

Disaster Volunteer Management & Volunteer Reception Centers

Notes for Presentation

Slide 11:

- After the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001, more than 4,000 spontaneous, unaffiliated well-intentioned citizens appeared in Manhattan alone to assist with response and recovery efforts.
- Their uncoordinated efforts, in some cases, hindered rather than helped relief efforts.
- Volunteers with little or direction became frustrated, adding to the confusion and delaying rescue efforts.

Slide 14:

- Volunteer Mobilization Centers will open only at the request of Citizen Services.
- Volunteer Mobilization Centers will require time to set-up operations.
- A VMC requires a minimum of 3 staff members to open. Staff could be as large as 15-20 per shift.

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- Photo identification is used only to verify that the person registering to volunteer is who they say they are.
- In the event of a disaster within a disaster, knowing who was assigned to a particular area could be critical.
- Encourage waiting volunteers to select several areas in which to volunteer.
- Depending upon the situation, certain positions may fill quickly.

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- It is imperative that the Liability Statement be signed. If it is NOT signed, the volunteer will be excused.
- **AND** the Optional Authorization for the release of name and contact information in the event it is required for reimbursement of funds.
- This is especially important for Declared Disasters.
- The Interviewer should verify the photo ID with signature, if possible.

Slide 21:

- Not all incoming volunteers will want to or be able to meet immediate community needs.
- Immediate needs will generally be filled first.
- Depending upon the disaster there may be a lag time in the registration of agency needs.
- Agencies might not be ready to accept assistance at time of intake.
- Be sensitive to which communication methods are working or may experience interruption.
- Inform volunteer that communications could hamper future contact and that they might wish to communicate with the Center at a later time.
- Intake interviews should last between 3-5 minutes. Perfect matches are not the goal at this point in time.
- Volunteers will need to be told to be patient if THEIR immediate need to serve can't be met immediately.

- Volunteers need to be reminded that their efforts are best used if they are coordinated and appropriately directed.
- The Volunteer Center values the services volunteers provide and it is IMPORTANT that volunteers are most effective when they are managed accordingly.

Slide 23:

- The Data/Agency Coordinator will regularly, if possible, contact agencies to get updated needs.
- A copy of the volunteer's referral form will be kept with the Agency's request.
- Suggested that Agencies be kept alphabetically, while Referrals in numerical order.
- Volunteers need to be informed that Agency needs may change before they arrive.
- Each agency, like each volunteer has the right to decline service.

Slide 24:

- Each disaster will have its own set of instructions.
- Some agencies may wish to provide a Safety Trainer of their own at the VMC – Health Department.
- Each time the training is modified or updated, documentation is required.
- Each volunteer will be required to sign an attendance sheet.

Slide 27:

- Only those volunteers who have completed the registration process and have a completed referral form will be allowed to serve at the disaster site unless other instructions have been provided by the Incident Commander.
- Referred volunteers, once accepted by an agency or organization fall under that agency's guidelines.
- Volunteers may be required to complete additional paperwork.
- Medical personnel will be asked to contact the Medical Reserve Corps or the Health Department directly.
- Equipment operators may be referred to the Police Department, Fire & Rescue Services or Public Works.
- In order to save valuable time and resources pre-affiliation is being stressed with community members with specialized skills.
- The wristband will only be valid on the day(s) indicated.