How to sign up for the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) by

A federal, state, local, tribal or territorial alerting authority that applies for authorization to use the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) is designated as a Collaborative Operating Group or "COG." There are currently numerous types of COGs affiliated with IPAWS varying in size, structure and governance styles. A COG may have members from multiple jurisdictions with each individual member account administered through its software system.

How does my organization apply?

Step #1 – Complete IPAWS Web-Based Training FEMA's Emergency Management Institute (EMI) offers the independent study course, IS-247 Integrated Public Alert and Warning System for Alert Originators.

The goal of the course is to provide authorized public safety officials with:
- Increased awareness of the benefits of using IPAWS for effective alerts and warnings
- Improved skills to draft more appropriate, effective, and accessible alert and warning messages
- Increased understanding of the importance of training, testing and exercising with IPAWS
- Best practices in the effective use of IPAWS to reach members of the public
- Once training is completed, submit the IS-247 training certificates to IPAWS.

Additionally, EMI offers the optional course, IS-251 Integrated Public Alert and Warning System for Alerting Administrators. The goal of the course is to provide authorized alerting administrators guidance with:
- Developing effective policies, plans and procedures
- Defining the approval process
- Defining the importance of training, practice and exercising with IPAWS
- Illustrating best practices and effective use of IPAWS to reach members of the public

Step #2 – Select IPAWS compatible software Access to IPAWS is free. To send a message using IPAWS, however, an organization must procure its own IPAWS-compatible software. Software should be successfully tested in the IPAWS Open Platform for Emergency Networks (IPAWS-OPEN) test environment and should meet the critical capabilities recommended by FEMA. Consult with your software developer to ensure your system is IPAWS-OPEN compatible and provides the capabilities that your organization requires.

Step #3 – Apply for a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with FEMA - To become a COG, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) must be executed between the sponsoring organization and FEMA.

The MOA governs interoperability and security across emergency response organizations and systems. Each MOA is tailored to the sponsoring organization and their interoperable software system.

To apply for IPAWS access, please [send an email](), with the subject line "COG Application." We will then provide you with an application form and instructions to begin the process. Once the complete MOA Application has been received by IPAWS, the Customer Support Branch will prepare the MOA for signature and return it to the sponsoring organization with a COG Identification (ID) number.

Step #4 – Apply for public alerting permissions – Alerting authorities that intend to send alerts to the public through IPAWS must complete an application defining the types of alerts they intend to issue and the extent of their geographic warning area. The application for IPAWS public alerting authority will be provided when you apply for a COG MOA, along with contact information for a designated state reviewer. In order to ensure consistency with state, tribal and territorial public alerting plans, the application must be reviewed and signed by a designated state official or tribal leadership before it is submitted to FEMA.

What to Expect
A copy of the executed MOA will be returned to the sponsoring organization along with a digital certificate that is needed to configure the IPAWS compatible software system. By completing steps one through three, the organization will have the capability to exchange messages and content between COGs, but is not yet able to alert the public via IPAWS.

Once the public alerting application is received, specific alerting permissions will be implemented in IPAWS-OPEN. At that point the individual members, specified by the COG, will be able to send public alerts and warnings in their geographically prescribed areas.

Initial functionality includes the ability to access and send alerts through:
- [Emergency Alert System (EAS)]()
- [Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)](), depending on local implementation by commercial mobile service providers
- [NOAA Weather Radio]()
- [Internet-Based Services and Unique Systems]()

For more information, please visit: [https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/integrated-public-alert-warning-system/public-safety-officials/sign-up#]()