



MEDIA RELEASE

Department of Public Safety

Ohio Department of Public Safety • John Born, Director
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THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY ANNOUNCES LAUNCH OF NEW EMERGENCY CREDENTIALING SYSTEM

(COLUMBUS) – For the first time in Ohio, a secure credentialing system will soon be available at no cost for Ohio Public Private Partnership (OP3) organizations to utilize while assisting communities in the wake of an emergency.

Beginning January 1, 2016, the Ohio Department of Public Safety's (ODPS) division of Homeland Security (OHS) will begin issuing emergency personnel credentials through the Emergency Partner Credentialing System (EPCS). EPCS credential holders are vetted through OHS to aid private-sector organizations with appropriate access to emergency areas to deliver critically needed stockpile supplies, resources and medication.

OHS will also partner with all Ohio county sheriffs so that these credentials will be available to assist essential personnel during winter weather emergencies in reporting for vital job functions in select critical infrastructure sectors.

"I am pleased that this nationally-unique system gives our private-sector partners the empowerment to do what they do best when emergencies hit Ohio communities," said ODPS Director John Born. "It is also reassuring that emergency responders can be confident that these pre-screened credentials can be verified by local on-scene authorities."

Two types of credentials will be authorized through EPCS:

- **Multi-Emergency Credentials** allow an employee access to regular statewide emergency relief initiatives.
- **Emergency-Specific Credentials** allow personnel access to a specific disastrous or emergency event, and will not carry over into disaster relief for other catastrophic events.

Both credential types can be presented to authorities on personal electronic devices or in hard copy format and are able to be authenticated through the Law Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS).

EPCS does not supersede the authority of local officials to restrict access to areas affected by an emergency that are unsafe or have not yet stabilized. Local authorities reserve the right to deny access to any individual to a restricted area, with or without EPCS credentials.

OP3 encourages open sharing of information vital to assist members in returning to normal operations after a catastrophe by: building on collaborative skills, knowledge and abilities of private partners; leveraging existing supply chains to ease the effects of emergencies; sharing critical information with the membership; and providing situational awareness of imminent threats. Currently, there are more than 235 OP3 members.

Media Contact:
Dustyn Fox, Public Information Officer
(614) 466-3640

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