

# NKU 2018 Hazard Mitigation Plan

## Hazard Mitigation Planning 101

Hazard mitigation is any action taken to reduce or eliminate long term risk to people and property from natural disasters. Hazard mitigation planning is a process used by State, tribal, and local governments, **as well as universities**, to identify risks and vulnerabilities associated with natural disasters and develop mitigation strategies to reduce or eliminate long term risks. The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act), as amended by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, provides the legal basis for hazard mitigation planning. Specifically, the Stafford Act requires state, tribal, and local governments to develop and adopt FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plans as a condition for receiving certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance.

Local governments have the responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of their citizens. Proactive mitigation policies and actions help reduce risk and create safer, more disaster resilient communities. Mitigation is an investment in the community's future safety and sustainability. Consider the critical importance of mitigation to:

- Protect public safety and prevent loss of life and injury.
- Reduce harm to existing and future development.
- Prevent damage to a community's unique economic, cultural, and environmental assets.
- Minimize operational downtime and accelerate recovery of operations after disasters.
- Reduce the costs of disaster response and recovery and the exposure to risk for first responders.
- Help accomplish other community objectives, such as leveraging capital improvements, infrastructure protection, open space preservation, and economic resiliency.

### Hazards that communities typically address in their mitigation plans:

Drought  
Extreme Heat  
Wildfire  
Landslide

Tornado  
Earthquake  
Flood  
Severe Storm

Mitigation is most effective when it is based on a comprehensive, long-term plan that is developed before a disaster occurs. The purpose of mitigation planning is to identify local policies and actions that can be implemented over the long term to reduce risk and future losses from hazards. These mitigation policies and actions are identified based on an assessment of hazards, vulnerabilities, and risks and the participation of a wide range of stakeholders and the public in the planning process. Benefits of mitigation planning include:

- Identifying actions for risk reduction that are agreed upon by stakeholders and the public.
- Focusing resources on the greatest risks and vulnerabilities.
- Building partnerships by involving citizens, organizations, and businesses.
- Increasing education and awareness of threats and hazards, as well as their risks.
- Communicating priorities to State and Federal officials.
- Aligning risk reduction with other community objectives.

It's important to recognize that the process is as important as the plan itself. In mitigation planning, as with most other planning efforts, the plan is only as strong as the process and variety of stakeholders involved in its development.

The plan should also serve as the written record, or documentation, of the planning process.



# Steps to Develop a Hazard Mitigation Plan

## 1. Conduct the Planning Process

The plan development process should be inclusive and allow for equitable participation by members of the community, including those not typically represented or engaged in planning and decision making. Through community workshops, surveys, and other facilitated activities, community members can provide input into all phases of plan development, particularly the mitigation strategy and the actions the community will complete in becoming more resilient. The planning team will engage a multi-disciplinary planning team and stakeholder group in the process.

### Recommended Stakeholders to engage in the planning process:

**University Police**  
**Facilities Management**  
**Faculty Senate**  
**Staff Congress**  
**Student Government**  
**Student Affairs**

**Dining Services**  
**Housing & Residence Life**  
**Business Operations and Auxiliary Services**  
**Student Health & Counseling**  
**Design & Construction**  
**County Emergency Management**

## 2. Complete Vulnerability and Capability Assessments

The planning team will conduct capability and vulnerability assessments that will provide the foundation for identifying the actions that make-up the mitigation strategy. The two assessments will:

- determine potential impacts of hazards to the community's people and economy;
- determine potential impacts of hazards to the built and natural environments;
- evaluate the community's political and administrative capabilities; and
- inventory the community's ordinances, policies, laws, and plans that relate to guiding and managing growth and development.

## 3. Build a Mitigation Strategy

The mitigation strategy is the community's blueprint for reducing the potential losses identified in the vulnerability assessment and potential gaps found in the capability assessment. This section of the plan will contain the mitigation goals and actions the community will complete. To build the mitigation strategy, the planning team will:

- gather input from subject matter experts and community officials;
- engage stakeholders and community members to collect ideas;
- identify opportunities to integrate with existing plans and programs;
- identify champions and timelines for implementing each action; and
- prioritize actions and identify funding sources.

## 4. Implement and Maintain the Plan

The mitigation plan is a living document that guides action over time. As conditions change, as new information becomes available, or as actions progress over the plan's life, it may be necessary to adjust the plan in order to maintain its relevance. Plan maintenance is the process the planning team establishes to track the plan's implementation progress and to inform the plan update.

### The planning team will develop procedures for:

**Monitoring** - Tracking the implementation of the plan over time

**Evaluating** - Assessing the effectiveness of the plan at achieving its stated purpose and goals

**Updating** - Reviewing and revising the plan at least once every 5 years