



**UTAH EMPG
SUMMIT 24**

EMPG and the National Qualification System (NQS):

*An independent venture, a guided exploration, or an adoption of statewide standards.
The choice is entirely yours.*

**Utah EMPG Summit 24
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FEMA recommends minimum qualifications, but it is **authorities having jurisdiction (AHJs)** across the Nation that **establish, communicate, and administer the qualification and credentialing process** for individuals seeking qualification for positions under that AHJ's purview. AHJs have the authority and responsibility to **develop, implement, maintain, and oversee the qualification, certification, and credentialing process** within their organization or jurisdiction.

Who is the AHJ? Great question. For each jurisdiction in Utah that question may be answered differently. This is a question that your city council, county commissioners and their legal representatives should be able to answer for your jurisdiction. For now, let's act under the assumption that if you are representing a college or university, your college or university is the AHJ for your campus (note, it may actually be your city, but you will know this better for your campus, if you represent a city, your city is the AHJ for your city. If you represent a county, your county is the AHJ for your county. For the state of Utah, anyone acting on behalf of the state as an agent of the state, your AHJ is the state. An AHJ only has jurisdiction to the point that their jurisdiction boundaries end.

Local, state, and tribal authorities frequently provide assistance to, or receive assistance from, neighboring jurisdictions under [mutual aid](#) and assistance arrangements. Therefore, mutually understood and accepted credentialing protocols are essential across jurisdictional boundaries.

What is NQS? National Qualification System (NQS), is a qualification and certification system, which defines a process for certifying the qualifications of incident workforce personnel, describes how to stand up and implement a peer review process, and provides an introduction to the process of credentialing personnel. See more here: <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/nims/components/nqs-supplemental-documents>

Why do I need to care about NQS? As a subrecipient of EMPG funds, all jurisdictions shall work toward implementation of NQS by developing an Implementation Plan in 2024-25 (**this document will serve that purpose, if completed**). To be clear, jurisdictions have the responsibility to implement NQS, not just the emergency manager. This should be a collaborative effort between disciplines and agencies.

What will be required of our jurisdiction for the EMPG 2024-2025 grant year, if we choose to continue to participate in EMPG? All jurisdictions shall have designed and approved organizational qualification system procedures, certification program and credentialing standards for incident workforce personnel in alignment with the NIMS Guideline for the National Qualification System. This can be by adopting the process that the state has in place OR by creating your own process at the AHJ level. All jurisdictions partially satisfy the requirement by ensuring incident workforce personnel, which they designate, meet the minimum training requirements from the Job Title/Position Qualification. Jurisdictions shall use a resource management or qualification tool system to track the qualification, certification and credentialing of incident workforce personnel.

NQS qualification is the process of:

- Enabling personnel to perform the duties of specific incident-related positions and meet any other prerequisites established for the positions; and
- Documenting the fact that individuals have demonstrated the capabilities and competencies required for those positions.

Local NQS Implementation Plan

(You may use this instead if your jurisdiction has already started with this process - [FEMA Implementation template](#))

Use this template for conducting a Mutual Aid Workshop with your EOC personnel and/or senior leaders in your jurisdiction.

Jurisdiction: _____

Identify who in our jurisdiction could be considered “incident workforce personnel”

City/County personnel

- Airport Operations
- Animal Services
- Fleet services/mechanics
- Facilities/Building/Development personnel
- Emergency Manager
- Emergency Medical Services
- Environmental/Parks/Recreation
- Financial Services/Treasurer/Recorder
- Fire Fighters
- Law Enforcement/Sheriff
- Legal
- Light and Power
- Information Technology/Data Systems/GIS
- Human Resources
- Library/Archive/Museum Services
- Public Works Office Staff
- Public Works Field Staff
- Road Department
- Volunteer Coordinators
- Victim Services
- Search and Rescue
- HAZMAT
- Other _____
- Other _____
- Other _____
- Other _____

College and University personnel

- Accessibility Services
- Accounting
- Agricultural Science
- Audio/Video Services
- Aviation Maintenance
- Behavioral Sciences
- Health/Public Service
- Engineering/Technology
- Communication
- Community Outreach and Economic Development
- Construction Management
- Law Enforcement
- Culinary Arts
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
- Digital Media
- Emergency Management
- Environmental Management
- Facilities/Planning
- Fire Marshal
- IT Security
- Library/Museum
- Language Services
- Social Work
- Volunteer Coordinators
- Other _____
- Other _____
- Other _____
- Other _____

Next step, list out any champions or stakeholders that you will engage from your jurisdiction:

Next, identify credentials and training needed for each discipline

In speaking with the personnel selected above, discuss with them the credentials and training they have in order to feel comfortable deploying within this jurisdiction and to other jurisdictions (whether through their own discipline to discipline mutual aid agreements or through emergency management agreements). There may already be set requirements in place. If so, document these requirements.

If they've never thought of deploying through any mutual aid, but are interested, work with them to identify the process for their specific discipline. There may be associations that formalize their discipline to discipline mutual aid agreements or they may need to lean on EMAC.

Identify where to start:

Other considerations:

What mutual aid agreements do we currently have for providing assistance **to other jurisdictions**? Who maintains these agreements?

What mutual aid agreements do we have with other jurisdictions for providing aid **to our jurisdiction**? Who maintains these agreements?

Next, document capabilities and competencies for those professional roles.

This isn't a job you should be doing alone. This is a job that leaders in each of these professional roles should be doing for your jurisdiction. Some questions to ask them:

- If we needed additional support in the EOC or in the field on an incident, and we wanted individuals with competencies in your discipline, what competencies would you be looking for?

- What capabilities would these individuals need?

- What equipment will we need more of in our jurisdiction?

Document how capabilities and competencies for those professional roles must be documented for each personnel deploying from your jurisdiction or to your jurisdiction.

Who will verify credentials? What credentials will your personnel have? Who will be responsible for maintaining these records?

Finally, formalize these processes. As an AHJ, your legal responsibility to your constituents is to maintain records of your processes and utilize these processes in real world incidents. As was mentioned before, this is not an assignment the emergency manager can or should do alone, but you can be the catalyst that drives the implementation of this effort. This should be a collaborative effort with stakeholders throughout a jurisdiction between emergency management and any deployable disciplines and agencies.

A final note on “deployability.”

The emergency manager must be designated as a deployable resource for the jurisdiction. This means that in an emergency within the jurisdiction, the emergency manager is available to serve in the role of emergency manager within and for the jurisdiction for the duration of the incident. (Back up support personnel may fill in for the emergency manager so they are not deployed for excessive or inappropriate lengths of time)

Deployable does not mean the emergency manager is required to mobilize and deploy in support of other jurisdictions.

Deployable: Able to be moved to a place where they can be used when they are needed; to organize or arrange in a position of readiness, or to move strategically or appropriately

All other incident workforce personnel are determined and designated by the jurisdiction as “deployable.” Ask your jurisdiction, “Who do we expect to respond when incidents occur in our jurisdiction? These are our “deployable” incident workforce personnel.”

Being deployable is akin to being “ready.”

Take some time to consider what prerequisite training, skills, capabilities and competencies make you deployable or “ready” for response.



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