

Commodity Points of Distributions (C-PODs)

A Guide for Local Jurisdictions

2026



Texas Emergency Management Advisory Committee

List of Abbreviations

AAR	After-Action Review
AAR/IP	After-Action Review/Implementation Plan
CPOD	Commodity Point of Distribution
CSA	Central Staging Area
DC	District Chief
DDEOC	Disaster District Emergency Operation Center
EMC	Emergency Management Coordinator
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
ESF-6	Emergency Support Function Mass Care
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
ICS	Incident Command System
MHE	Material Handling Equipment
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRE	Meals Ready to Eat
PACE	Primary, Alternate, Contingency, and Emergency
PIO	Public Information Officer
POD	Point of Distribution
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
RSA	Resource Staging Area
SOC	State Operations Center
STAR	State of Texas Assistance Request
TDEM	Texas Division of Emergency Management
TFBN	Texas Foodbank Network
USACE	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
VFW	Veterans of Foreign Wars
VOAD	Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters
VRC	Volunteer Reception Center

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This document is intended to serve as a guide and a planning resource. It does not supersede local, state, or federal laws, regulations, or official directives. All actions should be coordinated through and approved by the appropriate government authorities.

Overview

The purpose of this guide is to provide information and planning considerations for local jurisdictions to execute successful points of distribution (POD) operations.

As POD operations increase in scale, the planning principles do not change. This guide provides information for all local jurisdictions but is directed primarily towards local jurisdictions who do not typically conduct POD operations and need a starting point. This guide does not address mass feeding, mass care, or medical points of dispensing.

This document is separated into four sections:

Section 1: Types of Points of Distribution

Section 2: Points of Distribution Process and Considerations

Section 3: State and Local Role in Supporting Points of Distribution

Section 4: Points of Distribution Staff Organization

Section 1: Types of Points of Distribution

Section One provides information regarding the four types of PODs in a quick reference format. The information provides a detailed graphic representation of the POD types, commodity types, staffing, and equipment needed for each POD type. This section also provides information regarding the contents of a standard POD kit, the quantity of kits needed for each POD type, site recommendations based on populations served, and available POD site factors. It is organized from the smallest POD Type to the largest POD Type.

POD Planning Factors

POD Planning Factors are provided below to assist in understanding how to determine the type and size of the POD(s), POD site space requirements, traffic cone placement, commodity distribution per vehicle, as well as POD signage and placement.

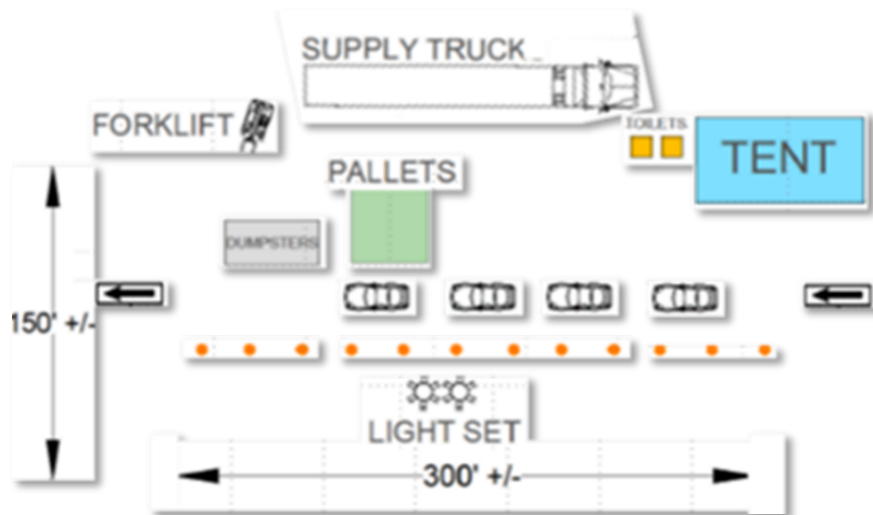
Determining POD Type and Size

A jurisdiction should consider the following to determine the type (pedestrian, vehicular, mass transit) and size (Type I, II, III or Type IV) of POD(s) to open:

- Number of impacted persons
- Population density of impacted area
- Number of mass transit dependent persons in the impacted area
- Status of transportation network in impacted area
- Extent of loss of power, water, etc.
- Anticipated demand in a geographic area
- Available POD locations and capacity of available locations

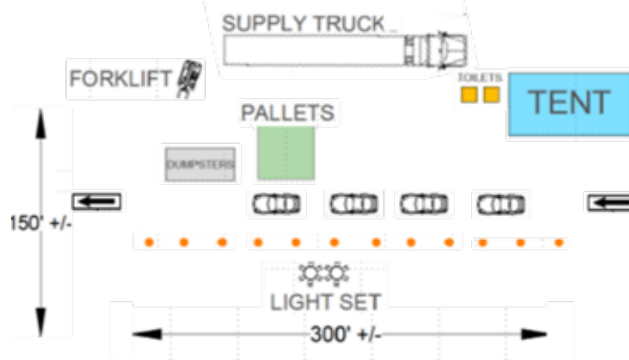
TYPE IV POD (Untyped)

A Type IV POD is not Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) typed. It is, however, based on a Type III Pod Kit and serves a population of approximately 2,500 residents. This type of POD works well for rural jurisdictions and can scale up or down based on the limitations of the POD site, the number of residents requiring assistance, and the number of commodities for distribution. A Type IV POD may have one to three loading points and one vehicle lane. A Type IV POD may require the same planning considerations and management processes as other POD Types.



TYPE IV POD

Space Requirement: <45,000 sq. ft.



Typical Commodities

Water	Tarps
Ice	Muck Kits
Food/Meals Ready to Eat (MRE's)	Pet Food
Baby Formula	Pet Supplies
Blankets	Other Commodities

Equipment		Personnel	
Type	No.	Type	No.
Forklift	1	Manager	1
Pallet Jack	1	Team Leaders	2
Power Light Set	1	Forklift Operator	2
Porta-Potties	2	Labor-Loading Point	5
Handwashing Stations	1	Labor-Backup	2
Tents/Canopies	2	Labor-Pallet Jack	1
Front End Loader	1	Site Security	1
Dumpsters/Trashcans	1	Community Relations Staff	1
Traffic Cones	12	Medic	1
Fire Extinguisher	2	Scene Safety Officer	1
Two-way Radios	0	Total Staff:	15
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Varies		

Contents of a Standard POD Kit x 1

Item	Quantity
Trash Can, Wheeled, 96 Gallons	3-6 Each
Leather Work Gloves	16 Pairs
Duct Tape	4 Rolls
Flashlight, D-Cell	19 Each
First Aid Kit	1 Each
Safety Vest, Reflective	19 Each
Hard Hat, Safety	16 Each
Glow Sticks, Orange or Red	30 Each
Batteries, D-Cell	36 Each

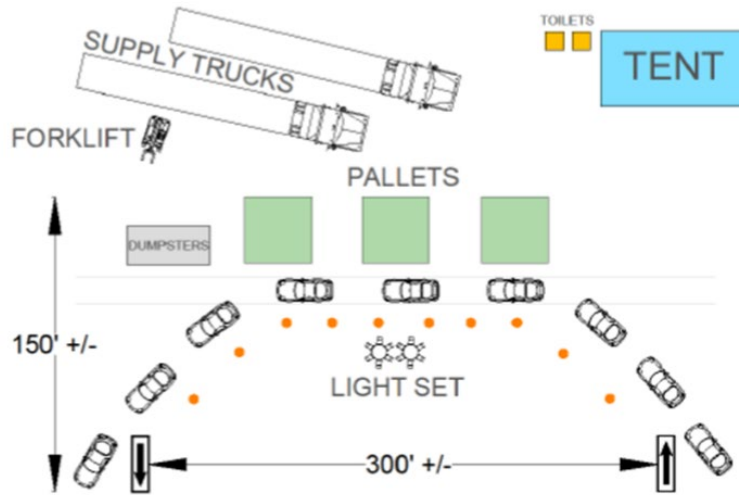
*Items NOT included in a Standard POD Kit:

Rubber gloves, light set, port-potties, tables, chairs, fuel, radios/chargers, signage (entrance, STOP and exit signs at a minimum), fire extinguisher, trash bags, Material Handling Equipment (MHE), pop-up shelter or tent, and documentation forms.

Recommend Separate Area for First Responders

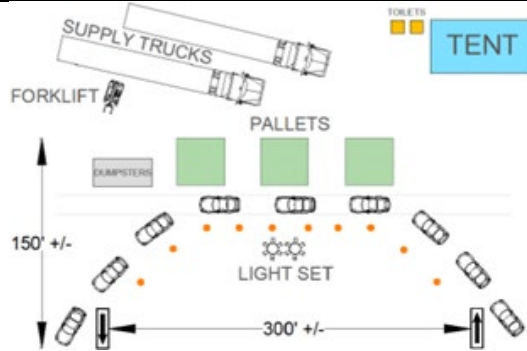
TYPE III POD

The smallest of the FEMA Typed PODs is Type III. A Type III POD serves approximately 5,000 people a day based on one vehicle representing a household of three people. A Type III POD is typically 100 ft. by 300 ft. and requires a staff of approximately 19 per day and four at night. This estimate assumes that restocking is accomplished while the POD is closed for distribution. A Type III POD has three loading points and only one vehicle lane.



TYPE III POD

Space Requirement: 45,000 sq. ft.



Typical Commodities

Water	Tarps
Ice	Muck Kits
Food/Meals Ready to Eat (MRE's)	Pet Food
Baby Formula	Pet Supplies
Blankets	Other Commodities

Equipment		Personnel	
Type	No.	Type	No.
Forklift	1	Manager	1
Pallet Jack	1	Team Leaders	2
Power Light Set	1	Forklift Operator	2
Porta-Potties	4	Labor-Loading Point	9
Handwashing Stations	2	Labor-Backup	4
Tents/Canopies	2	Labor-Pallet Jack	1
Front End Loader	1	Site Security	1
Dumpsters/Trashcans	1	Community Relations Staff	1
Traffic Cones	12	Medic	1
Fire Extinguisher	2	Scene Safety Officer	1
Two-way Radios	0	Total Staff:	21
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Varies		

Contents of a Standard POD Kit x 1

Item	Quantity
Trash Can, Wheeled, 96 Gallons	3-6 Each
Leather Work Gloves	16 Pairs
Duct Tape	4 Rolls
Flashlight, D-Cell	19 Each
First Aid Kit	1 Each
Safety Vest, Reflective	19 Each
Hard Hat, Safety	16 Each
Glow Sticks, Orange or Red	30 Each
Batteries, D-Cell	36 Each

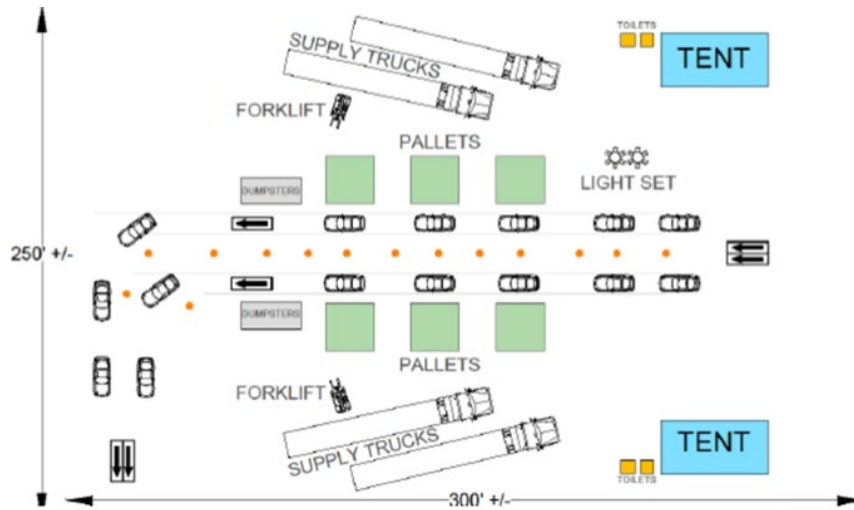
*Items NOT included in a Standard POD Kit:

Rubber gloves, light set, port-potties, tables, chairs, fuel, radios/chargers, signage (entrance, STOP and exit signs at a minimum), fire extinguisher, trash bags, material handling equipment (MHE), pop-up shelter or tent, and documentation forms.

Recommend Separate Area for First Responders

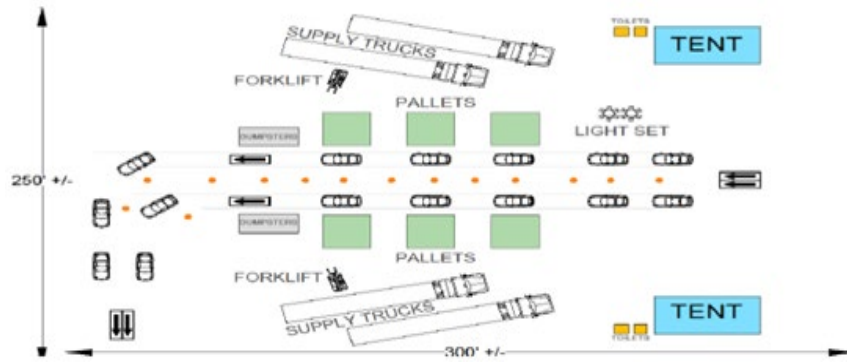
TYPE II POD

A Type II POD serves approximately 10,000 people based on one vehicle representing a household of three people. A Type II POD is typically 250 ft. by 300 ft. and requires a staff of approximately 34 per day and nine at night. This estimate assumes that restocking is accomplished while the POD is closed for distribution. A Type II POD has six loading points and two vehicle lanes.



TYPE II POD

Space Requirement: 75,000 sq. ft.



Typical Commodities

Water	Tarps
Ice	Muck Kits
Food/Meals Ready to Eat (MRE's)	Pet Food
Baby Formula	Pet Supplies
Blankets	Other Commodities

Equipment		Personnel	
Type	No.	Type	No.
Forklift	2	Manager	1
Pallet Jack	2	Team Leaders	4
Power Light Set	2	Forklift Operator	4
Porta-Potties	8	Labor-Loading Point	18
Handwashing Stations	4	Labor-Backup	9
Tents/Canopies	3	Labor-Pallet Jack	2
Front End Loader	2	Site Security	2
Dumpsters/Trashcans	2	Community Relations Staff	2
Traffic Cones	15	Medic	2
Fire Extinguisher	4	Scene Safety Officer	1
Two-way Radios	0	Total Staff:	40
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Varies		

Contents of a Standard POD Kit x 2

Item	Quantity
Trash Can, Wheeled, 96 Gallons	3-6 Each
Leather Work Gloves	16 Pairs
Duct Tape	4 Rolls
Flashlight, D-Cell	19 Each
First Aid Kit	1 Each
Safety Vest, Reflective	19 Each
Hard Hat, Safety	16 Each
Glow Sticks, Orange or Red	30 Each
Batteries, D-Cell	36 Each

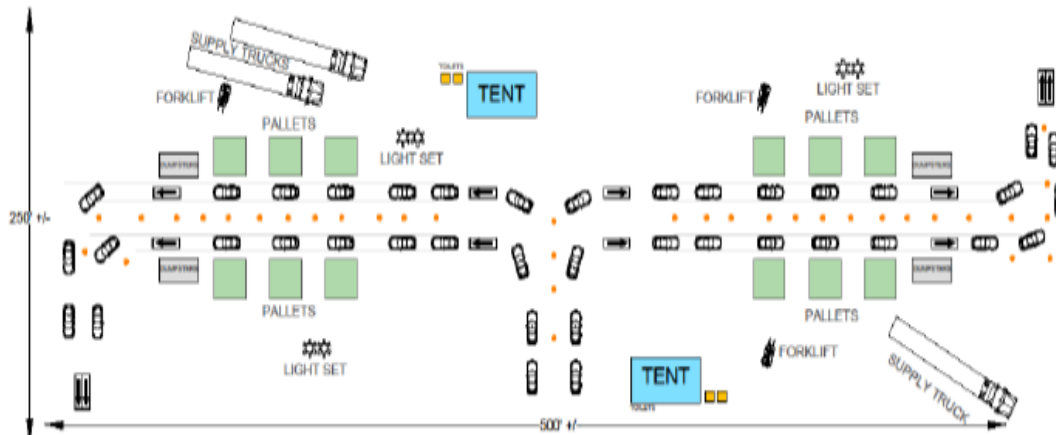
*Items NOT included in a Standard POD Kit:

Rubber gloves, light set, port-potties, tables, chairs, fuel, radios/chargers, signage (entrance, STOP and exit signs at a minimum), fire extinguisher, trash bags, material handling equipment (MHE), pop-up shelter or tent, and documentation forms.

Recommend Separate Area for First Responders

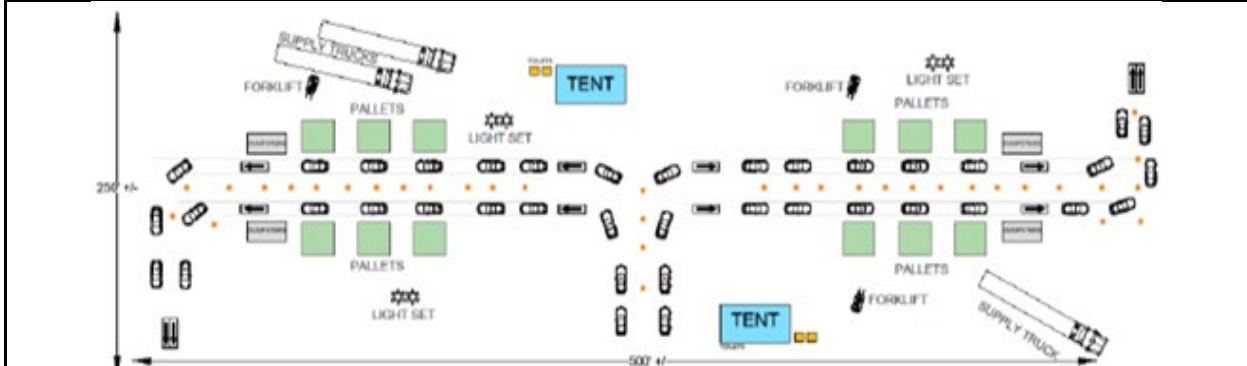
TYPE I POD

The largest of the PODs is Type I. A Type I POD serves approximately 20,000 people a day based on one vehicle representing a household of three people. A Type I POD is typically 250 ft. by 500 ft. and requires a staff of approximately 74 per day and nine per night. This estimate assumes restocking is accomplished while the POD is closed for distribution. A Type I POD has twelve loading points and four vehicle lanes. Type I PODs are only used in large metropolitan areas.



TYPE I POD

Space Requirement: 125,000 sq. ft.



Typical Commodities

Water	Tarps
Ice	Muck Kits
Food/Meals Ready to Eat (MRE's)	Pet Food
Baby Formula	Pet Supplies
Blankets	Other Commodities

Equipment		Personnel	
Type	No.	Type	No.
Forklift	2	Manager	1
Pallet Jack	2	Team Leaders	8
Power Light Set	4	Forklift Operator	4
Porta-Potties	8	Labor-Loading Point	36
Handwashing Stations	4	Labor-Backup	18
Tents/Canopies	4	Labor-Pallet Jack	4
Front End Loader	2	Site Security	2
Dumpsters/Trashcans	2	Community Relations Staff	2
Traffic Cones	15	Medic	2
Fire Extinguisher	4	Scene Safety Officer	1
Two-way Radios	0	Total Staff:	75
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	Varies		

Contents of a Standard POD Kit x 2

Item	Quantity
Trash Can, Wheeled, 96 Gallons	3-6 Each
Leather Work Gloves	16 Pairs
Duct Tape	4 Rolls
Flashlight, D-Cell	19 Each
First Aid Kit	1 Each
Safety Vest, Reflective	19 Each
Hard Hat, Safety	16 Each
Glow Sticks, Orange or Red	30 Each
Batteries, D-Cell	36 Each

*Items NOT included in a Standard POD Kit:

Rubber gloves, light set, port-potties, tables, chairs, fuel, radios/chargers, signage (entrance, STOP and exit signs at a minimum), fire extinguisher, trash bags, material handling equipment (MHE), pop-up shelter or tent, and documentation forms.

Recommend Separate Area for First Responders

POD Site Space Recommendations

Space requirements for PODs may vary based upon the type of POD selected. For vehicular PODs, the space requirements per the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) typing are below. Not all POD sites may meet these requirements based on limitations of the POD site. Use the following table as a recommendation. Type IV PODs are not FEMA typed but were developed to recognize the needs of rural jurisdictions.

POD Site Space Requirements	
POD Type	Space Requirement (Sq Ft)
Type IV (Untyped)	< 45,000
Type III	45,000
Type II	75,000
Type I	125,000

Commodity Standard Distribution Factors per Vehicle

Key partners in the Emergency Support Function (ESF-6) Mass Care functions identified planning factors that provide a baseline for calculating estimated needs of impacted residents during disasters. These factors are shown in the table below:

Standard Distribution Factors	
Based on a factor of three persons per household/vehicle	
Number of Meals per person per day	2
Liters of Water per person per day	3 (equivalent to 0.8 gallons)
Cots per person (based on incident)	1
Blankets per person (based on incident)	2
Pounds of ice per person per day (based on incident)	8

Incident specific commodities may be based on the event and included in the Commodity Distribution Plan. Adjust the POD site plan to accommodate additional items such as ice, tarps, blankets, fuel, and other items as potential commodities as necessary. The more commodity types are added to the loading line, the more personnel may be required. Also, the loading points may need to expand, and the throughput rate of vehicles may be impacted.

Site Security Planning Factors

24-hour security personnel should be provided unless there is a place to securely store equipment. When possible, local jurisdictions should plan to provide local law enforcement personnel to conduct security at the POD site. If using a school as the POD site, and the school district has its own police force, coordinate with Independent School District (ISD) law enforcement for use of the facility.

Safety

Safety begins in the planning phase and must be emphasized for the duration of the operation. All staff must continuously evaluate operations for hazards and unsafe actions. Ensure you plan for occasional breaks, meals, and rotation and rehabilitation for staff. Each POD site should have a staff member trained as a medical first responder who can stabilize a patient until Emergency Medical Services (EMS) arrives.

POD Signage

POD signage is based on a variety of factors with a fully developed and exercised POD plan. The signage requirements should be known in advance and can be pre-printed.

Signs need to be able to withstand environmental conditions.

Signs need to be large enough to be seen while driving, and messages should be simple and clear. Signs should be standardized with a bright background and bold contrasting lettering. Add a sign at each loading point that gives instructions to the driver(s) to include:

1. STOP
2. Turn off the ignition
3. Open trunk

Loading point signage may help reduce the load times and ensure the safety of the loading team. The instructions could be augmented with simple pictograms that are the same for the written instructions.

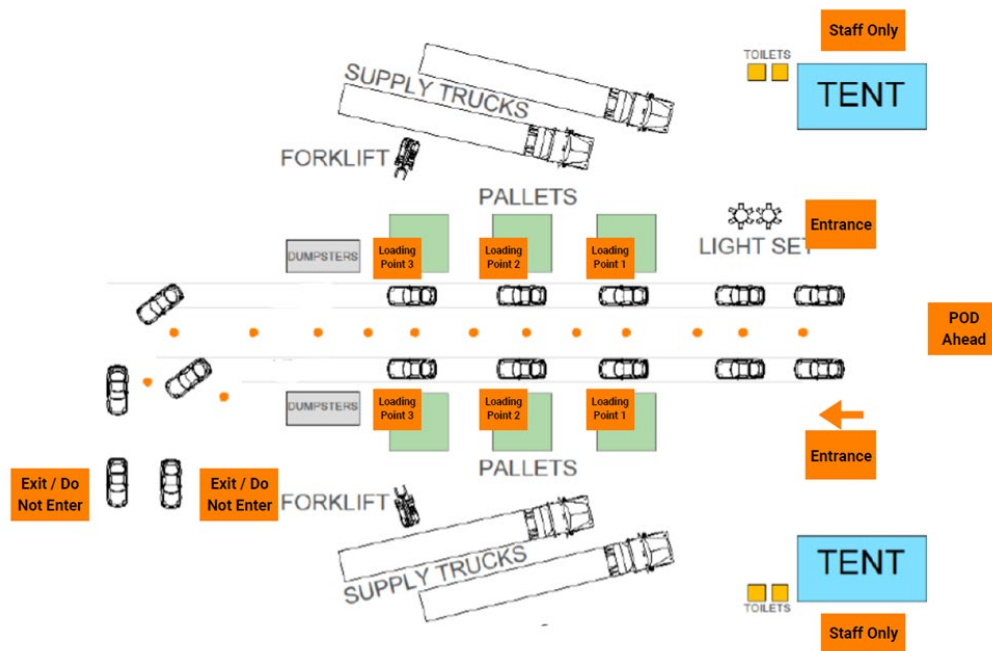
Consider signage in multiple languages if necessary.

Examples of basic signage that can be displayed at a POD shown in the table below:

Basic Signage	
POD AHEAD	Provides directions to the inbound residents in locating the entrance to the POD. This can be multiple signs placed away from the POD to give the estimated distance to the POD entrance.
ENTER	Directs the residents to enter the correct point of the vehicle line.
LOADING POINT	Designates where residents should stop for commodity loading. Consider multi-language needs.
EXIT/DO NOT ENTER	Ensures the proper flow of the vehicle line and prevents wrong-way drivers. If there are multiple loading lines, more signage may be required.
<i>Other examples of signage to consider: Staff Only, One Way, Open, Closed, Turn, etc.</i>	

Placement of Signage

Signs should be placed to inform or direct the reader. Depicted below is the signage placement for a Type II POD. The amount and placement of signage should be dictated by the type of POD and geographic limitations of the POD site. Scale up or down based on the needs of the situation.



Standard POD Kit (Type III POD)

Local jurisdictions may build and store POD kits before an incident or event as resources allow. If the jurisdiction does not have POD kits ready for deployment, kits can be requested through the Disaster District Emergency Operations Center (DDEOC). The contents of the Type III Pod Kit below provide the minimum equipment to build out a POD.

The foundation for all PODs is a Type III POD Kit. If a Type II POD is established at that site, the site should have two POD Kit(s) on site to support the initial setup of a POD. A Type I POD needs four kits. The POD Kit has supplies for the site and individual staff positions.

The table below lists the contents of a standard POD kit.

Contents of a Standard POD Kit		
Item	Quantity	Notes
Trash Can, Wheeled, 96 Gallons	1 Each	Stores Kit
Leather Work Gloves	16 Pairs	
Duct Tape	4 Rolls	
Flashlight, D-Cell	19 Each	
First Aid Kit	1 Each	
Traffic Cones, Reflective, 36"	12 Each	
Safety Vests, Reflective	19 Each	
Hard Hat, Safety	16 Each	
Glow Sticks, Orange or Red	30 Each	
Batteries, D-Cell	36 Each	

Items NOT included in a standard POD Kit:

Light set(s), porta potties, tables, chairs, fuel for light sets, radios and radio/phone charging capability, signage (entrance, STOP, and exit signs at minimum), fire extinguisher, trash bags, material handling equipment, pop up shelter(s) or tents, and forms.

Commodity Flow Reports (non-electronic and electronic)

Tracking the in and out flow of commodity resources at the POD site is a critical function for the POD staff. There are many variations of commodity flow reports that can be found on the internet in addition to the provided example in the pullouts.

The Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) has adopted an electronic tracking system, using a tool called Survey123, as the primary reporting tool for state supported commodity points of distribution (CPODs) and Resource Staging Area (RSA) consumption rates.

The tool is designed to capture critical POD related information such as number of vehicles and pedestrians served, and number of commodities disbursed. This data is accumulated into dashboards and reports that can be utilized by RSAs, and the State Operations Center (SOC) Commodity Distribution Cell to manage commodity flow and monitor for demobilization triggers.

If the electronic tracking system is not used or is not accessible, reporting can be done utilizing the paper-based Commodity Flow Report and aggregated at the RSA. Reports can be transmitted electronically, over the phone, or by primary point of contact of the POD who directs and distributes data collected, also known as the runner.

Local jurisdictions may use methods that work best for the situation. The key is to develop situational awareness for commodities received and distributed and support forecasting of needs for subsequent days.

The local emergency management coordinator (EMC) and the supporting central staging areas (CSAs) or RSAs should jointly determine the reporting tempo. This ensures uniform reporting protocols at each POD and CSA or RSA. An example flow report is below.

Non- Electronic Commodity Flow Report					
County or City:			POD Address:		
Time	# Cars per Hour	# Water per Hour	# MREs per Hour	# of Ice per Hour	# Other Commodity per Hour
0800-0900					
0900-1000					
1000-1100					
1100-1200					
1200-1300					
1300-1400					
1500-1600					
1600-1700					
1700-1800					
TOTAL					

Section 2: Points of Distribution Process and Considerations

Section Two provides the user with greater insight into POD operations. It leads the user to logical decisions and actions about when, where, and how to develop the PODs and the requirements for successful operations. This section provides valuable lessons learned distributed across the preparedness, response, and recovery phases of emergency management.

This section also provides additional quick reference tables for the following topics:

- When to Open a POD
- POD Site Space Requirements
- POD Site Setup Checklist
- Daily Site Hazard Assessment
- Commodity Planning Factors
- POD Staff Duty Positions and Responsibilities
- Commodity Flow Report
- When to Close a POD
- Considerations for Each Phase of the Operation

When to Open a POD

Use the table below to assist in determining when to open a POD.

When to Open a POD: Impacted Infrastructure Systems		
System	Status	Potential Action
Drinking Water Treatment Plant	Inoperable/closed	Open PODs
Drinking Water Wells (Public/Private)	Inoperable/closed	Open PODs
Electrical Generation/Transmission	Prolonged outage	Open PODs
Major Highways/Thoroughfares	Unusable for a significant time period	Open PODs
Grocery Stores	Inoperable	Open PODs

POD Site Space Requirements

Use the table below to determine if POD site space is adequate.

POD Site Space Requirements	
POD Type	Space Requirement (Sq Ft)
Type IV (Untyped)	< 45,000
Type III	45,000
Type II	75,000
Type I	125,000

Site spacing must account for ingress/egress of supply trucks and designated parking for POD staff, in addition to commodity staging and vehicle lines.

POD Site Setup Checklist

Use the table below to track activities before opening a POD site.

POD Site Setup Checklist					
POD Manager:			Location:		
Prior to Commodity Arrival			Prior to Opening POD		
Item to Complete	Yes	No	Item to Complete	Yes	No
Size hazard assessment			Distribute personal protective equipment (PPE)		
Communications established with local emergency manager			Conduct safety briefing		
Inspect POD Kit			Determine signage locations		
Identify supply line location			Receive Porta-Potties		
Identify loading line location			Receive dumpster		
Identify vehicle line(s) location			Receive pallet jack		
Identify Porta-Potty location			Receive first supply		
Establish dumpster location			Notify jurisdiction that the POD is ready for opening		
Establish break area location			Put up signage		
Set up traffic cones around the vehicle line			Open POD		
Ensure supply trucks can enter and exit			Notify jurisdiction of POD opening		
Assign staffing positions					
Remarks:					

Daily Site Hazard Assessment

Use this checklist for a daily assessment of the POD site, personnel, and equipment.

Daily Site Hazard Assessment Checklist			
POD Location:		Date:	
Assessment Areas	Yes	No	Comments
TRAINING:			
Is each person assigned to a job within their capability?			
Did each person receive a safety brief at shift change?			
Is training on personal protective equipment (PPE) and equipment provided?			
ENVIRONMENT:			
Are resources available to deal with weather conditions?			
Are staff trained to recognize symptoms of heat injuries?			
Is the level of light adequate for safe performance of work?			
HOUSEKEEPING:			
Is the work area clear of debris and trip hazards?			
Are materials properly stacked and spaced?			
Are work areas clear of fluid spills?			

Are aisles and passageways clear of obstructions?			
Are walkways clear of holes, debris, protruding nails, and loose boards?			
Is the break area kept clean and sanitary?			
Are the dumpsters being serviced properly?			
Are the restrooms/porta-potties clean, sanitary, and restocked?			
PPE:			
Is required equipment provided, maintained, and used?			
Does equipment meet requirements?			
Are warning signs displayed in hazardous areas?			
MATERIAL HANDLING and STORAGE:			
Is there safe clearance for all equipment through aisles and doors?			
Is stored material stable and secure?			
Are storage areas free from tipping hazards?			
Are only trained operators allowed to operate forklifts?			
Do personnel use proper lifting techniques?			
VEHICLE TRAFFIC:			
Are cones placed to direct traffic?			
Include entry/exit flow control			
Is the vehicle line free of pedestrians when vehicles are moving?			
Are pedestrian and vehicular traffic separated?			
Coordination with law enforcement for weather, crowd, and evacuation management			
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR CONCERNS:			

Commodity Planning Factors

This table provides basic planning factors for commodity distribution.

POD Commodity Planning Factors	
Based on a factor of three persons per household/vehicle	
Number of meals per person per day	2
Liters of water per person per day	3 (equivalent to .8 gallons)
Cots per person (based on incident)	1
Blankets per person (based on incident)	2
Pounds of ice per person per day (based on incident)	8

Include contracted items such as bathrooms, light sets, and fuel delivery in POD setup planning.

POD Staff Duty Positions and Responsibilities

This table describes POD staff duties and responsibilities.

POD Staff Duty Positions and Responsibilities		
Position	Duties	Reports To:
POD Manager	Supervises Support Team Leader, Loading Team Leader, and Site Security Lead.	Jurisdiction emergency management coordinator (EMC)
Site Security Lead	Secures POD site and maintains good order	POD Manager
Loading Team Leader	Oversees loading operations and sustainment of loading staff.	POD Manager
Loading Team Members	Loading commodities into residents' vehicles. Sustaining staff operations to include restrooms, break areas, trash removal, staff feeding, and shift schedules.	Loading Team Leader
Support Team Leader	Responsible for ensuring the loading line maintains stockage of commodities and supervises the Community Relations staff. Supervises the Traffic Controller, Forklift Operator(s), and Pallet Jack Operator(s). Ensures equipment safety, coordinates supply truck movement on-site, maintains accountability of all commodities, maintains all paperwork related to resource accountability, and provides daily resource reports.	POD Manager
Community Relations Staff	Serves as point of contact for media and public relations on-site. Ensures consistency of messaging in coordination with jurisdiction public information officer (PIO).	Support Team Leader
Traffic Controller	Manages movement of vehicles through the POD process, resident vehicle breakdowns, and movement of tractor trailers on-site. Oversees the safety of loaders on the vehicle line, counts vehicles through the loading line.	Support Team Leader
Forklift Operator	Unloads commodities from trucks.	Support Team Leader
Pallet Jack Operator	Moves commodities to loading line pallets.	Support Team Leader
Medic	Primary focus is emergency medical treatment to POD staff until EMS arrives.	Support Team Leader

Commodity Flow Report

Use this report to track the distribution of commodities during the operational period.

Commodity Flow Report: Non-electronic					
County or City:			POD Address:		
Time	# Cars per Hour	# Water per Hour	# MREs per Hour	# of Ice per Hour	# Other Commodity per Hour
0800-0900					
0900-1000					
1000-1100					
1100-1200					
1200-1300					
1300-1400					
1500-1600					
1600-1700					
1700-1800					
TOTAL					

When to Close a POD

Use this table to assist in deciding when to close a POD. The Jurisdiction’s Management Coordinator in coordination with the Disaster District Chief can authorize POD closure.

When To Close a POD: Impacted Infrastructure Systems		
System	Status	Potential Action
Drinking Water Treatment Plant	Operable	Demobilize PODs
Drinking Water Wells (Public/Private)	Operable	Demobilize PODs
Electrical Generation/Transmission	Power Restored	Demobilize PODs
Major Highways/thoroughfares	Open	Demobilize PODs
Grocery Stores	Operable	Demobilize PODs

Considerations for Each Phase of the Operation

The tables below provide additional insights based on lessons learned regarding POD operations through the phases of emergency management to include:

- Preparedness
- Response
- Recovery

Use this table to identify preparedness phase activities of planning, training, and exercising.

Preparedness Phase Considerations		
Function	Considerations	✓
PLANNING	Anticipate greater needs in economically challenged communities, pre-develop site plans, address delivery methods for access and functional needs population.	
PLANNING	Consider a POD for first responders; keep them working and not waiting in line.	
PLANNING	Do you have a Volunteer Reception Center (VRC)?	
PLANNING	Consider using non-traditional locations; churches and Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) posts can often provide locations and staff.	
PLANNING	Utilize non-essential jurisdiction staff as a pool.	
PLANNING	Recognize jurisdiction assets may be prioritized to other response/recovery tasks – have Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with private businesses.	
PLANNING	Identify and plan for inclusion of local businesses that stock life-sustaining commodities.	
PLANNING	Understand the location and status of retail purchase points.	
PLANNING	Plan for arrival of commodities; have material handling equipment (MHE) and operators available once the commodities arrive.	
PLANNING	Recognize that available POD sites may not be ideal. Adjust what you have based on your requirements.	
PLANNING	Will traffic in the POD site cause a backup on the road/street? Serpentine the line if an option.	
PLANNING	Robust site communications: have a Primary, Alternate, Contingency and Emergency means of communications (PACE).	
PLANNING	Have you considered medical emergencies? How will a responder get to the site?	
PLANNING	Be prepared to address vehicle breakdowns in the loading line.	
PLANNING	Consider weather effects on POD team, commodities, and site access. Establish warming/cooling capabilities.	
PLANNING	Do you need multilingual capabilities?	
TRAINING	Formal training or just-in-time training for staff?	
EXERCISING	Exercise your plan. Partner with local agencies for distribution of non-commodities (ex: Toys for Tots or a Turkey Give-Away). The after-action review/implementation plan (AAR/IP) should be revised as necessary.	

Use this table to identify response phase activities of exercising command and control, operating, and reporting.

Response Phase Considerations		
Function	Consideration	✓
COMMAND and CONTROL	Receive and inventory commodities from the Resource Staging Area (RSA) or supplier	
COMMAND and CONTROL	Remain observant of current and future weather impacts on POD operations. If a temporary closure is necessary, ensure that the public information officer (PIO) and community relations staff are synchronized in messaging efforts	
OPERATING	Safety of POD staff: Proper personal protective equipment (PPE), a security plan, qualified material handling equipment (MHE) operators, daily safety brief prior to POD opening and a staff rotation plan may help to keep staff safe	
OPERATING	Restocking should occur during hours that distribution operations are not occurring	
OPERATING	Do not open a POD if there is less than a full days stockage of commodities	
OPERATING	Track, calculate, and report consumption rate as directed	
OPERATING	Maintain enough inventory on hand to meet anticipated daily demand	
OPERATING	Refuel light set(s) twice daily	
REPORTING	Submit requested reports in an accurate and timely manner. This allows for necessary forecasting for resupply operations.	

Use this table to identify recovery phase activities of POD closure, disposition of remaining commodities, documentation, and after-action review (AARs).

Recovery Phase Considerations		
Function	Consideration	✓
CLOSURE	Plan the closure before the closure. Ensure staff understand the process and documentation standards.	
CLOSURE	Ensure provided equipment is returned to point of origin/agency or contractor. Be sure to identify any damage, worn or missing parts that occurred during POD operations.	
CLOSURE	Ensure POD site is returned to its original condition	
DISPOSITION	Local emergency management coordinator (EMC) should provide guidance for disposition of remaining commodities after the closure of a POD	
DISPOSITION	Any commodities that are directed for return must be re-palletized, inventoried, and loaded onto trucks for return.	
DISPOSITION	Any remaining commodities not designated for return should be dispersed to local food banks or charitable organizations	
DOCUMENTATION	After closure of a POD, all remaining commodities that are labeled for disposition must be documented	
DOCUMENTATION	Track and submit staffing hours to include volunteers	
DOCUMENTATION	Local EMC should designate the method and routing of all documentation	
After-Action Review (AAR)	An AAR is an opportunity to refine the POD plan and operations. Ensure that lessons learned are incorporated into a revised plan.	

Section 3: State and Local Role in Supporting Points of Distribution

This section informs the state’s role in supporting POD operations, the role of local emergency managers, guidance on the State of Texas Assistance Requests (STARs) and provides supplemental information to the “pullouts” provided in Section One.

State Role in POD Operations

TDEM is designated as the primary entity to assist the planning efforts for state disaster planning. The state may support up to four PODs per county with personnel and commodities as available.

The state may support up to four PODs per county as resources allow. If a county desires to operate more than four PODs, it must staff and equip them using local resources. The state may provide commodity support to these additional PODs as resources allow.

State resources are organized to support local commodity distribution operations and to meet shortfalls in local commodity distribution capability.

Once a jurisdiction identifies their capability gaps in providing commodities, the STAR should be submitted to the DDEOC to request assistance. The following table provides information on what this assistance may include.

What Can a STAR Fill?	
Commodities:	Equipment:
Water	Forklifts
Ice	Pallet Jacks
Food/Meals Ready to Eat (MREs)	Porta Potties
Other commodities	Handwashing Stations
	Tents/Canopies
Personnel:	Tables and Chairs
Forklift Operators	Traffic Control Equipment
General POD personnel	Light Towers
	Dumpsters/Trashcans
	Personal Protective Equipment

If a local jurisdiction needs assistance with completing the STAR, contact your TDEM District Chief (DC) or regional field response personnel. Information on how to complete a STAR and an example are located in this guide on pages 28 and 29, respectively.

*To locate **TDEM field response personnel** by region, refer to the TDEM website (<https://www.tdem.texas.gov/regions>).*

The DDEOC evaluates its ability to fulfill the request using its resources. If the request cannot be filled, it is forwarded to the SOC. The SOC routes STARs for assistance to the Logistics Section’s Commodity Distribution Cell for fulfillment of requests.

The Local Role in POD Operations

Typically, the county and city directors of emergency management are the designated points of contact for local POD locations, activation, and deactivation. Commodity distribution operations should be considered when local economic and physical infrastructure is damaged and can no longer support residents in the impacted area. Common evaluation criteria or triggers are listed in the table below.

Impacted Infrastructure Systems		
System	Status	Potential Action
Drinking Water Treatment Plant	Inoperable/closed	Open PODs
Drinking Water Wells (Public/Private)	Inoperable/closed	Open PODs
Electrical Generation/Transmission	Prolonged outage	Open PODs
Major Highways/thoroughfares	Unusable for a significant time period	Open PODs
Grocery Stores	Inoperable	Open PODs

POD Demobilization

Local jurisdictions should demobilize PODs when the local infrastructure is operational and dependable enough to provide consistent service to disaster survivors. The decision to demobilize a POD may depend on the EMC for the county or city where the POD is located.

In certain situations, the SOC (under the direction of the TDEM chief) may demobilize state support to PODs if circumstances require.

Common triggers or evaluation criteria for closing PODs are listed in the table below:

Impacted Infrastructure Systems		
System	Status	Potential Action
Drinking Water Treatment Plant	Operable	Demobilize PODs
Drinking Water Wells (Public/Private)	Operable	Demobilize PODs
Electrical Generation/Transmission	Power Restored	Demobilize PODs
Major Highways/thoroughfares	Open	Demobilize PODs
Grocery Stores	Operable	Demobilize PODs

Demobilization of the POD site should be based on the restoration of electricity, access to streets and highways, and retail operations in the affected area. Once the decision is made to demobilize a POD, disposition must be made for commodities, equipment, and personnel.

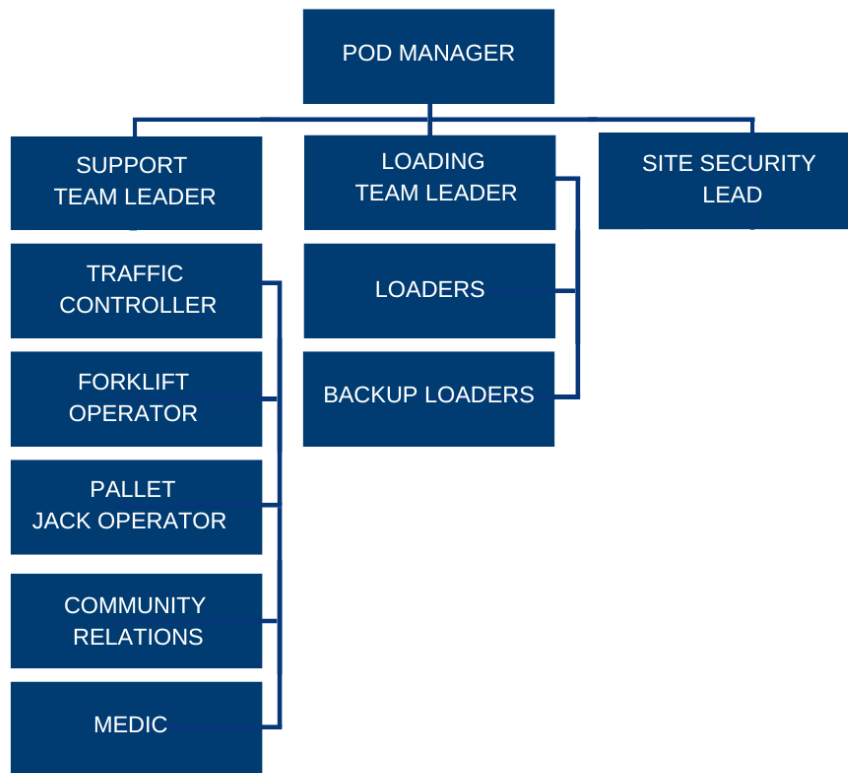
POD Managers may receive guidance from the local EMC for the disposition of remaining commodities. Excess commodities may be dispersed to local volunteer organizations and food banks (e.g., Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOADs) or to members of the Texas Foodbank Network (TFBN)).

Section 4: Points of Distribution Staff Organization

Each POD and incident are unique to the local jurisdiction. The POD's staff organization is dependent on resources available. The example listed below is just one of many methods. Local jurisdictions should follow the Incident Command System (ICS) principles in developing the critical roles and adjust the organizational positions based on the incident.

To find more information regarding ICS principles visit the FEMA website (<https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims>).

Example: POD Staff Organization Chart



POD Duties and Responsibilities

POD Manager

Each POD must have a POD Manager. Under the POD Manager there are two teams:

- 1) Loading Team
- 2) Support Team

The POD manager also provides supervision to the Site Security elements.

Site Security

Reporting to the POD Manager is a Site Security Lead who is responsible for securing the POD site and maintaining good order. If the POD is located at a school, the ISD may have its own law enforcement that can assist in this role.

Loading Team

The Loading Team Leader supervises the loading operation and sustainment for the loading staff. The loading staff is responsible for:

- Loading commodities into the resident's vehicle
- Sustaining staff operations including:
 - Porta-potties
 - Break area
 - Trash removal
 - Staff feeding
 - Establishing shift schedules

Community Relations

The Community Relations Staff member is the point of contact for media and public relations on-site. Messaging must be coordinated with the jurisdiction's Public Information Officer (PIO) to ensure consistency and prevent message fratricide.

Support Team

The Support Team consists of the following: a Support Team Leader, Community Relations Staff (when needed and available), Traffic Controller, Pallet Jack Operator, and Forklift Operator.

The Support Team Leader is responsible for:

- Ensuring equipment safety
- Coordinating supply truck movement on-site
- Conducting all resupply operations
- Maintaining accountability of all commodities
- Maintaining all paperwork related to resource accountability
- Providing daily resource reports to the CSA or next higher level of authority

The Traffic Controller is responsible for:

- Managing the movement of vehicles through the POD process
- Management of resident vehicle that breakdown in the line
- Management of tractor-trailers on site
- Oversees the safety of loaders on the vehicle line(s)
- Providing vehicle counts for reporting purposes

The Forklift and Pallet Jack Operators are responsible for:

- Movement of pallets to and from the resupply line
- Resupplying the loading line
- Removal of empty pallets

The Forklift Operator should be qualified to operate equipment. The Pallet Jack Operator must be familiar with pallet jack operations.

Medic

A staff member trained to provide initial treatment and stabilization of a victim should be part of the POD staff. The focus of the medic is to provide initial treatment and stabilization for POD staff until EMS can arrive on-site. Determine thresholds for when an ambulance/EMS presence is required (e.g., Type II and Type I PODs or when serving populations over 10,000)

Training, Exercise and After-Action Reports

POD operations are based on the foundations of planning, training, and exercising. Planning, training, and exercising local jurisdictions' POD plans is vital in establishing an effective plan and successful POD operations.

*Following the conclusion of any significant disaster, incident, or exercise, an **annual discussion-based exercise** is a way to keep the POD plan acknowledged and updated with key stakeholders involved.*

The EMC may conduct an after-action report/improvement plan (AAR/IP) on POD operations efforts after a disaster or exercise. Participating government agencies, local businesses, and voluntary organizations are encouraged to provide written or oral input. The EMC should consolidate all inputs into a finalized written AAR/IP and submit the report to the primary agency to implement changes into the POD plan.

Training Assistance Resources

Material Handling Equipment (MHE) Training: Most large cities in Texas require that people operating a forklift have a certification to operate a forklift. All the websites below have a 2-hour online class that provides personnel with an OSHA-compliant forklift operator certification.

- certifyme.net
- nationalforkliftfoundation.com
- OSHAeducationcenter.com

FEMA Training

FEMA IS-26: Guide to Points of Distribution, for more information visit the training.fema.gov and enter the course number in the search bar on the FEMA website.

Attachment A - Submitting an Effective State of Texas Assistance Request

A crucial part of receiving assistance from the state quickly and efficiently is requesting assistance in a way that conveys necessary and detailed information.

An effective State of Texas Assistance Request (STAR) should contain specific information communicating specific needs. In general, an effective STAR contains the following information:

- Clear and concise request title.
 - Spell out specifically what you are asking for (i.e., 3 Type I PODs with personnel, equipment, and commodities).
- Accurate quantity
 - Ensure you provide the number of PODs requested and any information about what resources the jurisdiction can provide, such as forklifts or loading personnel. Remember the 4 PODs per county limit for state-staffed and equipped PODs.
- Realistic delivery date
 - Having a delivery date with the same as the request date, or even 24 hours afterwards, is not realistic. POD operations can take considerable time to organize, depending upon when the request was made and resource availability.
- Detailed description
 - Provide specifics as to what you need, including personnel and equipment.
- Accurate delivery location
 - Provide street addresses and facility names for each POD location being requested. GPS coordinates are even better. Check the address provided in Google Maps or similar services to ensure it lands where you intend it to.
- Accurate delivery details
 - Please provide site-specific contact, as well as information about operating hours, security and traffic issues, or any other information that may impact the ability of state resources to arrive or be delivered.
- Relevant requestor details
 - Provide a point of contact who is knowledgeable about the request, and who may serve as the primary point of contact for the POD mission on behalf of the jurisdiction.
- POD Checklist
 - Attach a completed POD Checklist for each requested POD. Remember to combine them into a single document if you are requesting more than one POD.

Example STAR

An example STAR with all pertinent elements of information complete is provided below:

State of Texas Assistance Request ([Training](#))

[Return To List](#) [Print / PDF](#) [Follow](#)

Requestor Information

Request No: [00-70464 \(TX\)](#)
Requestor Name: AbdunNabiAlex1993
Requestor Position: Logs Section Coord
Requestor Phone #: 512-555-5512
Requestor Email: logistics@lonestarcountry.gov
Requestor Signature: Jim Logistics
Initial Request Date: 2/14/2020 11:32:11
Incident Name: 2020 Daily Ops Log
Requesting Entity: SOC


Item/Mission Description

Item/Mission: 3 Type III Points of Distribution-Locations included
Qty: 3
Unit: Each
When Needed? 02/16/2020 12:30 PM
For How Long Demob Item (7 Days)
Mission Description: 3 Type III PODs, with all equipment, personnel, and commodities, (per USACE POD Typing) are required at the following locations: -Sam Houston High School, 1125 S. Main Street, Townsville, TX 78000 -Lone Star County Community College, 3221 Jones Ave, Perfection, TX 787000 -First Baptist Church of Lone Star, 888 W. Elm Lane, Conjunction Junction, TX 787000 A POD Checklist for each site is attached to this STAR.
Purpose of Request: The water treatment plant servicing western Lone Star County is inoperable due to damage from recent large floods. The current estimated repair time is 6 days, and the community does not have the retail capacity to provide bottled water for all impacted residents.

*To locate **TDEM field response personnel** by region, refer to the TDEM website (<https://www.tdem.texas.gov/regions>)*

Attachment B – State Supported Points of Distribution Checklist

In state supported points of distribution (PODs), use the State of Texas Assistance Request (STAR) POD Checklist shown below when submitting a STAR. Attach the STAR POD Checklist to the STAR.

STAR POD Checklist	
General Site Information	
Site Name	
Street Address, City, Zip	
Site POC and 24 hr. Phone Number	
Latitude/Longitude	
Basic Information	
POD Type	Modifications
<input type="checkbox"/> Type I	<input type="checkbox"/> Walk-Up Load Point
<input type="checkbox"/> Type II	<input type="checkbox"/> Mass Transit Load Point
<input type="checkbox"/> Type III	<input type="checkbox"/> Delivery Vehicle Load Point
<input type="checkbox"/> Type IV (Untyped)	
Site Summary	
Site dimensions in feet and area in acres	
Paved, concrete, or gravel hard stand?	
Maximum load site can withstand	
Accessible at all times?	
Ingress/egress suitable for tractor-trailers	
Site security (fencing/lighting, etc.)	
Covered areas?	
Secured storage?	
Potable running water?	
Electricity?	
Restrooms?	
Can jurisdiction provide material handling equipment (MHE)?	
Can jurisdiction provide 24 hr. security?	
Site Diagram	
	
Submitted by:	
Name:	
Contact Number	
Date and Time:	

Attachment C – Daily Site Hazard Assessment Checklist

Prior to opening the POD for the operational period, an assessment of the POD site should be conducted daily. This allows the POD staff the opportunity to size up the readiness of the POD site, staff, and equipment.

Daily Site Hazard Assessment Checklist			
POD Location:		Date:	
Assessment Areas	Yes	No	Comments
TRAINING:			
Is each person assigned a job within their capability?			
Did each person receive a safety brief at shift change?			
Is training on personal protective equipment (PPE) and equipment provided?			
ENVIRONMENT:			
Are resources available for weather conditions?			
Are staff trained to recognize symptoms of heat/freezing weather injuries?			
Is illumination level adequate for safe performance of duties?			
HOUSEKEEPING:			
Is the work area clear of debris and trip hazards?			
Are materials properly stacked and spaced?			
Are work areas clear of fluid spills?			
Are aisles and passageways clear of obstructions?			
Are walkways clear of holes, debris, protruding nails, and loose boards?			
Is the break area kept clean and sanitary?			
Are the dumpsters being serviced properly?			
Are the restrooms/porta-potties clean, sanitary, and restocked?			
PPE:			
Is required equipment provided, maintained, and used?			
Does equipment meet requirements?			
Are warning signs displayed in hazardous areas?			
MATERIAL HANDLING and STORAGE:			
Is there safe clearance for all equipment through aisles and doors?			
Are stored materials stable and secure?			
Are storage areas free from tripping hazards?			
Are only trained operators allowed to operate forklifts?			
Do personnel use proper lifting techniques?			
VEHICLE TRAFFIC:			
Are cones placed to direct traffic?			
Is the vehicle line free of pedestrians when vehicles are moving?			
Are vehicle and pedestrian traffic separated?			
Additional Comments or Concerns:			