

ICS Basics

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There are two initiatives that have been leading the momentum to develop and implement Incident Command Systems (ICS):

- National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) implementation activities
- The Joint Commission (TJC) Emergency Management (EM) Standards

NIMS dictates that organizations choosing to be NIMS-compliant must implement ICS. TJC provides further leverage by basing most EM standards on concepts presented by NIMS. Also, TJC compliance provides financial incentives for healthcare providers to implement NIMS/ICS concepts within their organizations.

The Hospital Incident Command System (HICS) model is an important foundation for more than 6,000 hospitals in the United States in their efforts to prepare for and respond to various types of disasters. Many more organizations are quickly discovering the value and importance of using an electronic incident management system to assist them with daily operations, preplanned events, and non-emergency situations.

HICS Model

Planning is critical to speedy and efficient responses to incidents. Likewise, the structures you put in place during the planning phase aid you in recovering from the incident and assessing your organization's response. eICS incorporates the National Response Plan and HICS model, providing tools to help facilitate hospitals' efforts to:

- **Plan** and develop [emergency operations plans](#), manage contact information, and implement Incident Command within the organization.
- **Respond** during an incident, track personnel and their roles and responsibilities, and monitor the status of key [objectives](#) and assets.
- **Recover** post-incident by creating [standard reports](#) for quality improvement, demonstrating integration of standard management processes, and facilitating reimbursement from government programs.

Compliance

TJC requires hospitals to perform various planning tasks, including the creation of one or more Hazard Vulnerability Analysis (HVA) documents, emergency operations plans, and job action sheets for IC roles. In addition, TJC requires you to:

- Review your HVAs and EOPs on an annual basis.
- Perform drills annually.
- Create mutual aid relationships (MOA/MOU, memoranda of agreement/understanding) with other agencies.
- Document any corrective actions taken for the purpose of enhancing response capabilities.

Most of the files and documents associated with these planning activities are living documents—your organization's users will regularly review and update them. Your [eICS library](#) makes these documents available to the appropriate users for viewing or updating.

In addition, the library always presents to the user the latest official document, while also maintaining a version for of each file, including the dates it changed and which user made the change. Your library also enables the designation of draft versions, such as 2.1, that can be routed to specific users for the purpose of obtaining feedback without affecting the approved, official published version, 2.0.

Users can attach files from the library to [notifications](#) they send to entities and individuals. In this way, you can send the appropriate information with the message or notification.

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