**Christian County**

**Emergent Volunteer**

**Reception and Coordination Manual**

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**September, 2012**

**Christian County**

**Emergent Volunteer Reception and Coordination Manual**

INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose

This Emergency Volunteer Management Manual establishes an organizational structure and process by which the Christian County Emergency Management can access and manage spontaneous volunteer resources for community-wide disaster response, relief and recovery efforts. When managed appropriately, spontaneous volunteers and service programs provide valuable and cost-effective resources to the community.

The VRC is a procedure by which large numbers of volunteers can be processed, tracked, and matched with appropriate organizations and needs. Its major functions include:

* taking volunteer requests
* registering and referring volunteers
* orienting volunteers
* tracking volunteer and staff hours
* Tracking reimbursement eligible expenses

1. Goals

The goals of this Manual are:

* To augment, as a supporting plan, the Christian County Emergency Operation Plan (EOP)
* To enhance resources available to the jurisdiction and the community-at-large for disaster response and recovery through the involvement of spontaneous volunteers and locally-based service programs
* To establish a means by which volunteers and service program members can contribute their time and talents following a disaster
* To encourage partnerships among governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations for the most effective community-wide approach to disaster volunteer coordination
* To ensure that implementation of the Spontaneous Volunteer Management Manual is in accordance with principles and practices as described in the State Emergency Plan and local jurisdiction emergency plans

1. Scope

This manual is designed for use by Christian County Emergency Management during the response and recovery phases of emergency management for all hazards. The Christian County and/or the incorporated cities take responsibility for implementing this plan and will share responsibility with other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as appropriate. This plan focuses on the mobilization, coordination and referral of spontaneous volunteers and service programs only and does not address other related issues, such as the recruitment and management of affiliated volunteers.

1. Overall Concept of Emergent Volunteer Management

The main goal of a Volunteer Reception Center is to have one place where volunteers can meet, fill out the necessary paperwork; receive a safety briefing and any other relevant information before proceeding to a work site.

Delegating task level assignments does not happen at the Volunteer Reception Center. Task level assignments need to happen at area command posts set up in the disaster site.

The VRC is too far removed from the disaster to be able to competently delegate task level assignments.

1. Definitions

* *Volunteer.* Someone who willingly provides his/her services without receiving financial compensation.
* *Spontaneous Volunteer*. An individual who comes forward following a disaster to assist a governmental agency or NGO with disaster-related activities during the response or recovery phase without pay or other consideration. By definition, spontaneous volunteers are not initially affiliated with a response or relief agency or pre-registered with an accredited disaster council. However, they may possess training, skills and experience that can be useful in the relief effort. Spontaneous volunteers may also be referred to as unaffiliated, spontaneous unaffiliated and convergent volunteers.
* *Affiliated Volunteer.* An individual who is affiliated with either a governmental agency or NGO and who has been trained for a specific role or function in disaster relief or response during the preparedness phase. While spontaneous volunteers may bring needed skills and resources, affiliated volunteers will most likely be used first in a disaster. Examples of affiliated volunteer groups include Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), the Volunteers in Police Services (VIPS) program, Search and Rescue teams, the Medical Reserve Corps, and American Red Cross’ Disaster Action Teams (DAT). The category of affiliated volunteers may be further defined as follows:
  + Volunteers in *ongoing* programs. Such groups typically meet regularly and have other responsibilities in addition to their disaster response roles; for example, many are engaged in community disaster education, family preparedness and public safety efforts year-round. Many ongoing programs utilize Disaster Service Worker volunteers.
  + Volunteers in *reserve* programs. These volunteers are called up at the time of a disaster. They may participate singly or in teams, depending on the program*.*

1. VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Successful management of unaffiliated volunteers after a disaster is essential. Objectives for managing these volunteers are straightforward, but developing ways to achieve them is difficult. Strategies vary and depend on the extent of the disaster, available resources and size of the volunteer response. It can be as simple as establishing a call center, or as complex as setting up multiple fully staffed Volunteer Reception Centers. To be as effective as possible, these strategies require planning and an established community disaster response network.

Organizations within the disaster response network that currently work with volunteers should be identified as the main partners. This group should include the local Volunteer Center (or an equivalent organization), local chapter of the American Red Cross, and state and local emergency response offices. The collaboration’s main objectives should be:

* coordinating necessary logistical support for the management strategy
* drafting and signing appropriate MOUs within the collaboration and with other organizations
* identifying funding and reimbursement sources
* Educating and engaging social service, community, faith-based and non-profit organizations that could benefit from volunteers.

1. FUNDING / REIMBURSEMENT Documentation

Existing disaster models show that securing funding or reimbursement for disaster activities begins in the preparation phase. Tracking requirements, eligible activities and reimbursement schedules are often too complicated to decipher on the fly during a disaster. They should be fully understood in advance. A way to capture data on volunteer hours and expenses eligible for reimbursement should also be prepared beforehand.

Counties that kept accurate records of the hours and kinds of disaster relief work done by volunteers have been extremely successful in counting those contributions toward their match for FEMA reimbursement.

Developing a system for recording and maintaining the needed information is the crucial first step to success. All county personnel who will be supervising volunteers should be trained on the importance of thoroughly documenting the hours and kinds of work done by volunteers.

Worksite supervisors should be instructed to:

* Maintain a supply of volunteer sign-in sheets at each volunteer worksite.
* Conduct a safety briefing as each group of volunteers arrives, regarding the specific hazards at the site. This step is critical to preventing injuries and minimizing the risks to the volunteers, the county, and the property on which the volunteers will be working.
* Have all volunteers read the statement at the top of the sign-in sheet and sign in, recording their time of arrival and departure each day.

Volunteers registered with the Volunteer Reception Center will already have signed a complete release of liability on their Disaster Volunteer Registration Form, but should sign the sign in sheet each day, as well.

At the end of each shift, turn in all volunteer sign-in sheets to a designated supervisor, who will then turn them in to the Volunteer Reception Center.

1. Volunteer Reception Center Flow / Setup
   1. **Station # 1—Registration/Orientation**

The first stop for volunteers is the registration station. Volunteers sign in at the “sign in table”, receive the registration forms, instruction sheets, and a brief introduction to the registration process.

Forms used here are:

* Sign in log: contains Name, address, phone and signature line. All persons sign in on arrival.
* Registration Form 105
* Emergent Volunteer Waiver Form 110

These forms are in the Appendix.

The registration station is adjacent to a waiting area and, ideally, separate from the rest of the VRC. This station needs staff, which are called “greeters,” a supply of appropriate documents and a system for the in-and-out flow of documents. Ideally, the entire VRC should open as a unit, but this station can begin to function independently. For example, if spontaneous volunteers arrive before the community is ready to receive them, or if the logistics (phone lines, staff, office supplies) of the VRC are not set up, they can be preregistered and contacted later when they can be fully processed. Overall goals of the registration station are to begin capturing volunteer data, educate volunteers about the process and manage their expectations, and regulate the flow of volunteers through the rest of the VRC process.

In addition to explaining the forms and the process, greeters at this first station should recognize the contributions of the volunteers and let them know that the process works for them as well as the organizations needing volunteers. This is the key to managing volunteer expectations. Most spontaneous volunteers want to get to work right away. It is important to impress upon them that, while they are urgently needed, without this process their work will not have the greatest impact and they may endanger themselves and others. Greeters can help smooth the flow of volunteers by communicating with runners about any congestion in the waiting area and other parts of the VRC.

* 1. **Station #2—Assignment Area**

After their forms are filled out, volunteers proceed to the Assignment area. The goal of this station is to find the best area to send the volunteers. An appropriate match is essential to the efficiency of the volunteer disaster response. Those with special skills, prior training, or general experience need to be sent to the appropriate area.

All available opportunities should be displayed on a board behind the interview table. The list should include the requesting area command, number of volunteers needed, activity, time(s) and date(s) of the work and any special information such as age restrictions.

The Assignment Coordinator should be in constant contact with each area command to ensure that they are up to date and current on their needs.

A dry erase board, which can be quickly and clearly changed, is the best way to track this constantly changing information.

Finally, it is important that only interviewers and data collection staff be allowed to change the listings and that volunteers not see the board. It may seem secretive to keep volunteers in the dark, but this works best, especially when volunteers are needed at a site that may seem less than desirable. For example, help may be needed at cleanup site or water distribution center rather than some place more “fun.” If volunteers start cherry-picking preferred placements, efficiency is lost.

The Assignment Area Coordinator will sign each registration form before the volunteer proceeds to Station #3. Volunteers that are going to a specific agency will also receive a Volunteer Referral form with all the information on the requesting agency, contact info, address, etc.

* 1. **Station #3—Safety Training**

All volunteers need a basic safety briefing at the VRC before entering a work site. Here is how it should work. The staff safety trainer will document each one’s participation on their registration form.

The safety training area can be a table for a one-on-one briefing or a sitting area for training small groups, with size and location appropriate for the VRC. Optimally, the training area should be close to the data collection station.

The goals of training are to orient volunteers to the safety hazards of a dangerous, unfamiliar environment and to reduce the liability of any organization involved with the volunteers, including the requesting organization and the organizations who cooperate in the VRC. Training materials should be prepared before hand and adapted to the disaster as quickly as possible.

* 1. **Station #4—Forms Collection / Volunteer Identification**

After they have been documented, dispatched or referred and completed the safety briefing, volunteers should turn in all their forms and receive an identity bracelet or card.

This ID should include name, agency or site to which they are referred and the date(s) they expect to volunteer. All this information is available on the volunteer’s referral form. Located at the farthest end of the VRC from the reception area, this station should start working as soon as possible to refer volunteers. The ID bracelet or card provides another element of safety in the post-disaster environment. Materials needed to produce the bracelets or cards should be on hand before the disaster. After receiving their ID, volunteers proceed to their sites or to any necessary extra training.

* 1. **Station #5—Additional Training / Services**

Some partner organizations may want to conduct additional training for their volunteers before they arrive on site. Extra training could cover procedures, safety, equipment or any other topic specific to that disaster. If there is space available, the director may allow this training to take place at the VRC.

Additionally, the County Health Department may want to set up an area to give Tetanus Shots or other shots needed for the disaster or other health related activities.

1. Support Functions

VRCs have four physical and two staff support functions that do not deal directly with volunteers but facilitate the process: phone bank, data entry/recordkeeping, supply area, public information, runners and staff break area.

* **Phone bank:** Critical to the functioning of the entire VRC, the phone bank takes calls from those seeking volunteer opportunities and information and receives and documents calls from organizations requesting volunteers. Requests for volunteers from other agencies should be given to the Assignment Area Coordinator and should be posted on the request board behind the Assignment station.
* **Data entry/recordkeeping:** enters volunteers, hours worked and areas worked into the master spreadsheet. Keeps track of hours worked in the VRC and other agencies volunteers were sent to. Volunteer registration, requests and referral forms need to be recorded on a computer and the original forms filed.
* **Supply area**: supplies to keep the VRC running. No donations for disaster victims kept here. Only VRC staff should have access to the supply area, which should be located in a secured area outside the main VRC.
* **Public Information**: The VRC Public Information Officer keeps the county Public Information Officer up to date on what the VRC needs to release and what the public needs to know. The VRC Public Information Officer does not release any information on its own. He\she submits information to the County PIO of Joint Information Center for release. The VRC Public Information Officer meets and greets members of the press for tours and picture taking.
* **Runners:** General message delivery, move materials and information from station to station, leads volunteers through the process and help ease the flow of volunteers through the stations.
* **Staff break area:** Taking a break from the stress and urgency helps the staff stay efficient and lessens stress. Include as many creature comforts--coffee, water, comfortable seating—as possible.

1. Staffing Recommendations

Ideally, a VRC requires these 12 staff positions, working in shifts or full-time as the situation dictates:

* VRC Director
* Data Entry
* Greeters
* Host/Hostess
* Identification Coordinator
* Assignment Area Coordinator
* Master Data Coordinator
* Notification/Scheduling Team Member
* Phone Bank Staff
* Runners
* Safety Trainer
* Shift Manager

*Detailed descriptions for all positions are in the Appendix.*

Staffing the VRC starts during the preparedness phase, with the management positions (VRC director, master data coordinator, and shift managers) filled first. Start with the director, who is in charge of the entire operation. Draw from a pool of experienced managers in organizations that manage volunteers during disasters

For other management jobs, the prerequisites are experience and position-specific skills. For example, the master data coordinator needs to be trained on the VRC’s computer programs, and shift managers should have experience managing large numbers of volunteers. To fill other staff positions, organizations responsible for the VRC can use our normal volunteer recruitment strategies, or search the disaster response network for qualified, motivated candidates. These volunteers must be committed to working at the VRC and be oriented to every station and support function. Brief them as well on how the VRC will open and how they will be contacted. Continue to recruit staff members after the center opens. Interviewers should be on the look-out for volunteers who would be good staff members. If there is a particular need, managers should inform the data coordinator and Assignment Coordinator. These are simply the basic guidelines for operating a VRC. For all the pieces to function together and improve the efficiency of the volunteer response there must be adequate preparation and quick action in setting up and staffing the center.

1. MESSAGING / INFORMATION SHARING

As the VRC and other volunteer management strategies start to process volunteers, the collective messaging of the community disaster response network should be frequently updated. Messages need to reflect the conditions on the ground and include the need for volunteers. Information should be consistent across all organizations. Again, a key in achieving this is to draw upon pre-disaster relationships. The VRC structure also includes a position for a public information officer, the sole staff member responsible for communicating with the media.

1. Volunteer Housing

**ASSESSING THE NEED**  
The need for volunteer housing will depend on the size and scale of the disaster. Having housing available for volunteers can lower their costs and help them bond with our organization.

Evaluate the costs of establishing housing, zoning requirements, projected number of volunteers and logistical obstacles. The value of supplying volunteer housing must outweigh the costs of all the resources spent. Otherwise an organization may deplete resources designed to serve persons in need. Think broadly when you assess the potential benefits of volunteer housing. Do not undertake simply a financial assessment, but take into account all possible benefits, outlined below. Each of these must be examined in depth to fully calculate the anticipated value. Increase in volunteer numbers

Many who want to volunteer to help in disaster recovery can’t afford it. Volunteer housing programs can help. In fact, they often result in an increased number of volunteers. Reduction in commute time to and from project sites, often overlooked, this benefit can make a great difference, especially in rural areas without hotels or other housing options.

Volunteer housing is also crucial in cities where the disaster is so destructive, there is little housing left.

**SECURING A FACILITY**  
There are many considerations here. Look at location, cost, condition, availability of viable options, length of availability, zoning, amenities and more.

**STAFFING**Additional staff will be needed to properly manage a volunteer housing facility. The staff will have many duties such as addressing housing inquiries, taking reservations, establishing and enforcing rules, check-ins and check-outs, cleaning, maintenance, food preparation, financial oversight, resource development, volunteer recruitment, marketing/public relations and more. The size and scale of your housing will determine your staffing needs. In Post-Katrina volunteer housing, the staff ranged from a single person to 30 full-time equivalents.

**PROVISIONS—meals, bedding/linens, laundry services and more**Most incoming volunteers have probably not stayed in such a facility before, so they may expect hotel-like accommodations. They may anticipate linens, toiletries, a laundry facility and meals, especially with higher priced accommodations. The more provided for volunteers, the higher the cost of the housing program. So, find a balance between providing a clean, comfortable, inviting living space and operating a cost-effective program.

Again, the recommendation is to manage the expectations of incoming volunteers long before their arrival. Let there be no surprises upon check-in. Volunteers usually understand the condition of the accommodations if they are informed in advance. Do not let a volunteer expect a hotel-like room if they will sleep in a bunkhouse with 100 other volunteers, four showers and portable toilets.

**RULES AND REGULATIONS**Regulations for volunteer housing vary as greatly as the organizations operating them. There is no right or wrong way to set rules, and the success of this process will likely be influenced by trial and error. The key is setting regulations that let volunteers enjoy safe, sanitary conditions at all times.

* Age Restrictions—Because of the bunkhouse, communal style of many volunteer facilities, setting age restrictions can reduce liability issues. However, organizations restricting its housing to those ages 18 and older will miss the revenue generated by youth groups and families. If youth are allowed, we recommend that they be separated from adults.
* Curfew—This is another common point of contention for housing providers. Being too strict with curfew can result in a limited client base. But, to show respect for other volunteers, curfews or quiet hours are often necessary, especially in a bunkhouse or communal setting.
* Gender Separation—Some volunteers request that the genders be separated, others prefer a coed facility. When you consider this issue, think about how shower rooms, bathrooms and bedrooms should be handled. Scheduling gender-specific restroom and shower times is a way to handle this issue without the need for completely separating bathrooms and showers.
* Chores—In order to limit costs, housing providers may mandate that volunteers help clean and maintain the facility. Forming a daily team of volunteers to help with such tasks can result in great savings over the life of the program.
* Alcohol, Cigarettes, Illegal Substances—Illegal substances should be banned at all facilities. Organizations may want to allow alcohol and cigarettes. Some organizations allow volunteers to come back from serving and enjoy a drink, while others strictly forbid it. Whatever the decision, we recommend a ban on intoxication and smoking inside the facility out of respect for other volunteers.

1. Area Command Operations

The area posts should be set up in close proximity to the disaster area but easily accessible to incoming volunteers and responders. The disaster area should be divided up into manageable areas, so the area commanders have a good grasp on the activities in their assigned areas.

If the command post is at a suitable location with internet connection, phone and fax machines, relaying requests, forms and related paperwork will be streamlined. If this type of location is not available, runners may need to be employed.

Ideally, these command posts should be equipped with the following:

* Staff of 4-6
* Office equipment and supplies (pens, clip boards, stapler, paper)
* Dry erase boards
* Tents – shade, rehab area
* Team Leader Reports
* ICS forms
* Homeowner Needs Assessment Forms
* Cell Phone
* VHF Radio
* Laptop Computer
* Connection with the EOC and VRC. Communication with the EOC and VRC can be via cell phone, VHF radio or Amateur Radio.

Responsibilities of the Area Commander:

* Delegating the task level functions needed in the disaster area.
* Maintaining / updating the needs assessments on victims properties and keeping abreast of the needs of the homeowners
* Keeping track of work to be done and work that has been completed. Team leaders reporting back in at the end of the day should report on the status of their particular site.
* Ensuring that each work area / site has a team leader and that team leader has the necessary forms and instructions.
* Making sure to collect team leader reports and turn them into the VRC daily.
* Keep Assignment Area Manager at the VRC up to date on needs, deficiencies, etc. Commanders should relay to the VRC needed specialties such as chain saw crews, demolition crews, etc.
* Area Commanders should check in with VRC at a minimum of 2 times a day. At the beginning and end of each shift.
* Supplies, rehab supplies and support equipment for the workers should be kept on hand at the area command. Supplies should include gloves, water, sun tan lotion, ear plugs and any other needed items. Requests for supplies should be relayed to the EOC and relayed to Logistics.

The Area Commander should attempt to provide an affiliated volunteer with a group of un-affiliated volunteers. This can be a CERT, VIPS member, MRC, Amateur Radio or volunteer fire fighter. This person should serve as the team leader as they will have a better understanding of the ICS system and how operations are handled.

Amateur radio operators can also be sent to the work sites to report back to the Area Commander.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Sample site layout – registration flow

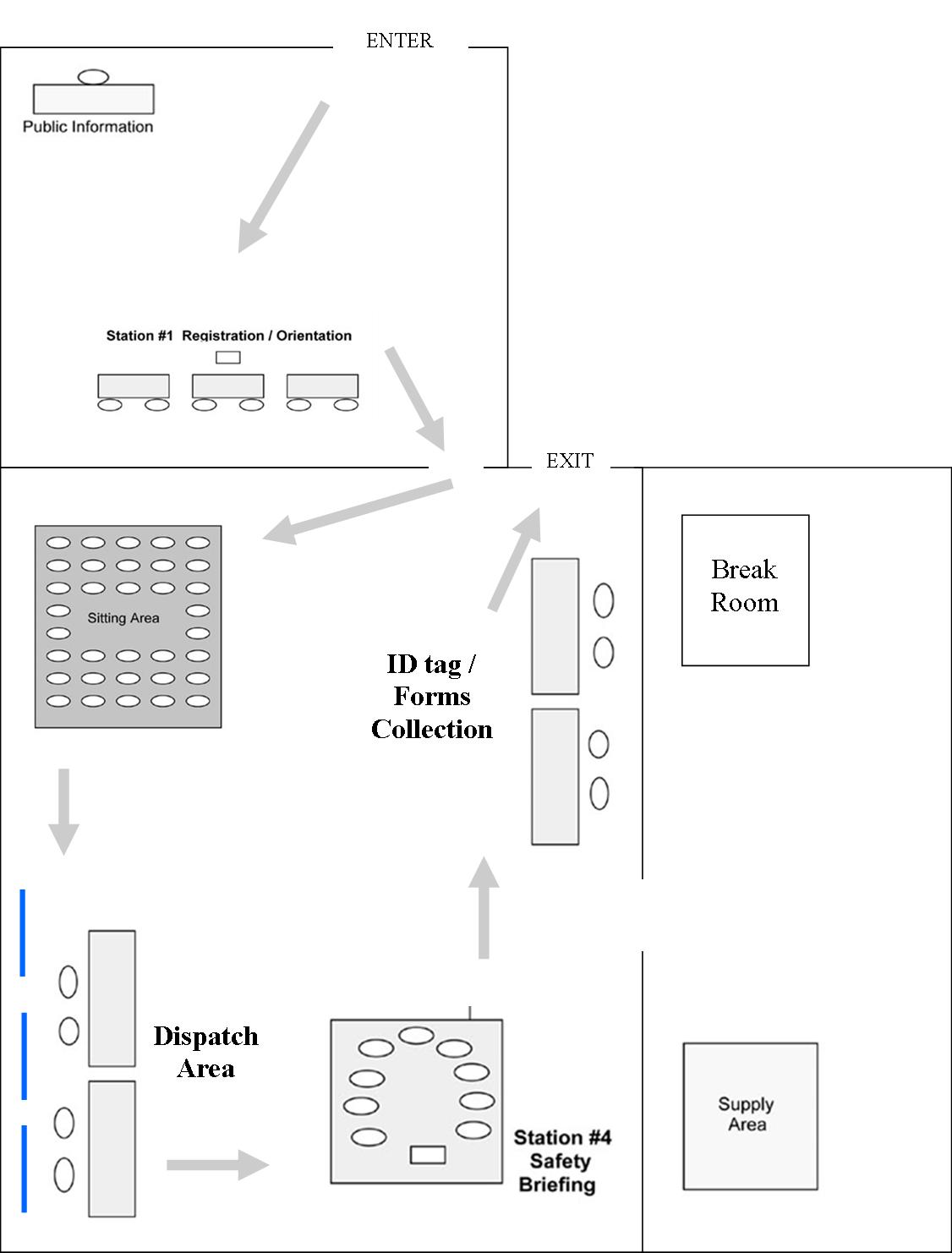
Appendix 2: Staff Tasks

Appendix 3: Supplies List

Appendix 4: Registration Form

Appendix 5: Volunteer Waiver

Appendix 6: Building Use Agreement

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**Staff Tasks**

**VRC DIRECTOR**

**Work Location**—Volunteer Reception Center (VRC)

**Responsibilities and Duties**—Over-see the operation of the Volunteer Reception Center. You will:

* Clearly identify one entrance and one exit
* Set up the room for efficient flow of volunteers and information
* Brief and assign tasks to staff and volunteers of the VRC
* Monitor the operation and make necessary adjustments
* Maintain all records of safety and job training provided to volunteers, and hours worked in the VRC by employees and volunteers
* Maintain records of expenditures
* Resolve challenges as they arise
* Ensure the proper usage agreements are signed between the County EMA and the facility.
* Perform a walk thru with facility coordinator. Note condition of facility, have facility coordinator sign off on the condition.
* Coordinate activities with the EOC (through established lines of communications or by designating a representative to report to the EOC).
* Establish security at site.

**Qualifications**—Needs to be knowledgeable about all aspects of the Volunteer Reception Center including all of the various position titles. Also, needs to have some management experience and effectively be able to run the entire Volunteer Reception Center.

**Commitment Required**—Full time participation when the VRC has been activated.

**Training**—Training in each of the VRC positions prior to activation. Previous supervisory and management training experience preferred. NIMS courses: IS 700, IS 100, IS200, ICS 300 and 400 and Developing and Managing Volunteers.

**Supervisor**—Unified Command / EOC

**DATA ENTRY**

**Work Location**—See the VRC floor plan

**Responsibilities and Duties**— Your job is to enter the information from the Volunteer Registration and Request for Volunteers forms into the database so that the EOC has an accurate record of who participated in the recovery effort, what kinds of work they performed, when and where.

Even if you are familiar with the software being used by the VRC, please ask for a brief orientation before beginning your first shift. Accuracy is more important than speed. The information you enter will be used to determine the amount of money the county will receive from the FEMA as a result of the disaster.

If you have difficulty using the computer, please ask for help immediately. Do not attempt to fix the problem yourself.

**Qualifications**— Be comfortable with computers and ability to enter information into a database. Familiar with MS Word, Excel and Access.

**Commitment Required**—8-hour shift

**Volunteer Supervisor**—VRC Director and Shift Manager

**GREETERS**

**Work Location**—Near the entrance of the Volunteer Reception Center (see the VRC floor plan)

**Responsibilities and Duties**—Ideally, you will be working with a partner, orienting volunteers inside and outside the volunteer entrance. Your job is to greet people with a friendly and firm demeanor, determine the purpose of their visit and direct them accordingly.

* If they are volunteers, give them a Volunteer Instructions sheet and show them where to sign in. If the VRC is too full at the time, ask them to have a seat in the waiting area
* If they are media personnel, direct them to the Public Information Officer.
* If they are disaster survivors, refer them to the appropriate organization.
* If they have food, clothing, etc. to donate refer them to the appropriate agency unless it is food for the Volunteer Reception Center staff. If it is food for the VRC staff, take the individual to the Host/Hostess. For safety reasons, unsolicited donations of food for Volunteer Reception Center staff will not be accepted!
* If there is a long wait, some volunteers may not understand the reason and may become impatient. Please thank everyone for volunteering, briefly explain the process and ask everyone to be patient or to come back later.

**Qualifications**—Have a friendly demeanor and be able to approach people and talk with them, neat appearance.

**Commitment Required**—8-hour shift preferred

**Volunteer Supervisor**—VRC Director and Shift Manager

**HOST/HOSTESS**

**Work Location**—Volunteer Reception Center

**Responsibilities and Duties**—Provide congenial hospitality to all who enter the VRC.

* Set up area at the VRC for coffee, water, juice and snacks where volunteers can help themselves.
* Provide and offer on a cart coffee, water, juice and snacks to volunteers as they are filling out their paperwork and waiting to be interviewed.
* Replenish supplies with sugar, creamer, napkins, etc. as they are running low and ensure that bathrooms are stocked with paper towels and toilet paper.
* Be available to inform volunteers of the locations of the restrooms and to answer any simple questions they may have, i.e., how much longer do I have to wait? Etc.
* Always have a pleasant attitude and be willing to help at all times

**Qualifications**—Knowledgeable about all aspects of the Volunteer Reception Center including all of the various position titles. Needs to have a pleasant attitude and neat appearance.

**Commitment Required**—8 hour shifts.

**Volunteer Supervisor**—Volunteer Reception Center Director, Volunteer Center Director

**IDENTIFICATION / FORMS COLLECTION COORDINATOR**

**Work Location**—See the VRC floor plan

**Responsibilities and Duties**—Ask if the volunteer for his/her Referral form. If they have not been referred, thank them for coming and ask them to please wait in the sitting area in the center of the room. Tear off the bottom of the referral form, give the top to the volunteer to be turned in to once they arrive at their destination.

* Collect all forms from the volunteers and give them to the Data Entry section.
* Make sure all forms are completed before issuing Identification tags.
* Clearly write on the white portion of an ID wristband the name of the volunteer, dates he/she will be working, and the name of the agency to which the volunteer was referred, as shown on their Referral form.
* Place the ID wristband securely on the volunteer’s wrist.
* Explain to the volunteers that the ID will be valid only for the date(s) written on the band. Authorities will not permit them to enter any of the disaster impacted areas on any other day, without a current ID wristband. If volunteers plan to work more than one day, you may write the beginning and ending dates of their service. Thank them for coming.

**Qualifications**—Ability to clearly write the volunteer’s information on their ID band good communication skills

**Commitment Required**—8-hour shift preferred

**Volunteer Supervisor**—VRC Director and Shift Manager

**NOTIFICATION/SCHEDULING TEAM MEMBER**

**Work Location**—VRC.

**Responsibilities and Duties**—The Notification Team Member will be notified after a disaster and told whether the Volunteer Reception Center has been activated and where it will be located. Once the location is decided upon, make the necessary arrangements to set up the phone bank, develop the flow patterns, ensuring the necessary equipment is on hand, etc. Then, the Notification Team Member will initiate the phone tree and call the other volunteers. You will be responsible for making sure that all the trained Volunteer Reception Center volunteers are notified. You must also gather information on who can volunteer and at what times and develop a schedule for the volunteers.

In addition, after calling the volunteers, you must work on getting refreshments for the VRC.

**Qualifications**—Must have good phone and communication skills. Also, must be a responsible person who will be in charge of making sure other volunteers are notified. Must have a good working knowledge of how a VRC operates.

**Commitment Required**—As long as it takes to get the VRC set up and call the trained volunteers

**Volunteer Supervisor**—Volunteer Center Director

**Assignment Area Coordinator**

**Work Location**—See the VRC floor plan

**Responsibilities and Duties**—Your job is to refer volunteers to a job at site or agency appropriate to his or her abilities and interests.

* Volunteer requests will be posted on a board in front of you and will be erased as they are filled. If the center has a computer system, you might also receive a printed list of the current needs.
* When a new volunteer approaches, ask for his/her registration form. Verify its completeness and accuracy, and use it as a guide from which to inquire more about the volunteer’s skills. Check a photo picture ID to verify identity.
* At the conclusion of the interview, sign the registration, help them fill out their referral form and have the volunteer take all their forms to the Identification / Forms Collection station.
* Key points to remember are:
  + Disaster registration differs from a normal volunteer intake–there is less time to try to fit each volunteer into an ideal assignment.
  + Refer the volunteer on the spot if possible–it may be impossible to contact him later. If the volunteer has special training or unusual skills that you think might be needed soon, ask him to wait in the sitting area and to check the volunteer request board for new requests for their specialized skills.
  + Be sure to watch for volunteers who would work well in the Volunteer Reception Center.
  + It is likely that some volunteers will exhibit the stress of the disaster–an extra measure of patience and understanding is needed.
  + You may be called upon to train volunteers to assist with the interviewing.

**Qualifications**—Must have good communication skills and be able to interview people to find out their skills

**Commitment Required**—8 hour shift

**Volunteer Supervisor**—VRC Director

**MASTER DATA COORDINATOR**

**Work Location**—Volunteer Reception Center

**Responsibilities and Duties**  
You will be overseeing the operation of the VRC data entry as well as ensuring that requests for volunteers from outside agencies are posted in the Assignment area, requests are met and removed from board once they are met.

1. Ensure the information from the phone bank is being entered by the data entry person.
2. Ensure the database / board is updated when volunteer positions are filled.
3. Ensure smooth communication between data entry and volunteer coordinators.
4. Receive agency information from the phone bank and/or runner.
5. Writes the agency information on the master board for the Assignment Coordinators.
6. Remove the agency from the master board once all volunteer positions have been filled.
7. Ensure all activity is documented and entered into the database

**Qualifications**—Knowledgeable about all aspects of the Volunteer Reception Center including all of the various position titles. Needs to possess good communication, organizational skills and computer skills.

**Commitment Required**—8 hour shifts.

**Volunteer Supervisor**—Volunteer Reception Center Director and Volunteer Center Director

**PHONE BANK STAFF**

**Work Location**—See the VRC floor plan

**Responsibilities and Duties**—You will be handling three types of calls, those from agencies requesting volunteers, those from people wanting to volunteer and those needing help or just asking questions. The information you record about each call must be complete and in sufficient detail to facilitate matching volunteers to the needs.

* When you receive a call from an agency, fill out a Request for Volunteers form 130 while you are speaking with the agency caller. If there is a computer available enter the need as soon as possible.
* Next, call a runner by raising the flag at your station. Ask the Runner to give the Request for Volunteers form to the Master Data Coordinator
* When people call to volunteer, thank them and give them the registration instructions:
  + If the caller represents a group that wishes to volunteer together, ask them to be patient while you determine where they can be of most help. It might take one day or several to match them with a need, especially if they are coming from out of town. Post the caller’s inquiry on the board behind the Phone Bank. When a match (a mission) is found for that volunteer, e-mail or call them back and schedule a time for them to come to the VRC to sign their registration form, pick up their referral form and Id bracelet(s), and attend a safety briefing.

**Qualifications**—Must be able to communicate over the phone with people and record what your conversations were about.

**Commitment Required**—8-hour shift preferred

**Volunteer Supervisor**—VRC Director and Shift Manager

**RUNNERS**

**Work Location**—See the VRC floor plan

**Responsibilities and Duties**—Your job is to carry information from one station to another within the VRC.

* When a station needs you to pick up forms, restock their supplies or escort a volunteer from one place to another, they will signal you at their station.
* Please watch carefully for this signal and respond promptly, in order to keep the information and volunteers moving smoothly through the registration and referral process.
* When you are asked to post a new Volunteer Request on the board, be sure to use only the markers provided and write neatly and large enough so that the interviewers can see the requests clearly. After posting the request on the board, give the Request form to the Data Coordinator (Station 3).

**Qualifications**—Must be able to move around the Volunteer Reception Center to visit the different stations.

**Commitment Required**—8 hour shift

**Volunteer Supervisor**—VRC Director and Shift Manager

**SAFETY TRAINER**

**Work Location**—See the VRC floor plan

**Responsibilities and Duties**—Your job is to brief all new volunteers on what to expect at their job sites, how to be safe while volunteering and how to take good care of themselves after their experience. When a small group has gathered, thank the volunteers for offering to help.

* Read the entire Safety Training sheet slowly, emphasizing the importance of following supervisors’ instructions at the worksite. Encourage everyone to attend a debriefing, if available, at the end of their shift. Ask if there are any questions. If a question arises to which you do not know the answer, summon a runner. Ask the runner to summon the VRC Director or other VRC staff to answer the question. When your briefing is concluded, explain where the volunteers should move to the ID / Forms Collection area.
* Sign each Volunteers registration form, verifying that they attended the Safety Briefing. Maintenance of these records is important to help protect the County and local disaster officials from liability, should a volunteer be injured on the job.

**Qualifications**—Must be able to talk to groups about safety issues. Also, must be able to answer questions volunteers might have about safety.

**Commitment Required**—8 hour shift

**Volunteer Supervisor**—VRC Director and Shift Manager

**SHIFT MANAGER**

**Work Location**—Volunteer Reception Center

**Responsibilities and Duties**—Oversee the operation of the Volunteer Reception Center. You will:

* Clearly identify one entrance and one exit
* Set up the room for efficient flow of volunteers and information
* Brief and assign tasks to staff and volunteers of the VRC
* Monitor the operation and make necessary adjustments
* Resolve challenges as they arise

**Qualifications**—Needs to be knowledgeable about all aspects of the Volunteer Reception Center including all of the various position titles. Also, needs to have some management experience and effectively be able to run the entire Volunteer Reception Center.

**Commitment Required**—8 hour shifts

**Volunteer Supervisor**—Volunteer Reception Center Director

**Area Commander**

**Work Location:** Area Command Post

**Responsibilities and Duties:**

* Delegating the task level functions needed in the disaster area.
* Assembling teams of volunteers, assigning a Team Leader to these teams and dispatching them to various locations/properties in their area.
* Maintaining / updating the needs assessments on victims properties and keeping abreast of the needs of the homeowners
* Keeping track of work to be done and work that has been completed. Team leaders reporting back in at the end of the day should report on the status of their particular site.
* Ensuring that each work area / site has a team leader and that team leader has the necessary forms and instructions.
* Making sure to collect team leader reports and turn them into the VRC daily.
* Keep Assignment Area Manager at the VRC up to date on needs, deficiencies, etc. Commanders should relay to the VRC needed specialties such as chain saw crews, demolition crews, etc.
* Area Commanders should check in with VRC at a minimum of 2 times a day. At the beginning and end of each shift.
* Supplies, rehab supplies and support equipment for the workers should be kept on hand at the area command. Supplies should include gloves, water, sun tan lotion, ear plugs and any other needed items. Requests for supplies should be relayed to the EOC and relayed to Logistics.

**Qualifications**—Needs to be knowledgeable about all aspects of the Volunteer Reception Center including all of the various position titles. Also, needs to have some management experience and effectively be able to run the entire Volunteer Reception Center.

**Commitment Required**—Full time (8-10 hours per day) participation when the VRC has been activated.

**Training**—Training in the entire VRC operation prior to activation. Previous supervisory and management training experience preferred. NIMS courses: IS 700, IS 100, IS200, ICS 300 and 400 and Developing and Managing Volunteers as well as a good knowledge of the area served.

**Supervisor-**VRC Director

VRC supplies – Equipment List

* Registration Area
  + 75 Clip boards
  + 250 Pens
  + 3-5 tables and chairs for receptionists
  + Sign in sheets
* Assignment Area
  + 5 Large Dry Erase display boards with easels, markers, erasers
  + Referral forms
* ID / Forms Collection Area
  + 5-10 Laptops connected to a network
  + Printers
  + ID wrist bands
* Sitting Area
  + 3-5 Tables
  + 40-50 Chairs
* Phone Bank Supplies
  + At least 5 phones
  + One laptop and printer
  + Referral Forms
* Safety Briefing Area
  + Relevant information on current disaster.
* Hospitality Area
  + Coffee, water, drinks
  + Donuts, refreshments+
* Misc Office Supplies
  + Pens, pencils
  + Several Cases of Paper
  + Flip Charts
  + File Folders and labels
  + Push pins
  + Staplers
  + Masking tape
  + Clear Tape
  + Post it notes
  + Binder Clips
  + Scissors
  + Paper clips
  + Hospital ID bracelets
  + Sharpee Markers
* **Area Commands**
  + Bug repellant / sun tan lotion
  + 2 way radios / batteries / chargers
  + Misc Office supplies
    - Pens, pencils
    - Several Cases of Paper
    - Flip Charts
    - File Folders and labels
    - Push pins
    - Staplers
    - Masking tape
    - Clear Tape
    - Post it notes
    - Binder Clips
    - Scissors
    - Paper clips
    - Hospital ID bracelets
    - Sharpee Markers
  + Water / refreshments
  + Gloves
  + Dust masks
  + Shovels, rakes

**SIGNS NEEDED** (All signs should be laminated and large enough to be read from across a large room)

* Disaster Volunteer Reception Center (2 large banners, 3ft by 8ft)
* Enter
* Station #1 Registration
* Station #2 Assignment Area
* Station #3 Safety Briefing
* Station #4 I.D. Tags / Forms Collection
* Exit
* Staff Only (2+ as needed)
* Phone Bank
* Public Information Officer
* Various “arrow” signs on pedestals to direct flow.