



**RECEPTION
CENTER**



Emergency Support Services Plan

Emergency Support Services Plan

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Merritt
FLOURISH UNDER THE SUN

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Merritt and Nicola Valley Emergency Support Services respectfully acknowledges that it works on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Nlaka'pamux and Syilx people.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1 – Introduction	1
1.1 Scope.....	1
1.2 Purpose.....	1
1.3 Overview.....	1
Chapter 2 – Program Administration	3
2.1 Legal Authorities.....	3
2.2 Concept of ESS.....	3
2.3 Organizational Structure.....	4
2.4 Appointment of ESSD and ESSDD.....	4
2.5 Communication and Information Systems.....	4
Chapter 3 – MNVESS Volunteer Management	7
3.1 Application Process.....	7
3.2 Criminal Record Check Process.....	7
3.3 Code of Conduct.....	7
3.4 Welcome Package.....	7
3.5 Interviews.....	8
3.6 Insurance Coverage and Reimbursement of Expenses.....	8
3.7 PSLV Identification Cards.....	8
3.8 Volunteer Roster and Information.....	8
3.9 Volunteer Files.....	8
3.10 Clothing.....	8
3.11 Access to the Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) Program.....	9
3.12 Volunteer Recognition.....	9
3.13 Duty Phone.....	9
3.14 Meetings.....	10
3.15 Annual Events.....	10
3.16 Trailer.....	11
Chapter 4 – MNVESS Training Program	13
4.1 Concept of Training.....	13
4.2 Justice Institute of BC (JIBC) Courses.....	13
4.3 Additional Training.....	13
4.4 Tracking of Training Completion.....	13
4.5 Evacuee Registration and Referral (ERA) Practice.....	13
Chapter 5 – MNVESS Activation	15
5.1 Criteria to Evacuate.....	15
5.2 Procedure to Activate.....	15
5.3 Alert.....	16
Chapter 6 – MNVESS Response Procedures	19
6.1 Concept of Response.....	19
6.2 Responding Alone.....	19
6.3 Relationship with the City of Merritt EOC.....	19
6.4 Mapping of Reception Centres and Group Lodging Facilities.....	19
6.5 Embossing.....	19
6.6 Resource and Financial Management.....	19
6.7 Additional Roles in Emergency Response.....	20
6.8 Deactivation.....	20

Chapter 7 – Supporting Organizations	21
7.1 ESS Suppliers.....	21
7.2 BC Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR)	22
7.3 Canadian Disaster Animal Response Team (CDART).....	22
7.4 Canadian Red Cross (CRC).....	22
7.5 Disaster Psychosocial Services (DPS).....	23
7.6 District of Logan Lake ESS	23
7.7 First Nations Health Authority (FNHA).....	23
7.8 Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC).....	24
7.9 Salvation Army	24
7.10 Service BC	24
7.11 Town of Princeton ESS	24
7.12 United Way BC (UWBC)	25
Lexicon.....	27
Terms and Definitions.....	27
Acronyms and Abbreviations	27

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. The MNVESS logo	1
Figure 2. Sticker design used to identify ESS Suppliers in Merritt	21

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCOPE

This document overviews Merritt and Nicola Valley Emergency Support Services (MNVESS) administrative and response procedures. This document supplements the [Government of BC's Emergency Support Services \(ESS\) Program Guide](#) and complements the [City of Merritt Emergency Management Plan](#) and the [City of Merritt Hazard, Risk, and Vulnerability Analysis \(HRVA\)](#).

1.2 PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to establish and overview MNVESS administrative and response procedures. These procedures supplement the procedures described in the Government of BC's ESS Program Guide and apply the ESS program in a local context.

1.3 OVERVIEW

[According to the BC Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness](#), Emergency Support Services (ESS) means “Volunteers who provide services that preserve the emotional and physical well-being of survivors and response workers in an emergency. They include, but are not limited to, reception, food services, lodging, clothing, registration and inquiry, personal, and financial services”. Like search and rescue and several other types of volunteer groups, ESS is recognized as a Public Safety Lifeline (PSL) organization by the Government of BC. Most emergency survivors that ESS assists are evacuees.

ESS typically does not provide services to evacuees directly; rather, ESS refers evacuees to businesses, such as hotels, grocery stores, and restaurants, which have volunteered to participate in the ESS program. These businesses are known as ESS Suppliers. The Government of BC then reimburses ESS Suppliers for the services that they provide to evacuees. In recent years, ESS increasingly provides evacuees with direct financial support via Interac e-Transfer in lieu of referrals to specific ESS Suppliers.

ESS may be activated in response to events ranging from small housefires to large-scale evacuations. ESS typically provides services to evacuees for up to 72 hours; however, the BC Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) may authorize services to be provided for longer if necessary.

The City of Merritt ESS program is called Merritt and Nicola Valley ESS (MNVESS).



Figure 1. The MNVESS logo

CHAPTER 2 – PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

2.1 LEGAL AUTHORITIES

ESS is a Government of BC program that is administered locally by the City of Merritt as MNVESS.

Division 5 of Part 2 of the [BC Emergency and Disaster Management Act \(EDMA\)](#) authorizes the Government of BC to deploy volunteers in response to emergency events.

⚖️ Legislation

Authority	Legislation	Applicable Sections
Government of BC	Emergency and Disaster Management Act	30–32

2.2 CONCEPT OF ESS

MNVESS is intended to provide basic services to emergency survivors immediately after an emergency has taken place. In order to provide services, MNVESS typically operates a reception centre. Depending on the particulars of a given emergency, MNVESS may operate a reception centre at a large facility, such as the Merritt Civic Centre or Merritt Cadet Hall, or alternatively operate a reception centre in a small location such as a hotel lobby.

In general, MNVESS should intend to assist emergency survivors indirectly using Interac e-Transfers and referrals to ESS Suppliers rather than directly through programs like group lodging. While the ESS program in BC does train to conduct group lodging, MNVESS should recognize that group lodging is a complex and resource-intensive activity and would likely put substantial strain on the organization.

MNVESS is guided by three function-level principles. These principles supplement both the five overall City of Merritt Emergency Program principles described in Chapter 3 of the [City of Merritt Emergency Management Plan](#) and the three response phase principles described in Chapter 6 of the Emergency Management Plan. The three MNVESS principles are *program-focused*, *compassionate*, and *sustainable*:

- ▶ **Program-focused.** MNVESS should be program-focused so that the organization primarily works to provide basic services to emergency survivors. While ESS programs may provide a variety of services, MNVESS is generally not intended to be a survival organization, animal welfare group, or counselling service.
- ▶ **Compassionate.** MNVESS should be compassionate so that care is provided to emergency survivors in a welcoming, nonjudgemental and empathetic manner that supports individual dignity and personal agency.
- ▶ **Sustainable.** MNVESS should be sustainable so that services are provided in a manner that does not place undue stress or hardship on volunteers and program supports and that avoids burn-out and compassion fatigue. MNVESS should always be cognizant that its responders are volunteers.

2.3 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

MNVES is managed by an Emergency Support Services Director (ESSD) and an Emergency Support Services Deputy Director (ESSDD).

2.4 APPOINTMENT OF ESSD AND ESSDD

The City of Merritt Emergency Program Coordinator (EPC) shall appoint the MNVESH Director and Deputy Director in consultation with the overall MNVESH volunteer group. Director and Deputy Director appointees should be willing to fill a leadership role and should be selected based on their availability, ESS experience, training and qualifications, and working relationships with other MNVESH volunteers.

2.5 COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

2.5.1 MICROSOFT 365

2.5.1.1 OVERVIEW

MNVESH makes considerable use of cloud-based Microsoft 365 applications. For example, most MNVESH files are uploaded onto a [Microsoft SharePoint site](#) and the MNVESH uses a [Microsoft Team](#) to support communications.

The MNVESH SharePoint uses a variety of libraries and lists to organize files. These libraries and lists are referenced frequently throughout this document and are described in the following table:

Name	Description
Contacts List (EOC SharePoint)	Lists MNVESH contacts.
Documentation Library (EOC SharePoint)	Files a wide variety of guides and documents relating to emergency management.
Equipment List (EOC SharePoint)	Lists major local emergency response equipment.
Glossary (EOC SharePoint)	Lists key terms and definitions
MNVESH Supplier Information List	Lists MNVESH suppliers
MNVESH Volunteer Information List	Lists MNVESH volunteers and their contact information and training qualifications.

2.5.1.2 GROUP CALENDAR

The MNVESH uses a Microsoft Outlook group calendar to schedule and share information about key events such as training courses and emergency exercises. The EOC Microsoft Outlook group calendar is available [here](#).

2.5.1.3 GROUP MAILBOX

MNVESS uses the Microsoft Outlook group mailbox ess@merritt.ca to receive emailed emergency alerts and routine email communications. The use of a shared mailbox ensures continuity of communications if the EPC or ESSD changes. The MNVESS group mailbox can be accessed [here](#).

The ess@merritt.ca mailbox receives the following news bulletins and notifications:

- ▶ NESST newsletters;
- ▶ PHSA Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) newsletters;
- ▶ Survive-It Disaster Preparedness newsletters; and
- ▶ Voyent Alert! notifications issued by the City of Merritt.

2.5.2 FACEBOOK ESS GROUP

MNVESS maintains a [Facebook group page](#).

2.5.3 CITY OF MERRITT ESS WEBPAGE

The City of Merritt maintains a public website on behalf of MNVESS (www.merritt.ca/ess).

CHAPTER 3 – MNVESS VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

3.1 APPLICATION PROCESS

Prospective volunteers must apply to join MNVESS. Applicants must:

- ▶ be 16 years of age or older (volunteers from 16 to 18 years of age require parent or guardian consent to volunteer with ESS);
- ▶ be willing and able to respond to occasional ESS activations that take place late at night or on weekends or holidays;
- ▶ be willing and able to take part in ESS training;
- ▶ be willing and able to reliably attend monthly ESS meetings;
- ▶ pass a criminal record check, including a vulnerable sector check; and
- ▶ provide two references.

Applications can be made by following the instructions listed on the [City of Merritt ESS webpage](#) or by visiting Merritt City Hall and speaking with the City of Merritt Emergency Program Coordinator.

3.2 CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK PROCESS

OMITTED IN PUBLIC VERSION OF PLAN.

3.3 CODE OF CONDUCT

MNVESS volunteers shall be familiar with and conduct themselves in accordance with [EMCR Policy 1.02 “Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer Code of Conduct”](#).

3.4 WELCOME PACKAGE

New MNVESS volunteers should receive a welcome package upon joining MNVESS. This welcome package should include:

- ▶ the [MNVESS Welcome Package](#)
- ▶ a physical copy of this document;
- ▶ a physical copy of the [Government of BC’s ESS Program Guide](#);
- ▶ physical copies of the following [EMCR policies and procedures](#):
 - ▶ 1.02 Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer Code of Conduct;
 - ▶ 2.06 Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer Safety; and
 - ▶ 5.06 Volunteer Expense Reimbursement and Allowance Rate.

3.5 INTERVIEWS

The ESSD and EPC should conduct informal interviews of new MNVESS volunteers to learn more about the volunteer's background. Interview topics may include the volunteer's skills or training, life experiences, reasons for joining MNVESS, and dietary preferences.

3.6 INSURANCE COVERAGE AND REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

MNVESS volunteers operating under an EMCR task number receive the following insurance coverage:

- ▶ workers' compensation coverage;
- ▶ liability coverage;
- ▶ reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses for authorized operational tasks; and
- ▶ reimbursement for the repair/replacement of personal property or equipment lost or damaged on an operational task.

More information regarding policies and procedures relating to workers' compensation, expense reimbursement claims, and reimbursement rates may be accessed on the [EMCR policies webpage](#).

3.7 PSLV IDENTIFICATION CARDS

All MNVESS volunteers shall register to receive a Government of BC Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer (PSLV) identification card.

[EMCR Policy 1.05](#) describes the PSLV registration process.

3.8 VOLUNTEER ROSTER AND INFORMATION

A roster of current MNVESS volunteers is available [on the MNVESS SharePoint Volunteer Information List](#).

3.9 VOLUNTEER FILES

All MNVESS shall have a personal file that contains physical documents such as their MNVESS application form, criminal record check results, PSLV application form, and any applicable transcripts or course results. The EPC shall custodian MNVESS volunteer files and keep them in a secure location.

3.10 CLOTHING

MNVESS possesses a considerable amount of branded clothing and other branded items, such as water bottles. MNVESS volunteers should only receive MNVESS-branded items after first completing the JIBC course EMRG-1635 "Introduction to Evacuee Registration and Supports" (see [Chapter 4](#)).

3.11 ACCESS TO THE EVACUEE REGISTRATION AND ASSISTANCE (ERA) PROGRAM

MNVESS volunteers should receive access to the Evacuee Registration and Assistance (ERA) program after completing the JIBC course EMRG-1635 “Introduction to Evacuee Registration and Supports” (see [Chapter 4](#)). ERA can be accessed at <https://ess.gov.bc.ca/>.

ERA access is granted by providing a volunteer with a business BCeID account and linking the BCeID account to a responder profile in ERA. MNVESS uses the “City of Merritt” business in the BCeID system and most MNVESS volunteers should be assigned a “Business User” BCeID account role.

The ESSD and EPC should be configured as BCeID Business Account Managers so that they are able to set up new BCeID accounts for ESS volunteers as well as perform BCeID account password resets. The BCeID system can be accessed at <https://www.bceid.ca/>.

3.12 VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

3.12.1 OVERVIEW

ESS work may sometimes be difficult or stressful. Accordingly, it is important that MNVESS volunteers be recognized for their work in order to reduce burnout and grow the organization. Recognition may involve providing MNVESS volunteers with awards or certificates of recognition or organizing dinners and social events.

While the City of Merritt should be the primary source of recognition for MNVESS volunteers, the Government of BC also has a [variety of programs](#) intended to recognize the work done by volunteers. The City of Merritt EPC may nominate MNVESS volunteers for recognition from the Government of BC.

3.12.2 YEARS-OF-SERVICE PINS

The Government of BC awards Public Safety Lifeline volunteers with pins recognizing 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, and 40 years of service. Pins may be ordered by contacting EMCR at emcr.ess@gov.bc.ca.

3.13 DUTY PHONE

MNVESS has a duty phone (contact 778-921-0189) that is intended to receive any emergency activation requests. The volunteer who currently has custody of the phone is referred to as the duty volunteer.

The duty volunteer is responsible for:

- ▶ receiving and approving requests to activate MNVESS;
- ▶ requesting EMCR task numbers;
- ▶ conducting callouts of MNVESS volunteers; and
- ▶ advising the EPC and ESSD of any activation requests.

In order to prevent burnout, the MNVESS duty volunteer should generally rotate on the 1st and 16th day of the month.

The duty volunteer should be briefed on the criteria for activating MNVESS, MNVESS activation procedures, and have access to contact information for all MNVESS volunteers before they take custody of the phone.

- ▶ The duty volunteer should hand the duty phone off to another volunteer if they anticipate that they will be outside of cell phone coverage for more than a brief period of time;
- ▶ leaving the Nicola Valley for more than 72 hours; or
- ▶ leaving Canada.

3.14 MEETINGS

3.14.1 MEETING TIME AND LOCATION

MNVESS conducts regular meetings and training at 7 p.m. at the Merritt Cadet Hall (1755 Coldwater Ave) on the third Tuesday of the month from September to June. MNVESS takes an annual recess from regular meetings from July to August.

3.14.2 MEETING NOTES

Notes should be taken at MNVESS meetings. Notes should be distributed to MNVESS volunteers as well as filed in the [MNVESS SharePoint task numbers folder](#).

3.14.3 TRAINING TASK NUMBER

Volunteers attending MNVESS meetings and training will sign in under an assigned EMCR task number (see Chapter 6 of the [City of Merritt Emergency Management Plan](#)). EMCR typically assigns a single training task number that can be used for meetings throughout the provincial fiscal year (1 April to 31 March).

Note that training task numbers are not applicable to community and public events such as open houses.

[EMCR Policy 1.08](#) describes the process to apply for a training task number.

3.15 ANNUAL EVENTS

3.15.1 NESST CONFERENCE

The [Network of Emergency Support Services Teams \(NESST\)](#) conference is an annual event for BC ESS teams. MNVESS should consider sending volunteers to attend the conference.

3.15.2 REMEMBRANCE DAY

MNVESS should consider laying a wreath at the annual Merritt Remembrance Day Ceremony on 11 November. Wreath laying may be arranged by contacting [Royal Canadian Legion Branch #96 Merritt](#).

3.16 TRAILER

MNVESS uses a trailer (City of Merritt fleet number 1633) to hold the supplies necessary to establish a reception centre.

The ESSD, ESSDD, and City of Merritt EPC should have keys to access the trailer.

The trailer shall only be towed by City of Merritt vehicles.

CHAPTER 4 – MNVESS TRAINING PROGRAM

4.1 CONCEPT OF TRAINING

The MNVESS training plan is intended to enable MNVESS volunteers to capably and confidently perform their assigned roles during an ESS activation. The primary focus of the MNVESS training plan is qualifying volunteers on Justice Institute of BC (JIBC) ESS courses. JIBC works closely with EMCR and provides almost all ESS training in BC. JIBC offers a wide variety of ESS courses and qualifications. Most courses are self-paced and offered entirely online.

4.2 JUSTICE INSTITUTE OF BC (JIBC) COURSES

All MNVESS volunteers should aim to complete the following JIBC ESS training within six months of joining MNVESS:

- ▶ [EMRG-1600 – Introduction to Emergency Support Services](#);
- ▶ [EMRG-1607 – Level One Emergency Support Services](#);
- ▶ [EMRG-1610 – Introduction to Reception Centres](#);
- ▶ [EMRG-1612 – Introduction to Group Lodging](#);
- ▶ [EMRG-1615 – Registration & Referrals](#); and
- ▶ [EMRG-1635 – Introduction to Evacuee Registration and Supports](#).

JIBC estimates that this training takes approximately 29 hours in total to complete.

ESS volunteers may register for JIBC courses either online or through the JIBC registrar (contact 604-528-5590 or register@jibc.ca).

4.3 ADDITIONAL TRAINING

In addition to JIBC training, training related to topics such as critical incident stress management, cultural safety and humility, first aid, and the incident command system (ICS), among other things, may be of interest to MNVESS volunteers. Organizations like the Canadian Red Cross, Provincial Health Services Authority, and St. John Ambulance may deliver these types of training.

4.4 TRACKING OF TRAINING COMPLETION

MNVESS volunteer training is tracked [on the MNVESS SharePoint Volunteer Information List](#).

4.5 EVACUEE REGISTRATION AND REFERRAL (ERA) PRACTICE

MNVESS volunteers may practice using the ERA program by using the Evacuee Registration and Referral (ERA) portal training mode. MNVESS volunteers can use the mock task number “Train-Merritt” in the ERA portal training mode.

CHAPTER 5 – MNVESS ACTIVATION

5.1 CRITERIA TO EVACUATE

MNVESS uses the criteria described in the [Government of BC's ESS Program guide](#) to evaluate activation requests. Evacuations and structure fires are the most common, although by no means the only, causes of MNVESS activations.

An MNVESS activation shall not proceed unless EMCR assigns a task number (see Chapter 6 of the [City of Merritt Emergency Management Plan](#)).

5.2 PROCEDURE TO ACTIVATE

Anyone from the City of Merritt or elsewhere can request that MNVESS activate. Requests to activate MNVESS should be made to the MNVESS 24/7 duty volunteer phone (contact 778-921-0189).

If the MNVESS duty phone is not answered, the request to activate MNVESS should be made to the City of Merritt Emergency Program Coordinator (contact 778-921-0359).

Requests may also be made to the ess@merritt.ca mailbox; however, this mailbox is not monitored at all times.

Requests to activate MNVESS should include the following information:

1. the name of the person making the request;
2. the organization the person making the request belongs to;
3. the phone number that the person making the request may be reached at;
4. the type of emergency;
5. the location of the emergency;
6. the approximate number of people affected by the emergency;
7. the type of property affected by the emergency;
8. information regarding any additional people or property that may be imminently affected by the emergency;
9. any dangers presented by the emergency that should be considered;
10. available access to the site of the emergency; and
11. a brief overview of any emergency response already being made.

Upon receiving a request to activate MNVESS, the duty volunteer shall approve or deny the request in accordance with the activation criteria described in the [Government of BC's ESS](#)

[Program guide](#). If the duty volunteer is unsure if the situation meets the criteria described in the ESS Program Guide, the ESSD or EPC should be contacted.

The ESSD and EPC should be advised of any request made to activate MNVESS, regardless of whether or not the request is approved, as soon as possible.

If the request to activate MNVESS is approved, the duty volunteer shall immediately contact the BC EMCR Emergency Coordination Centre (ECC) at 1-800-663-3456, provide a report on the emergency, and request a task number.

MNVESS SHALL UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ACTIVATE UNLESS AN EMCR TASK NUMBER IS ASSIGNED

Upon being assigned an EMCR task number, the MNVESS duty volunteer shall call out MNVESS volunteers until the required staffing level is reached.

Contact information for MNVESS volunteers is available [on the MNVESS SharePoint site](#).

- ▶ An ESS callout message should include:
 - ▶ a brief description of the emergency;
 - ▶ the location of the reception centre;
 - ▶ the name of the reception centre manager;
 - ▶ the EMCR task number; and
 - ▶ a point-of-contact for questions.
- ▶ The callout message should request that receipt of the message be confirmed.

Note that the MNVESS duty volunteer is not necessarily required to respond to an activation themselves; rather, the duty volunteer is responsible for approving or denying the activation request, requesting an EMCR task number, and conducting the callout of MNVESS volunteers.

Templates

An ESS activation email template is available on the [City of Merritt EOC SharePoint](#).

5.3 ALERT

When a heightened level of vigilance is appropriate but an MNVESS activation is not yet required, it may be prudent to place MNVESS on alert. For example, MNVESS may be placed on alert in response to an evacuation alert being issued for Logan Lake. MNVESS should be placed on alert by taking the following actions:

- ▶ preparing a reception centre for activation;
- ▶ apprising MNVESS volunteers of the emergency situation;

- ▶ advising MNVESS volunteers that an activation is possible;
- ▶ reviewing MNVESS procedures with MNVESS volunteers;
- ▶ recommending that MNVESS volunteers prepare any items that they may want to have with them in a reception centre; and
- ▶ advising MNVESS volunteers to stay in the Merritt area and in phone and email contact.

MNVESS volunteers should be advised if MNVESS is activated or if the alert is rescinded without MNVESS being activated.

Templates

An ESS alert template is available on the [City of Merritt EOC SharePoint](#).

CHAPTER 6 – MNVESS RESPONSE PROCEDURES

6.1 CONCEPT OF RESPONSE

MNVESS shall respond to emergencies in accordance with the [Government of BC's Emergency Support Services Program Guide](#). The ESS Program Guide overviews almost all components of the ESS program.

In addition to the Emergency Support Services Program Guide, MNVESS follows [BC Emergency Management System \(BCEMS\) Emergency Operations Centres \(EOC\) operational guidelines](#). While these guidelines are primarily intended for EOCs, ESS reception centres and group lodging facilities use a largely identical organizational system. The BCEMS guidelines are in turn adopted from incident command system (ICS) guidelines.

6.2 RESPONDING ALONE

MNVESS volunteers shall under no circumstances respond to ESS activations alone.

6.3 RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CITY OF MERRITT EOC

MNVESS requests for higher level support, including resource requests to the EMCR Central Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centre (PREOC), should be made through the City of Merritt [EOC Operations Section](#) (contact eoc.operations@merritt.ca).

When both the City of Merritt EOC and MNVESS are activated, MNVESS may assign a volunteer to work as a branch coordinator as part of the [EOC Operations Section](#). The MNVESS branch coordinator represents ESS in the EOC and acts as a subject matter expert and liaison.

6.4 MAPPING OF RECEPTION CENTRES AND GROUP LODGING FACILITIES

Reception centres and group lodging facilities are public emergency response facilities and accordingly should be mapped on [EmergencyMapBC](#). Procedures to map public emergency response facilities on EmergencyMapBC are described in Chapter 6 of the [City of Merritt Emergency Management Plan](#)

Mapping

Active ESS reception centres in BC are featured on the [City of Merritt Emergency Program map](#).

6.5 EMBOSSING

MNVESS uses a special embosser to add a mark of authenticity to official ESS referral documents.

6.6 RESOURCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

MNVESS shall submit expenditure authorization forms (EAF), personnel requests, and resource request (RR) to the [EOC Operations Section](#) (contact eoc.operations@merritt.ca) for fulfillment.

Resource and financial management procedures are described in greater detail in Chapter 6 of the [City of Merritt Emergency Management Plan](#)

6.7 ADDITIONAL ROLES IN EMERGENCY RESPONSE

6.7.1 EOC BRANCH COORDINATOR

In emergencies that substantially involve the City of Merritt EOC, MNVESS should designate a volunteer as an EOC branch coordinator. The branch coordinator acts as the link between MNVESS and the City of Merritt EOC and keeps the EOC advised of matters relating to ESS.

6.7.2 ESS SUPPLIER LIAISON

In emergencies that are likely to involve many ESS Suppliers (see [Chapter 7](#)), MNVESS may consider designating a volunteer as an ESS Supplier liaison. The ESS Supplier liaison is responsible keeping MNVESS suppliers informed about the emergency situation, tracking availability of accommodations such as hotel rooms, and for explaining ESS referral forms and reimbursement procedures to suppliers.

Templates

An MNVESS supplier liaison template for major emergency events is included in the [City of Merritt Emergency Program Microsoft SharePoint](#).

6.8 DEACTIVATION

If the City of Merritt EOC is activated concurrently with MNVESS, the deactivation of MNVESS should be approved by the **EOC Operations Section** (contact eoc.operations@merritt.ca).

MNVESS volunteers should perform the following tasks to deactivate:

- ▶ complete and file any unfinished documentation;
- ▶ enter any paper registration and referral forms in ERA;
- ▶ reset the passwords of any City of Merritt computer systems used as part of the activation;
- ▶ follow-up with suppliers and support referral form processing and reimbursement procedures;
- ▶ thank supporting organizations;
- ▶ complete an after-action review (AAR); and
- ▶ restock supplies and documents.

If an activation involved exposure to considerable stress or trauma, a critical incident stress debriefing or similar activity may also be appropriate to include in the deactivation process. Organizations like Disaster Psychosocial Services (see [Chapter 7](#)) or the Merritt Fire Rescue Department may be able to support the delivery of critical incident stress management.

CHAPTER 7 – SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

7.1 ESS SUPPLIERS

ESS typically does not provide services to evacuees directly; rather, ESS refers evacuees to businesses, such as hotels, grocery stores, and restaurants, which have volunteered to participate in the ESS program. These businesses are known as ESS Suppliers. The Government of BC then reimburses ESS Suppliers for the services that they provide to evacuees.

While ESS increasingly provides evacuees with direct financial support via Interac e-Transfer in lieu of referrals to specific ESS Suppliers, ESS Suppliers remain essential to the ESS program.

ESS Suppliers may include:

- ▶ clothing stores;
- ▶ general purpose retailers;
- ▶ grocery stores;
- ▶ hotels and motels;
- ▶ pharmacies; and
- ▶ restaurants.

Merritt businesses must complete an [ESS Supplier Consent Form](#) (EMCR2396) in order to register as an ESS Supplier. ESS Supplier Consent Forms for Merritt businesses are filed on the [MNVESS SharePoint](#).

Under ideal circumstances, ESS Supplier Consent Forms should be reviewed and renewed annually. The review and renewal procedure may also involve MNVESS volunteers overviewing referral form and reimbursement procedures with ESS Supplier employees or taking steps to recognize the contributions of ESS Suppliers to the overall ESS program by providing ESS Suppliers with certificates of recognition or similar gestures.

It may make sense to review and renew Supplier Consent Forms in April or May and immediately before wildfire season.

Information about Merritt ESS Suppliers is available [on the MNVESS SharePoint Supplier Information List](#).

Merritt businesses that are interested in registering as ESS Suppliers should contact MNVESS at ess@merritt.ca.



Figure 2. Sticker design used to identify ESS Suppliers in Merritt

7.2 BC MINISTRY OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND CLIMATE READINESS (EMCR)

The BC Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness (EMCR) administers the overall ESS program and provides various supports to local ESS teams. For example, EMCR can deploy its own Roving ESS Team (RESST) and offer ERA program technical support.

The EMCR ESS Regional Planning Officer assists with routine coordination between EMCR and ESS teams like MNVESS.

📞 Key Contacts

OMITTED IN PUBLIC VERSION OF PLAN.

Additional contact information for EMCR is available in the [City of Merritt Emergency Program Contact List](#).

7.3 CANADIAN DISASTER ANIMAL RESPONSE TEAM (CDART)

The [Canadian Disaster Animal Response Team \(CDART\)](#) is a volunteer organization that supports domesticated animals during emergency events. CDART often works closely with ESS teams and may work at an ESS reception centre,

📞 Key Contacts

Organization	Contact	Phone	Email
CDART	General Enquiry	-	info@cdart.org

Additional contact information for CDART is available in the [City of Merritt Emergency Program Contact List](#).

7.4 CANADIAN RED CROSS (CRC)

The [Canadian Red Cross \(CRC\)](#) can provide a wide variety of supports to ESS through its Personal Disaster Assistance (PDA) program. Typical supports included conducting emergency survivor needs assessments, providing recovery support, and provisioning emergency supplies. The CRC is not intended to replace ESS; rather, the CRC generally focuses on providing supports beyond the 72-hour period in which ESS is typically activated.

📞 Key Contacts

Organization	Contact	Phone	Email
CRC	Emergency Management Duty Officer	1-888-800-6493	bcydutyofficer@redcross.ca

Additional contact information for the CRC is available in the [City of Merritt Emergency Program Contact List](#).

7.5 DISASTER PSYCHOSOCIAL SERVICES (DPS)

[Health Emergency Management BC \(HEMBC\)](#) can deploy [Disaster Psychosocial Support \(DPS\)](#) volunteer teams to provide psychological first aid during or after an emergency event. DPS volunteers are popularly referred to as “purple shirts” in reference to the clothing they wear when deployed.

📞 Key Contacts

Organization	Contact	Phone	Email
HEMBC	Disaster Psychosocial Services Duty Officer	250-686-6061	hlth.dutyofficer@gov.bc.ca

Additional contact information for HEMBC is available in the [City of Merritt Emergency Program Contact List](#).

7.6 DISTRICT OF LOGAN LAKE ESS

MNVESSE works closely with the District of Logan Lake’s ESS team.

📞 Key Contacts

OMITTED IN PUBLIC VERSION OF PLAN.

Additional contact information for nearby ESS teams is available in the [City of Merritt Emergency Program Contact List](#).

7.7 FIRST NATIONS HEALTH AUTHORITY (FNHA)

The [First Nations Health Authority \(FNHA\)](#) provides a wide range of health supports for Indigenous persons and helps promote cultural safety and humility at ESS facilities.

📞 Key Contacts

Organization	Contact	Phone	Email
FNHA	Health Emergency Management	604-456-7669	hem@fnha.ca

Additional contact information for FNHA is available in the [City of Merritt Emergency Program Contact List](#).

7.8 INSURANCE BUREAU OF CANADA (IBC)

The [Insurance Bureau of Canada \(IBC\)](#) can deploy its [Community Assistance Mobile Pavilion \(CAMP\)](#) to areas affected by an emergency in order to answer questions about insurance coverage.

📞 Key Contacts

OMITTED IN PUBLIC VERSION OF PLAN.

Additional contact information for IBC is available in the [City of Merritt Emergency Program Contact List](#).

7.9 SALVATION ARMY

The Salvation Army's Emergency Disaster Services (EDS) may provide food, emotional and spiritual care, and hygienic supplies after an emergency has taken place.

📞 Key Contacts

OMITTED IN PUBLIC VERSION OF PLAN.

Additional contact information for the Salvation Army is available in the [City of Merritt Emergency Program Contact List](#).

7.10 SERVICE BC

Service BC can send employees to reception centres or deploy its Mobile Service Centre van to areas affected by an emergency in order to register people for the BC Services Card mobile app replace lost provincial identification.

Service BC support to a reception may be requested by sending a resource request through the City of Merritt EOC to Central PREOC at preoc3.ops1@gov.bc.ca.

📞 Key Contacts

Organization	Contact	Phone	Email
Service BC	Merritt Office	250-378-9343	servicebc.merritt@gov.bc.ca

Additional contact information for Service BC is available in the [City of Merritt Emergency Program Contact List](#).

7.11 TOWN OF PRINCETON ESS

MNVES works closely with the Town of Princeton's ESS team.

📞 Key Contacts

OMITTED IN PUBLIC VERSION OF PLAN.

Additional contact information for nearby ESS teams is available in the [City of Merritt Emergency Program Contact List](#).

7.12 UNITED WAY BC (UWBC)

The [United Way BC \(UWBC\)](#) works with many charitable organizations that may be able to provide various supports to ESS.

Key Contacts

OMITTED IN PUBLIC VERSION OF PLAN.

Additional contact information for UWBC is available in the [City of Merritt Emergency Program Contact List](#).

LEXICON

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

The [City of Merritt Emergency Program Glossary](#) contains terms and definitions.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAR – After-Action Review

BCEMS – BC Emergency Management System

CAMP – Community Assistance Mobile Pavilion

CDART – Canadian Disaster Animal Response Team

CRC – Canadian Red Cross

CRRP – Criminal Records Review Program

DPS – Disaster Psychosocial Support

EAF – Expenditure Authorization Form

ECC – Emergency Coordination Centre

EDMA – Emergency and Disaster Management Act

EDS – Emergency Disaster Services

EMCR – BC Ministry of Emergency Management and Climate Readiness

EOC – Emergency Operations Centre

EPC – Emergency Program Coordinator

ERA – Evacuee Registration and Assistance

ESS – Emergency Support Services

ESSD – Emergency Support Services Director

ESSDD – Emergency Support Services Deputy Director

FNHA – First Nations Health Authority

HEMBC – Health Emergency Management BC

HRVA – Hazard, Risk, and Vulnerability Analysis

IBC – Insurance Bureau of Canada

ICS – Incident Command System

JIBC – Justice Institute of British Columbia

MHPSS – Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

MNVESS – Merritt and Nicola Valley Emergency Support Services

NESST – Network of Emergency Support Services Teams

PDA – Personal Disaster Assistance

PHSA – Provincial Health Services Authority

PREOC – Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centre

PSL – Public Safety Lifeline

PSLV – Public Safety Lifeline Volunteer

RCMP – Royal Canadian Mounted Police

RR – Resource Request

RESST – Roving ESS Team

UWBC – United Way BC

