



**The South Carolina
State Board of Financial Institutions
Banking Division**

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Richards H. Green
Commissioner of Banking

**Emergency and Disaster Preparation Information for South Carolina State-Chartered
Institutions**

Each state-chartered institution should have an emergency preparedness plan in place that documents how the institution will respond to various scenarios in the event of a disaster or emergency. The plan should be tested regularly and updated as needed.

Branch Closures

If you find it necessary to close a branch or office in preparation for an impending emergency, you should post notices in the branch for your customers. You should also notify the Office of the Commissioner of Banking by sending an email to alerts@banking.sc.gov. In your email, please include the address of the location affected and the closing time.

If you need to close a branch temporarily in order to complete repairs, or if some of your facilities cannot open because they lack essential services such as electricity, telephone, or security, you should also notify the Office of the Commissioner of Banking by emailing alerts@banking.sc.gov. In your email, please include the following information for each closed branch:

- Address of branch
- Description of the situation
- Estimated time when the branch will reopen

An email should also be sent to alerts@banking.sc.gov once the branch is re-opened.

Declarations Issued by the Governor

If the Governor proclaims that an emergency exists in a particular area of the state and designates specific days for the general cessation of business in that area, then all of your branches located within that area must remain closed for the designated days or until the declaration of emergency has been lifted by the Governor.

If the Governor authorizes, but does not mandate that your institution close, your institution may decide whether to close or remain open, depending on the specific conditions impacting your institution and taking into consideration the safety of staff and customers.

If an emergency exists, but it is not practical to obtain a proclamation from the Governor before closing a branch(es), your institution may close the branch(es) as necessary to protect property, staff, and customers. The Office of the Commissioner of Banking should be notified as soon as

possible by emailing alerts@banking.sc.gov. In your email, please include the following information for each closed branch:

- Address of branch
- Description of the situation
- Estimated time when the branch will reopen

Temporary Locations

If your institution suffers loss of a branch(es) following a storm or disaster, it is not necessary to seek prior approval to establish temporary locations from the Office of the Commissioner of Banking. However, an after-the-fact notice should be provided within 24 hours of the establishment of a temporary facility. The notice can be emailed to alerts@banking.sc.gov. The temporary facility must have sufficient security measures in place to conduct financial transactions.

Priority Communication Services

Institutions may consider enrolling in the Government Emergency Telecommunication Service (GETS), Wireless Priority Services (WPS) and Telecommunications Service Priority (TSP) offered by the Department of Homeland Security. GETS and WPS may be used to enable calls to be placed immediately following a disaster and TSP ensures priority treatment for vital voice and data circuit or other telecommunications services. More information regarding these services can be found at <https://www.dhs.gov/cisa/emergency-communications-division-priority-telecommunications-services>.

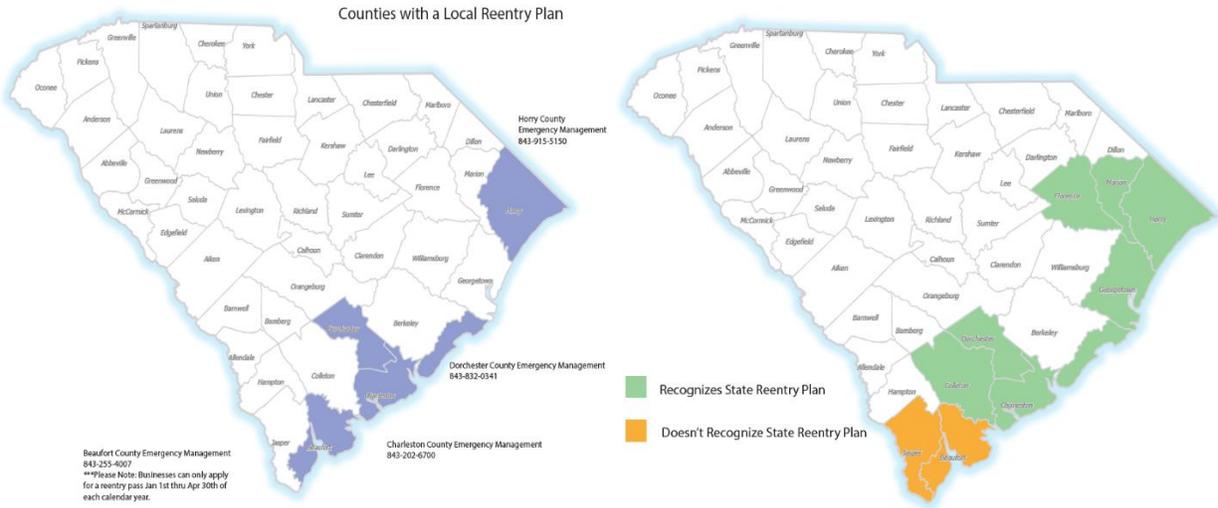
Emergency Communication System (ECS)

The Office of the Commissioner of Banking may use multiple tools to communicate with institutions in the event of an emergency. One of those tools is ECS. ECS is a communication channel established by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, which partners with the Office of the Commissioner of Banking. This system is available to all South Carolina state-chartered institutions and allows the Office of the Commissioner of Banking to quickly and simultaneously establish two-way communication channels with all registered South Carolina state-chartered financial institutions during a crisis so that essential information can be easily shared. We urge all South Carolina state-chartered institutions to visit <https://bsr.stlouisfed.org/ecs> to register and maintain updated contact information for this valuable free service.

Re-Entry Credentials

Multiple key institution personnel (i.e. branch managers, information technology specialists, and executive management) should [apply for re-entry credentials](#) at both the State level and in the counties where the institution operates (<https://www.scemd.org/who-we-are/county-emergency-managers/>), depending on whether those counties have separate re-entry plans. Below are maps reflecting coastal counties that have local re-entry plans and counties that do not recognize the State-level reentry credentials. These credentials must be obtained prior to an emergency event. Note that deadlines to apply for re-entry credentials vary across counties. Please let this office know if you have difficulties obtaining re-entry credentials. If your institution operates branches

outside of South Carolina, you will need to contact each respective state’s Emergency Management Division to obtain information regarding re-entry credentials.



South Carolina Emergency Management Division Listserv

Institutions are encouraged to have key personnel register for the South Carolina Emergency Management Division’s Emergency Support Function – Business and Industry (ESF 24) listserv hosted by the South Carolina Department of Commerce. Important updates for local businesses and industries are provided via the listserv related to different types of events. To sign up, the following information for each key personnel should be sent to esf24@emd.sc.gov:

- Name
- Institution’s Name
- Email address
- Phone number (not required)

Emergency Preparedness Considerations

Below is a listing of other actions that institutions should consider as part of their emergency preparedness:

- Develop a plan to ensure your institution is able to maintain adequate cash during an emergency event.
- Institutions that operate along evacuation routes should consider increasing cash supplies, particularly in ATMs, prior to an emergency event.
- Review cash transportation agreements. Institutions may consider entering into multiple cash transportation agreements in the event that their normal carrier is unable to deliver during an emergency event.

- Institutions may consider developing shared service plans with other institutions in communities in which they operate to enable the sharing of facilities and/or currency.
- Institutions should review their vendors' business continuity plans and verify that vendors are testing their plans.

Post Emergency Considerations

The Office of the Commissioner of Banking encourages institutions to take prudent steps to meet the financial needs of the communities in which your institution operates in the aftermath of a disaster or other event. Examiners will not criticize reasonable responses to assist customers as long as the actions are taken in a manner consistent with sound banking practices.