

The Great Seal of the State of Montana is a circular emblem. It features a landscape with a sun rising over mountains, a waterfall, and a river. In the foreground, there are mining tools: a pickaxe, a shovel, and a crosscut saw. A banner at the bottom reads "ORO -Y- PLATA". The words "GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF MONTANA" are inscribed around the border.

# **MONTANA HOMELAND SECURITY STRATEGIC PLAN**

**2026-2028**

**Maintained by Montana Disaster & Emergency Services**

**Version: 1.0**

**Release date: January, 2026**

Record of Change

Date	Description of Change	Initials

## Message from Montana's Homeland Security Advisor

The threat landscape confronting our nation today is complex, converging, and fast-moving. It spans violent extremism, transnational criminal networks, state-sponsored operations, and increasingly sophisticated cyber actors. These pressures do not occur in isolation; they compound and amplify one another, challenging our communities, our critical infrastructure, and our economic vitality.

In the public safety domain, lone offenders and small cells—motivated by both domestic and foreign extremist narratives—continue to pose the greatest risk of sudden violence. Concurrently, the flow of illegal drugs, especially synthetic opioids, persists as a deadly driver of harm in our communities, often propelled by transnational criminal organizations that exploit border and transportation nodes. These dynamics demand that we strengthen prevention, detection, and rapid disruption capabilities while expanding outreach and resilience at the local level.

Our critical infrastructure - energy, water, transportation, healthcare, communications, and the digital systems that bind them - is a prime target for disruptive and destructive attacks. Cyber adversaries increasingly probe and exploit vulnerabilities, and the cadence of alerts and advisories reflects the number of attacks affecting government and industry alike. This plan prioritizes whole-of-government and whole-of-community defenses: rigorous risk management, timely information sharing, and disciplined incident response across public and private partners.

Economic security is now a frontline homeland mission. Adversarial nation-states employ coercive economic tools, conduct influence operations, and pursue economic espionage to erode competitiveness and trust in U.S. institutions and supply chains. These activities—often intertwined with broader intelligence collection and cyber intrusions—require coordinated countermeasures: protecting sensitive data, hardening procurement and vendor ecosystems, and elevating security standards across the public sector and industry. Enduring issues such as the rapid proliferation of new technologies and the cascading effects of natural disasters intensify the above threats. Technology accelerates both the spread of disinformation and the speed of cyber operations, while extreme weather events strain emergency management and critical services, creating windows of opportunity for malicious actors. Our strategy addresses these compounding risks by investing in preparedness, redundancy, and adaptive capabilities that ensure continuity of government and community resilience under stress.

This plan is our roadmap for meeting these challenges head-on. It sets clear priorities; aligns resources to risk; and advances partnerships with federal, state, tribal, territorial, local, and private-sector stakeholders. It commits us to measurable outcomes—reducing incident frequency and impact; accelerating detection and response; protecting vulnerable populations; and strengthening the foundations of our economy and critical infrastructure. Above all, it calls

each of us to the same standard: **anticipate, adapt, and act**—with urgency, with integrity, and with unity of effort.

Together, we will safeguard the American people, our homeland, and our values.

Sincerely,

GIBSON.TRENTON.  
JAMES.1151601592

Digitally signed by  
GIBSON.TRENTON.JAMES.1151601592  
Date: 2026.03.19 11:06:48 -06'00'

---

Trenton Gibson  
Brigadier General  
Montana Homeland Security Advisor  
Director Montana Department of Military Affairs

## Contents

<b>Message from Montana’s Homeland Security Advisor .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Section I: Purpose and Scope .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Section II: Montana Homeland Security Environment .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Section III: Montana Homeland Security Strategy .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Section IV: Plan Implementation and Maintenance.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Section V: Attachments .....</b>	<b>14</b>

## Executive Summary

The *Montana Homeland Security Strategic Plan 2026-2028* provides a framework for establishing homeland security priorities and focusing its broad range of efforts to develop, sustain, and employ homeland security capabilities. Securing Montana and enhancing its resilience to incidents that do occur requires close coordination among jurisdictions at all levels. Although this document applies to state and local agencies, the State also encourages and recognizes the critical importance of voluntary private sector cooperation. Effective implementation will require active monitoring, assessment, and management of homeland security risk, with corresponding adjustments to our priorities and activities

MT DES coordinates the development and implementation of the MHSSP including planning, development, and coordination of statewide capabilities developed in support of public and private organizations responsible for preventing, protecting from, mitigating the consequences of, responding to, and recovering from intentional human-caused incidents (e.g., terrorism, crime, etc.) and natural or technological disasters.

The MHSSP is a living document that requires an annual critical review to remain relevant to and adjust to the changing environment. This document serves as a tool for state and local organizations to use when investing, managing, and maintaining Montana's homeland security capabilities, ensuring that the state is optimally using its resources. Everyone in Montana has a role to play in homeland security – from individual citizens to our federal partners.

In creating the MHSSP, MT DES recognized the importance of instituting an inclusive planning process to ensure comprehensive input was received from multiple partners across the public and private sector. The citizens of Montana are key to ensuring the security of the state and are encouraged to educate themselves about personal preparedness and volunteer their services to help government agencies and non-governmental organizations achieve the homeland security goals and objectives that will make Montana a more secure and resilient state.

Section I of the strategy explains the state's purpose and scope for homeland security and the mission areas and core capabilities that will guide our actions. Section II references key attachments that summarize the breadth and magnitude of Montana's homeland security environment. Section III establishes the Goals, Objectives, and Priority Actions that indicate our homeland security priorities over the next three years.

# Section I: Purpose and Scope

## Purpose

The purpose of the MHSSP is to provide an overarching framework for organizing the state's efforts to enhance its security and resiliency, enhance proactive responses to current and future threats and hazards in Montana, and to articulate how to strengthen the Montana homeland security partners foundation. The MHSSP will also establish a common framework to analyze and inform homeland security management decisions, including strategic guidance, operational requirements, budget formulation, and mission execution.

## Scope

Homeland security is inherently a multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional effort. By design, the MHSSP is a high-level, multi-year strategy and does not address all homeland security activities. The MHSSP is a statewide strategy, with applicability for state agencies, regional organizations, local and tribal governments, private sector organizations, and the public. In general, local jurisdictions prepare for their most likely threats and hazards, and state agencies must be prepared to assist with catastrophic events that exceed local capability. While effective public-private coordination is critical to the success of homeland security initiatives and is encouraged in many areas of this document, it should be noted that private sector participation is voluntary and that government agencies must take all appropriate measures to safeguard private sector information.

The MHSSP contains goals with accompanying targeted objectives that outline the direction for the homeland security mission in our state for 2026 - 2028. These goals will serve as a roadmap by which Montana's homeland security stakeholders should work to enhance our state's capabilities to prevent, protect, mitigate, respond to, and recover from terrorist and criminal incidents and other critical hazards. By employing a risk-based approach and addressing the state's most critical needs, MT DES, in partnership with Federal, state, local and Tribal governments as well as non-government organizations and the community at large, will leverage our limited homeland security resources to achieve our desired outcome: a more secure and resilient Montana.

## Mission Areas and Core Capabilities

Montana will achieve this vision through focusing activities conducted across three primary mission areas, each of which has goals with corresponding objectives and priority actions in Section III of this plan:

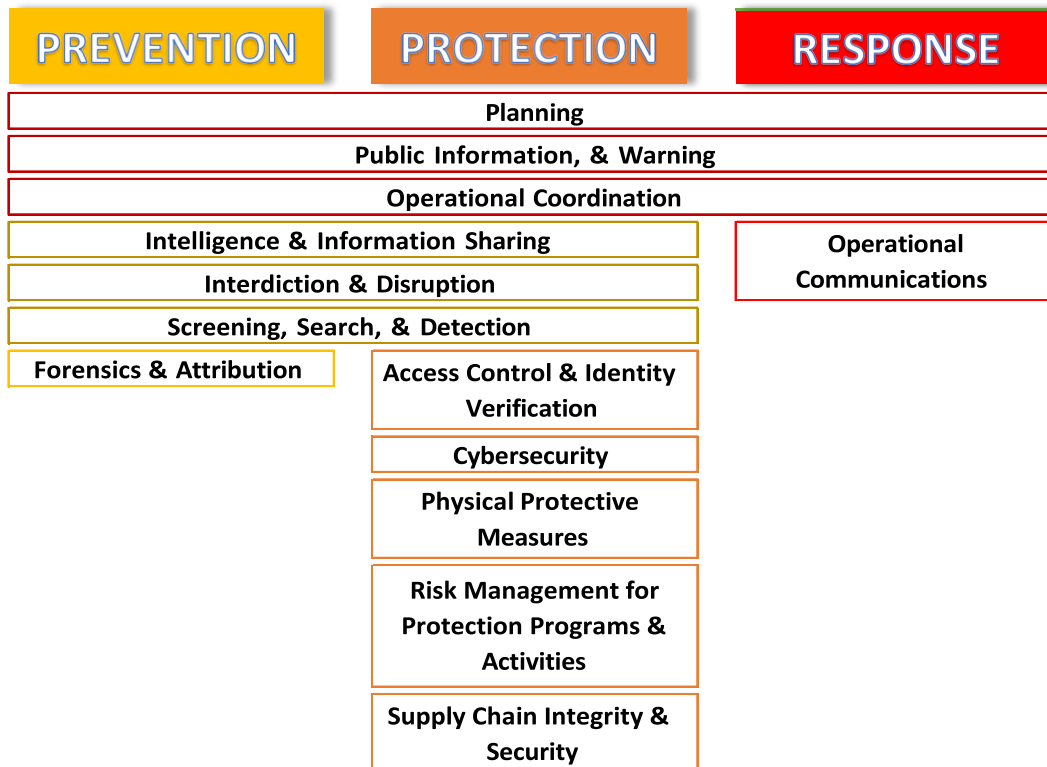
**Table 1: Prevention, Protection, and Response Mission Areas that affect homeland security.**

Montana Homeland Security Mission Areas	
Mission Areas	Descriptions
<b>Prevention</b>	Prevent terrorist attacks and organized criminal activity in Montana.
<b>Protection</b>	Reduce the state’s vulnerability to terrorist and criminal attacks and natural and technological disasters.
<b>Response</b>	Increase the capability of the state’s response system to minimize damage and loss of life from terrorist and criminal attacks and natural and technological disasters.

The method to measure, describe, and implement and improve Montana homeland security is through core capabilities. These core capabilities are highly interdependent and require the use of existing networks and activities, coordination and unity of efforts, and promoting innovation and ensuring that the administrative, finance and logistics systems are in place to support these core capabilities. The following are key characteristics regarding these core capabilities:

- They are distinct critical elements necessary to achieve homeland security goals.
- They are essential for the execution of preventing, protecting from, and responding to intentional human-caused incidents.
- Provide a common language for homeland security across all stakeholders.
- Are not exclusive to any single level of government or organization.

### Core Capabilities within their Mission Areas



**Figure 1: Core Capabilities within their Mission Areas**

## Section II: Montana Homeland Security Environment

Homeland security fundamentally relates to the management of risk, which is defined as the product of threat (likelihood), vulnerability, and consequences of attacks and disasters. In a resource-constrained environment, we must actively identify and manage homeland security risk at all levels.

For details of the homeland security environment in Montana and the extensive and diverse nature of the homeland security risks faced in Montana, refer to the following Attachments:

1. Montana Homeland Security Threat and Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment, and Consequence Analysis.
2. Montana's Critical Infrastructure Profile

## Section III: Montana Homeland Security Strategy

The goals, objectives, and priority actions contained within the MHSSP provide an overarching framework for Montana's homeland security partners to protect our state from all critical hazards, including reducing our risk for intentional human-caused incidents. The MHSSP contains interconnected goals that are designed to accomplish the mission of securing Montana. The goals, objectives, and priority actions reflect the state's most significant homeland security priorities and will serve to focus our homeland security activities, to include investment and resourcing efforts. It is important to note that these goals, objectives, and priority actions do not constitute an exhaustive list of all important actions within each mission area.

**Goals** are the general strategic ends toward which Montana will continually work; they serve to orient our long-term homeland security efforts.

**Objectives** support each goal and describe a result, event, or outcome to be achieved over the next three years. Objectives serve to focus on the application of resources.

**Priority Actions** support each objective and describe specific initiatives and activities needed to accomplish the objective.

**Table 3: Montana Homeland Security Goals**

<b>Montana Homeland Security Goals</b>	
<b>Goal 1</b>	Strengthen statewide capability to prevent and minimize damages and loss of life from criminal activities and terrorist attacks through coordinated law enforcement operations, investigations, and supporting programs.
<b>Goal 2</b>	Strengthen Montana’s capabilities to prevent, protect from, and respond to malicious cyber activities.
<b>Goal 3</b>	Enhance communications interoperability among public safety agencies at the local, tribal, and state levels.
<b>Goal 4</b>	Enable Continuity and Recovery of Essential Services.
<b>Goal 5</b>	Reduce risk to communities and enhance cyber and physical protection of critical infrastructure that support community lifelines across the state.

<b>Goal 1: Strengthen statewide capability to prevent and minimize damages and losses of life from criminal activities and terrorist attacks through coordinated law enforcement operations, investigations, and supporting programs.</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	
<b>1.1</b>	<b>Enhance the systems that help coordinate and manage operations to ensure unified and efficient effort.</b>
<b>Priority Actions</b>	
<b>1.1.1</b>	Enhance the collection and integration of common operational pictures, resource management, data collection and sharing tools, and other decision supportive structures across jurisdictions, agencies, and operations centers to ensure shared local, tribal, state, and federal situational awareness during incidents and operations.
<b>1.1.2</b>	Enhance the capability, efficiency, and coordination of Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) / 911 Dispatch Centers.
<b>1.1.1</b>	Enhance information technology and communications capabilities to connect local, regional, and state stakeholders and enable data sharing and communications with partner organizations at all levels.
<b>1.1.2</b>	Continually improve proficiency in critical incident management system software for the systems used to coordinate and support incidents throughout the state.
<b>Objective</b>	
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Enhance crime prevention and protection capabilities through strengthening early detection and leveraging resources and communications.</b>
<b>Priority Actions</b>	
<b>1.2.1</b>	Support leveraging local, state, and federal partner investigations to disrupt and dismantle criminal or terrorist organizations operating in Montana.
<b>1.2.2</b>	Expand and enhance capabilities to conduct investigations on groups and networks advocating criminal activities and terrorism.

<b>1.2.3</b>	Expand and enhance local, state, and federal law enforcement efforts to combat crime, to include increased staffing, joint operations, specific training for agents and officers, and sharing information with public and private partners.
<b>1.2.4</b>	Enhance programs to counter security threat groups (STG) recruitment in communities and correctional facilities and ensure sharing of relevant intelligence on potential threats with law enforcement agencies.
<b>1.2.5</b>	Increase and strengthen law enforcement related task forces across the state.
<b>1.2.6</b>	Build capability for conducting coordinated state and local law enforcement surge operations in response to emerging or active incidents, emergencies or disasters across the state.
<b>Objective</b>	
<b>1.3</b>	<b>Support the pursuit of education and training opportunities as well as recruitment and retention of talent.</b>
<b>Priority Actions</b>	
<b>1.3.1</b>	Promote retention of law enforcement, PSAP, and detention center professionals through enhanced benefits, advancement, and career expansion opportunities.
<b>1.3.2</b>	Promote construction and rental of Government Housing to mitigate the challenges faced by law enforcement agencies to attract and retain employees due to the impact of rising rent and mortgage costs.

<b>Goal 2: Strengthen Montana’s capabilities to prevent, protect from, and respond to malicious cyber activities.</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	
<b>2.1</b>	<b>Improve cyber incident prevention and response capabilities across Montana</b>
<b>Priority Actions</b>	
<b>2.1.1</b>	Enhance cybersecurity efforts of Montana: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define roles and responsibilities, communication channels, capabilities, and resources available during a cyber incident.</li> <li>• Enhance information sharing and relationships among cyber professionals and stakeholders statewide.</li> </ul>
<b>2.1.2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase awareness and encourage assessments of network architecture at all government levels for effective cyber incident response.</li> </ul>
<b>2.1.3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a business needs assessment for a Cyber and Physical Incident Command Center to improve communication across government and critical infrastructure sectors.</li> </ul>
<b>2.1.4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain an annual cybersecurity baseline guideline for all critical infrastructure and businesses in Montana based on industry standards and laws.</li> </ul>
<b>2.1.5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a business needs assessment for a Montana Civilian Cyber Reserve to assist eligible Montana entities with cybersecurity issues.</li> </ul>

<b>Goal 3: Enhance communications interoperability among public safety agencies at the local, tribal, and state levels.</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Develop and upgrade the communications infrastructure to meet national and statewide interoperable standards.</b>
<b>Priority Actions</b>	
<b>3.1.1</b>	Initiate coordination with contiguous states and stakeholders to address interoperability.
<b>3.1.2</b>	Encourage exercising and evaluating interoperable communications capabilities in state, local, tribal, and regional exercises.
<b>3.1.3</b>	Establish and grow regional talk groups for statewide trunking systems.
<b>3.1.4</b>	Implement communications strategy to support interoperability and spectrum planning issues.
<b>3.1.5</b>	Initiate, maintain, and expand interoperable strategic and tactical communication plans and equipment.

<b>Goal 4: Enable Continuity and Recovery of Essential Services.</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Support continuity planning at the local and tribal levels, as appropriate.</b>
<b>Priority Actions</b>	
<b>4.1.1</b>	Encourage and provide continuity training, technical assistance, and continuity resources to local and tribal jurisdictions.
<b>4.1.2</b>	Encourage and assist local and tribal jurisdictions with incorporating elections into continuity / contingency plans.

<b>Goal 5: Reduce risk to communities and enhance cyber and physical protection of critical infrastructure that support community lifelines across the state.</b>	
<b>Objective</b>	
<b>5.1</b>	<b>Increase public awareness of threats and reporting of suspicious activities related to crime and terrorism.</b>
<b>Priority Actions</b>	
<b>5.1.1</b>	Increase retail sector awareness and reporting of suspicious transactions through expansion of awareness materials throughout the state.
<b>5.1.2</b>	Utilize a statewide public awareness campaign with pre-scripted messaging templates developed with stakeholder input to support local jurisdictions.
<b>5.1.3</b>	Increase education and awareness of the threats to the general public and private sector.

5.1.4	Incorporate social media, websites, and in-person outreach through community events, schools, and business partnerships.
5.1.5	Enhance law enforcement collaboration with schools to facilitate reporting of suspicious activity and potential threats to students and staff members.
5.1.6	Conduct public outreach activities to raise public awareness and understanding of the importance of suspicious activity reporting and methods for reporting.
5.1.7	Support statewide standardization and integration of processes and standards for receipt, analysis, and sharing of criminal activity and public safety concerns.
5.1.8	Expand the availability and delivery of training focused on individual civilian responses to attacks and emergencies.
5.1.9	Expand the number and scope of Information Liaison Officer and similar outreach programs statewide to increase the amount of law enforcement and other personnel trained in recognizing criminal activity, suspicious behavior and public safety concerns.
<b>Objective</b>	
5.2	<b>Continually strengthen collaboration, partnerships, and communications across public and private critical infrastructure sectors to improve whole-of-state resilience and recovery.</b>
<b>Priority Actions</b>	
5.2.1	Promote information sharing and collaboration between government and critical infrastructure sector representatives through information sharing and other forums.
5.2.2	Enhance identification and awareness of threats and vulnerabilities to critical supply chains in order to protect against potential disruptions.
5.2.3	Support public and private critical infrastructure sector stakeholders in their security and business continuity planning efforts through the provision and invitation to attend relevant training and best practices and include critical infrastructure stakeholders in exercises where appropriate.
5.2.4	Assess the current collaboration, partnerships, and communications and identify gaps or opportunities for improvement.
5.2.5	Enhance statewide cyber and physical security assessment programs for critical infrastructure by establishing a pool of independent assessors.
5.2.6	Continue to encourage local and tribal jurisdictions to migrate to “.gov” domains.
5.2.7	Validate election infrastructure risk management through workshops and exercises.
5.2.8	Support efforts to strengthen food systems and supply chain resiliency to enhance long-term stability that withstands disruptions and ensures future sustainability.
5.2.9	Enhance collaboration across sectors and across state agencies to streamline and strengthen federal and state food security-related program access and delivery.

## Section IV: Plan Implementation and Maintenance

### Implementation

Upon final approval, the MHSSP will be distributed to the Department of Military Affairs Director (aka the Montana Homeland Security Advisor), MT DES senior management, all Senior Advisory Committee members, and will be posted on MT DES's webpage for eligible applicants to review for Homeland Security Grant applications. The goals and objectives of the MHSSP will be incorporated into the Integrated Preparedness Plan (IPP) and other plans as appropriate. Deliverables identified throughout the MHSSP will be monitored by MT DES to ensure the constant progression of the MHSSP including but not limited to MT DES Plans and Assessment monitoring grant projects, training, exercise results, and core capability gap assessments that are relative to the MHSSP that work to fulfill the objectives and will report regularly to the DMA Director. This Strategic Plan will be implemented in October 2025, and the performance period will end in October 2028.

### Maintenance

The preparation, evaluation, and revision of the MHSSP is the responsibility of the MTDES Plans and Assessment Team with the assistance and involvement of all applicable stakeholders and support agencies. The document will be updated following the method and schedule outlined in the *MTDES Plan Development and Maintenance Policy*.

## Section V: Attachments

- 1. Montana Homeland Security Threat and Hazard Identification, Risk Assessment, & Consequence Analysis**
- 2. Montana's Critical Infrastructure Profile**