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**Subject:** Required COVID-19 After Action Reporting  
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Honorable Elected Officials and Governmental Leaders

After reviewing multiple city and county web-sites, specifically each agencies stated strategic priorities, goals and projects, road maps, action plans and visioning processes for 2023, very little related to COVID-19 could be found.

After three years of constant COVID impacts, this obvious societal inclination to move forward and onward is clearly evident and predictable. However, by law, the California Code of Regulations, Title 19, § 2450 (a) states “Any city, city and county, or county declaring a local emergency for which the governor proclaims a state of emergency, and any state agency responding to that emergency shall complete and transmit an after action report to Cal OES within ninety (90) days of the close of the incident period.”

California Governor Gavin Newsom announced that the COVID-19 State of Emergency ended on February 28, 2023. On April 10, 2023, President Biden signed a measure that immediately ended the COVID-19 National Emergency after more than three years from when it was enacted. However, the actual public health emergency declaration is scheduled to end on May, 11, 2023.

The Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal-OES) is currently preparing additional after action guidance and timing, given their own requirement to provide an after action report 180 days after the incidents closure.

<https://www.caloes.ca.gov/office-of-the-director/operations/planning-preparedness-prevention/planning-preparedness/after-action-corrective-action-reporting/>

Given these requirements, I recommend the required COVID 19 After Action Reporting Process be added to each governmental agencies 2023 strategic priority work list.

The After Action Report should not be seen as a punitive process, but rather an opportunity for governmental agencies specifically responsible for public safety and

essential services to reflect on their strengths and address any weaknesses or shortcomings in preparation for the next, or potential future events.

Key findings, recommendations, gap analysis and best practices can highlight benefits associated with emergency planning updates, community engagement, training, exercises, equipment purchases, and critical but flexible strategies needed to not only prepare for the next emergency but also reflect on what worked and what didn't.

As a former Fire Chief who spent 40 years in public safety and specifically in special operations, where I responded to some of the worst disasters in the nation, I have directly seen the benefit of honest formal post-incident assessments that resulted in significant improvements for future responses.

Beyond the basic requirements outlined by Cal-OES and the state's timeline, governmental agencies could choose to conduct a more comprehensive process based upon public comment, feedback or engagement process and/or requests and feedback from local officials under a shared vision of improvement and preparedness.

Whichever each jurisdiction chooses, transparency and actionable improvement recommendations should be at the core of any after action improvement effort.

Suggested reference links:

**Cal-OES After Action Reporting**

[https://www.caloes.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/Preparedness/Documents/01-2006-SEMSGdlnesAAR\\_Part-III.pdf](https://www.caloes.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/Preparedness/Documents/01-2006-SEMSGdlnesAAR_Part-III.pdf)

**FEMA Preparedness Tool Kit**

<https://pretoolkit.fema.gov/web/hseep-resources/improvement-planning>

**FEMA HSEEP COVID After Action Planning Template**

<https://emergency.cdc.gov/training/ERHMScourse/pdf/127961885-Hseep-AAR-IP-Template-2007.pdf>

**CDC After Action Template**

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/erhms/pdf/LessonsLearned.pdf>

**US-HHS COVID After Action Template**

<https://files.asprtracie.hhs.gov/documents/aspr-tracie-covid-19-after-action-reports--7-21-2021-508.pdf>

**WHO After Action Template**

[https://www.euro.who.int/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/393651/who-guid-aar-eng.pdf](https://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0009/393651/who-guid-aar-eng.pdf)

**IFRC The World is not ready for the next pandemic**

<https://www.ifrc.org/press-release/world-not-ready-next-pandemic-warns-ifrc>

Thank you.

Harold Schapelhouman, Retired Fire Chief  
Local, State, Federal First Responder

