

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-1608**  
**FEBRUARY 11, 2022**

**Operations and Services**  
**NWS Performance and Evaluation, NWSPD 10-16**

**STATION DUTY MANUAL**

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**NOTICE:** This publication is available at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/>.

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**SUMMARY OF REVISIONS:** This directive supersedes National Weather Service Instruction 10-1608, “*Station Duty Manual*,” dated December 12, 2017.

The following changes were made:

1. Entire instruction was edited and rewritten for clarity, format corrections, internal consistency, program updates, technology updates, and legal correctness.
2. Added Impact-Based Decision Support Services (IDSS) to the list of services provided, mission connection, and SDM content.
3. Section 1 (Introduction and Description): Added to provide background for the chapter.
4. Section 2 (Mission Connection): Added to provide background on need for Station Duty Manuals.
5. Section 3.3 (Content of the Station Duty Manual): Clarified bullet “g” to detail backup procedures necessary for operational backup.
6. Section 3.3 (Content of the Station Duty Manual): Added bullet “i” to add procedures necessary for providing services through community-based organizations and to Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs).

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Director, Operations Division

Date

**Station Duty Manual**

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**1 Introduction and Description**

The National Weather Service (NWS) uses a variety of methods to ensure competent service delivery and performance – both routinely and during hazardous weather events, including Impact-Based Decision Services (IDSS). This procedural directive provides general guidance for the content, organization, preparation, and maintenance of the Station Duty Manual (SDM).

**2 Mission Connection**

The SDMs, along with Service Assessments, reviews, verification, and office evaluations, help determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the NWS’ delivery of information and services, including IDSS, to partners and the public. The offices’ standard operating procedures are constructed to promote consistent and effective products, services, and evaluation. Routine updates to the SDM ensure that NWS offices are operating using the latest science, training, and technology.

**3 Format and Procedures**

**3.1 General**

The SDM is a set of local office instructions for documenting and describing how operations, emergency procedures, managerial and administrative matters (e.g., assigned office programs), are to be accomplished. The SDM should be an easy-to-read general reference source with cross references to detailed instructions where appropriate. There will be an indication of when a change is made to the pages of the SDM (e.g., Google site keeping archives of past changes; manual date change entries on each page). Each NWS office will maintain an up-to-date SDM.

### **3.2 Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of each Meteorologist in Charge (MIC), Hydrologist in Charge (HIC), Director, or Office Manager to ensure the SDM is complete and current and that all bargaining obligations have been completed prior to making any changes that are beyond de minimis. Changes to the SDM are to be made only by the MIC, HIC, Director, or Office Manager, unless the duty is assigned to or his or /her designee.

### **3.3 Content of the Station Duty Manual**

The SDM varies in content because of the size, scope, and number of individual station programs. Only those programs, functions, and items pertinent to the particular office should be contained in their SDM. Specialized units, including the National Centers, Tsunami Warning Centers, Data Collection Offices, and Regional Operation Centers, will use the basic guidelines and tailor the SDM to fit their operations.

The content and organization should be simple and minimized so new employees can quickly familiarize themselves with office processes and procedures. Standardization will allow for rapid familiarization of office procedures by new employees and minimize the time necessary to locate seldom-used procedures during high-impact events. The SDM will have the following attributes:

- a. Be maintained using collaborative software (e.g., Google Site) or an office intranet. The SDM will be posted in the secure Google Cloud Platform so that backup offices have immediate access to office instructions and procedures. The Google Cloud will also keep archived copies of the SDM. Offices will also maintain previous SDM versions in a safe and readily accessible location where it would not be affected by a catastrophic communications or electronic systems failure. This ensures documentation is on hand to maintain Continuity of Operations capabilities and to protect the legal and financial rights of the Federal Government and of persons directly affected by NWS activities.
- b. Provide instructions, guidance, or references for actions to take for weather and non-weather related emergencies (e.g., Occupant Emergency Plan, Continuity of Operations plan).
- c. Provide instructions or references for actions to take in the event of power, communications, and systems failures, including references for backup sources and procedures.
- d. Document office programs (e.g., program operations, instructions) and operations (e.g., hours of operation, shift hours, shift duties) or provide reference to where documentation resides.
- e. Provide guidance to assure adequate staffing during significant hydrometeorological events and IDSS. Offices will post guidance such as Severe, Tropical, or Winter Weather Operations Plans, etc., and/or other instructions for IDSS events.
- f. Provide instructions, guidance, and references for administrative actions pertinent to routine office operations (e.g., designation of timekeepers, handling of administrative matters in the absence of the MIC, HIC, Director, or Office Manager).

- g. Provide instructions and/or references for procedures necessary for operational back-up services.
- h. Provide instructions and/or references for the criteria and procedures for locally issuing warnings, watches, and weather statements along with other non-routine operational products.
- i. Provide instructions and/or reference for the criteria and procedures for providing services through community-based organizations, tribal leadership, Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), and Points of Influence.

### **3.4 Reference to National Instructions and System Operating Instructions**

The SDM should not be a redundant elaboration of national or regional instructions. While the SDM may cite pertinent portions of national instructions and system manuals, in most cases it is appropriate to direct the reader to the specific chapter, section, and paragraphs of the reference document(s) for the detailed instructions.

### **3.5 Program/System Ready Reference Notebooks**

Locally-developed ready reference notebooks or web pages for individual forecast and service programs or systems operations are not required as part of the SDM. These materials are optional and can be included with the approval of the MIC, HIC, Director, Office Manager, or designee. If local program reference notebooks, system-ready reference notebooks, and/or web pages are maintained, the SDM will contain a cross-reference to these stating their location and the responsible person(s)/position(s).

### **3.6 Organization of the SDM**

Appendices A and B provide a recommended structure to the SDM, which separates the Manual into two parts/volumes.

### **3.7 Changes to the SDM**

Necessary changes to the SDM should be brought to the attention of the MIC, HIC, Office Manager, or his/her designee for corrective action. Changes will not be made without the authorization of the MIC, HIC, or Office Manager. The staff should be notified whenever a change is made. When a page/section is superseded and removed, the date of removal is recorded and copies of the superseded pages are retained for a period of five (5) years. Google cloud services will facilitate these archives.

### **3.8 New Instructions or Information**

New instructions or information received by the station should be incorporated into the appropriate sections of the SDM. The staff should be kept fully informed of all SDM changes. This notification may be accomplished by providing the new instructions in a hard copy or electronic format. The MIC, HIC, Director, or Office Manager, or his/her designee, will keep a record documenting all personnel have received, reviewed, and understand the new instructions

or information. The documentation is archived, for a minimum of five (5) years, and maintained as part of the official SDM review record.

### **3.9 Review of the SDM**

At a minimum, all station personnel will review the SDM annually. To confirm completion of the annual review, offices should maintain a review record containing the dates of review and name or initials of each staff member. The review record should be archived and maintained as part of the official SDM. In addition, new staff members should review the SDM within one (1) month after reporting on station. The SDM will be reviewed for adequacy and currency on station during visits by regional headquarters staff.

**APPENDIX A**  
**STATION DUTY MANUAL**  
<Station Name>  
<Date>

Volume I - EMERGENCY OPERATIONS, WATCHES, WARNINGS, AND WEATHER STATEMENTS

Part 1 General SDM Organization and Maintenance

Section 1.1 Table of Contents Volume I and Volume II  
Section 1.2 Review Record

Part 2 Non-routine or Emergency Operations

Section 2.1 Aircraft Accidents  
Section 2.2 Oil/Hazardous Substance Spill  
Section 2.3 Impact-Based Decision Support Services (IDSS) Procedures  
Section 2.4 ....

Part 3 Operational Emergency Procedures

Section 3.1 Power and/or Equipment Failures  
Section 3.2 Communications Failures  
Section 3.3 Backup Operations/Procedures  
Section 3.4 ...

Part 4 Non-operational Emergencies

Section 4.1 Occupant Emergency Plan  
Section 4.2 Continuity of Operations plan  
Section 4.3 ...

Part 5 Watches, Warnings, and Weather Statements

Section 5.1 Severe Weather—Thunderstorm/Tornado Warnings, Watches, and Statements  
Section 5.2 Flash Flood Warnings, Watches, and Statements  
Section 5.3 Special Weather Statements  
Section 5.4 ...

Part 6 ... (Local Option)

**STATION DUTY MANUAL**

<Station Name>

<Date>

VOLUME II - ROUTINE OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

Part 1 Office Programs

Section 1.1 Public Forecasts

Section 1.2 ...

Section 1.3 ...

Part 2 Office Operations

Section 2.1 Hours of Operation

Section 2.2 Shift Duties

Section 2.3 ...

Part 3 Local Office Instructions and Area Instructions

Section 3.1 ...E-mail/Internet Policy

Section 3.2 ...

Section 3.3 ...

Part 4 Administration

Section 4.1 ...IT Security

Section 4.2 ...

Section 4.3 ...

Part 5 Special Personnel Assignments

Section 5.1 ...

Section 5.2 ...

Part 6 ... (Local Option) ...

**APPENDIX B**

**STATION DUTY MANUAL [River Forecast Center, National Water Center]**

<Station Name>

<Date>

Volume I - EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

Part 1 General SDM Organization and Maintenance

Section 1.1 Table of Contents Volume I and Volume II

Section 1.2 Review Record

Part 2 Non-routine or Emergency Operations

Section 2.1 Guidelines for changing hours of operations

Section 2.2 Issuance criteria for non-routine products

Section 2.3 ....

Part 3 Operational Emergency Procedures

Section 3.1 Power and/or Equipment Failures

Section 3.2 Communications Failures

Section 3.3 Backup Operations/Procedures

Section 3.4 ...

Part 4 Non-operational Emergencies

Section 4.1 Fire or Building Damage

Section 4.2 Personnel Injury or Illness

Section 4.3 ...

Part 5 ... (Local Option) ...

VOLUME II - ROUTINE OPERATIONS AND ADMINISTRATION

Part 1 Office Programs

- Section 1.1 ...
- Section 1.2 ...
- Section 1.3 ...

Part 2 Office Operations

- Section 2.1 Hours of Operation
- Section 2.2 Shift Duties
- Section 2.3 ....

Part 3 Local Office Instructions and Area Instructions

- Section 3.1 ...
- Section 3.2 ...
- Section 3.3 ...

Part 4 Administration

- Section 4.1 ...
- Section 4.2 ...
- Section 4.3 ...

Part 5 Special Personnel Assignments

- Section 5.1 ...
- Section 5.2 ...

Part 6 ... (Local Option) ...