



# Re-Entry Standard Operating Guide



2018

## Table of Contents

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Table of Contents.....	2
1.0 Introduction .....	3
1.1 Purpose .....	3
1.2 Scope .....	3
2.0 Outreach .....	3
3.0 Situation Overview .....	4
4.0 Concept of Operations .....	5
4.1 Phase 1: Render Safe Task Force Team Entry .....	5
4.2 Phase 2: Emergency Response and Life Safety Workforce Re-Entry .....	6
4.3 Phase 3: Essential Public and Private Sector Personnel Re-Entry.....	6
4.4 Phase 4: Local Residents, Property Owners, and Business Owners.....	8
4.5 Phase 5: Open to Public with Limited Access.....	8

## 1.0 Introduction

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### 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this Standard Operating Guide (SOG) is to describe the State of Georgia's strategy to permit access of essential response personnel into restricted areas during a disaster in Georgia. Essential response personnel are furthermore defined as those operating in the following roles: emergency response, emergency management, life safety, essential public sector, and essential private sector.

### 1.2 Scope

This SOG seeks to clarify the roles, responsibilities, and protocol to be followed during a disaster response to ensure that essential response personnel are given timely and efficient access to areas impacted by a disaster. The purpose of this permitting process is to control access so that those responding to life-threatening hazards, repairing critical infrastructure, and restoring essential commerce can perform those necessary tasks prior to public re-entry.

This document is the product of joint federal, state, county, local, and private sector efforts. Federal, state, and local government agencies and law enforcement officials have agreed to recognize the specific identification process outlined in this SOG for everyone who seeks access into a restricted disaster area.

## 2.0 Outreach

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This program is a partnership between the public sector and the private sector. As such, outreach obligations exist for all parties involved.

In the private sector, company/organizational leadership is responsible for training all essential response personnel that will use re-entry permits on the protocol specific to this SOG.

At the local-level, local organizations and agencies that plan to use re-entry permits are responsible for making local responders aware of this protocol.

At the state-level, the Georgia Emergency Management and Homeland Security Agency (GEMA/HS) will ensure that required state officials and responders are made aware of this SOG, and will disseminate this information at the local-level. County, city, and municipal government personnel are expected to partner with essential response personnel and state representatives in support of this initiative.

At the federal-level, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will work to ensure that all federal protection representatives are aware of this SOG and will support its dissemination throughout the country.

### 3.0 Situation Overview

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Upon receipt of a re-entry permit application, GEMA/HS will issue electronic re-entry permits to any pre-identified organization, agency, or company that may deploy essential response personnel following a disaster in the State of Georgia. One permit with an assigned phase of re-entry (either Phase 2 or Phase 3) will be issued per company, unless access is requested and approved for different personnel for both Phase 2 and Phase 3. Phase permits will be accepted during subsequent phases, but not earlier phases. In other words, Phase 2 permits will be accepted for re-entry during Phase 3 and beyond. However, Phase 3 permits will not be accepted during Phase 2.

Each company will be responsible for providing their authorized personnel with electronic or paper copies of the necessary re-entry permit for use during the specific phase of the re-entry process. Private companies or contractors not identified as a critical workforce provider should follow normally established methods of seeking access to disaster areas. Companies should use these permits for re-entry of all personnel and vehicles that are responding to the disaster (see Figure 1).

GEMA/HS will only provide re-entry permits directly to the following:

- Emergency response, emergency management, and/or life safety personnel
- Essential public or private sector employers with regional or statewide responsibilities, including:
  - Energy supply and distribution
  - Water and wastewater treatment
  - Food supply and distribution
  - Residential and commercial improvement
  - Medical supplier of hospitals, urgent care facilities, and dialysis centers
  - Communication providers
  - Commercial broadcasters designated in the State EAS Plan as primary relay stations, and/or meet the following criteria:
    - Are licensed by the Federal Communications Commission
    - Broadcast any EAS messages
    - Utilize FCC-designated television and/or radio carrier frequencies for broadcasting of content
    - Whose sole purpose for re-entry is restoring, repairing, or re-supplying a broadcaster facility and/or equipment
    - Do not normally operate exclusively within an affected county and/or do not have a regular supply/delivery schedule to locations within the affected counties (in which cases, re-entry permits are primarily issued at the county-level)

These permits will be valid for three years from the date of issue. It is strongly encouraged that organizations, agencies, and companies apply for Official State of Georgia Re-entry Permits well before an emergency affects Georgia. However, permits will still be issued if applied for during an event. Keep in mind that the permits either need to be printed or an internet connection must be available on the drivers' phones, circumstances which may be compromised based on the situation.

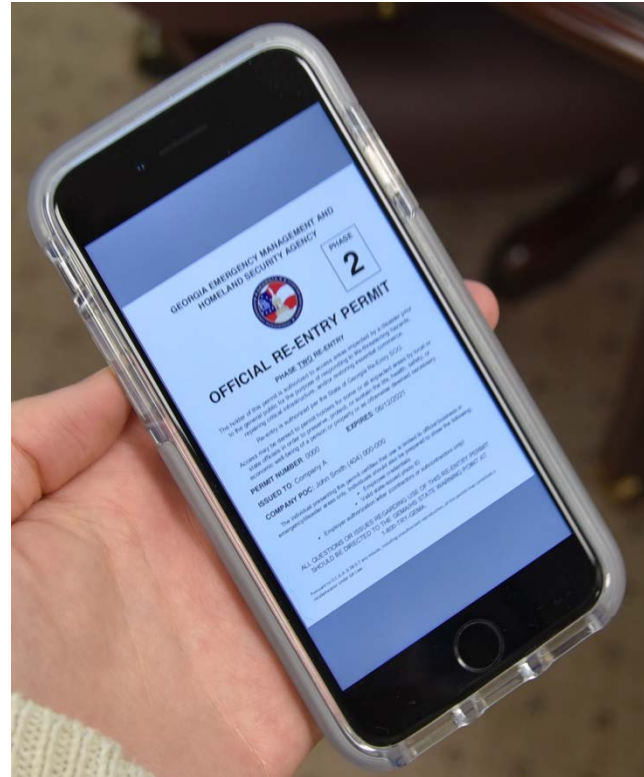


Figure 1: An example of a paper and an electronic copy of a re-entry permit.

## 4.0 Concept of Operations

### 4.1 Phase 1: Render Safe Task Force Team Entry

Phase 1 is the initial phase of re-entry. During this phase, teams from state and local response agencies, as well as private sector utility providers, will gain access to impacted areas. The primary objective of operating personnel during this phase is to render the area safe for the first responders who will follow them to conduct life safety operations.

Most likely, members of the Render Safe Task Forces will be co-located immediately before re-entry operations begin in inland-defined Forward Staging Areas (FSAs). These teams will be the first officials to enter restricted areas; therefore, re-entry permits will not be required (as the task forces will have embedded law enforcement officials). Nearly all personnel within this group will be manning emergency response vehicles with obvious agency or company markings.

Phase 1 will begin after the abatement of tropical storm force winds (34 knots / 39 mph) or as soon as the specific hazard has diminished and when conditions at the FSAs are deemed safe by on-site Re-entry Task Force leaders. Re-entry Task Forces will deploy from the FSAs along the pre-designated re-entry routes and conduct debris-clearing into affected areas to allow ground-based response personnel the ability to access the impacted areas.

The state or county level response may utilize aerial reconnaissance during Phase 1 operations. Aerial reconnaissance may be used to assist in determining the status of and impacts to re-entry routes, and to determine areas experiencing ongoing hazardous conditions. During the state-level response, aerial reconnaissance may be coordinated by the Georgia Department of Public Safety (DPS)-led Aviation Support Operations Center in conjunction with Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)-led ESF-1: Transportation, and DPS-led ESF-13: Law Enforcement. Aerial reconnaissance resources that may be utilized during Phase 1 include, but are not limited to: Georgia National Guard satellite imagery, fixed and rotary wing assets, elements of the Georgia State Patrol, the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Civil Air Patrol. Upon re-entry, utility crews on the Render Safe Task Forces will ensure the safe handling and removal of electric transmission and distribution lines. GDOT, DNR, and GFC resources will oversee the clearing of trees and other types of debris (white line to white line) to enable safe passage along roadways. GDOT will inspect roadways and bridges to provide approval ratings for travel on re-entry routes.

#### **4.2 Phase 2: Emergency Response and Life Safety Workforce Re-Entry**

Phase 2 will consist of personnel conducting life safety operations in impacted areas. These operations include, but are not limited to: search and rescue, emergency medical services, fire suppression, hazardous materials control and containment, preliminary damage assessment, essential relief staff to critical medical facilities, and immediate utility restoration to critical incident facilities.

Personnel entering impacted areas during Phase 2 in marked (see Figure 2), unmarked, or civilian vehicles should be prepared to present an Official State of Georgia Re-Entry Permit, employee credentials, and a valid state-issued identification card to public safety personnel controlling access. All personnel and equipment entering an impacted area during Phase 2 and beyond must maintain self-sustaining capabilities.

#### **4.3 Phase 3: Essential Public and Private Sector Personnel Re-Entry**

Phase 3 will consist primarily of individuals in the public and private sectors that can restore essential operations, services, and commerce in support of re-entry by the general public. These systems and networks include, but are not limited to: petroleum distributors, food distributors, non-emergency medical facilities (such as dialysis centers), pharmaceutical providers, members of the media, medical facility support staff, and local government essential workers. Re-entry permit issuance for this phase will require close coordination among state and local emergency management and with local public safety officials to ensure that the appropriate individuals and private sector partners are being allowed access to damaged areas.



Figure 2: Examples of what constitutes a marked vehicle.

Personnel entering impacted areas during Phase 3 in marked (see Figure 2), unmarked, or civilian vehicles should be prepared to present an Official State of Georgia Re-Entry Permit, employee credentials, and a valid state-issued photo identification card to public safety personnel controlling access. Individuals working as contractors or subcontractors for an organization or business approved for Phase 3 re-entry are also required to have an employer authorization letter. All personnel and equipment entering an impacted area during Phase 3 and beyond must maintain self-sustaining capabilities.

#### **4.4 Phase 4: Local Residents, Property Owners, and Business Owners**

Phase 4 will consist of local residents and those who own property or businesses in the impacted areas. The timeframe of this phase is dependent upon the extent of the damage caused by the hazard and the status of recovery and restoration operations in the preceding phases. During Phase 4 of re-entry, access may be limited to certain portions of impacted counties, and restrictions may be in place that only allows access during daylight hours.

Residents and individuals attempting to gain access during this phase will be expected to present valid state-issued photo identification that includes an address in the impacted area; or, valid state-issued photo identification along with a property deed, recent utility bill verifying an address, current voter registration card, recent property tax statement, business credential, or paystub from a local business. No Official State of Georgia Re-Entry Permits are issued for Phase 4 of re-entry. All personnel and equipment entering an impacted area during Phase 4 and beyond must maintain self-sustaining capabilities.

#### **4.5 Phase 5: Open to Public with Limited Access**

In Phase 5, local officials will determine that a county or portions of the county are relatively safe for entrance by the general public. Restrictions may remain in place for a period of time limiting access to daylight hours.