



STATE OF FLORIDA

# DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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Ron DeSantis  
Governor

Kevin Guthrie  
Director

3/13/2024

Polk County, Florida  
ATTN: Paul Womble  
1890 Jim Keene Blvd  
Winter Haven, FL 33880

**RE: Letter of Acknowledgement – Emergency Operations Center Grant Program  
Polk County**

To whom it may concern:

With regard to the Community Project Funding request submitted by Polk County to receive funding to add 5,000 square feet of office and support space to the existing Emergency Operations Center (EOC) building via the U.S. Department of Homeland Security FY 2024 Emergency Operations Center Grant Program, the State of Florida Division of Emergency Management acknowledges this request and will execute as necessary.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin Guthrie".

**Kevin Guthrie**  
**Division Director**  
Florida Division of Emergency Management  
2555 Shumard Oak Blvd.  
Tallahassee, FL 32399



# *Sheriff Grady Judd*

## *Polk County*

1891 Jim Keene Blvd. • Winter Haven, FL 33880-8010 • Phone: 863.298.6200 • [www.polksheriff.org](http://www.polksheriff.org)

February 15, 2024

**Re: Support for the Expansion of the Emergency Operations Center in Polk County**

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this letter of support for the expansion of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Polk County, Florida. This initiative is crucial for enhancing our capacity to respond to emergencies and disasters across our county's vast 2,000 square miles, which include both incorporated and unincorporated areas.

Under my leadership, the Polk County Sheriff's Office has always prioritized innovative solutions and collaborative efforts to improve public safety and emergency response. The proposed expansion of the EOC, which was originally established in 2008, is a testament to our commitment to adapt to the growing needs and challenges of our community, particularly in the face of increasing natural and man-made emergencies.

The allocation of \$2.5 million for an additional 5,000 square feet of office and support space represents a significant step forward in building a more resilient and safe community. This expansion will enable enhanced coordination and collaboration not only among the fire departments throughout Polk County, including Polk County Fire Rescue, Auburndale, Lakeland, Winter Haven, Davenport, Bartow, Dundee, Haines City, and others but also with the Polk County Sheriff's Office.

I urge our federal, state, and local partners to recognize the importance of this project and provide their full support. By investing in the EOC's expansion, we are reinforcing our collective commitment to the safety, preparedness, and well-being of Polk County's residents. If awarded, the Polk County Sheriff's Office will not act as a sub recipient of the funds, or accept any funds directly or indirectly dispersed from this grant.

Thank you for considering our call to action on this critical project. Together, we can make a substantial difference in the lives of those we serve.

Sincerely,



Grady Judd  
Sheriff



## **Polk County Fire Chief's Association**

**PO Box 2277, Winter Haven, FL 33883-2277**

Subject: Support for the Expansion of the Emergency Operations Center in Polk County, Florida

We, the Polk County Fire Chiefs Association, representing fire departments across Polk County, including Polk County Fire Rescue, Auburndale, Lakeland, Winter Haven, Davenport, Bartow, Dundee, Haines City, and beyond, express our strong support for the proposed expansion of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Polk County, Florida.

Given Polk County's vast expanse of 2,000 square miles, serving both incorporated and unincorporated areas, and the EOC's annual activations at various levels, the need for an upgraded facility is clear and pressing. The current EOC, built/established in 2008, no longer meets the demands of our rapidly growing and changing community, particularly in the face of increased natural disasters and man-made emergencies.

The requested \$2.5 million for an additional 5,000 square feet of office and support space is a critical investment in our community's safety and resilience. This expansion will significantly enhance our collaborative efforts across multiple agencies, ensuring swift, coordinated responses during emergencies, thus safeguarding all residents of Polk County.

We urge federal, state, and local partners to recognize the vital importance of this project and to provide the necessary support. This initiative is not merely an infrastructure enhancement; it is a commitment to the safety, preparedness, and well-being of our community.

Thank you for considering our support for this indispensable project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sonny Emery". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sonny" and the last name "Emery" clearly distinguishable.

Sonny Emery, Fire Chief

President, Polk County Fire Chiefs Association

[jemery@mywinterhaven.com](mailto:jemery@mywinterhaven.com)