

## Overview for Participants in the Health Risk Assessment (HRA) Process

### **Introduction**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our county's Health Risk Assessment (HRA). Engaging partners in this process is a major strength of the assessment methodology and we welcome your input and support.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), through its Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) grant, requires public health in every state to conduct HRAs. In West Virginia, the Bureau for Public Health, Center for Threat Preparedness is responsible for the management of these assessments and for providing technical assistance to health departments in each county.

These assessments are conducted using the participant tool included with this document. The tool was created by a workgroup that included local health administrators and threat preparedness coordinators, hospital safety managers, and state environmental health, epidemiological, behavioral health and threat preparedness staff. In addition, the tool has been vetted by partners in emergency management, primary care and many others. A complete partner list is included in your participant tool.

The HRA will give us the opportunity to examine our health preparedness activities and resources, identify how hazards would affect the health and health systems in our county, and help to guide health preparedness exercises and planning. The assessments do not replace or duplicate emergency management assessments, such as Hazard Vulnerability Assessments (HVA). Instead, HRAs complement the work of emergency managers and should provide useful information for planning and exercise development, as they relate to health and health systems.

As a participant, you will be filling-out the participant tool. There are separate tools for behavioral health, public health, hospitals, primary care/health centers, and other agencies that do not fall into one of these four sectors. Each step in the tool is described below. Generally, the tool asks you to rank the hazards that may affect the health and health systems in our county, reflect on the impact that the greatest hazard would have on health and health systems, and provide feedback on the ways in which our county and your agency are working to reduce the impact of hazards on health and health systems.

Counties across the state are using a variety of methods to complete these assessments. Some counties are holding a single meeting or workshop, some are e-mailing or mailing the tool to partners for completion, and others are using a combined approach of in-person and electronic/mailed forms. Thus, we have included instructions for both in-person meetings and receiving forms through e-mail or mail.

### **Step 1: Identify and rank the hazards in our county**

The first step in the process is to identify and rank the hazards in our county. To complete this portion of the assessment, please use **Part I: Hazard Identification and Ranking**. This worksheet includes instructions, a list of hazards, a list of hazard definitions, and definitions for the 0-4 rating scale that you will use to rate each hazard. Please use the following chart to determine how to complete this part of the tool:

Agency type	In-person meeting	Tool mailed/e-mailed
<p>ALL (Including public health, hospitals, primary care, emergency management, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fill-out the form in your packet</li> <li>• Please <b>do not</b> fill-out the boxes for “Other:” hazard (the two rows at the bottom of the page) unless you have been asked to do so</li> <li>• Return completed form to the meeting facilitator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You will receive either a paper form, a Microsoft Word form or a Microsoft Excel form to fill-out</li> <li>• Please <b>do not</b> fill-out the boxes for “Other:” hazard (the two rows at the bottom of the page) unless you have been asked to do so</li> <li>• For the paper form please complete and scan/e-mail, fax or mail the form to your contact at the health department</li> <li>• For the Word/Excel forms, please complete, save and e-mail or print and mail/fax to your contact at the health department</li> </ul>

The health department/workshop facilitator will average participant responses to identify the average risk for each hazard. This will allow us to rank the risk that each hazard poses to health and health systems in our county. We will use the hazard with the highest average risk to fill-out **Part II: Impact Discussion and Planning Tool**.

*\*\*Please do not proceed to Step 2 until the health department/workshop facilitator has given/sent you the highest ranked hazard. You need this hazard in order to complete Step 2\*\**

**Step 2: Identify how the highest ranked hazard will impact public health and health systems in our county**

The second step in the process is to consider, in detail, the impact that the group’s highest ranked hazard will have on the public’s health and the health systems in our county. To complete this portion of the assessment, please use **Part II: Impact Discussion and Planning Tool** that is included in your participant tool. Please use the following chart to determine how to complete this part of the tool:

Agency type	In-person meeting	Tool mailed/e-mailed
<p>Hospital Health center/primary care provider Behavioral health center</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fill-out the form in your participant tool</li> <li>• If more than one person from your agency is present at the meeting, fill-out a <i>single</i> sheet for your agency</li> <li>• Return your completed form to the meeting facilitator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fill-out the form</li> <li>• Scan and e-mail, fax or mail the form to your point of contact at the health department</li> </ul>
<p>Public health/health department Other agency (Emergency management, VOAD organizations, county board, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sit with public health and discuss/help complete the impact indicators in the public health tool</li> <li>• Please note that these indicators are also included in your participant tool for your review</li> <li>• There will be a <i>single</i> impact sheet completed for public health and all agencies that are not a hospital, health center or behavioral health center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You do <b>not</b> need complete the Part II worksheet</li> <li>• However, please note that your point of contact at the health department may contact you for assistance/guidance on how to rank specific indicators</li> </ul>

**Step 3: Discuss what our county has done to reduce the impact of hazards on our county’s health**

The third step in the process is to discuss the measures that our county, as a whole, has in place to reduce the impact of all hazards. To complete this portion of the assessment, **Part III: Community Mitigation Planning Tool** is provided for your reference in the participant tool. Please use the following chart for additional guidance on how to complete this part of the tool:

Agency type	In-person meeting	Tool mailed/e-mailed
<p style="text-align: center;">ALL (Including public health, hospitals, primary care, emergency management, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a group, fill-out the Community Mitigation Planning Tool</li> <li>• The health department will take notes and will submit the group's answers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fill-out the Community Mitigation Planning Tool to the best of your knowledge</li> <li>• Scan and e-mail, fax or mail the form to your point of contact at the health department</li> </ul>

**Step 4: Identify the status of your agency's preparedness planning**

The final step in the process is to reflect and report on your agency's preparedness planning activities and the partnerships you have in the community. To complete this portion of the assessment, please use **Part IV: Agency Mitigation Planning Tool** that is included in your participant tool. Please use the following chart for additional guidance on this step:

Agency type	In-person meeting	Tool mailed/e-mailed
<p style="text-align: center;">ALL (Including public health, hospitals, primary care, emergency management, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fill-out the form in your participant tool</li> <li>• If more than one person from your agency is present at the meeting, fill-out a <i>single</i> sheet for your agency</li> <li>• Return your completed form to the meeting facilitator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fill-out the form</li> <li>• Scan and e-mail, fax or mail the form to your point of contact at the health department</li> </ul>

**Next Steps**

Thank you for participating in this process. We look forward to contacting you with the results of this assessment and to discussing how the results can be applied to health preparedness planning in our county. The West Virginia Bureau for Public Health, Center for Threat Preparedness, will be compiling and analyzing the data from the county assessments and will be providing us with a report by October, 2012.