

Date of Hearing: April 13, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Rhodesia Ransom, Chair

AB 2475 (Committee on Emergency Management) – As Amended April 7, 2026

SUBJECT: Standardized emergency management system

SUMMARY: This bill separates existing after-action reporting into two reports: a public safety response report due within the first 180 days of a state of emergency declaration, and a disaster recovery report due no later than 180 days after the declaration ends. It also requires Cal OES to provide annual recovery updates until the second report is completed, and mandates that local after-action reports be completed, no later than 120 days after a local emergency declaration. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires Cal OES, in cooperation with involved local and state agencies, to complete an after-action report that reviews the public safety response, with conclusions and recommendations, within the first 180 days of a declaration of a state of emergency, instead of within the first 180 days of a disaster declaration.
- 2) Requires Cal OES, in cooperation with involved local and state agencies, to complete a second after-action report that reviews disaster recovery activities, with conclusions and recommendations, no later than 180 days after a declaration of a state of emergency ends, instead of as part of the single after-action report referenced above.
- 3) Requires Cal OES to annually draft written updates related to the recovery activities until the second, recovery focused after-action report is completed, as specified,
- 4) Requires each of the reports and recovery updates be available to all interested public safety and emergency management organizations and sent to the Assembly and Senate Committees on Emergency Management.
- 5) Requires Cal OES publish a public version of the after-action reports and data and statistics from the reports that may be used to assess statewide emergency related needs, as specified.
- 6) Requires a city and/or county, as applicable, in cooperation with involved local and state agencies, to complete an after-action report no later than 120 days after their declared local emergency and to share the report with Cal OES and all other interested public safety and emergency management organizations.
- 7) Requires the local after-action report to include, at a minimum, the following:
 - a. A review of the public safety response and disaster recovery activities.
 - b. Conclusions and recommendations, as specified.
 - c. The jurisdiction's application of the standardized emergency management system and any suggested modifications to the standardized emergency management system.
 - d. Any necessary modifications to plans and procedures.
 - e. Any identified training needs.

- f. A plan to implement any improvements needed.
- 8) Authorizes the investigation, collection of data, and drafting of a local level after-action report to be considered an eligible cost under the California Disaster Assistance Act.
- 9) Finds and declares this act is a matter of statewide concern, rather than a municipal affair, therefore this act applies to all cities, including charter cities.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Establishes the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) within the office of the Governor and makes Cal OES responsible for the state's emergency and disaster response services for natural, technological, or manmade disasters and emergencies. (Gov. Code Section 8550)
- 2) Authorizes the Governor to proclaim a state of emergency and local officials and local governments to proclaim a local emergency, when specified conditions of disaster or extreme peril to the safety of persons and property exist, and authorizes the Governor or the appropriate local government to exercise certain powers in response to that emergency. (Gov. Code Section 8558)
- 3) Defines "state of emergency" and "local emergency" to mean a duly proclaimed existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the state or territorial limits of a local government caused by, among other things, a sudden and severe energy shortage. (Gov. Code Section 8558)
- 4) Requires the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) for managing multiagency and multijurisdictional responses to emergencies in California. State agencies are required to use SEMS and local government entities must use SEMS in order to be eligible for any reimbursement of response-related costs under the state's disaster assistance programs. (Gov. Code Section 8607)
- 5) Requires Cal OES to, within 180 days after each declared disaster, complete an after-action report, in cooperation with involved state and local agencies, that includes a review of the public safety response and disaster recovery activities and conclusions and recommendations based on findings. (Gov. Code Section 8607)
- 6) Requires Cal OES to make the make the report available to all interested public safety and emergency management organizations. (Gov. Code Section 8607)

FISCAL EFFECT: Unknown. A fiscal committee has not analyzed this bill.

COMMENTS:

Author Statement: "California relies on after-action reports to capture critical lessons learned from disasters and improve future emergency response and recovery efforts. However, ambiguity in current law regarding the timeline for these reports has led to inconsistent implementation and significant delays. As the California Office of Emergency Services interprets current law as directing the completion of after-action reports no later than 180 days after an emergency declaration ends, reports are often postponed for years while emergency declarations remain

open for valid recovery and funding purposes. As a result, the state and local emergency managers are left without timely access to information that could strengthen preparedness and response in the face of increasingly frequent and severe disasters.

This bill brings clarity, accountability, and timeliness to the after-action reporting process by separating response and recovery components into two distinct reports with clear deadlines. It ensures that response-focused findings and recommendations are available within the first 180 days of a disaster, when they are most actionable, while maintaining the existing timeline for recovery reporting. Additionally, the bill requires annual recovery updates and provides greater clarity for local reporting requirements. By improving the structure and timeliness of after-action reports, this bill strengthens California's ability to learn from past emergencies and better protect communities in future disasters."

Equity Statement: "Timely and transparent after-action reporting is essential to ensuring that all communities—particularly those that are historically underserved, high-risk, or disproportionately impacted by disasters—benefit from continuous improvements in emergency management. Delays in capturing and disseminating lessons learned can perpetuate gaps in response effectiveness, resource allocation, and recovery outcomes, which often fall most heavily on vulnerable populations."

Background: The reporting deadline for Cal OES after-action reports is open to interpretation in current law. Current law states after-action reports are due "within 180 days after each declared disaster." Cal OES interprets this due date to mean within 180 days after a disaster declaration ends. However, some disaster declarations, or state of emergencies, can last over a decade. For example, on March 24, 2026, Governor Newsom signed a proclamation ending 18 open state of emergencies that were originally proclaimed in the years of 2015, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021, and 2022. While some of these emergencies already have an associated, published after-action report, several do not (but should within 180 days). Furthermore, there are currently 52 open state of emergency declarations, going back as far as December of 2022. It is important to note that many of these emergency declarations have valid reasons for being left open for many years, including lengthy recovery periods, state and federal funding eligibility, and more. Yet when state of emergency declarations can last years, the state – including local emergency managers on the front lines of disaster response – is left waiting for answers that would likely be useful for mitigating, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from future disasters.

The Committee is attempting to solve this issue by splitting the current after-action report into two separate reports: a response focused report and a recovery focused report. These are the two topics required in statewide after-action reports by law, including associated conclusions and recommendations. This bill will functionally leave the report due date for recovery information unchanged, clarifying this report is due 180 days after a disaster declaration ends. However, the response report would now be due within the first 180 days of the disaster declaration. Furthermore, this bill requires annual recovery updates from Cal OES until the recovery after-action report is completed. It also codifies requirements for local level after-action reports, while adding greater specificity and clarity that many local emergency managers have expressed would be useful.

After Action Reports: An after-action report is a retrospective document evaluating a declared emergency. An after-action report provides a source for documenting response and early recovery activities, identifies successes and areas needing improvement during emergency

operations, analyzes the effectiveness of the different components of the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), and describes and defines a plan of corrective action for implementing recommended improvements to existing emergency response efforts.

Per existing law, after-action reports are required for any emergency declared by the Governor. These reports must provide a review of public safety response and disaster recovery activities, including conclusions and recommendations based on the report's findings. These reports must be shared with all interested public safety and emergency management organizations.

Local after-action reports are currently required through California Code of Regulations, Title 19 § 2450. These regulations require any city, city and county, or county declaring a local emergency for which the governor proclaims a state of emergency, and any state agency responding to that emergency shall complete and transmit an after action report to Cal OES within 90 days of the close of the incident period. These local level after-action reports are required to include, at a minimum, a review of response actions taken, application of SEMS, suggested modifications to SEMS, necessary modifications to plans and procedures, identified training needs, and recovery activities to date.

Open Cal OES After-Action Reports: The following Cal OES after-action reports are still in progress:

2025 Active Reports

2025 January Wildfires and Wind Event AAR
2025 Fire Season AAR
2025 Winter Storms

2024 Active Reports

2024 Fire Season AAR
2024-2025 Winter Storms AAR
2024 Victoria Island Levee AAR
2024 Avian Influenza A (H5N1) AAR
2024 December Earthquake AAR
2024 Rancho Palos Verdes Landslide AAR
2024 Fire Season AAR
2024 Winter Storms AAR

2023 Active Reports

2023 Tropical Storm Hilary and Summer Fires

2022 Active Reports

2022-2023 Winter Storms AAR
2022 Ferndale Earthquake AAR
2022 September Extreme Heat, Fires, and Tropical Storms AAR

2021 Active Reports

2021 Late December Winter Storms AAR
2021 Fire Season AAR

2020 Active Reports

2020 COVID-19 AAR
2020 Fires Season AAR

2019 Active Reports

2019 Fire Season and PSPS AAR
2019 Winter Storms AAR

2018 Active Reports

2018 Fire Season AAR

2017 Active Reports

2017 Fire Season AAR
2017 Winter Storms AAR

Related Legislation:

AB 3267 (Smith) Chapter 260, Statutes of 2020. Requires the California Office of Emergency Services (OES) to coordinate with representatives from the access and functional needs population when updating the State Emergency Plan (SEP); and, provides OES with additional time to complete an after-action report following each declared disaster, as specified.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**Support**

None on file.

Opposition

None on file.

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