



Together, we can save a life



Welcome to Plans to Help Manage “Unsolicited Volunteers”

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Who/What are Unsolicited Volunteers?

- ◆ Individuals or groups
- ◆ May be unfamiliar with agency protocols or have limited skills related to disaster relief
- ◆ May be local individuals/groups, or may arrive from outside of the affected area

Why do they volunteer?

- ◆ Desire to help others
- ◆ May be motivated by media stories, including social media
- ◆ Disaster may be personal (they may know individuals affected)





Benefits of Using Unsolicited Volunteers

- ◆ Community Involvement
- ◆ Supplement current staff and volunteer roles
- ◆ Meet specialized needs during disaster response
- ◆ Form relationships with new individuals/groups/agencies within the disaster area



Concerns about Unsolicited Volunteers

- ◆ Lack of training
- ◆ Liability/legal issues
- ◆ Lack of planning process to utilize unsolicited volunteers
- ◆ Volunteer skills not needed
- ◆ Concerns over supervision and control





Why Plan?

- ◆ Address the concerns about a volunteer workforce
- ◆ Provide protocols and chain of command for volunteers
- ◆ Allow for the strategic use of pre-determined volunteer roles
- ◆ Pre-determination of training requirements (and agency capabilities)
- ◆ Determine “triggers” for activation of plans and need for unsolicited volunteers
- ◆ Determine responsibilities



Forming the Planning Team

- Individual currently responsible for volunteers
- Current volunteers
- Training personnel
- Staffing personnel
- Anyone else who may need to be involved or aware of the process
- Individuals with approval authority



Planning Considerations

- ◆ Preparation
- ◆ Information Gathering
- ◆ Training Unsolicited Volunteers
- ◆ Assigning Work
- ◆ Tracking Volunteers
- ◆ Releasing Volunteers
- ◆ Feedback Opportunities
- ◆ Recognition
- ◆ Retention
- ◆ Process Review



Preparation

◆ Planning

- Determine process and roles of volunteers
- Determine strategies for proper placement
- Expense Reimbursements (if applicable)
- Prepare job descriptions
- Identify volunteer processing space requirements
- Prepare basic orientation to the process

◆ Research

- Internal review of current volunteer roles
- Research legal and liability considerations
- Identify potential needs and roles for volunteers



Always Research the Legal & Insurance Issues!

- ◆ federal, state and local laws
- ◆ Agency insurance policies and agents
- ◆ Citizens Corp Volunteer Liability Guide
http://www.citizencorps.gov/downloads/pdf/Citizen_Corps_Volunteer_Liability_Guide.pdf



Legal and Liability Information

- ◆ Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 (Section 4) provides immunity for volunteers serving nonprofit organizations or governmental entities for harm caused by their acts or omissions if:
 - ◆ The volunteer was acting **within the scope** of his or her responsibilities.
 - ◆ If appropriate or required, the volunteer was **properly licensed**, certified or authorized to act.
 - ◆ The harm was **not caused by willful, criminal or reckless misconduct** or gross negligence.



More Legal and Liability Information

- ◆ Georgia Code 51-1-20: Liability of persons serving charitable organizations and public entities while acting in good faith

(a) A person serving with or without compensation as a member, director, or trustee, or as an officer of the board without compensation, of any nonprofit hospital or association or of any nonprofit, charitable, or eleemosynary institution or organization or of any local governmental agency, board, authority, or entity **shall be immune from civil liability** for any act or any omission to act arising out of such service if such person was **acting in good faith within the scope of his or her official actions and duties** and unless the damage or injury was caused by the willful or wanton misconduct of such person.



Information Gathering

- ◆ How to gather the information?
 - Online
 - Volunteer Processing Center (agency office or community clearinghouse)
- ◆ What information to gather?
 - skills and licenses
 - Background checks, including license confirmation
 - Availability

Training Unsolicited Volunteers

- ◆ Orientation to the Volunteer Process
- ◆ Orientation to the current situation
- ◆ Specific skill training, if applicable
- ◆ Additional training needs as determined
- ◆ Considerations for the training process:
 - Instructors
 - Supplies
 - space requirements





Assigning Work

- ◆ Determine process for assigning work based on skills, knowledge, and abilities
- ◆ Determine schedule needs (shifts, average hours, etc)



Tracking Volunteers

- ◆ Training
- ◆ Assignments/Roles
- ◆ Schedules
- ◆ Performance Evaluation
- ◆ Expenses (if applicable)



Releasing Volunteers

- ◆ Have release triggers and procedures in writing
- ◆ Should be discussed as a part of the initial orientation
- ◆ Should involve feedback opportunities
- ◆ Determine process for early release of volunteers, including any disciplinary actions





Retention

- ◆ Potential for continued relationships
 - Continued volunteer support
 - Opportunities for future collaboration with volunteer groups
- ◆ Additional training
- ◆ Other volunteer activities



Feedback Opportunities

- ◆ Provide feedback opportunities such as surveys, individual interviews, or group sessions
- ◆ Encourage identification of challenges and successes
- ◆ Feedback opportunities should occur shortly after the event



Recognition

- ◆ Recognize volunteer efforts
- ◆ May be as simple as a thank you note or certificate of appreciation
- ◆ Can be as simple or elaborate as appropriate to your agency
- ◆ Some employers may allow volunteer days and will need some type of verification



Merci



Process Review and Updates

- ◆ Process Review
- ◆ Gather and Incorporate feedback
- ◆ Update written plans





Questions???