

SECTION 8: PLAN ADOPTION

8.1 OVERVIEW

This section contains information regarding adoption of the plan update by Lehigh and Northampton counties and each participating municipality.

8.1.1 PLAN ADOPTION BY LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES

Adoption by the local governing bodies demonstrates the commitment of Lehigh and Northampton counties and each participating municipality to fulfill the mitigation goals and objectives outlined in the plan update. Adoption legitimizes the plan update and authorizes responsible agencies to execute their responsibilities. In order for this multi-jurisdictional plan to be approved, each jurisdiction included in the plan update must have its governing body adopt the plan update upon conditional approval by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), even when a cross-jurisdiction agency has the authority to prepare such plans in the name of the respective jurisdictions.

Each participating jurisdiction will proceed with formal adoption proceedings when FEMA provides conditional approval of this plan update. A draft adoption resolution template is provided in Appendix F, and will be forwarded to each jurisdiction upon FEMA's conditional approval of this plan update. Each participating jurisdiction understands that a conditional approval of the plan update will be provided for those municipalities that meet the planning requirements with the exception of the adoption requirement as stated above.

Following adoption or formal action on the plan update, each participating jurisdiction must submit a copy of the resolution or other legal instrument showing formal adoption (acceptance) of the plan update to their respective county emergency management contact for this plan update. These will then be submitted to PEMA and forwarded to FEMA. Each participating jurisdiction understands that PEMA and/or FEMA will transmit acknowledgement of verification of formal plan adoption and the official approval of the plan to the mitigation plan coordinator.

In addition to being required by DMA 2000, adoption of the plan is necessary because:

- It lends authority to the plan to serve as a guiding document for all local and state government officials;
- It gives legal status to the plan in the event it is challenged in court;
- It certifies the program and grant administrators that the plan's recommendations have been properly considered and approved by the governing authority and jurisdictions' citizens; and
- It helps to ensure the continuity of mitigation programs and policies over time because elected officials, staff, and other community decision-makers can refer to the official document when making decisions about the community's future.

Source: FEMA. 2003. "How to Series"-*Bringing the Plan to Life* (FEMA 386-4).