Presentation to the House Interim Committee on Veterans and Emergency Management

ODHS Office of Resilience & Emergency Management

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Office of Resilience and Emergency Management

- ODHS plays a crucial role as part of a larger system
  - Responsible under state laws and plans
- We invest in, and enable, local action through public and private partnerships
- We address inequity by working across Oregon to assist local partners
- We work before, during, and after disasters

4 key functions
- Mass care
- Emergency assistance
- Human services
- Stabilization
Guiding principles

• Natural disasters are policy failures that accelerate pre-existing trends and increase inequities

• Incidents disproportionately impact some communities. All efforts need to be equity focused

• Emphasis on communication with survivors in a linguistically and culturally appropriate way

• Partner with local jurisdictions and community-based organizations (CBOs) that are best suited to support the needs of survivors
Warming shelters

• Newest mission
• In December, we fulfilled requests from local governments to help staff shelters in Clackamas, Jackson, Multnomah and Washington Counties
• Our field team filled 90 shifts, including 23 as the person in charge (Dec. 26 – Jan. 2)
Wildfire sheltering

Challenges
• 4040 homes destroyed in 2020
• COVID-19
• Disproportionate impact
• Dearth of interim and long-term affordable housing
• Hundreds remain in shelter as 2021 wildfires begin

What we’ve done
• As of Jan. 8, 4,386 families sheltered from the 2020 wildfires
• 25 families sheltered from the 2021 wildfires
• More than 1.4 million meals delivered
• Shelter liaisons
• Recovery planning

Partnerships
• Disaster case management and social service integration and support
• Multi-agency partnerships
• Support local communities
• Develop housing options
COVID

Hospital decompression

• **COVID impacts**
  • Overwhelmed hospitals
  • Outbreaks and staffing challenges in long-term care facilities
  • Patients are waiting for discharge

• **Shelter role**
  • Provide non-congregate shelter to ease hospital overcrowding when patients can’t go home or have no home, but don’t need long-term care
  • Reserve hotel rooms in high-census counties at request
  • Sheltering 2 in Coos County, 3 in Marion County

Isolation and quarantine

• **Houseless persons**
  • Need safe location

• **Shelter role**
  • Hotel shelter, other options sometimes needed
Afghan refugees

- ODHS role: Provide initial temporary shelter for those who need it
- The number of Afghan refugees continues to increase and rotate out as Resettlement Agencies find them temporary or permanent housing
- Current profile is 194 people
- Total to date: 93 families, 272 people

POLITICS

Oregon Legislature approves $18 million in additional support for Afghan refugee resettlement

Dianne Lugo Salem Statesman Journal
Published 7:00 a.m. PT Dec. 15, 2021

- ODHS is adding more hotel contracts to ensure availability
- Recruiting shelter liaisons with Dari and Pashto language skills
Moving forward

- We must:
  - Continue to work before, during and after disasters – we can’t wait for disasters to happen then react – we learned that lesson from the 2020 Labor Day fires
  - Plan mass care and sheltering response for the inevitable Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake
  - Invest in, and enable, local action through public and private partnerships
  - Address inequity by working across Oregon to assist local partners
  - Continue to work with local partners and others to transition people out of shelter to intermediate and permanent housing options