

CAREER GUIDE FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SPECIALISTS

SOC Code: 13-1061

Pay Band(s): 4, 5 ([Salary Structure](#))

Standard Occupational Description: Coordinate disaster response or crisis management activities, provide disaster preparedness training, and prepare emergency plans and procedures for natural (e.g., hurricanes, floods, earthquakes), wartime, or technological (e.g., nuclear power plant emergencies, hazardous materials spills) disasters or hostage situations.

Emergency Management Specialist positions in the Commonwealth are assigned to the following Roles in the [Emergency Services Career Group](#):

[Emergency Coordinator II](#)

[Emergency Coordinator Manager I](#)

While Emergency Management Specialists within the Commonwealth are all located within the Emergency Services Career Group, individuals may want to pursue related public safety or administrative opportunities depending upon individual training, education, knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests.

Other Career Group(s) that may be of interest are:

[Program Administration](#)

[Policy Analysis and Planning](#)

[Training and Instruction](#)

[Public Safety Compliance](#)

[Law Enforcement](#)

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES AND TASKS

(Technical and Functional Expertise)

Skills

Note: *The technical and functional skills listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for **Emergency Management Specialists** commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the skills listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

1. Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
2. Talking to others to convey information effectively.
3. Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
4. Understanding the implications of new information for both current and future problem-solving and decision-making.
5. Monitoring/Assessing performance of yourself, other individuals, or organizations to make improvements or take corrective action.
6. Adjusting actions in relation to others' actions.
7. Persuading others to change their minds or behavior.
8. Actively looking for ways to help people.

9. Identifying complex problems and reviewing related information to develop and evaluate options and implement solutions.
10. Determining the kind of tools and equipment needed to do a job.
11. Conducting tests and inspections of products, services, or processes to evaluate quality or performance.
12. Determining how a system should work and how changes in conditions, operations, and the environment will affect outcomes.
13. Identifying measures or indicators of system performance and the actions needed to improve or correct performance, relative to the goals of the system.
14. Managing one's own time and the time of others.
15. Obtaining and seeing to the appropriate use of equipment, facilities, and materials needed to do certain work.
16. Motivating, developing, and directing people as they work.

Knowledge

Note: *The technical and functional knowledge statements listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for **Emergency Management Specialists** commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the knowledge listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

The Knowledge of:

1. Relevant equipment, policies, procedures, and strategies to promote effective local, state, or national emergency management operations for the protection of people, data, property, and institutions.
2. Principles of situational analysis and planning.
3. Principles and methods for curriculum and training design, teaching and instruction for individuals and groups.
4. Business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modeling, leadership technique, production methods, and coordination of people and resources.
5. Principles and methods for moving people or goods by air, rail, sea, or road, including the relative costs and benefits.
6. Materials, methods, and the tools involved in the construction or repair of houses, buildings, or other structures such as highways and roads.
7. The structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.

Abilities

Note: *The technical and functional abilities listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for **Emergency Management Specialists** commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the abilities listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

The Ability to:

1. Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
2. Respond to a wide range of issues under stress.
3. Tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.
4. See details at a distance.
5. Speak clearly so others can understand you.

6. Quickly analyze, make sense of, combine, and organize information into meaningful patterns.
7. Shift back and forth between two or more activities or sources of information (such as speech, sounds, touch, or other sources) without being distracted.
8. Know your location in relation to the environment or to know where other objects are in relation to you.
9. Identify or detect a known pattern (a figure, object, word, or sound) that is hidden in other distracting material.
10. Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
11. Focus on a single source of sound in the presence of other distracting sounds.
12. Read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.
13. Communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.
14. See details at close range (within a few feet of the observer).

Tasks

Note: *The following is a list of sample tasks typically performed by **Emergency Management Specialists**. Employees in this occupation will not necessarily perform all of the tasks listed.*

1. Collaborate with other officials in order to prepare and analyze damage assessments following disasters or emergencies.
2. Conduct surveys to determine the types of emergency-related needs that will need to be addressed in disaster planning, or provide technical support to others conducting such surveys.
3. Consult with officials of local and area governments, schools, hospitals, and other institutions in order to determine their needs and capabilities in the event of a natural disaster or other emergency.
4. Coordinate disaster response or crisis management activities such as ordering evacuations, opening public shelters, and implementing special needs plans and programs.
5. Direct emergency response teams and provides on-site investigations.
6. Design and administer emergency/disaster preparedness training courses that teach people how to effectively respond to major emergencies and disasters.
7. Develop and maintain liaisons with municipalities, county departments, and similar entities in order to facilitate plan development, response effort coordination, and exchanges of personnel and equipment.
8. Develop and perform tests and evaluations of emergency management plans in accordance with state and federal regulations.
9. Inspect facilities and equipment such as emergency management centers and communications equipment in order to determine their operational and functional capabilities in emergency situations.
10. Keep informed of activities or changes that could affect the likelihood of an emergency, as well as those that could affect response efforts and details of plan implementation.
11. Keep informed of federal, state and local regulations affecting emergency plans, and ensure that plans adhere to these regulations.
12. Administers public emergency recovery assistance programs.

INTERESTED?

Like people, occupations have traits or characteristics. These characteristics give important clues about the nature of the work and work environment, and give you an opportunity to match your own personal interests to a specific occupation. When you choose a job in an occupation that matches your own interests you have taken an important step in planning a successful and rewarding career.

Emergency Management occupations have Enterprising, Social, and Investigative characteristics.

Enterprising occupations frequently involve starting up and carrying out projects. These occupations can involve leading people and making many decisions. Sometimes they require risk taking and often deal with business.

Social occupations frequently involve working with, communicating with, and teaching people. These occupations often involve helping or providing service to others.

Investigative occupations frequently involve working with ideas, and require an extensive amount of thinking. These occupations can involve searching for facts and figuring out problems mentally.

LICENSURE, REGISTRATION, OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Certification will be required for certain Emergency Management Specialist positions in state government. Examples include hazardous materials specialist, fire fighter, and fire instructor. Specialized training and/or certification in Emergency Management will improve employment and career advancement opportunities and should be included in your self-development plan.

For information on Certified Fire Training and related continuing education opportunities visit the Virginia Department of Fire Programs' web site at <http://www.vdfp.state.va.us>.

Information on Certified Emergency Management training is available at the following web sites:

Virginia Department of Emergency Management
<http://www.vdem.state.va.us>

Federal Emergency Management Agency
<http://www.fema.gov>

EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The field of emergency management offers a variety of career choices. An Emergency Management Program usually includes (1) planning and prevention, (2) communication (3) response and recovery (4) disaster assistance, and (4) public education.

Emergency Management Specialist positions include *emergency planners* and *policy analysts*, *preparation and recovery specialists*, *hazardous materials specialists*, *firefighters*, *public assistance officers*, and *trainers*.

In addition to the principles of emergency management, employers may require knowledge of federal, state, and local emergency management and/or homeland security policies. A college degree in urban planning, public administration, the technical or physical sciences, public safety, or a related field of study may be required. Knowledge of, and fluency in a second language can improve employment opportunities.

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) coordinates a variety of training courses in five major programs: Emergency Management, Hazardous Materials, Radiological Emergency Response, Public Safety Response to Terrorism and Search and Rescue. For course descriptions and training calendars visit their web site at <http://www.vdem.state.va.us>.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) operates the Emergency Management Institute (EMI). The EMI Independent Study program consists of self-paced courses designed for people who have emergency management responsibilities and the general public. Courses are offered free-of-charge to all who qualify for enrollment, and college credit can be obtained through a for-fee service after successful completion of a course. For more information go to <http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/IS/>

COMMONWEALTH COMPETENCIES

Competencies are a set of identified behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that directly and positively impact the success of employees and the organization. Competencies can be observed and measured. When consistently demonstrated, competencies make employees particularly effective in their work. Competencies help lay out a road map to career success. You can use the Commonwealth Competencies to help improve your individual performance by adopting behaviors that make high performing employees successful in their jobs. In this way, you can use the Commonwealth Competencies for your further professional development.

The Commonwealth Competencies are:

1. Technical and Functional Expertise
2. Understanding the Business
3. Achieving Results
4. Serving the Customer
5. Teamwork
6. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
7. Leadership and Personal Effectiveness

The above competencies may be applied to employees throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. They can be rank-ordered by agencies and hiring managers to represent the needs of a specific job. The rank ordering will change depending upon the occupation, an organization's priorities, the actual job requirements, and the supervisor's preferences.

Career success is both about what you do (applying your technical knowledge, skills, and ability) and how you do it (the consistent behaviors you demonstrate and choose to use) while interacting and communicating with others. Hopefully, by studying the Commonwealth competencies, identifying your developmental opportunities, and working to refine your own competence, you can take charge of your career!

For additional information about the **Commonwealth Competencies** go to: http://jobs.state.va.us/cc_planningctr.htm. For the competencies, we first list the competencies and then define each. Finally, we list competency indicators; to describe what successful performance looks like.

COMMONWEALTH CAREER PATH

Career opportunities in the Commonwealth are not limited to moving “up” to the next highest role and pay band, changing positions, or to becoming a supervisor. That’s because most roles describe a broad group of occupationally related positions that perform a range of work that requires increased knowledge and skills. For that reason, Commonwealth roles describe the career paths within the same or higher-level role for the same or different Career Group. The broad salary range and the Commonwealth’s pay practices provide flexibility in recognizing career development and advancement. ([Salary Structure](#))

For example:

PAY BAND	PRACTITIONER ROLES	MANAGEMENT ROLES
3	Emergency Coordinator I	
4	Emergency Coordinator II	
5	Emergency Coordinator III	Emergency Coordinator Manager I
6		Emergency Coordinator Manager II
7		Emergency Coordinator Manager III

Sample Career Path:

Emergency Coordinator I

The Emergency Coordinator I role provides career tracks for dispatchers or communication technician who perform a variety of communications and operational duties in support of public safety, security, and law enforcement operations ranging from entry level to journey level. Employees function in communications or operation centers and in the field at incidents.

Emergency Coordinator II

The Emergency Coordinator II role is provides career tracks for dispatchers and communication technicians whose responsibilities range from advanced level of lead workers to supervisors. This role also provides career tracks for emergency management specialists (recovery specialists/planners) whose responsibilities range from entry level to advanced level. Responsibilities include handling sensitive or dangerous cases, or serve in a planning function, collecting and organizing data to develop plans and delineate and direct resources to facilitate a given level of response to emergency and disaster situations. The role also provides career tracks for fire fighters that perform fire-fighting responsibilities ranging from trainee to advanced level. Employees combat fires that have dangerous or explosive potential and involve the use of technical and specialized equipment.

Emergency Coordinator III

The Emergency Coordinator III role provides career tracks for fire fighters who supervise and direct the activities of several fire fighters in fire-fighting and rescue operations.

Emergency Coordinator Manager I

The Emergency Coordinator Manager I role provides career tracks for managers who administer and coordinate emergency management and disaster preparedness programs for response, recovery, and mitigation in accordance with state and federal regulations. Responsibilities may also include supervising major functional areas, such as fire fighting for state level crisis operations during emergencies and disasters.

Emergency Coordinator Manager II

The Emergency Coordinator Manager II role provides career tracks for managers that are operations and planning directors charged with the control of large groups of assets and resources directed toward a particular program area of Emergency Management. Responsibilities include supervising major functional areas for state level crisis operations during major emergencies or disasters.

Emergency Coordinator Manager III

The Emergency Coordinator Manager III role provides career tracks for the executive level managers acting as a deputy or an assistant to the agency head. Policy is defined at this level and interaction with the Governor's Secretaries or Executive Assistants is routine. Interaction with other agency leadership is also the norm. Global planning and operational ability and skilled, diplomatic leadership ability is expected.

ADDITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:

O*Net (Occupational Information Network)

<http://online.onetcenter.org/>

Federal Emergency Management Agency

<http://www.fema.gov>

Virginia Employment Commission

<http://www.alex.vec.state.va.us/>

Career One Stop

<http://www.careeronestop.org/>

Virginia Career Resource Network

<http://www.vacrn.net/>