheet within the CTN Mass Transportation Plan, (annex B to the state hurricane plan).
3. Charleston County will move citizens to the collection point at the Coliseum, for movement to inland shelters, once inter-county shelters reach 50% capacity.

**VII. MAINTENANCE, REVISION AND UPDATES**

- A. SCEMD is the lead agency for the development, coordination, review and updating of this contingency plan.
- B. As a minimum, SCEMD will review and update this contingency plan on a bi-annual basis. The review, maintenance and update will take into account any updates to the SCEOP, SC Hurricane Plan and SC Mass transportation Plan, in addition to, after-action reports (AAR) and other relevant State and Federal guidance.