

January 2025

Department of Emergency Management Strategic Plan 2025 – 2030



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HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS AND APPROVAL

The Florida International University Department of Emergency Management and the members of the University Safety Council were primary contributors to this planning document. This document is **For Official Use Only (FOUO)**. The following individuals have prepared, contributed, and approved this version of the document:

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RECORD OF CHANGES

Date of Change	Section(s) Changed	Summary of Change
8/2019	None	Plan reviewed <i>per Standard Operating Procedures for Plan Development, Maintenance, and revision.</i>
11/2019	None	The FIU University Safety Council provided feedback and accepted this document on November 22, 2019.
3/2022	Who We Are; Strategic Plan Framework; Goal 1: Enhance University Preparedness	Updated University statistics under Who We Are. Updated images under Strategic Plan Framework and Message from the Director. Under Goal 1: Enhance University Preparedness, updated the number of continuity of operations plans.
5/2023	Executive Summary	Updated the 2020 – 2025 Strategic Plan table.
7/2023	Cover Page	Updated cover page to the new templates used for all departmental plans.
	Handling Instruction and Approval	Added the Handling Instruction and Approval page.
11/2024	Cover Page	Update cover page strategic plan year to 2025 - 2030
	Handling Instructions and Approval	Updated Prepared By section.
	Executive Summary	Updated the 2020 – 2025 Strategic Plan table.
1/2025	Entire Plan	General grammar edits and maintenance. Updated Executive Summary, Message from the Director, Who We Are, Strategic Plan Framework, and Goal 1-4 Sections. Added 2020-2025 Strategic Plan Achievements table.
4/2025	Primary EOC/Alternate EOC	Added primary and alternate EOC addresses.
	Achievements	General grammar edits.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Florida International University (FIU) has rapidly emerged as one of the nation's leading public research universities. FIU is the second-largest university in Florida and ranks among the top 10 largest universities in the nation. The majority of FIU's operations are based in Miami, Florida, a city highly vulnerable to hurricanes, severe weather, flooding, rising sea levels, and other climate-related risks due to its geographic location and coastal environment.

The Department of Emergency Management (DEM) is responsible for developing and maintaining a comprehensive, all-hazards emergency management program designed to protect students, faculty, staff, visitors, and university infrastructure. This strategic plan outlines the goals and strategies DEM intends to achieve over the next five (5) years, strengthening the university's resilience against both natural and human-generated disasters.

On January 7, 2025, DEM held a strategic planning meeting to review and assess the goals outlined in the *2025–2030 DEM Strategic Plan*. The meeting served as an opportunity to brainstorm future goals and discuss methods for measuring success. Upon finalizing the goals, DEM aligned them with FIU's *Experience Impact 2030* Strategic Plan.

The following three strategic focus areas are the following:

- **Focus Area 1:** Establish leadership in environmental resilience by creating innovative, scalable solutions.
- **Focus Area 2:** Aims to lead in researching the link between human health and environmental factors, using innovative technology to improve health conditions.
- **Focus Area 3:** Aims to be a global leader in technology and innovation, driving economic growth through cutting-edge research, industry partnerships, and real-world applications.

STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS



ENVIRONMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE

FIU will be synonymous with scalable solutions for the environment and environmental resilience. We will be recognized as the source for information, education, innovation, demonstration, real-world engagement, testing, and solutions.



HEALTH

FIU will be a leader in researching the relationship between human health and environmental factors and leveraging innovative technology to improve health outcomes.



TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

FIU will be known for its investment in cutting-edge technology and research and for its commitment to industry-focused partnerships, viewed as the model for the value proposition for public higher education.

FIU Department of Emergency Management (DEM) 2025 – 2030 Strategic Plan:

DEM Strategic Priorities	Strategic Goals	Performance Goals	FIU Experience Impact 2030 Strategic Plan Focus Areas
Preparedness	Goal 1: Enhance University Preparedness	Attain EMAP reaccreditation by 2029.	3
		Hire additional staff positions by 2030.	1
		Aim to use technology and innovation to enhance training and exercises.	2, 3
		Aim to further develop the Disaster Volunteers Program by establishing partnerships and ensuring ongoing recruitment.	1, 3
Response	Goal 2: Improve Response Capabilities	Train Emergency Operations Center Planning Section on the use of WebEOC®.	3
		Train DEM staff on technologies used (HURREVAC, FIU Alert, and FIU Ready).	1, 3
		Aim to continue testing the primary EOC and all equipment annually.	3
		Aim to conduct a tabletop exercise at the alternate EOC and continuously test all equipment and plans.	3
Recovery	Goal 3: Enhance Recovery Efforts	Conduct a tabletop exercise to test the FIU University-Wide Recovery Plan by 2025.	1, 3
		Continue unit-based tabletop exercises to test individual COOPs for all FIU departments.	1, 3
Mitigation	Goal 4: Develop Mitigation Strategies	Conduct a threat and hazard identification and risk assessment every 2 years.	1, 3
		Maintain active membership in Local Mitigation Strategies (LMS) and continue participation in Miami-Dade County LMS working groups.	3

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



I am pleased to present the 2025 - 2030 strategic plan for the Division of Operations and Safety's Department of Emergency Management. As higher education evolves in content, delivery, and funding, Florida International University is seizing the opportunity to rethink how we fulfill our mission of preparing the next generation of students with the necessary skills to tackle future challenges. The Department of Emergency Management is proud to be part of this process, constantly assessing and strengthening our foundation as a leader in progressive emergency management and disaster resiliency.

This five-year strategic plan aims to enhance the University's ability to plan, respond, mitigate, and recover from emergencies, requiring cooperation from students, faculty, staff, visitors, and all partners.

The Department of Emergency Management's strategic plan seeks to align with FIU's *Experience Impact 2030*, focusing on environmental resilience, health equity, and technology innovation. We recognize the growing impacts of climate change, which are increasing the frequency and intensity of natural disasters and will integrate this into our planning processes to ensure future preparedness.

DEM's core mission is to ensure the university community, and its infrastructure are prepared for the next disaster and resilient enough to recover quickly, restoring operations and normalcy. This will be achieved through ongoing outreach and education in personal preparedness, training and exercises for key staff, fostering internal and external partnerships, and integrating the latest technologies into all phases of emergency management.

A disaster resilient university is everyone's responsibility, and I look forward to leading the way in fostering a culture of preparedness as we move forward to turn ideas into action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AB', followed by a horizontal line.

Amy B. Aiken, MS, CEM®
Assistant Vice President, Operations and Safety
Director, Emergency Management

WHO WE ARE

Florida International University (FIU) has quickly become one of the nation's top public research universities. As a top-tier, R1-designated research institution, FIU places research at the heart of its mission. For more than five decades, FIU has served as one of South Florida's anchor institutions, addressing some of the greatest challenges of our time. With a student body exceeding 56,000 and more than 10,000 employees, FIU consistently ranks among the top 100 public universities by *U.S. News & World Report*.

FIU is classified as an “R1: Doctoral Universities – Very High Research Activity” by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Research is a key component of the university's mission, with major projects both locally and internationally. FIU also has a global presence through its study abroad, international student exchange, and student-led Alternative Breaks programs.

**FIU is 1st in the nation in
awarding bachelor's and
master's degrees to
Hispanic students.**

FIU Experience Impact 2030 FOCUS

- 1. Environment & Environmental Resilience**
- 2. Health**
- 3. Technology & Innovation**

The University has a key responsibility to ensure it is prepared for and resilient against emergencies and disasters that may disrupt normal operations at any of its locations. The Department of Emergency Management (DEM) is tasked with developing and maintaining a comprehensive, all-hazards emergency management program to protect students, faculty, staff, visitors, and university infrastructure. With a robust training and

exercise schedule, DEM aims to have effective plans and procedures in place to mitigate against, plan for, respond to, and recover from large-scale emergencies or disasters. Our priorities are to protect life, ensure safe working conditions, and restore normal operations as quickly as possible following any major disaster or emergency.

EXPERIENCE IMPACT 2030

THE FIU STRATEGIC PLAN 2025 - 2030

STRATEGIC PLAN FRAMEWORK



Our Mission...

Guide the University's all-hazard preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation efforts by coordinating information and resources to protect students, faculty, staff, and visitors, while restoring operations as quickly as possible.

Our Vision...

To develop a robust emergency management program and disaster-resilient university that serves as a model for other higher education institutions both in the United States and abroad.

Purpose of Strategic Plan...

To identify the goals and strategies the Department of Emergency Management aims to achieve over the next five (5) years to further strengthen the University's resiliency against natural and human-generated disasters.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- **PREPAREDNESS** – Equip FIU students, faculty, and staff with the knowledge and training needed to be better prepared for any natural or human-generated disaster by expanding our training and exercise program to more departments and staff levels, while increasing campus outreach programs.
- **RESPONSE** – Enhance response capabilities for both planned and unplanned events by improving collaboration and coordination across university departments and with external partners.
- **RECOVERY** – Train and test the newly developed university-wide recovery plan and collaborate with university departments to develop effective continuity of operations plans.
- **MITIGATION** – Work with the University Infrastructure Committee and other university departments to integrate mitigation strategies into university infrastructure.



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CYCLE

GOAL 1: ENHANCE UNIVERSITY PREPAREDNESS

ACCREDITATION THROUGH THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

In 2019 and 2024 the FIU emergency management program received full accreditation status from the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP), an independent non-profit that sets rigorous

industry standards emergency management programs. This accreditation recognizes the program's compliance with these standards and acknowledges the work accomplished to achieve this status. To maintain accreditation, DEM must comply with sixty-four industry-recognized standards, keep emergency plans and planning products updated, report progress to the EMAP Commission annually, and enhance university emergency plans by developing hazard-specific annexes.

Performance Goal: Attain EMAP reaccréditation by 2029.

DEM STAFFING LEVELS

Performance Goal: Hire additional staff positions by 2030.

As the University continues to grow in population, physical locations, research, and complexity, the need for additional professional emergency management staff also increases. Over the next five (5) years, as

budgets and priorities permit, DEM aims to add the following positions:

PLANNER II

The FIU Ready program is one of several continuity planning tools used by DEM to maintain normal university operations during disruptive events. With over 200 departmental continuity plans stored on FIU Ready, this position will be responsible for maintaining the university's continuity of operations plan (COOP) and overseeing activities. The individual will further develop both university-wide and departmental COOPs, train faculty and staff on their plans, collaborate with university units to address resource needs, and conduct testing of departmental COOPs.

TRAINING AND EXERCISE COORDINATOR

Administrative staff regularly participate in all-hazard exercises to ensure timely decision-making and appropriate actions during emergencies. This culture of preparedness is instilled across all university units to improve response and recovery times. This position will collaborate with



special event committees, regional academic locations, museums, local, state, and federal agencies, and private and non-profit organizations to conduct essential training, exercises, and after-action reports. Additionally, they will strengthen internal and external partnerships, culminating in a full-scale exercise for the University.

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

The Department of Emergency Management at Florida International University will incorporate AI into tabletop exercises and training to enhance efficiency and effectiveness. AI will be used to create dynamic scenarios, streamline training processes, and help participants practice decision-making in a more adaptive, responsive environment. This integration will ensure that FIU's professionals are equipped with cutting-edge tools to handle complex, real-world emergencies.

Performance Goal: Aim to use technology and innovation to enhance training and exercises.

DISASTER VOLUNTEERS PROGRAM

Performance Goal: Aim to further develop the Disaster Volunteers Program by establishing partnerships and ensuring ongoing recruitment.

The FIU Disaster Volunteer Program was established through a university presidential directive to actively engage the FIU community and enhance emergency response operations. The Department of Emergency Management (DEM) oversees the program, maintaining the volunteer database and coordinating training opportunities. Disaster Volunteers receive training in disaster

preparedness, first aid, bleeding control, and shelter operations, among other critical topics. Once trained, they support the university in sheltering operations, administrative services, logistical support, call center operations, and other disaster-related tasks before, during, and after a disaster.

To strengthen the program, DEM is expanding training opportunities and building new partnerships to enhance volunteers' understanding of emergency management and their role in disaster response. Volunteers will receive instruction in hands-only CPR, Stop the Bleed, shelter operations, poison hazards, extreme weather preparedness, and more. DEM will strengthen the program by building internal and external partnerships, recruiting volunteers annually, and leveraging technology to enhance the program's administration.



GOAL 2: IMPROVE RESPONSE CAPABILITIES

WEBEOC®

Staying current with advancing and changing technologies is crucial to the university's ability to respond quickly and effectively to a disaster. WebEOC® is a web-enabled collaborative crisis information management system that provides real-time situational awareness to any authorized user, anywhere. The application supports the management of all-hazards incidents and planned events. WebEOC® status boards allow users to create, post, transmit, and share critical information. Additional boards include activity logs, significant events, incident action plans, agency situation reports, EOC situation reports, and resource requests/mission tasks.

Performance Goal: Train Emergency Operations Center Planning Section on the use of WebEOC®.

DEM STAFF

Performance Goal: Train DEM staff on technologies used (HURREVAC, FIU Alert, and FIU Ready).

The Department of Emergency Management (DEM) will train staff on the use of key technologies like HURREVAC, FIU Alert, and FIU Ready. HURREVAC helps emergency managers make evacuation decisions by combining storm tracking data with information from state Hurricane Evacuation Studies. FIU Alert is an emergency notification system designed to quickly notify the FIU community of imminent threats to life safety through multiple communication methods, ensuring redundancy. The FIU Ready program is a continuity planning tool used by DEM to maintain normal University operations during disruptive events. Staff will receive regular training and hands-on exercises to ensure proficiency in using these tools effectively during emergencies.

PRIMARY EOC

The primary Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is located at the Modesto A. Maidique Campus (MMC) in Miami. It is at the intersection of SW 8th Street and SW 109th Avenue on the 2nd floor of the Parking Garage 5 (PG-5) Market Station building in room 275.

Address: 11200 SW 8th Street, Miami, FL 33199.

Performance Goal: Aim to continue testing the primary EOC and all equipment annually.

This central facility plays a critical role in coordinating the University's response to emergencies and disasters. The EOC is equipped with advanced technology to support all-hazard incident management and communication efforts. Regular exercises and drills are conducted to test the EOC's functionality, equipment, and staff readiness. Going forward, we will continue to test and maintain all systems, ensuring the EOC remains fully operational and up to date. This includes conducting tabletop exercises, reviewing procedures, and addressing any areas for improvement to ensure effective response during emergencies.

ALTERNATE EOC

Performance Goal: Aim to conduct a tabletop exercise at the alternate EOC and continuously test all equipment and plans.

An alternate Emergency Operations Center (EOC) location has been established at the Biscayne Bay Campus (BBC), located on Biscayne Boulevard in North Miami. It is located on the eastern side of the Biscayne Bay Campus in the Hospitality Management (HM) Building on the 1st floor in room 135.
Address: 3000 NE 151st St, North Miami Beach, FL 33181.

The campus spans nearly 200 acres and serves around 7,000 students. Several exercises have already been conducted at this alternate EOC to test the room's capabilities and technology. Additional resources are needed to enhance its functionality, and activation and deactivation procedures still need to be drafted. Moving forward, we aim to conduct a tabletop exercise at the alternate EOC to further train staff, test all equipment, and ensure the EOC is maintained and up to date. This exercise will help identify any additional needs or improvements to ensure the facility's readiness.

GOAL 3: ENHANCE RECOVERY EFFORTS

UNIVERSITY-WIDE RECOVERY PLAN

Recovery is the most lengthy and complex area of emergency management, often overlooked until after a disaster strike. Following a disaster, FIU will immediately mobilize its resources to restore operations and return to normal. In 2018, with funding

Performance Goal: Conduct a tabletop exercise to test the FIU University-Wide Recovery Plan by 2025.

support from the Miami-Dade County Office of Emergency Management, DEM developed a comprehensive, university-wide recovery plan. This plan includes a wide array of standard operating procedures to address the University's essential functions. To ensure its effectiveness, DEM plans to conduct a tabletop exercise to test the recovery plan by 2025 evaluating its ability to guide the University's recovery and identify any areas for improvement.

CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS PLANS (COOP)

Performance Goal: Continue unit-based tabletop exercises to test individual COOPs for all FIU departments.

The Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is a critical component of FIU's preparedness strategy, ensuring that essential University operations continue during and after disruptive events. The FIU Ready program, one of many continuity planning tools used by the Department

of Emergency Management (DEM), supports the development and management of department and unit COOPs. Using the FIU Ready platform, COOP managers and teams plan for, respond to, and recover from various emergencies, including flooding, network outages, and fires. To ensure the effectiveness of these plans, DEM will continue to test all 200 FIU department COOPs by conducting tabletop exercises, which will help identify any gaps and ensure that all departments are prepared to maintain operations during emergencies.

GOAL 4: DEVELOP MITIGATION STRATEGIES

COMPREHENSIVE THREAT AND HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT

As the University continues to grow in size and complexity, it becomes increasingly important to assess the threats and hazards that could impact operations and affect our most valuable resource—

Performance Goal: Conduct a threat and hazard identification and risk assessment every 2 years.

our people. DEM has already conducted a threat and hazard assessment and has taken steps to develop plans to address these risks. To ensure the University remains prepared, it is critical to conduct a comprehensive threat and hazard identification and risk assessment every two years. This ongoing process will help the University better understand its strengths and vulnerabilities and develop effective strategies to address them.

Local Mitigation Strategies (LMS)

Performance Goal: Maintain active membership in Local Mitigation Strategies (LMS) and continue participation in MDC LMS working groups.

Mitigation is a strategy aimed at reducing the impact of disasters on communities through preparedness, structural improvements, and infrastructure projects. The Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) is a community-wide initiative focused on reducing or eliminating long-term risks to human life and property from hazards. FIU is an

active member of the Miami-Dade County LMS and has submitted several projects for inclusion on the County's list of mitigation efforts. DEM is committed to maintaining active membership in the LMS and will continue to partner with and participate in LMS working groups. This collaboration helps ensure that FIU remains involved in local mitigation efforts and is aligned with broader regional strategies to protect the University's growing infrastructure. Moving forward, DEM aims to identify additional mitigation projects and opportunities to further strengthen FIU's preparedness for future disasters.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT, MAINTENANCE, AND REVISION

The FIU Department of Emergency Management's 2025 – 2030 Strategic Plan will be developed, evaluated, maintained, and revised following the schedule and procedures outlined in the Standard Operating Procedures for Plan Development, Maintenance, and Revision.

ACHIEVEMENTS

2020 – 2025 Strategic Plan Achievements

EMAP reaccreditation was successfully achieved in October 2024, marking a significant milestone in the department's commitment to meeting the highest standards in emergency management.

The previous Planner was promoted to Assistant Director, and a new Planner was hired in April 2024 to strengthen the team and enhance the department's capabilities.

The internship program was established in 2021 which offers the Academy of International Disaster Preparedness (AIDP) students valuable hands-on experience, providing them with practical skills in emergency management.

DEM actively recruits Disaster Volunteers at the start of the Fall and Spring semester. The department has developed training schedules and maintains partnerships with both internal and external departments to support training and exercise opportunities for volunteers every semester.

Planning section staff members and Section Chiefs from the EOC Staff completed WebEOC® training and confirmed access in June 2022, ensuring readiness and effective participation in emergency management operations.

By December 2021, the EOC renovations were completed, and DEM staff successfully relocated to the new space, enhancing operational capacity and efficiency.

The University-Wide Recovery Plan was tested throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, providing valuable insights and strengthening the University's ability to respond to future disruptions.

Due to COVID-19, the projected timeframe for testing the museum and library Recovery Plans was postponed to 2023. In February 2023, DEM hosted a unit-level tabletop exercise for the Frost Art Museum, further refining response strategies and ensuring preparedness.

A threat and hazard identification and risk assessment were conducted by March 2023, gathering valuable stakeholder input to enhance the University's preparedness and mitigation strategies.

The projects outlined in the 3-Year FIU Infrastructure Plan were successfully completed, including the hardening of buildings and the renovation of the EOC, strengthening the University's resilience and preparedness for future emergencies.