



## National Planning System

The **National Planning System** provides a unified approach and common terminology to plan for all-threats and hazards and across all mission areas (Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response and Recovery). These plans—whether strategic, operational, or tactical—enable the whole community to build, sustain, and deliver the core capabilities identified in the National Preparedness Goal.

The National Planning System contains two key elements: the Planning Architecture, which describes the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of planning and planning integration; and the Planning Process, which describes the steps necessary to develop a comprehensive plan, from forming a team to implementing the plan.

### Planning Architecture

The National Planning System consists of three levels of planning:

- **Strategic-level** planning sets the context and expectations for operational planning.
- **Operational-level** planning provides the tasks and resources needed to execute the strategy.
- **Tactical-level** planning shows how to apply resources in order to complete the operational tasks within a given timeframe.

The three levels of planning generally fall into **two categories**:

- **Deliberate planning** involves developing strategic, operational, and tactical plans to prevent, protect against, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from threats or hazards.
- **Incident action planning** occurs in a time-constrained environment to develop rapidly adaptable operational and tactical plans in response to an imminent or ongoing incident.

Knowing which plans a jurisdiction needs and in what order to develop or revise plans is key to the success of planning activities. Planning activities

### About the National Preparedness System

The goal of the National Preparedness System is to strengthen the security and resilience of the United States through systematic preparation for the threats that pose the greatest risk to the security of the Nation. It identifies five mission areas—Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery—and builds on proven processes to guide the Nation’s approach for ensuring and enhancing national preparedness.

Key documents related to the National Preparedness System include:

- **National Preparedness Goal** defines a set of core capabilities within each mission area. Core capabilities are the distinct elements needed to achieve national preparedness.
- **National Planning Frameworks** set the strategy and doctrine for building, sustaining, and delivering the core capabilities necessary for achieving the National Preparedness Goal.
- **Federal Interagency Operational Plans** build upon the National Planning Frameworks and are the concept of operations used to integrate and synchronize existing national-level Federal capabilities to support local, state, tribal, territorial, insular area, and Federal plans and are supported by Federal department-level operational plans, where appropriate. They describe how the Federal government aligns resources and delivers core capabilities to reach our shared National Preparedness Goal.

involve two parts: Ensuring support of applicable parties and Conducting a common planning process.

### Planning Process

There are six steps in the **common planning process**:

1. Form a Collaborative Planning Team
2. Understand the Situation
3. Determine Goals and Objectives
4. Plan Development
5. Plan Preparation, Review, and Approval
6. Plan Implementation and Maintenance

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