

Engaging Volunteers in Montana Communities



A Disaster Readiness Toolkit

Brought to you by

Serve Montana
The Governor's Office
of Community Service

Prepared by
United Way of
Yellowstone County

Introduction

Voluntary citizen involvement is a valuable asset for communities in their efforts to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters. Serve Montana, the Governor's Office of Community Service, in partnership with United Way of Yellowstone County and Serendipity Solutions, is pleased to offer this Toolkit to provide encouragement and support for Montana communities to effectively engage this often underutilized and even overlooked resource.

Special emphasis in the Toolkit is placed on managing spontaneous volunteers. These volunteers are not trained or affiliated with a disaster response organization but will almost certainly show up to help with or without an invitation. Several unknown factors are associated with spontaneous volunteers such as, how many will arrive, whether or not they have good intentions, what skills they bring, how will they be housed and fed. Unless properly managed, this influx of volunteers can create a disaster within a disaster.

This Toolkit may be used by any size community but it was designed with a focus on being helpful for smaller, more rural communities that do not have as many organizational and institutional resources as the largest cities in Montana. Volunteer efforts that are organized and documented can not only restore normalcy to a community in the aftermath of an emergency but can also offset the unanticipated and unbudgeted disaster costs to communities.



To volunteer is to choose to act in recognition of a need, with an attitude of social responsibility and without concern for monetary profit, going beyond one's basic obligation.

Special Thanks

The *Engaging Volunteers in Montana Communities: A Disaster Readiness Toolkit* was developed by a group of dedicated Montanans with years of experience in disaster preparedness, mitigation, response and volunteer coordination.



Serve Montana: The Governor's Office of Community Service

The **Governor's Office of Community Service** and the Governor-appointed Montana Commission on Community Service were created in 1993 to promote and expand national service and volunteer opportunities in Montana.



United Way of Yellowstone County

The **United Way of Yellowstone County** mobilizes the caring power of the community to improve lives.



Serendipity Solutions

Serendipity Solutions offers guaranteed grant writing services and training to nonprofit organizations throughout the United States and Caribbean.

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Points of view or opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of FEMA's Grant Programs Directorate or the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

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Some forms in this toolkit are ready to be photocopied.
Others can be customized for your individual organization and community.

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- Volunteers are a valuable resource when they are **trained** and **supervised**
- There is **economic value** in working with volunteers in disasters
- Communities benefit from developing a core group of local residents who can learn how to **manage** spontaneous volunteers
- SUVs = Spontaneous Unaffiliated Volunteers
- Volunteers need to be **flexible**, self-sufficient, and **aware** of risks
- Information is vital to successful management of unaffiliated volunteers

Types of Disaster Volunteers

Traditional Volunteers

- They are already affiliated with a voluntary agency.
- They are trained and liability insurance is covered by another agency.
- They are self-sufficient in disaster response.
- Many traditional volunteers are local; others travel to your community.

Local Volunteers

- Residents who will share special skills if asked.
- They may require training (ex: CPR, First Aid) before volunteering.
- They are typically self-sufficient.
- They can be recruited and engaged throughout the year.

Spontaneous Volunteers

- They appear in the aftermath of a disaster with good intentions.
- They may travel long distances to volunteer in your community.
- They may not be self-sufficient (no housing, no provisions).
- Without coordination, they can create a disaster within a disaster.



Volunteers can provide aid to victims of disaster (food, water, clothing, shelter, transportation); restore calm (debris removal, donation coordination); and prepare the community for future disasters (CPR/First Aid training, assembling disaster kits).

Ideally, all volunteers would be trained and affiliated with a disaster relief organization, church, or social service organization before a disaster strikes. In reality, people feel compelled to help their families, their neighbors, and their communities immediately after an event and descend upon the disaster area – **ready or not**.

The Six Groups

Researchers have identified six different groups of people that tend to flock into a community affected by a disaster. These folks come for different reasons....

The Helpers– the spontaneous, unaffiliated volunteers who show up in varying stages of self-sufficiency, determined to assist and to do it now

The Residents– often returning to the disaster zone to realize they cannot go home so choose to help others until they are cleared to return

The Anxious– family and friends who want to find disaster victims and want access to the disaster zone

The Curious– the people who cannot resist the urge to drive through a community impacted by disaster to see the devastation

The Fans– those who drive through a community to show their support for the first responders and volunteers by shouting, clapping, and waving flags

The Exploiters– individuals and businesses who see money making opportunities in a disaster area

Identifying Stake Holders in Communities

It is a great idea to identify potential volunteers, partners and stakeholders before a disaster strikes in your community. Below is a form that you can use to distribute to groups and individuals to identify assets. Here are some groups that you might consider:

- Local Businesses AmeriCorps Churches Disaster Emergency Services
- County Government Hospital Schools Health Department
- Social Service Agencies Civic Groups Others?

Sample Community Survey

Name of Organization: _____

Contact: _____

Address: _____

City/County: _____ **State/Zip:** _____

Email Address: _____

Office Phone: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____

Primary Role in Disaster: _____

**What could your organization provide to strengthen the Plan?
Please check all that apply.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide facility for a Volunteer Reception Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide Information to Congregation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Host Training in Disaster Preparedness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide Food for Volunteers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Recruit/Provide Team of Volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/>	House Volunteers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sponsor a Special Offering to Support Recovery	<input type="checkbox"/>	Request Food Donations for Victims
<input type="checkbox"/>	Train a CERT Team	<input type="checkbox"/>	Request Other types of donations
<input type="checkbox"/>	Operate a HAM radio	<input type="checkbox"/>	Serve as local leader offering Public Information
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide interpreters (Spanish, sign language)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Offer pilot/aircraft
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide laptop/computer skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	Serve as a Pet Shelter
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide hotel rooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	Offer medical training
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide Hygiene Kits	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

Do you have a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with _____ regarding your organization’s role in disaster? _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

Planning and Preparation: Sample MOU

When you have identified Key Stakeholders, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is recommended between partnering organizations to clearly understand roles and commitments when disaster strikes a community.

SAMPLE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

I. PURPOSE

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) provides a framework within which and _____ will cooperate with each other to carry out their respective responsibilities following a local disaster. _____ will cooperate with _____ as described in this document. _____ and _____ may agree to work to enhance cooperation in other areas without amending this MOU.

II. PARTIES

The parties to this MOU are _____ and _____ Both parties are responsible for the goals and activities contained in this agreement, and shall equally contribute to its success.

Organization # 1 Mission :

Organization # 2 Mission:

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. _____ will, as resources and information are available and as is appropriate, partner and communicate with:
- a. Add the specifics of the collaboration in this section and list the corresponding bullets under the partner organization section.
- B. _____ will, as resources and information are available, and as is appropriate, partner and communicate with _____ as follows:

IV. POINTS OF CONTACT

- A. ADD ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVE NAME HERE WITH PHONE/EMAIL
- B. ADD ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVE NAME HERE WITH PHONE/EMAIL

V. OTHER PROVISIONS

- A. Nothing in this MOU is intended to conflict with current law or regulation or the directives of _____. If a term of this MOU is inconsistent with such authority, then that term shall be invalid, but the remaining terms and conditions of this MOU shall remain in full force and effect.
- B. Nothing in the MOU is intended to restrict the authority of either party to act as provided by law, statute, or regulation.
- C. Nothing in this MOU shall be interpreted as affording _____ or **ADD ORGANIZATION NAME HERE** any role in the content or programming decisions of the other entity.
- D. This MOU is between _____ and **ADD ORGANIZATION NAME HERE** and does not confer or create any right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural,

enforceable at law or equity, or by any third person or party (public or private) against _____, its agencies, its officers, or any person; or against or **ADD ORGANIZATION NAME HERE**, its Governing Board, or any of its staff.

E. This MOU is not a fiscal or funds obligation document.

VI. EFFECTIVE DATE

The terms of this MOU will become effective on the date of the last signature by the respective parties hereto.

VII. MODIFICATION

This MOU may be modified upon the mutual written consent of the parties.

VIII. TERMINATION

This MOU will remain in effect until_____. The term may be extended by mutual written agreement of the parties. Either party may terminate this MOU upon sixty (60) days written notice to the other party.

APPROVED BY:

Date: _____

Date: _____

Funding for Managing Volunteers in Times of Disaster



When Traditional, Local, and Spontaneous Volunteers offer their assistance in disaster preparedness, mitigation, or response it costs money. Who pays for water, tools, and gloves?

Funding for disaster preparation, mitigation and response projects can come from a variety of sources. Grants may come from the government, community foundations, civic groups, human service organizations, and corporate foundations.

Did you know that Office Depot Foundation (stores in Billings, Bozeman, and Helena) **offer grants up to \$3,000 to assist with disaster projects?**

For Example: Office Depot Grant Information

Application Process

The Office Depot Foundation utilizes an on-line grant application process. Materials will only be accepted on-line through the Foundation website. Materials mailed, faxed or sent by overnight delivery will not be accepted unless specifically requested in advance by the Office Depot Foundation.

Grants awarded by the Office Depot Foundation will be a minimum of \$50 and a maximum of \$3,000 (very limited). The majority of grants issued are in the vicinity of \$1,000 and are supported by in-kind donations when inventory allows.

The Office Depot Foundation will consider proposals from organizations related to disaster relief and recovery throughout the year.

Website: <http://officedepotfoundation.org/>

Grant Application

If your organization completes the eligibility survey successfully, you will be asked to complete an online grant application. Specific information that will be requested includes:

General:

- Name of organization
- Tax ID Number
- Contact information
- Date that tax-exempt status was granted
- Chief executive's name and contact information
- Mission Statement

Proposal Information:

- Project title
- Project description
- Project budget
- Amount requested
- Program area, geographical area and population served
- Will the program be sustainable without funding from the Office Depot Foundation?
- List your organization's top five contributors.

Nonprofit organizations will also be asked to upload the following documents:

- Audited financial statement
- Board of Directors list

- IRS Exemption Letter
- Itemized project budget
- Non-SKU-specific product wish list
- Business continuity/disaster preparedness plan (if available)
- FREE [Emergency Response Plan Template](#)

Schools will be asked to upload the following documents:

- W-9 with proof of operation as a school
- Itemized project budget
- Non-SKU-specific product wish list

The online process ensures that the request meets the requirements of the Foundation's donation strategy and that the Foundation's donations are in compliance with federal laws prohibiting the funding of terrorist organizations.

Upon receipt of all of the information, the Office Depot Foundation will review the online application to determine whether the applicant and project are within the Foundation's Program Guidelines. Those that are not within the guidelines will be declined. Applications that are within the guidelines are then reviewed to determine the following:

- The priority of the proposed activity within the Foundation's goals,
- The extent to which the proposal includes collaborative efforts,
- The impact of the potential results of the activities, and
- The availability of the Foundation's funds.

When an online application reflects the Foundation's program priorities and is considered for funding, the Foundation may request additional information. This information should be submitted to the Foundation only upon request.

**YOU CAN ONLY SUBMIT ONE APPLICATION PER CALENDAR YEAR (EX: JAN 01-DEC 31).
DUPLICATE/MULTIPLE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.**



Managing Risk When Utilizing Volunteers



- **Create a volunteer position description (see page 18).** List skills and abilities necessary to complete task and make certain the volunteer understands the position description before signing form.
- **Register the volunteer (see page 19) using an application.** Basic information can be gathered, even in disasters, to identify volunteers and track their contact information, skill set, etc. **Interview the volunteer (see page 21)** to determine special skills and talents.
- **Document/track the volunteer (see page 54) by requiring sign in/sign out forms.** Volunteers may not live in your community and you, as the coordinator, may be the only person who knows where they are volunteering at any particular time.
- **Provide a safety briefing (see pages 58 and 59)** and ensure that the volunteer signs a form indicating that was read and understood.
- **Check with your county government** to ensure correct verbiage on all forms.

Sample Volunteer Position Description

Volunteer Position Description

Position Title _____
Reports to _____

Overview of Position

Specific Tasks:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Time Required: _____

Qualifications: _____

Physical and Age Requirements: _____

Skills and Education: _____

Experience: _____

Training: _____

I have read and I understand the Position Description for this volunteer opportunity.

Volunteer's Signature

Date

Sample Volunteer Registration Form – From United Way of Yellowstone County

Volunteer Application (with references)



I. General Information

Date: _____

Applicant's Name: _____
Last First M.I.

Address: _____ City: _____ ST: _____ Zip: _____

Day Phone: _____ Age if under 18: _____ (Parent signature required if under 18)

Evening Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

II. Volunteering

If you are applying for a specific position, please specify: _____

Please state why you wish to be a volunteer with this organization. _____

How did you learn about the volunteer program(s) of the United Way of Yellowstone County?

- Newspaper/Radio/TV
- Friend/Colleague/Family
- Group Presentation
- YouCanVolunteer.org
- Staff at the United Way or Volunteer Center
- Other _____

Do you prefer short-term long-term special projects flexible

III. Employment History

Current Employer: _____ Phone #: _____

Title or Job Description: _____

Start Date: ___/___/___ (mo/yr) End Date: ___/___/___ (mo/yr)

Describe types of previous employment: _____

IV. Education, Skills and Interests

	Name of School	# of years	Degrees	Applicable Coursework
High School:	_____	_____	_____	_____
College:	_____	_____	_____	_____
Other:	_____	_____	_____	_____

Are you currently attending school? Yes No (circle one) What grade/level? _____

Please list any hobbies, interests, or special skills you feel will be beneficial to this position. _____

Please list and describe any community-based organizations you currently belong to or have belonged to in the past relevant to this position. _____

V. References Request (Please fill out if not crossed out)

A release of information is included. Please provide the names and addresses of two non-family member references preferably those familiar with your work.

1. Name: _____ Relation: _____
Address: _____ Phone: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____
Email: _____

2. Name: _____ Relation: _____
Address: _____ Phone: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____
Email: _____

VI. Disclaimer

I, _____, certify that all answers on the application and any attachments are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I also certify that I have not withheld any pertinent information. I hereby give my permission for United Way of Yellowstone County to verify any information included in this application and authorize the United Way of Yellowstone County to obtain information from the individuals above for the purpose of a personal reference if required for this position. I further agree to release and hold harmless the United Way of Yellowstone County, institutions and any references listed above and any law enforcement agency from all liability and any damage that may result from furnishing this information to you.

I understand that I may be asked to give a background check and other personal information needed depending on the volunteer position and will abide by the program's policies and procedures.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

PARENT or GUARDIAN SIGNATURE if applicant is a minor:

I understand that my signature indicates my approval of my child's participation as a volunteer with your organization.

Please print name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

STAFF USE ONLY:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Application | <input type="checkbox"/> Placement | <input type="checkbox"/> Background Check |
| <input type="checkbox"/> References | <input type="checkbox"/> Orientation | <input type="checkbox"/> Position Specific Training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interview | <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of Photo ID | |

Additional Comments: _____

Interview Potential Volunteers

Voluntary and Community Action

Volunteer Interest Interview

Title
First Name:
Family Name: **Male/Female** (please circle)

Address:

 Zip code:
 Daytime Telephone: Evening Telephone:
 Mobile
 Email:

How did you hear about this Volunteer Service?

Areas of interest	Type of Activity
Please tick any of the following that interest you	Please tick any following that you would like to do

Animals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Art and Culture	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disaster Relief	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domestic Violence	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drugs and Addictions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education and Literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Elderly	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Families	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gay, Lesbian Bi and Transsexual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health, Hospitals and Hospices	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heritage	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homeless and Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human and Civil Rights	<input type="checkbox"/>
International Aid	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal Aid and Justice	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental Health	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mentoring	<input type="checkbox"/>
Millennium Volunteers (16-25yr)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Museums	<input type="checkbox"/>
Music	<input type="checkbox"/>
Politics	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prisoners and Ex-offenders	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race and Ethnicity and Refugees	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sport and Outdoor Activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Women's Group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Youth	<input type="checkbox"/>

Administrator	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice Work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Architecture and Building Work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Art	<input type="checkbox"/>
Befriending	<input type="checkbox"/>
Business and Management	<input type="checkbox"/>
Campaigning and Lobbying	<input type="checkbox"/>
Caring	<input type="checkbox"/>
Catering	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computers and Technology	<input type="checkbox"/>
Website Design	<input type="checkbox"/>
Counselling	<input type="checkbox"/>
Driving	<input type="checkbox"/>
Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Finance Work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fundraising	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hostel Work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Languages	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal Work	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marketing, PR and Media	<input type="checkbox"/>
Music	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practical Work and DIY	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retail and Charity Shops	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching and Training	<input type="checkbox"/>
Trusteeship	<input type="checkbox"/>
Under 16 Volunteering	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>
One Off Volunteering	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>

Aç Please tick the boxes below to show the days and times when you are available.

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
AM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EVE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

One off events: Would you be interested in attending on-off volunteering events? Yes No

In which area do you want to volunteer?

Give brief details of any skills you would like to use:

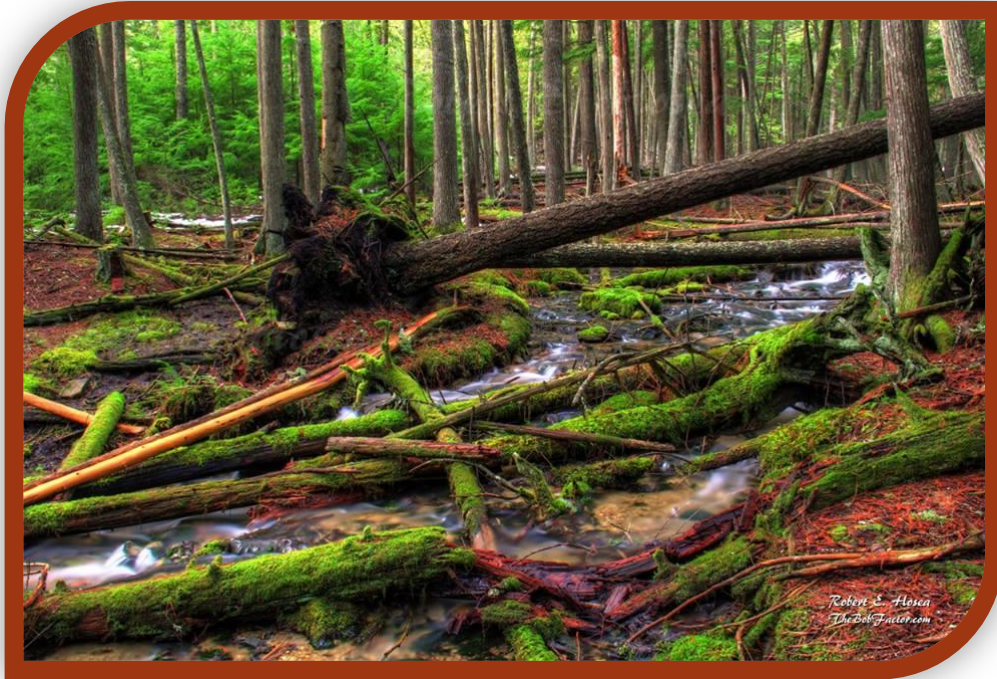
Data Protection:
 At no time will we provide any of your details to a third party, e.g. volunteering organization without your permission. You have the right to see any information about you that we hold in a retrieval system such as a computer database or paper index system. You have the right to challenge us about any information relating to you that we hold in a retrieval system and to have this information changed. You have the right for your details to be removed from a retrieval system. We may compile statistical data from time to time but this will never include references to a particular individual. In order to keep you up to date with information and events we may include you in our mailing list or email list. We never sell or give mailing lists to a commercial third party.

If you have decided which organization(s) you would like to make contact with please indicate below and we will pass your contact details to them. If you need further help and guidance and would like an interview with volunteer services please tick this box

Organization	Opportunity	Date contacted

Print Name _____ Signed _____
 Date _____

Training Opportunities for Volunteers



The **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** offers a variety of online courses to prepare volunteers for disaster preparedness, mitigation, and response.

<https://www.fema.gov/training-1>

The **American Red Cross (ARC)** offers online training courses for volunteers.

CPR/AED First Aid Bloodborne Pathogens

<http://www.redcross.org/take-a-class>

Domestic Preparedness Consortium offers online training at no cost.

<https://www.ruraltraining.org>

Volunteer Management Toolkit offers templates and forms for coordinating volunteers.

<https://www.serve.mt.gov/volunteer-mgmt-toolkit/>

You may find other local resources to provide excellent training, such as:

County Health Department

The American Heart Association

Fire Department

Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)

Keeping Volunteers Engaged Year Round

Imagine what would happen if enthusiastic volunteers were trained, skilled, and ready to share their time and talents.....but there are no disaster or emergency events for months ...even years. Those volunteers will affiliate with organizations that can utilize them year round! Here are some project ideas to effectively utilize volunteers in disaster preparation and mitigation activities.

More Mitigation Project Ideas can be found at www.fema.gov

Property Maintenance for Senior Citizens

Many older residents cannot afford, physically or financially, to make minor repairs. Volunteers can assist with minor repairs, building handicap accessible ramps, etc.

Winter Snow and Ice Removal

Volunteers can clear sidewalks and driveways for folks unable to do it themselves.

Computer Lessons/Social Media Training

Volunteers can teach residents to use technology. Navigating social media (Twitter, Facebook) is essential in times of disasters. Volunteers can help set up accounts and teach the basics to residents in a community.

Faith Based Community Liaison

Understanding the resources available from every church in the area is crucial in times of disaster. Volunteers can gather the information, design a web site dedicated to disasters, and connect the resources with the community through social media. Perfect for youth volunteers!

Debris Removal/Razing Properties

Clearing debris and razing properties can eliminate hazards in a community. "Tipping fees" from local landfills may be waived if volunteers offer to clean properties.

Planting and Landscaping

Common areas (parks, roadways, fields) can be cleaned, trees can be planted, areas can be landscaped. Farm Service Agency (FSA) offices might donate saplings or seeds.

Transportation Service

Seniors and persons with disabilities often find it difficult to get to and from appointments or go grocery shopping. Volunteers can offer to do shopping or take them along.

Evening Meal Preparation and Delivery

Meals on Wheels serves many communities with hot lunches. Evening meals could be prepared by volunteers, frozen, and delivered weekly to vulnerable residents.

Facilitate Trainings

Host training opportunities and tabletop exercises ([see page 25](#)) to engage volunteers and increase skills and knowledge regarding disaster preparation, mitigation, response and recovery.



Chuck Lee –DES - Fallon County, shared:

“This is from a BNSF derailment that happened on 8-5-12 in Plevna. Plevna is 12 miles West of Baker, in Fallon County, Montana. There were many derailed cars, and 4 Ethanol Tank cars exploded. The derailment was caused by extreme heat that day which separated the tracks.”

Disaster Exercises

Tabletop exercises and conversations with colleagues (staff, volunteers) are a great way to brainstorm ideas on effective utilization of volunteers. What roles are possible for volunteer involvement?

A good way to start is with a scenario for which response actions can be discussed.

Cheri Kilby, Disaster Emergency Services (DES) Coordinator from Fergus County, created a card game to engage members of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC).

Discussion Cards

Instructions: Make two sets of cards, information below. Draw one card from the “incident” set and one from the “problem” set. This gives you the basis to begin a discussion. For example:

- The incident card selected was **abduction**. Group chose to focus on a baby abduction from a hospital. The problem card selected was **communications**. Discussion focused on internal hospital protocol and then external communications—who is notified, when, how.
- Selection of **Flooding** as the incident and **Volunteers (excessive)** could lead to considering what would you do with them, how would you handle the overwhelming numbers—how do you feed, house them and make them part of a solution not part of the problem.
- One way **collection of resources** could be defined is that too many or too few resources have responded. No one answers a page so how is that handled? Do we have the right protocol for ordering or cancelling resources.

The combination of possibilities provides avenues for many considerations.

You may add your own problems and/or incidents. Make the cards work for your community.

First set of card back is labeled: **INCIDENT**

Evacuation of _____ (I put in a larger nursing home, a state nursing home, school, etc)

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Tornado | Flooding |
| Terrorism Event | Multiple Vehicle Accident |
| Evacuation of Hospital | Hazmat in _____ (Spring Creek) |
| Epidemic | Mass Casualty |
| Bank Robbery | School Fire |
| Evacuation of City | Hostage Situation |
| VIP Situation | Main Street Structure Fire |
| Dam Failure | Aircraft Accident |
| Fire in Apartment Building | Armed Intruder in School |
| Military Aircraft Accident | Bleacher Collapse |
| Utility Failure | Active Shooter |
| Bus Crash | Bomb Threat |
| Confined Space Rescue | Animal Disease at Auction Yard |
| Wildfire | Severe Storm |
| Evacuation of Town | Earthquake |
| Semi Hazmat | Severe Winter Storm |
| Large Planned Event | Abduction |

Second Set of Cards on the Back: **PROBLEM**

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Collection of Resources | Coordination of Transportation |
| Congestion | Communication |
| Major Transportation Routes Closed | Volunteers (lack) |
| Volunteers (excessive) | |

Acknowledging Volunteers

Thanks, Volunteers!

Recognize Outstanding Contributions

In addition to recognizing volunteers for the hours that they work, you can also implement a formal rewards program for outstanding contributions. Who went above and beyond during the disaster relief effort? Surprise them at their place of employment or at their church with balloons or flowers or both!

Spotlight a Volunteer

Write a story about a volunteer's efforts and send it to your local newspaper. Send photos, too!

Volunteer Appreciation Events

Holding a volunteer appreciation event of some type can be an excellent way to demonstrate to volunteers that their generosity is valued. If your community survived a major disaster and many volunteers shared their skills in response, an event is warranted. Many organizations hold a luncheon or reception that all active volunteers are invited to attend. Awards and recognition for outstanding achievements and service hours are often presented at these types of events. If your budget doesn't include funding for this type of volunteer appreciation event, you may want to seek a sponsor to help fund at least an annual gathering for those who help your organization accomplish its mission without any expectation of payment for their efforts.

Thank You Notes

One of the most simple and inexpensive, yet often overlooked, way to express appreciation to volunteers is with personal thank you notes. Hand written thank you notes can be a very meaningful way to let volunteers know that their efforts are truly appreciated. Make sure that the notes are personalized and express sincere thanks for time contributed and a job well done. If you send notes that seem like form letters, your efforts can actually backfire.

The President's Volunteer Service Award

The PVSA is the premier volunteer awards program, encouraging citizens to live a life of service throughout presidential gratitude and national recognition. The awards range from \$2.25 to \$8.00 per volunteer.

Learn more: www.presidentialserviceawards.gov

After the Disaster

Volunteer Assistance with Disaster Management

Volunteers can be effectively involved in ways that help with the management of the incident.

Operations of the Emergency Management Center (EOC);

- Serve as the Volunteer Function Coordinator at the EOC: manage volunteers helping at the EOC; take calls related to volunteer offers of help; provide input into the need to open a Volunteer Reception Center; serve as the communications link between the EOC and a VRC
- Set-up the EOC facility or space for a press conference
- Check people in and out of the EOC
- Help scribe or serve as an assistant to members of the EOC management team
- Be a runner to carry communications inside and outside if needed
- Help with food, coffee, other refreshments
- Answer phones and make inquiries/calls as instructed
- Disperse information and help with social media (give clear instructions as to what to say and what not to say)
- Monitor all types of media to be aware of what messages are being circulated

Volunteers can manage a Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) when emergency management determines the need to manage local, traditional and spontaneous volunteers.

Volunteer Reception Centers (VRC)

A Disaster Occurs. Putting the plan into motion.

The Volunteer Reception Center registers, screens, and places Spontaneous Volunteers in available opportunities in times of disaster

Volunteer Reception Centers (VRC) are opened only when local emergency management feels it is necessary to do so. Typically, VRCs are opened within 48 hours after a disaster (as long as the roads are safe to travel). VRCs operate daily, during daylight hours, until spontaneous volunteers become affiliated with organizations and emergency management determines a date to close.

The aim of a VRC is to connect spontaneous volunteers with requesting agencies. This is done by registering and interviewing potential volunteers, assigning them to a volunteer opportunity that meets their needs and skills, providing safety training, and issuing volunteer identification.

Extensive planning is required to identify possible locations and staff, likely volunteer roles at requesting agencies and developing Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) between the many stakeholders, in advance.

The decision to set up a VRC should be made by the local or state government and is carried out by the organization previously identified as responsible for VRCs.

Individuals and organizations should NOT self-deploy and make an independent decision to establish VRCs.

Effectively documenting volunteers' activities is crucial for FEMA reimbursement and risk management.

Train a group of local volunteers to manage a VRC by facilitating a VRC Simulation Exercise!

VRC Exercise - Simulation

A VRC Simulation is an effective way to prepare individuals and organizations for spontaneous volunteers in disaster response.

VRC Exercise, Setup, Briefing and Play

Exercise set-up (before participants arrive)

- Arrange VRC Station tables and chairs for smooth flow of people through separate entrance and exit if available
- Distribute pre-packaged envelopes of materials needed at each Station
- Tape signs on walls over the VRC Stations
- Tape Job Descriptions to tables at each Station
- Place a hat or flag (to summon Runners) at each Station
- Tape portable whiteboard (laminated 3'x8' sheet of poster paper) on a wall. (Masking tape is safest.)
- Write some of your volunteer requests (in alternating colors) on the whiteboard. File those request forms in the "Open Requests" file. This gets the play started more quickly. New requests are added as old ones are completed.

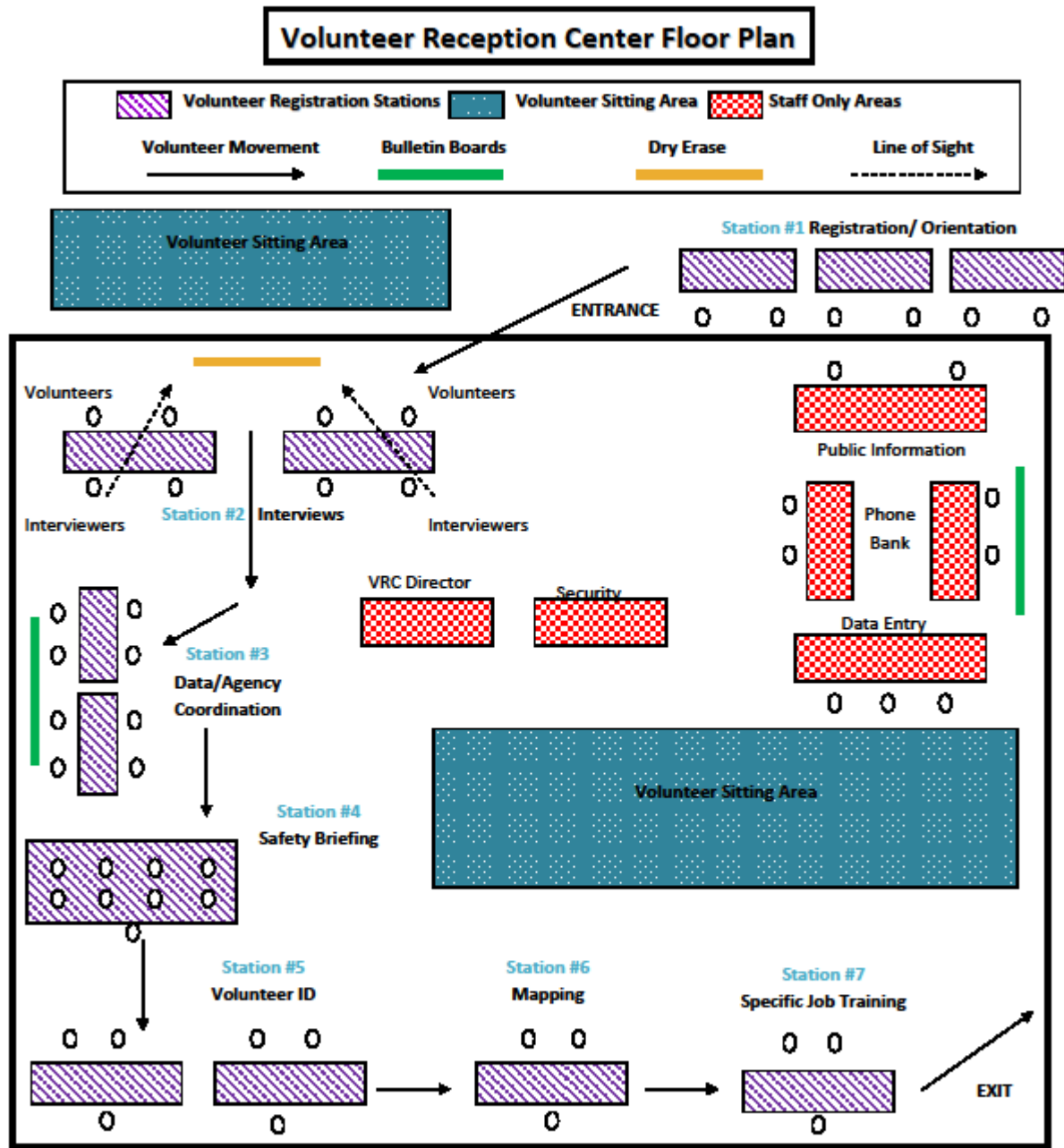
Briefing

- As participants arrive, ask them to fill up the chairs at the Stations first, then those in the middle of the room. Ask those at the Stations to read the Job Descriptions taped there.
- Pass out disaster scenario sheets and Station badges
- Explain the premise of this training: Disaster volunteers will come to help, whether you have planned for them or not. Hundreds or thousands of unaffiliated (and unplanned for) volunteers will hinder rather than help the traditional response agencies.
- Discuss who will/could operate a Volunteer Reception Center, if one is needed locally.
- Review signs and ask someone seated at each VRC station to explain what happens at their station.
- Discuss the need for accurate record keeping. (Liability, proof that safety and job training were provided, and local match for FEMA reimbursement)
- Explain why the VRC doesn't do background checks on volunteers and that such checks are the responsibility of the receiving agency.
- Pass out volunteer registration forms. Ask each person to fill out one with their real-life information, and a second for a new persona (be creative!) with new skills. (You may or may not want people to go around twice. Extra discussion time might be more valuable.)

Begin the role play exercise

- Begin processing volunteers, watching to be sure Runners respond as needed.
- To keep the play moving smoothly, VRC Director should respond quickly to raised hands, confused expressions and any signs of frustration in your participants. (Someone else with experience could help as a facilitator.)
- If a question pertains to only that one Station, such as clarification of the Job Description, try to answer it on the spot.
- For questions that seem to involve more than one Station, say something like "That is a valid question and a very important point. Could you please bring it up again when we stop the play to discuss some of these issues?"
- Pause the play once or twice as needed. Encourage participants to ask their questions, voice concerns, etc. (Often the problems are caused by forms not being completed properly.) Ask participants to suggest solutions and engage the group in solving the problems. (Some suggestions will be impractical for reasons beyond participants' knowledge.)
- Stop play 15-20 minutes before the scheduled end of your training. Lead a discussion of the Post Exercise Questions if they are appropriate to your trainees. Answer participant questions.
- Discuss the importance of consistency in VRC plans throughout the state or region to facilitate mutual support.

VRC Setup Map



A complete Volunteer Reception Center Manual can be found at http://www.bigbendcoad.org/uploads/3/1/7/4/3174850/vrc_manual_2012doc.pdf

VRC Supplies and Equipment

Volunteer Reception Center Supplies & Equipment

The following items are recommended for the Coordinating Agency's "GO BOX." Quantities listed here are the minimum to set up and operate the VRC initially. Additional materials will need to be available as replacements if the VRC will be in operation for more than a day or two. Depending upon the magnitude of the event, the VRC Coordinator should arrange for the purchase of additional supplies. Note that this list does NOT include food service for staff and volunteers.

Office Supplies

Water-based markers
Pens (3 boxes of 12)
Highlighter (3)
Pencils (3 boxes, sharpened)
Copy paper (2 reams)
Flip Chart pad & easel
3 x 5 index cards & file box
12 file folders, labels
4 hanging file folders, labels
3 milk crates
Push pins (pack of 100)
Clipboards (minimum 5)
Stapler, staples
Masking tape
Clear tape
Staff name tags
Post-its (pack of 10)
#10 envelopes
3-ring binders (3), 3-hole punch
Scissors
Pencil sharpener (manual)
Paper clips (box 100)
200 hospital ID bracelets
ID permanent markers
24 runner signal flags
2 bulletin boards
VRC staff "uniform"
(eg: neck scarves, armbands, caps)

Forms

Volunteer instructions (25 x 4)
VRC Volunteer Registration forms (100)
VRC Request for Volunteers forms (100)
Volunteer referral forms (3-part; color coded)
Staff & volunteer sign-in forms
Expense forms
Oath & Waiver forms (if required)
Orientation attendance
Safety briefing forms

Lists, maps, contact information

VRC Floor schematic
City, county maps
Emergency cell phone, email lists
VRC job descriptions

Equipment

Laptop, printer, software, database access
VRC Signage, poles
2 large dry-erase white boards, stands
Battery operated radio, batteries
Battery operated clock
Digital camera, batteries
Phone system (rollover w/extra lines)
Coffee urn, cups, coffee, supplies
Large ice chest
Flashlights, batteries
Bottled water
Paper towels
Toilet paper

Volunteer Reception Center Flow Description

1. Volunteers enter volunteer reception center.
2. Volunteer completes registration and liability waiver form at the registration/greeter table.
3. Volunteer obtains identification from volunteer identification table.
4. Volunteer participates in safety briefing.
5. Volunteer is assigned a team and job at the job assignment table.
6. Volunteer obtains equipment at the logistics table.
7. Volunteer exits reception center and proceeds to job site as directed.
8. Volunteer completes assigned job.
9. Volunteer returns to volunteer reception center.
10. Volunteer signs out at volunteer reception center.

VRC Position Descriptions

This section contains the “training and exercise” version of the position descriptions for the various staff roles of the Volunteer Reception Center. The descriptions represent the functions that will actually be done during a VRC exercise. The remaining functions must be done in a real disaster VRC, but are not practical to do in an exercise.

It is helpful to tape the position descriptions to the appropriate tables and allow trainees to read and become familiar with their roles prior to starting the exercise. Asking them to describe for the rest of the participants what will happen at their station gives them an opportunity to confirm their understanding and to ask questions.

VRC Director

Your job is to oversee the operation of the Volunteer Reception Center. You will:

- 0 Clearly designate one entrance and one exit
- 0 Set up the room for efficient flow of volunteers and information
- 0 Brief and assign tasks to staff and volunteers of the center
- 0 Monitor the operation and make staffing changes when necessary
- 0 Maintain all records of safety and job training provided to volunteers, and hours worked in the VRC by employees and volunteers
- 0 Turn all records in to the County Budget Department weekly or at end of the activation

You should meet and thank all volunteers who help in the VRC and instruct them to sign in and out on the Volunteer Sign-in / Sign-out Record daily. Instruct paid staff to sign in on the Employee Sign-in / Sign-out Record daily. In a fast-paced disaster response, both paid and volunteer staff will need regular reminders to sign in and out.

Items needed:

- 0 ID badge
- 0 Tables and chairs (see sample room layout for details)
- 0 “Go Box” containing office supplies and forms to stock your VRC for the first 2-3 days
- 0 Items on the Supplies and Equipment list

VRC Greeters

(Station #1 Registration)

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 there to volunteer, thank them, give them a “Volunteer Instructions” sheet and ask them to fill out a registration form. When the form is completed, direct them to the next available interviewer at Station #2.
- If they are media personnel, direct them to the Public Information Officer.
- If they are disaster survivors needing assistance, refer them to the appropriate relief organization and, if appropriate, the FEMA registration process.
- If they are bringing cleaning supplies, nonperishable food, etc., to donate, refer them to an agency that is accepting donated goods.

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, if they prefer, to come back later.

Items needed:

- ID badges
- Sign (Station #1 Registration)
- Table or clipboards and chairs for volunteers to use for filling out their forms
- Supply of “Volunteer Instructions” handouts
- Supply of Disaster Volunteer Registration Forms
- Pens
- Flag or hat to summon runners

VRC Interviewers

(Station #2 Interviews)

Your job is to do a quick interview of the prospective volunteer and refer him/her to a job at an agency appropriate to his abilities and interests. Requests for volunteers will be posted on a board in front of you (behind the volunteers being interviewed) and will be erased as the needs are filled. If the VRC 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. With the volunteer, verify its completeness and accuracy, and use it as a guide from which to inquire more about the volunteer's skills. At the conclusion of the interview, keep his registration form. When the volunteer accepts an assignment, complete a Referral form, filling in all information requested, sign or initial it and give it to the volunteer and instruct him to report to Data Coordination (Station #3).

Before you signal the Greeter that you are ready for another interview, take a minute to jot down in the "Notes" section anything about the volunteer you feel is important and that the volunteer did not include on his registration form (a special skill, an obvious physical limitation, etc.) If your center decides to use the blind field labeled "Office Use Only*," check the appropriate box. Place his registration form in the file.

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 may seem self-serving, but if the VRC has sufficient staff and works effectively, the community will benefit!)
- It is likely that some volunteers will exhibit the stress of the disaster – they may be survivors themselves. An extra measure of patience and understanding is needed.
- **You may be called upon to train new volunteers to assist with the interviewing.**

The VRC Director should determine appropriate use of the "Office Use Only" field. It is intended to provide a customizable "blind" field in which special information can be noted about volunteers. If, for future referral of that volunteer, it would be helpful to know his general level of ability to work independently, boxes 1-5 could be coded: **1. Learns quickly, able to supervise the activities of others; **2.** Would work well independently, good decision making skills; **3.** Needs some supervision and assistance with decision making; **4.** Needs close or constant supervision; and **5.** Has a mental, physical or emotional limitation to consider in making a referral.*

Items needed:

- 0 An ID badge for each interviewer
- 0 2-3 tables and 8-12 chairs (see floor plan)
- 0 Sign (Station #2 Interviews)
- 0 Supply of Referral forms
- 0 Flag or hat to summon runners
- 0 Pens
- 0 File for maintaining Volunteer Registration Forms in alphabetical order

VRC Data/Agency Coordinator

(Station #3 Data/Agency Coordination)

When a volunteer brings you his Referral form, pull the corresponding Request for Volunteers form from the file. Enter his name and the date of the referral on the bottom of the Request form. Place your initials in the appropriate box on his Referral form. Direct the volunteer to Station #4 for a Safety Briefing.

As you have time, call the agency contact to let him know who or how many volunteers have been referred. Confirm with the agency contact whether you should continue referring volunteers or close out the Request.

When a Request has been filled, raise your flag or put on the hat to call a runner and ask him to confirm that the request has been removed from the board.

Enter the date and reason the request was closed (completed, no longer needed, etc.) at the bottom of the Request form. If your Requests for Volunteers have been entered into a database, be sure to enter the date and reason the Request was closed as soon as possible. Place open Requests in one file and closed Requests in the other, alphabetically by agency.

You may have to call an agency contact to clarify the agency's Request. When you speak with an agency contact, record the information on the Request form in the section called "Follow-up Contacts with Requesting Agency."

Items needed:

- 0 An ID Badge for each staff member
- 0 Sign (Station #3 Agency / Data Coordination)
- 0 Two tables and four chairs
- 0 Phone
- 0 Two sets of files – one for open Requests for Volunteers and one for closed out Requests
- 0 Pens
- 0 Computer, if available, networked to the computers at the Phone Bank station
- 0 Flag or hat to summon runners

VRC Phone Bank Staff

You will be handling two types of calls, those from agencies requesting volunteers and those from people wanting to volunteer. The information you record about each call must be complete and in sufficient detail to facilitate matching volunteers to the needs. DO take control of each call immediately. It is much more efficient to ask the questions in the order in which they appear on the form. (If the caller takes control you will find yourself scribbling in the margins and will not get all the required information.)

When an agency calls to request volunteers, fill out a Request for Volunteers form while you are speaking with the agency caller. If there is a computer available for entering the request into a database, Data Entry staff should enter the need as soon as possible, or could enter the data directly while speaking to the caller.

Next, call a runner by raising the flag at your station. Ask the Runner to post the volunteer request on the board in view of the Interviewers (Station #2) and then to give the Request for Volunteers form to the Data Coordinator (Station #3).

When people call to volunteer, thank them and give them the following registration options: (This will need to be edited to reflect the system being used.)

- They may register in person at the VRC, and will be given instructions when they arrive.
- They may register on-line, and will be e-mailed regarding possible assignments and given further instructions. If the caller represents a group that wishes to volunteer together, ask him to be patient while you determine where they can be of most help. It might take one day or several to match a volunteer with a need, especially if he is coming from out of town.
- When a match (a position) is found for that volunteer, e-mail or call him back. Ask him to print the registration form he completed on-line and schedule a time for him to come to the VRC to turn in his signed registration form and complete the registration process.

Items needed:

- An ID Badge for each staff member
- Sign (Phone Bank)
- Supply of Request for Volunteers forms
- Flag or hat to summon a runner
- Two tables and four chairs
- Phones
- Pens

VRC Data Entry

(Edit as needed to reflect the system being used.)

Your job is to enter the information from the Volunteer Registration and Request for Volunteers forms into the database so that an accurate record can be maintained of who participated in the recovery effort, what kinds of work they did and when it was performed.

After the initial influx of volunteers has subsided, you may have time to begin entering the referrals recorded on the Request for Volunteers forms and to close out the completed Requests. As needed by VRC staff, print updated lists of the unfilled Requests and ask a Runner to distribute copies to Phone Bank staff, Data Coordination, Interviewers and, if requested, the VRC Director.

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 document the number of agencies and volunteers participating in the relief effort and the number of hours served.

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

Items needed:

- 0 An ID Badge
- 0 One table and two chairs
- 0 Printer
- 0 Pens
- 0 Flag
- 0 One or more computers (multiple computers should be networked to provide all users access to information on the status of volunteer requests and the availability of volunteers.)

VRC Safety Trainers

(Station #4 Safety Briefing)

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. Pass around a clipboard with an attendance sheet and check to be sure that all participants have signed it.

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, put on the hat to summon a runner. Ask the runner to summon the VRC Director or other VRC staff to answer the question. At the conclusion of the briefing, direct volunteers to Station #5 Volunteer ID.

Attach a copy of the safety briefing script/handout to the attendance sheet for each class, file them in the folder and turn them in to the VRC Director daily.

Maintenance of these records is important to help protect the Volunteer Reception Center, voluntary agencies and emergency management officials from liability, should a volunteer be injured on the job.

Items needed:

- An ID Badge
- Sign (Station #4 Safety Training)
- Flag or hat to summon runners
- Clipboard with attendance sheets
- Pen
- Stapler
- List of additional training required by specific worksites, training locations and instructors
- 10 or more chairs, preferably in a semi-circle so everyone is facing the Safety Trainer
- A supply of Safety Training handouts

VRC Volunteer ID Staff

(Station #5 Volunteer ID)

(Edit as necessary to reflect the identification procedures being used.)

Thank all volunteers for coming out and ask to see their Referral forms. Clearly write on 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 "good" only for the date(s) written on the band. Authorities may 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.

Some volunteers will be required to take additional training for their particular assignment. When your briefing is concluded, direct those volunteers to where job training is being provided. Direct all others to the exit or to transportation to their work sites if available.

For this exercise, please ask participants to take a seat in the sitting area in the middle of the room. They may trade places with a VRC staff member as time allows.

If you need assistance, please raise your flag or put on the hat to summon a Runner.

Items needed:

- 0 ID Badges
- 0 Two tables and four chairs
- 0 Sign (Station #4 Volunteer I.D. Tags)
- 0 Supply of volunteer ID wristbands
- 0 Fine point indelible markers
- 0 Scissors
- 0 Flag or hat to summon runners

VRC maps ID Staff

(Station #6 Maps)

Thank all volunteers for offering to help and ask to see their Referral Forms. Using a street map, show volunteers where their work assignment is located. Smaller strip maps may also be drawn and printed to hand out to volunteers.

If there is a phone at the Maps Station, you may provide that phone number in case the volunteer gets lost. Remind them that they also have contact information for the agency or work site to which they were referred.

Some volunteers will be required to take additional training for their particular assignment. Direct those volunteers to where job training is being provided. Direct all others to the exit or to transportation to their work sites if available.

If you need assistance, please raise your flag or put on the hat to summon a Runner.

Items needed:

- 0 ID Badges
- 0 Two tables and four chairs
- 0 Sign (Station #6 Maps)
- 0 Supply of strip maps to various worksites or agencies
- 0 Pens or markers
- 0 Flag or hat to summon runners

VRC Runners

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 by raising a flag or putting on a hat 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.

One Runner should be stationed at the board on which Requests for Volunteers are posted. As a volunteer is referred, place a tally mark or otherwise indicate next to that request the number of volunteers referred. This prevents referring too many volunteers to a request.

Runners posting new Requests for Volunteers on the board, should 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).

Items needed:

- An ID Badge
- Dry erase marker or water-soluble marker
(Dry erase markers should not be used on a laminated “portable white board.”)
- Dry eraser or damp sponges

Roles for Volunteers

Participating in Volunteer Reception Center Simulation/Exercise

Ask some of your volunteers to role play, pretending to be in distress for a variety of reasons. All of these situations have actually happened at Volunteer Reception Centers, so it will be interesting to see how your VRC “staff” responds....

Cut these into strips and distribute to volunteers before they enter the exercise:

- You are a young, single mother who wants to help but you need to bring your 5 year old daughter with you.
- You represent the Disasterville Doggies, a 5 member local country western band that wants to help. The rest of the band is waiting outside.
- You are an adult leader of a Girl Scout troop that is eager to help. You have 5 girls, ages 11-14, with one adult and one college student leader.
- You are a company executive who has 12 employees with a variety of office skills (clerical, computer, customer service) who can help. You tried calling the Red Cross but could not get through to anyone on the phone.
- You represent a group of 8 nuns in a van with chainsaws ready to go.
- You are a young woman who says her employer, a pizza restaurant, had to close because of the disaster. You came to the VRC on a bicycle.
- You are a couple in their 40’s who will do anything to help. One of you is a human resources specialist and the other is a teacher.
- You are a brawny guy with a pick-up truck that insists on being given the name of a place to help. There is no way you are going to wait to be interviewed.
- You are an elderly woman who walks with a cane and refuses to leave until given a job to do.

- You represent a group of 15 people from a church who are concerned about people who have lost power and are dependent on medical equipment. You want to do something but you don't know who to contact.
- You are a disaster victim. You have already tried to talk to FEMA and the Red Cross and you want assistance NOW since no one has helped you at other places.
- You only speak Spanish.
- You are a reporter for the local ABC affiliate. You've come to find out what is going on at the VRC and you're on a tight deadline for this evening's news.
- You just got stung by a wasp outside the VRC and you're allergic to stings.
- You're stressed out about all of the damage to your house and you've been drinking....that is quite obvious.
- You want to convert everyone in the VRC to your religion. Talk to everyone about your concern for their salvation.
- You are blind and want to volunteer today.
- You are a truck driver who has 25 pallets of frozen chicken breasts that were donated by a grocery store 100 miles away. You've been all over town trying to deliver them to people in need. You're tired, frustrated, and determined to unload the chicken at the VRC. You will not take "no" for an answer.
- You are not literate. Ask for the forms to be read to you and for someone to complete the registration form for you.
- You have your handgun with you and fully intend to take it with you into the disaster area for your own protection. Mention this in your interview.
- You are only interested in rescuing puppies and refuse to be involved in any other volunteer activity today. Be insistent.

Sample VRC Volunteer Registration Form

DISASTER VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM

(Please print clearly. Submit at Volunteer Reception Center or email/fax (see reverse))

Mr. ___ Mrs. ___ Ms. ___ Name _____ Birth Date _____ Day Phone _____
 E-mail address _____ Evening Phone _____
 Home Address _____ City _____ ST _____ Zip _____
 Emergency Contact _____ Relationship _____ Emergency Phone _____
 Your Occupation _____ Employer _____
 Business Address _____ City _____ ST _____ Zip _____
 Are you a year-round resident? ___ Yes ___ No Months you are available _____
 If you have any health limitations, please explain _____
 I am willing to volunteer in: ___ this county ___ a neighboring county ___ anywhere in the state ___ anywhere in the U.S.
 Are you currently affiliated with a disaster relief agency? If yes, name of agency: _____
 Special skills and/or vocational/disaster training: _____

SKILLS: Please check all that apply.

<p>MEDICAL</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Doctor – Specialty: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nurse – Specialty: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Emergency medical cert.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mental health counseling</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Veterinarian</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Veterinary technician</p> <p>COMMUNICATIONS</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> CB / ham operator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hotline operator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cell phone # _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Satellite phone # _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Public relations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Web page design</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Public speaker</p> <p>Language other than English:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> French</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> German</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Italian</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Spanish</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Russian</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Creole</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>OFFICE SUPPORT</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Clerical – filing, copying</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Data entry – Software: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Phone receptionist</p> <p>SERVICES</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Food</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Assistance to elderly.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Child care</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual counseling</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Social work</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Search and rescue</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Auto repair/towing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Traffic control</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Crime watch</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Animal rescue</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Animal care</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Runner</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Functional needs support _____</p> <p>STRUCTURAL</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Damage assessment</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Metal construction</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Wood construction</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Block construction</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Cert. # _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Plumbing</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Cert. # _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Electrical</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Cert. # _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Roofing</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Cert. # _____</p>	<p>TRANSPORTATION</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Car</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mini van</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Maxi-van, capacity _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ATV</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Own off-road veh/4wd</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Own truck, description: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Own boat, capacity _____</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Type: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Commercial driver</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Class & license #:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Camper/RV, capacity _____ &</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">type: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair transport</p> <p>LABOR</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Loading/shipping</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sorting/packing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Clean-up</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Operate equipment –</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Types: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Have experience supervising others</p> <p>EQUIPMENT</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chainsaw</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Backhoe</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Generator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>Office Use Only</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p>		

Disaster Volunteer Registration Form (Side two)

Release of Liability Statement

I, for myself and my heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, hereby release, indemnify and hold harmless [Coordinating Agency, local governments, State of _____, the organizers, sponsors and supervisors of all disaster preparedness, response and recovery activities (check with local Risk Management and Emergency Management Departments re who should be included)] from all liability for any and all risk of damage or bodily injury or death that may occur to me (including any injury caused by negligence), in connection with any volunteer disaster effort in which I participate. I likewise hold harmless from liability any person transporting me to or from any disaster relief activity. In addition, disaster relief officials have permission to utilize any photographs or videos taken of me for publicity or training purposes. I will abide by all safety instructions and information provided to me during disaster relief efforts.

Further, I expressly agree that this release, waiver, and indemnity agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the State of _____, and that if any portion thereof is held invalid, it is agreed that the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect.

I have no known physical or mental condition that would impair my capability to participate fully, as intended or expected of me.

I have carefully read the foregoing release and indemnification and understand the contents thereof and sign this release as my own free act.

Signature _____ Date _____

Guardian, if under 18 _____ Date _____

Volunteer's credentials were recorded as presented. Verification of credentials and any background check required are the responsibility of the receiving agency.

This volunteer was referred to the following agencies:

Date	Need #	Agency	Contact Name	Contact's phone #

Return this completed form to:

(Add Coordinating Agency name, address, email address and fax number here)

Notes:

VRC Volunteer Sign In/Sign Out Sheet Tracking Volunteers

Volunteers should Sign In and Sign Out daily. Often, the volunteer lives far away from the disaster work site. You, as the Volunteer Manager, may be the only person who knows the location of the volunteer. *Signing In and Signing Out is critical.*

VRC SIGN-IN/SIGN-OUT RECORD

Sign-in / Sign-out Record

Date	Name	In	Out	In	Out	Reg. Hrs.	OT Hours	Total Hours

VRC Request for Volunteers

REQUEST FOR VOLUNTEERS

(Complete one form for each job description.)

Event name/# _____ Today's Date: _____ Start Date: _____ End Date: _____

Title of Volunteer Position: _____

Agency Name: _____ Agency Contact: _____

Agency Address: _____ Phone: _____ Ext: _____

Duties: _____

Volunteers must be physically able to: _____

Number Needed: _____ Dates/Hrs Needed: _____

For this position, volunteers must be at least ____ years of age.

Skills Needed

Description	Description

Follow-up Contacts with Requesting Agency / Clarification of Need

Date	COMMENTS

Volunteers Referred

Name	Date	Name	Date

Request closed on ___/___/___ Completed No placements possible No longer needed

Instructions for Volunteers

1. **Reception Area:** Please fill out a registration form and proceed as directed to an Interviewer at Station #2.
2. **Interview Area:** Interviewer will take your Registration Form, talk with you about your skills and refer you to an agency needing your help. Next take your Referral form to Station #3.
3. **Data Coordination Area:** Coordinator will record and initial your Referral Form and, if possible, notify the agency to expect you. Take your Referral form to the Safety Briefing area at Station #4.
4. **Safety Briefing Area:** You will be given special instruction about safety, security & transportation. Take your Referral form to ID area at Station #5.
5. **Identification Area:** You will receive an ID bracelet that will allow you to enter restricted areas during the days(s) written on ID. Continue to Station #6 - Maps.
6. **Maps Area:** Area maps are posted for viewing and strip maps to your destination may be available. If job training is available you will be directed to Station #7.
7. **Job Training:** Job training for your assignment may be available at the VRC. Some jobs may also require extra orientation or training that will be provided by the agency or worksite to which you are referred.

Thank you for volunteering!

VRC Registered Volunteer Car Window Sheet

VRC Registered Volunteer

Date for Access:

Safety Briefing and Signature Sheet

Thank you for volunteering today!

1. If you will be working outside, dress for the weather. Boots may be helpful, as debris on the ground can be sharp and dangerous.
2. Bring work gloves, sunscreen, hat and any appropriate tools you have. You will be responsible for your tools.
3. Water may be available at your work site, but you are encouraged to bring a personal water container. It is important to drink lots of water while you work.
4. While working, you may have a higher than normal exposure to bacteria. When you take a break, wash thoroughly.
5. The work you will be doing may cause you stress, anxiety, fear or other strong emotions. You are providing a valuable service by volunteering today. Please understand that, by helping, we will not be able to undo the effects of this event. We are each just one person. All we can do is help in our own small ways to assist survivors into the recovery process. If you care for one lost animal, find one child's lost favorite toy, or hold the hand of one wheelchair bound senior in a shelter, you will have eased a little of the pain.

Do not feel guilty because you are not able to fix everything. Just work your shift, then go home to rest and eat well. Both will help to relieve the stress. **Be sure to attend any debriefing that may be conducted at the end of your shift.**

6. Older children can help with some kinds of disaster recovery work, but parents must sign a release of liability form for each child under the age of 18. Children should remain in school, if it is open. Older children may be able to participate with parents on weekends.
7. In case you are injured while volunteering and need medical care, you should plan on paying for that care. The agency with which you are volunteering *might* have a policy that will cover you while you volunteer for disaster relief. If you are volunteering under the direction of a government entity, you *might* be covered by their Workers Compensation policy. It's best to ask questions and not make any assumptions about health/accident coverage.
8. **Follow carefully any instructions given to you at your job site.**
9. **Please attend any debriefing activity provided at your worksite after your shift.**

Volunteer Florida, Revised 6-06

VRC Safety Training Signature Sheet

I have attended and received the safety briefing conducted by (Coordinating Agency name) at the Volunteer Reception Center. I understand and agree to follow the safety instructions provided.

Print Name	Signature	Conducted by:	Date	Time

According to FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency):



*The time citizens and volunteer groups spend sandbagging, clearing debris from clogged drains, taking and logging calls, staffing warming centers, and many other duties may be an allowable reimbursement under the FEMA Public Assistance programs. **Volunteer efforts need to be organized and documented correctly.** Communities find a bright spot in a declared disaster recovery process: the tracking and documenting of volunteer worker efforts, generally called 'Donated Resources. This process can reimburse a community's share of matching funds required by FEMA Public Assistance Programs for declared disasters.*

*Once a presidential disaster declaration is issued and damages are documented, FEMA can provide up to a **75 percent cost reimbursement** for eligible projects. State and local entities then must come up with a 25 percent shared cost match.*

Assembling Volunteer Information for County Reimbursement

UNAFFILIATED VOLUNTEERS IN RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

Assembling Volunteer Information for County Reimbursement

Documentation for Reimbursement and Risk Management

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:

1. Maintain a supply of volunteer sign-in sheets at each volunteer worksite.
2. 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.
3. 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. (Review the statement with your Risk Management Department and

edit as necessary. 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.)

4. At the end of each shift, turn in all volunteer sign-in sheets to a designated supervisor, who will turn them in to the county Budget Department.

Strict adherence to these procedures will minimize the effects of any possible legal action taken against the Coordinating Agency or the county, should a volunteer be injured or inadvertently cause damage to property or to others.

Placing a Value on Work Done by Volunteers

All work that is eligible for FEMA reimbursement if done by county employees or contractors is also eligible when done by volunteers. Matching credit for volunteer contributions toward both direct and indirect costs will only be given by FEMA, however, if the county and its contractors have established a rate for each type of work completed.

The rate applied to each type of volunteer work should be the rate at which a county employee would be paid, including fringe benefits, for the same or similar work, or the customary rate for that work in the local labor market.

Contact your regional or state Department of Emergency Services to get more information.