



**For Immediate Release**

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**San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors Establish  
Office of Emergency Services as a Stand Alone Department  
*Supervisors also approve continued local emergency proclamation due to high water levels***

**Stockton, CA** – Yesterday, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors received updates and approved several items including the following:

By a unanimous vote, the Board approved an item to establish the San Joaquin County Office of Emergency Services (OES) as a stand-alone department, removing it from the General Services Division of the County Administrator's Office effective July 3, 2023.

Currently staffed by 10 full-time positions under the Department of General Services, OES is responsible for coordinating with County departments, local cities, and special districts to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. In April of 2011, as part of the organizational changes resulting from downsizing after the Great Recession, the Board of Supervisors consolidated OES as an operational section of General Services, a division of the County Administrators Office. As part of that consolidation, the OES department head position of Director of Emergency Services, was reassigned to senior management and operated under the direction of the Director of General Services.

At the March 28, 2023 meeting, the Board of Supervisors directed staff to facilitate the transition of OES back to a stand-alone department reporting directly to the Board rather than the County Administrator. The Chair of the Board of Supervisors will serve as the Director of Emergency Services and the new Office of Emergency Services Department head will be reclassified as Director of Emergency Operations.

"This action shows our commitment as a Board to how important our emergency system is in protecting the people, businesses and infrastructure in San Joaquin County. We have major interstate highways, air service, a deep water port, transcontinental rail, and commuter trains which need concentrated attention in an emergency such as flood, fire, drought or other catastrophes that impact public safety. This new office will go a long way in saving lives and protecting our residents," said Supervisor Robert Rickman, Chair of the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors.

In addition, the Board also approved continuing the local emergency proclaimed in March 2023 regarding the ongoing extreme atmospheric rivers and increased releases of reservoir water leading to flooding and other impacts that have continued since December 28, 2022. The Emergency Operations Center activation continues at low level and duty officer status until such time conditions warrant re-activation or the incident is terminated.

The proclamation was extended due to higher-than-normal water levels in the Mokelumne, Calaveras, and San Joaquin Rivers, as well as the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta—all of which could continue to rise with the historic snowpack melt. Reservoir releases continue to cause river levels to fluctuate, resulting in the continued monitoring and the extension of repair work to protect the levee systems in the County.

“As water remains high, many areas have not receded enough to observe all damages. Based on weekly assessments, reservoir operators continue to monitor releases to make room as the historic snowpack starts to melt. San Joaquin County continues to monitor and respond to community requests for information, coordinate local government resource needs, and provide situational awareness,” Supervisor Rickman concluded.

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