

# Chapter



## Volunteers\*

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\*The authors wish to acknowledge the State of Florida for their generous permission to use materials and guides, which we found to be greatly beneficial in preparing this chapter.

## Preface

In many disaster situations, it is not uncommon for members of the public to want to assist and volunteer their services. The urge to help is a natural one and if appropriately channeled, it can be of great benefit to healthcare providers and their operating facilities.

In contrast, convergent volunteers who are not well-coordinated disorganized and lack adequate training and can pose a significant threat to rescue efforts. Uncoordinated volunteers can lead to an increased risk to a hospital's function and even to themselves.

This chapter reviews the guidelines for integrating volunteers into the disaster response using a team-based approach. These guidelines include job descriptions for the various coordinators and directors of volunteer centers, setting up a volunteer registration system, and a predisaster "drill" outline, as well as various templates of documents that might be useful to healthcare facilities.

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## Recruitment, Training, Response, and Maintenance of Volunteers in Disaster Management

It is human nature to want to help in response to disasters. Volunteers can be an asset or a hindrance, and the management of volunteers has been a major challenge in disaster situations.<sup>1</sup> Many Canadian cities along with the Public Health Agency of Canada have formulated plans for the management and use of volunteers in the event of a pandemic or disaster situation.<sup>2</sup> However, the management of volunteers in a hospital-based setting during a disaster situation has not been fully addressed.

A unified, practical, and easily implemented template that can be utilized nationwide, for use in both urban and community hospital settings, would have many advantages. This guide would also make the management of volunteers less of an effort, would be available and active in a timely manner, and would be available for peer review on a regular basis.<sup>3</sup> It may also behoove the current administration to form a volunteer “reserve corps” similar to the Medical Reserve Corps formed in the United States in 2007.<sup>4</sup> There are no complete guidelines or templates that exist on a national level to deal with volunteers in hospital or nonhospital settings.

Hospitals and communities across Canada require a practical and easily implemented plan or template for volunteer management in disaster situations.

## Background

All volunteers require careful, detailed, and supervised management, which must be guided by certain principles.<sup>5</sup>

1. Volunteers must be anticipated, planned, and managed.
2. Volunteers are a valuable resource when they are trained, assigned, and supervised within established emergency management systems. Clear designation of responsibility for the on-site coordination of volunteers, through a volunteer coordination team, is required.
3. Volunteers must have roles based on areas of community need.
4. Volunteers may have roles in mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.
5. The mobilization, management, and support of volunteers are primarily a responsibility of local government and nonprofit sector agencies. Therefore, specialized planning, information sharing, and a management structure are necessary to coordinate efforts and maximize the benefits of volunteer involvement.
6. Volunteers need to be flexible, self-sufficient, and aware of risks as well as willing to be coordinated by a local emergency management expert and must accept the obligation to “do no harm.”
7. The impact on volunteers in assisting others can be quite positive and contribute to the healing process of both individuals and the larger community.
8. Clear, consistent, and timely communication is essential to successful management of volunteers. A variety of opportunities and messages should be utilized to educate the public, minimize confusion, and clarify expectations.

Volunteers can be divided into 2 types: affiliated and unaffiliated.

*Affiliated volunteers* are attached to a recognized voluntary or nonprofit organization and are trained for specific disaster response activities. Their relationship with the organization precedes the immediate disaster, and they are invited by that organization to become involved in a particular aspect of emergency management.

*Unaffiliated volunteers* are not part of a recognized voluntary agency and often have no formal training in emergency response. They are not officially invited to become involved but are motivated by a sudden desire to help others in times of trouble. They come with a variety of skills. They may come from within the affected area or from outside the area. This group is also known as convergent, emergent, walk-in, or spontaneous responders. Unaffiliated volunteers create a paradox in that their willingness to volunteer may not coincide with the system’s capacity to utilize them effectively.

Cone et al.<sup>6</sup> have discussed the problems underlying the response and usage of unaffiliated or convergent volunteers. The arrival of unexpected or uninvited personnel wishing to render aid at the scene of a large scale emergency incident raises many concerns.

1. Security may be compromised as untrained volunteers attempt to aid at the site. Perimeters need to be established and maintained, so looting and crime does not occur, forensics can be performed if required, and the safety of the general public and personnel should always be a priority.

2. Safety of unaffiliated volunteers will be compromised if safety equipment is not worn, or volunteers attempt to carry out functions that they are not trained for, for example, search and rescue in hazardous field sites.
3. There is a lack of formal accountability as systems that normally keep track of on scene responders won't be able to track, communicate with, or properly utilize uninvited volunteers.
4. Unaffiliated volunteers can tie up lines of communication with use of cell phones, etc.
5. The housing, feeding, and toileting needs of uninvited volunteers can overburden and cause logistical problems for the affected community.

Although affiliated volunteers are much easier to deploy (one author claiming that each affiliated volunteer can be as effective as 10 unaffiliated volunteers [David Cone, personal communication, 2006]), given proper information, with a formal approach to organization established before the disaster, and utilized effectively, can be a valuable resource.<sup>7</sup> In addition, history has shown that unaffiliated volunteers will present themselves, needed or not, so it behooves any healthcare organization to integrate these into the organizational disaster plan and the incident management system. To paraphrase a popular movie—they will come, so build it.

## The 4 Phases of the Emergency Management Cycle

Emergency management has been traditionally divided into 4 phases and affiliated and unaffiliated volunteers may be used in all of these. The phases are

*Mitigation:* Disaster mitigation includes a wide range of activities at the household, community, state and national levels, which aim to reduce the damaging effects of all kinds of disasters. Mitigation is often integrated with preparedness since these 2 phases precede the event.

*Preparedness:* Disaster preparedness refers to proactive efforts undertaken by individuals, families, groups, or whole communities to place themselves in a better state of readiness to withstand or avoid the immediate impact of any kind of disaster.

*Response:* Disaster response occurs from the moment an incident takes place (fire, hurricane, earthquake, tornado, bio-terrorism, or other man made) through the time that basic emergency human and community needs have been met through rescue operations, mass shelter, mass feeding, and overall stabilization of the disaster-affected community.

*Recovery:* Disaster recovery follows the disaster response period and may extend for several years after a disaster. Disaster recovery relates to the collaborative efforts of individuals, communities, all levels of government, the private sector, the nonprofit sector, and others to re-establish a sense of normalcy, development, and growth in a community affected by a disaster.

The volunteer management tasks that need to be performed locally during these phases of the disaster management cycle require the recruitment and training of an in-hospital Disaster Volunteer Coordinator (DVC) who will be familiar with the hospital's disaster plan and its manpower needs. This person

needs to be integrated or connected to the Incident Management System (IMS) command and control structure of the hospital. The ideal person for each hospital may differ. Ideally, this should be a person already on staff and familiar with the workings of the organization.

## Phase 1 and 2 Mitigation and Preparedness

During these predisaster phases, the DVC will have the following tasks<sup>8</sup>:

1. Recruit physicians, nurses, paramedics, physiotherapists, social workers, and other required hospital personnel. This can be done using professional associations to act in disaster situations. For example, the Canadian Medical Association may be used to contact all local physicians interested in disaster response.
2. Register the volunteers in a database that would include key information such as a contact process, definition of the volunteers skill set, etc. (see Appendix A). All medical professionals will be asked to bring proof of licensure or professional association affiliation and, if applicable, malpractice insurance. This database will become the list of affiliated volunteers.
3. Coordinate the training of the above personnel for disaster situations including regularly informing various medical and professional associations of meetings and updates on disaster management.

The DVC could also be party to the organization and development of a training/mock disaster event organized at least once a year as part of a larger medical conference. This has many proven benefits including reviewing the handling, structure, implementation, and barriers to care in disaster situations.<sup>4</sup>

Appendix L is a role-play exercise to be organized by the DVC at the hospital, involving the setup of a volunteer recruitment center. This exercise should be conducted before a disaster event and should be reviewed and updated regularly.<sup>8</sup>

4. Develop a public information plan for deployment in a disaster, letting potential unaffiliated volunteers know how to get involved. They should be educated about where they are needed and where they are not (e.g., advised NOT to go directly to hospitals to offer help), where to present for registration, what to bring with them, and what needs are still yet to be met. This may require writing press releases for quick editing and dissemination to local and regional media after a disaster, having a dormant website that can be easily activated, pretaping of public service announcements (PSAs), and so on. As well, securing a commitment for a complimentary toll-free number is advised.
5. Investigate the legal aspects with respect to liability of volunteers in disaster response. This should be done in conjunction with the hospital's legal counsel.
6. Regularly attend local emergency planning committee meetings.
7. Build a community network of civic, fraternal, and other groups encouraging their members to affiliate with a local disaster response organization and to become trained. This would be part of a larger effort to educate local coalitions regarding their role of referring unaffiliated and affiliated volunteers.

8. Pursue mutual assistance plans with their counterparts in neighboring regions.
9. Develop a volunteer referral plan. This would include:
  - a. A task list of jobs to be given to volunteers and the criteria for candidates to fill the position.
  - b. Projected schedule of shifts required with number of personnel should the hospital be required to operate at full or extended capacity around the clock.
  - c. Deployment process whereby volunteers can be contacted, briefed, and deployed to their tasks, tracked during their tasks, relieved of duty at the appropriate times and otherwise supported (i.e., provided food, shelter, and other needs, e.g., childcare, elder care, pet care, etc.).
10. Recruit, train, and orient volunteer staff to operate the Volunteer Registration Center (VRC).
11. Coordinate with in-hospital and out of hospital professional groups (physicians, nurses, physiotherapists, social workers, respiratory therapists, etc.) to develop a general outline of shift structure for each specialty in the event that extra coverage is required in a disaster.

Students or those under training in these various fields can be allowed to work in disaster events but only at the discretion of each of the department chiefs and with close supervision. They should also be encouraged to call the Volunteer Registration Center at the time of an event to see if their skills can be better utilized elsewhere.

Residents, fellows, and those with advanced schooling in a particular medical field should be encouraged to undertake training seminars in disaster medicine. They can then be registered as affiliated volunteers with their skills updated yearly on databases.

12. Link with business groups and potential partners in the area to plan for donated goods and services to future response and recovery efforts. These might include universities, youth groups, schools, ethnic associations, civic associations, foundations, faith-based organizations, special needs groups, voluntary agencies, and senior programs along with hospitals.
13. Review community demographic information for implications regarding the management of unaffiliated volunteers. This could include common languages spoken in the community, age structure, etc.
14. Establish a Volunteer Registration Center (VRC) deployment plan which will include equipment, transportation, communications, and deployment.

## The Volunteer Registration Center (VRC)

The VRC provides a place where large number of volunteers can be efficiently processed and referred to agencies or departments needing their services. It fulfils 3 key tasks: registration of volunteers, determination of needs, and documentation of deployment.

For each person presenting or contacting the VRC, staff must determine the volunteer's skills and interests, their ability to do the assigned work, available time, and limitations. These specifications should be added to the Volunteer Registration Forms and entered into the database. All medical professionals seeking to register as volunteers but who have not yet done so will be asked to bring proof of licensure, malpractice insurance, and other professional membership. See Appendix A for Disaster Volunteer Registration Forms used for preregistering or creating affiliated volunteers and for registering spontaneous or unaffiliated volunteers, Release of Liability Statement, and Appendix B for a safety training information form.

Please note that all the forms in this document are meant for guidance only and should be reviewed by the appropriate hospital and local authorities.

For each *request* for a volunteer, the VRC has to define the requesting agency/ or the hospital, and department, with the name of the supervisor to whom they should report and who will be responsible for their safety briefing and enter the Requests for Volunteers into the database. The VRC should remind the agency/ department that it is their responsibility to brief the volunteer.

For each *deployment*, the VRC must provide the volunteer with identification tags or bracelets with the date and agency/department to which the volunteer was referred, document of volunteer registration, fill in a referral form for volunteer to take on site, advise the volunteer of where and to whom to report, close out the completed requests, and provide a basic safety briefing, when appropriate. However, all volunteers should have a basic review of universal precautions and other relevant infection control protocols. Note that for each deployment to a specific area, it is the responsibility of the receiving agency or department to give specific job training to all volunteers and keep complete and accurate records of all such training.

Other tasks that will be fulfilled by the VRC will include keeping a detailed account of expenses, to be reported to the financial arm of the IMS (see Chapter 5), generating updated reports of volunteers available, unfilled requests and other reports as required and staffing the telephones so as to take calls from individuals and groups wishing to volunteer and from organizations needing volunteers.

See Appendix H for a floor plan for the VRC and Appendix G for an outline of job descriptions, types of supplies, and equipment required for each task, sample sign-in and sign-out sheets for employees and volunteers, expenses incurred by the VRC/VCA, and signage required for the VRC.

## Phase 3—Response

In a disaster, the DVC in conjunction with the hospital EOC would perform the following:

- 1.** Implement the above Affiliated and Unaffiliated Volunteer Management Plan.
- 2.** Deploy the Volunteer Registration Center (VRC) to receive volunteers and begin the registration process. Paid staff and a few key volunteers should be trained to set up the VRC, in case it becomes necessary.
  - a.** All medical professional affiliated volunteers not otherwise preassigned to a task will call and/or be registered at the VRC first. The VRC will have a database confirming CMPA, CPSO, RN degree status, etc, registration before the disaster. The VRC will note their availability, location, and contact information.
  - b.** Volunteer staff who have already been told to deploy to a specific task will call in to register so that the VRC knows that the task is staffed.



The VRC will then coordinate supplies, food, and relief staffing for that position for as long as it is filled by a volunteer.

- c. All other affiliated and unaffiliated volunteers should report to the VRC for registration.
3. Open to/the VRC to request for volunteers.
4. Deploy and support the volunteer force.

*Note that public information should only come from the public relations officer (See Chapter 5 on IMS structure) assigned to the hospital or region and not the VRC.*

## Phase 4—Recovery

During the recovery phase, the tasks of volunteers may change but the process of managing volunteers will stay the same. It is important to follow this framework not only to document volunteer efforts, their financial impact, and overall efficiency, but also this documentation can be used eventually to thank volunteers both individually and as a group.

## References

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# Appendices

Appendix A	Volunteer registration form
Appendix B	VRC safety training and attendance record
Appendix C	VRC sign-in sheet
Appendix D	Request for volunteers sheet
Appendix E	Disaster volunteer referral form
Appendix F	Work site sign-in/sign-out record
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Appendix H	Sample VRC layout
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# Appendix A – Disaster Volunteer Registration Form

**(Please print clearly. Submit at Volunteer Reception Center or fax to \_\_\_\_\_)**

Mr. \_\_\_ Mrs. \_\_\_ Ms. \_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date \_\_\_\_\_ Day Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Home address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Your Occupation \_\_\_\_\_ Employer \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_ Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

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 city \_\_\_ neighboring city \_\_\_ anywhere in this province \_\_\_ anywhere in Canada

Are you currently affiliated with a disaster relief agency? If yes, name of agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Special skills and/or vocational/disaster training: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a health care professional (as defined by the Regulated Health Professions Act or equivalent legislation)?

\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ College registration number or equivalent (attach photocopy)

\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Malpractice insurance (attach photocopy)

**SKILLS: Please check all that apply.**

<p><u>MEDICAL</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Doctor Specialty: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Nurse Specialty: _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Resp. Technologists</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Physiotherapy/Occ. Health</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Lab Technician</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Diag. imaging technician</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Speech pathology</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pharmacists</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chiropractors</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Massage therapists</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Emerg. medical cert.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Mental health counsel.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Veterinarian</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Veterinary technician</p>
<p><u>COMMUNICATIONS</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Hotline Operator</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Own a cell phone # _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Own a skyephone # _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Public relations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Web page design</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Public speaker</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>

(continued)

Language other than English: <input type="checkbox"/> French <input type="checkbox"/> German <input type="checkbox"/> Italian <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish <input type="checkbox"/> Ukrainian <input type="checkbox"/> Hindi/Punjabi <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> _____
<u>OFFICE SUPPORT</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Clerical-filing, copying <input type="checkbox"/> Data entry software: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Phone receptionist
<u>SERVICES</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Food <input type="checkbox"/> Elderly/disabled asst. <input type="checkbox"/> Child care <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual counseling <input type="checkbox"/> Social work <input type="checkbox"/> Search and rescue <input type="checkbox"/> Auto repair/towing <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic control <input type="checkbox"/> Crime watch <input type="checkbox"/> Animal rescue <input type="checkbox"/> Animal care <input type="checkbox"/> Runner

(continued)

STRUCTURAL

\_\_\_ Damage assessment

\_\_\_ Metal construction

\_\_\_ Wood construction

\_\_\_ Block construction

Cert. # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Plumbing

Cert. # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Electrical

Cert. # \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Roofing

Cert. # \_\_\_\_\_

TRANSPORTATION

\_\_\_ Car

\_\_\_ Station wagon/mini van

\_\_\_ Maxi-van, capacity \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ ATV

\_\_\_ Own off-road veh/4wd

\_\_\_ Own truck, description: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Own boat, capacity \_\_\_\_\_

Type: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Commercial driver

Class and license \_\_\_\_\_

Camper/RV, capacity, and type \_\_\_\_\_

LABOR

\_\_\_ Loading/shipping

\_\_\_ Sorting/packing

\_\_\_ Clean-up

(continued)

<input type="checkbox"/> Housekeeping <input type="checkbox"/> Porter/Pt. transport <input type="checkbox"/> Operate equipment Types: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Have experience supervising others
<u>EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Stethoscope <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

## 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, Provincial or Federal governments, the organizers, sponsors and supervisors of all disaster preparedness, response and recovery activities 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 law, 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 \_\_\_\_\_

### This Section for Office Use Only

Volunteer's credentials were recorded as presented (verification of credentials is the responsibility of the receiving agency or hospital).  Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Name of Staff

Has volunteer participated in a local disaster exercise? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No If Yes, date of exercise: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of last review of universal precautions: \_\_\_\_\_(dd/mm/yyyy)

Has Volunteer been fit tested for PPE? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No If Yes, date of fit testing \_\_\_\_\_ (dd/mm/yyyy) and PPE type N95

SCBA

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Return this completed form to:**

Coordinating Agency name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax number: \_\_\_\_\_

This volunteer was referred to the following agencies:

Date   Request #   ESF or Agency   Contact Name   Contact's Phone #

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Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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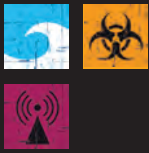
# Appendix B – Safety Training for Volunteers

Presenter: Edit this training for the specific incident.

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.  
  
Bring work gloves, sunscreen, hat, and any appropriate tools you have. You will be responsible for your tools.
2. Water may be available at your work site, but you are encouraged to bring a personal water container. It is important to drink lot of water while you work.
3. While working, you may have a higher than normal exposure to bacteria. When you take a break, wash thoroughly with the medical soaps provided at the hospital.
4. When you arrive at your worksite, report to your supervisor. You will be warned if there is a possibility of encountering victims. **Follow the instructions given to you at your job site.**
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 victims into the recovery process. If you care for another volunteer's animal at home, transport a patient quickly to an X-ray, 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 the disaster recovery work in *some* areas, but parents must sign a release of liability form for each child under the age of 18. It is recommended that children remain in school, if it is open. *Older* children can participate with parents on weekends.
7. **Follow carefully any instructions given to you at your job site.**
8. **Please attend any debriefing activity provided at your worksite after your shift.**
9. **Make sure you have reviewed universal precautions and have conducted your mask fit testing prior to your job deployment.**

### VRC Safety Training Attendance Record

Print Name	Signature	Date	Time



# Appendix C – Registration of VRC Volunteers

## VRC Volunteer Sign-in/Sign-out Record

Date	Name	Time In	Time Out	Time In	Time Out	Total Hours

(White)



# Appendix D – Request for Volunteers

(Complete one form for each job description.)

Request # \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Volunteer Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital/Department Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital/Department Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital/Department 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

Job Skill #	Description	Job Skill #	Description

## Follow-up Contacts with Requesting Agency/ Clarification of Need

Date	Comments

## Volunteers Referred

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Name	Date	Name	Date

Request closed on \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Completed  No placements possible  No longer needed



# Appendix E – Disaster Volunteer Referral

Name of Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Referred to (agency/hospital) \_\_\_\_\_ Request # \_\_\_\_\_

Agency contact name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Agency/Site \_\_\_\_\_

Directions to Site \_\_\_\_\_

Title/description of volunteer assignment \_\_\_\_\_

Dates & hours volunteer will work \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: Verification of volunteer’s credentials and selecting an appropriate and safe task is the responsibility of the agency receiving the volunteer.**

**VRC Staff Initials:**

Interview	Data Coord.	Safety Brief
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# Appendix F – Work Site Sign-in/Sign-out Record

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

On-site Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Local Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Please read before signing:** I have received safety instructions for working at this site and agree to follow the safety procedures and the directions of the site supervisor.

Sign your name, times in & out, and the type of work you did today (e.g., medical care, cleanup, repair, sorting, etc)

Volunteer's Name	Time In	Time Out	Time In	Time Out	Total Hours	Type of Work



# Appendix G – Job Action Sheets

## Job Action Sheet – VRC Director

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

- Clearly designate 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 center
- Monitor the operation and make staffing changes when necessary
- Maintain all records of safety and job training provided to volunteers and hours worked in the VRC by employees and volunteers
- Turn all records in to the **Finance 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.**

**Items needed:**

- ID badge
- Tables and chairs (see sample room layout (Appendix H) for details)
- Office supplies and forms to stock your VRC for the first 2–3 days
- Items on the Supplies and Equipment lists



## Job Action Sheet – VRC Greeters

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 no interviewers are available, direct them to the seating area and put their registration form in queue for the next available interviewer.**
- If they are media personnel, direct them to the Public Information Officer (PIO).\*
- If they are disaster survivors, refer them to the nearest care facility.
- 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 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.

### Items needed:

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

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\*Note: There may be a PIO dedicated to the VRC. If not, then redirect them to the PIO at the Disaster Emergency Operations Center.

## Job Action Sheet – VRC Interviewers

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/her abilities and interests. Volunteer requests may be posted on a white board and will be erased as they are filled, or 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. Determine whether the volunteer is affiliated and pre-registered or unaffiliated. With the volunteer, verify the registration forms 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 the form. When the volunteer accepts an assignment, complete a Referral form filling in all information requested, give it to the volunteer and instruct him/her to report to Data Coordination (Station #3).

For volunteers who have pre-registered via the phone bank, (or internet if applicable) they may have a printed on-line/phone bank registration form. You must then verify completeness and signatures.

Before signaling 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, that the volunteer did not include on his/her 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/her registration form in the bin or 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 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.

### Items needed:

- An ID badge for each interviewer
- Two tables and eight chairs (see VRC floor plan – Appendix H)

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*\*The VRC Director should determine appropriate use of the notes section of the "Office Use Only" field, with input from the local lead agency. It is intended to provide a customizable "blind" field in which special information can be noted about volunteers.*

- Sign (Station #2 Interviews)
- Supply of Referral forms
- Pens
- Flag or hat to summon runners
- Bin or file for maintaining Volunteer Registration Forms

## Job Action Sheet – VRC Data/Agency Coordinator

**Your job is to match the Referral forms to the Requests and to close out the Requests when they have been filled or are no longer needed.** 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 Hospital/Department or Agency."

**When a volunteer brings you his/her Referral form, enter his name and the date of the referral on the Request form to which he was referred. Place your initials on his Referral form.** If you have time, call the Hospital/agency contact to let him know who or how many volunteers have been referred. Confirm with the Hospital/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 remove that request from the board.**

If a volunteer who has been interviewed but not referred approaches your station, thank them for coming and ask them to please wait in the sitting area in the center of the room. Periodically review the list of unfilled request and unmatched volunteers in an attempt to close requests and use volunteer resources.

**In closing a request – 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, in either numerical order or alphabetically by hospital, department or agency.**

### Items needed:

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

## Job Action Sheet – VRC Phone Bank Staff

**You will be handling** two types of calls, those from hospitals/departments/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.**

**When you receive a call from a hospital, department or agency, fill out a Request for Volunteers form while you are speaking with the agency caller.** If there is a computer available for entering the needs into a database, Data Entry staff should enter the need as soon as possible.

**Next, call a runner by raising the flag at your station. Ask the Runner to post the volunteer request on the dry erase 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:

- If they choose to register on line or by fax (assuming that option is available), they will be e-mailed or called to discuss possible assignments and given further 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.
- If you believe that the caller might not be an appropriate fit for the hospital setting that you are affiliated with, consider referring them to your provincial public health volunteer recruitment center or other appropriate agency.
- 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 on-line registration form, pick up their referral form and ID bracelet(s), and attend a safety briefing. Make sure that the volunteer's on-line registration form is waiting with the Interviewers (Station #2) on their arrival date.
- If they choose to register in person at the VRC, they will be given instructions when they arrive.

### Items needed:

- An ID Badge for each staff member
- Sign (Phone Bank)
- Supply of Request for Volunteers forms

- Push pins or masking tape
- Two tables and four chairs
- Phones
- Pens
- Flag

If the VRC resources allow, volunteers may be registered on the telephone and called to be interviewed/safety briefed in the VRC once a specific task is available.

## Job Action Sheet – VRC Data Entry

**Your job is to enter the information from the Volunteer Registration and Request for Volunteers forms into the database** so that there is an accurate record of who participated in the recovery effort, what kinds of work they performed and when. The computer will assign a number to each Registration and Request, which must also be hand-written on the paper forms.

After the initial influx of volunteers has subsided, you may have time to begin entering the referrals recorded on the Request 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.

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

### Items needed:

- An ID Badge
- One table and two chairs
- Printer
- Pens
- Flag
- 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.)

## Job Action Sheet – Volunteer ID Staff

**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.

**Clearly write on the 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 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 and direct them to Station #5 Safety Training.**

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

### **Items needed:**

- An ID Badge
- Two tables and four chairs
- Sign (Station #4 Volunteer I.D. Tags)
- Supply of volunteer ID wristbands
- ID bracelet tool, if required
- Markers
- Scissors
- Flag or hat to summon runners



## Job Action Sheet – Safety Trainers

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 (Appendix B) and check to be sure that all participants have signed it.

Be sure that the volunteer has had a recent review of universal precautions, and direct them to the appropriate station if this is not the case.

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.

Some volunteers will be required to take additional training for their particular work. Direct those volunteers to where that training is provided. When your briefing is concluded, explain where the volunteers should meet the transportation to their worksites, if transportation is provided.

**File the attendance sheet for each class in the folder** and turn them in to the VRC Director daily. If the content of your safety briefing changes (new material is added or safety instructions change), staple a copy of the new safety training script to the attendance sheet of the first class in which the new script was used. **Maintenance of these records is important to help protect the Coordinating Agency and local disaster officials from liability, should a volunteer be injured on the job.**

### Items needed:

- An ID Badge
- Sign (Station #5 Safety Training)
- 10 or more chairs, preferably in a semi-circle so participants can see one another
- Clipboard with attendance sheets
- Pen
- Stapler
- Flag or hat to summon runners
- List of additional training required by specific worksites, training locations and instructors
- A supply of Safety Training handouts

## Job Action Sheet – Runners

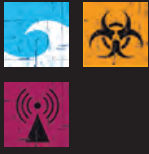
Your job is to carry information from one station to another within the VRC. When a station needs you to pick up forms, restock their supplies or escort a volunteer from one place to another, they will signal you by raising a flag or putting on a hat at their station.

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.

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).

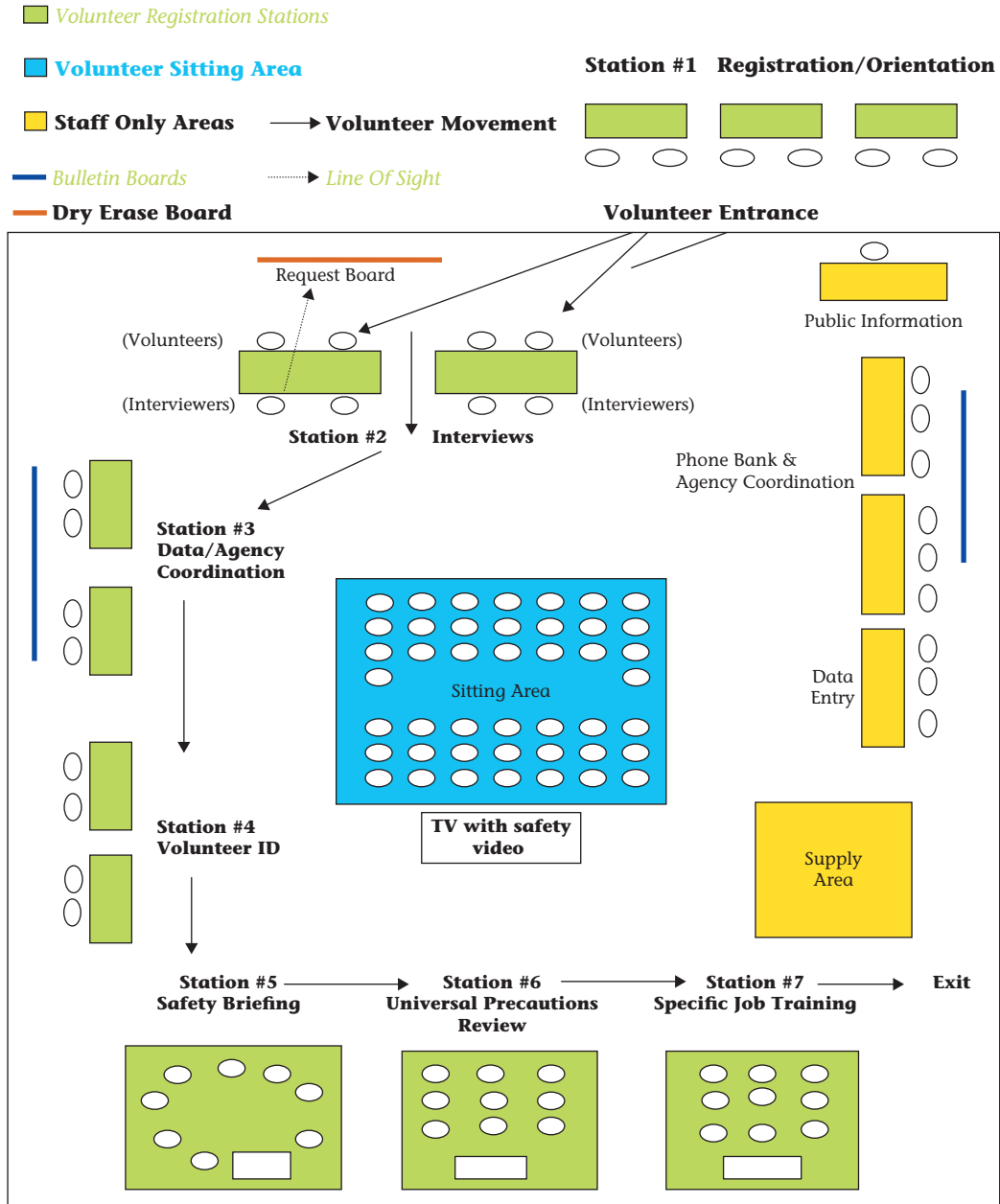
Items needed:

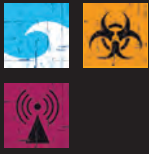
- An ID Badge
- Dry erase marker or water soluble marker (depending on the type of board available)
- Dry eraser or damp sponges



# Appendix H – Volunteer Reception Center Floor Plan

Volunteer Reception Centre Floor Plan

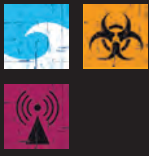




# Appendix I – Signage for Volunteer Reception Center

You will need one enlargement, unless otherwise specified, for each of the 17 station or directional signs shown in the left column. All signs should be laminated and large enough to be read from across a large room.

Signs Needed	Where to Post
<b>Volunteer Registration Center (2)</b>	On street visible from either direction
<b>Station #1 Registration Enter</b>	Registration/orientation area Volunteer Entrance to VRC
<b>Station #2 Interviews</b>	Interview Area visible from Volunteer Entry
<b>Station #3 Data/Agency Coordination</b>	Data Coordination visible from Station #2
<b>Station #4 Volunteer I.D. Tags</b>	Volunteer ID area visible from Station #3
<b>Station #5 Safety Training</b>	Safety Training visible from Station #4
<b>Station #6 Universal Precautions</b>	Universal Precautions Review visible from Station #5
<b>Station #7 Specific Job Training</b>	Specific Job Training visible from Station #6
<b>Exit</b>	Exit visible from Stations #6 and #7
<b>Staff Only (2+ as needed)</b>	Staff rest area, supply area, etc
<b>Phone Bank</b>	Agency Coordination area
<b>Current Needs</b>	Dry erase board in Interview area
<b>Offers of Volunteer Help</b>	Top left of bulletin board in Agency Coord
<b>Individuals</b>	Beneath “Offers of Volunteer Help” sign
<b>Groups</b>	Beneath “Offers of Volunteer Help” sign
<b>Other Resources</b>	Top right of bulletin board in Agency Coord
<b>Public Information Officer</b>	Public Information Officer’s Table (if deployed in VRC)



# Appendix J – VRC Tracking Forms

## Expenses Incurred by VRC Coordinating Agency in Response to Disaster

Name of Event: \_\_\_\_\_ VRC Opened? Yes  No

**Save all receipts** and place them in an envelope with this form and turn in to VRC Director.

Date	Item	Price	Quantity	Total	Auth. by



# Appendix K – Volunteer Recruitment Letter (for volunteers affiliated elsewhere)

Date

Dear Happybrook Hospital (for example) Volunteer

Thank you for your continued dedication to volunteering for Happybrook Hospital. Our organization has entered into a cooperative agreement with the Volunteer Center to support any disaster relief efforts that might become necessary in our community.

In the event of a disaster our office may close temporarily. Should this occur, we would like you to consider volunteering instead as a disaster relief worker through the Volunteer Center.

If you are interested in participating in a disaster relief effort, please fill out the enclosed enrollment form and return it to me or to the Volunteer Center. If a disaster occurs, you will be informed how/where to contact the Volunteer Center to get your disaster volunteer assignment.

Pre-disaster training is available to volunteers willing to help to operate a Disaster Volunteer Reception Center or to affiliate with a recognized disaster relief agency.

There are many kinds of needs in the aftermath of a disaster for both physical labor and less strenuous jobs. Your support of our community in such an effort will be tremendously appreciated.

Sincerely,

Volunteer Coordinator

Happybrook Hospital



# Appendix L – VRC Exercise Set-up, Briefing & 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 (see suggested floor plan)
- 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 the volunteer requests (alternating colors makes them easier to read) on the whiteboard

## 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 quietly 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 operate a Volunteer Reception Center, if one is needed locally.
- Review signs and ask each VRC staff member to explain what happens at their Station.
- Discuss the need for accurate record keeping. Explain how volunteer hours can be used as match for FEMA reimbursement. (See manual for details)
- 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.

### **Begin the role play exercise**

- Begin processing volunteers, watching to be sure Runners respond as needed.
- To keep the play moving smoothly, Exercise Facilitator(s) and the VRC Director should respond quickly to raised hands, confused expressions and any signs of frustration in your participants.
- 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 to the issues and respectfully discuss the merits of all ideas.
- Stop play 15–20 minutes before the scheduled end of your training. Lead a discussion of the Post Exercise Questions. Answer participant questions. Ask each to complete an evaluation form.
- Reiterate the importance of this planning and training; thank all participants for their valuable input.





# Appendix M – Volunteer Instruction Handout

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 form, talk with you about your skills and refer you to an agency needing your help. Next take your Referral form to the Data Coordinator (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 ID area (Station #4).
4. Identification Area: You will receive an ID bracelet that will allow you to enter restricted areas during the day(s) written on ID. Proceed to Safety Briefing area (Station #5).
5. Safety Briefing Area: You will be given special instruction about safety, security & transportation. You may be directed to Station #6 for additional job training.
6. Specific Job Training: Some jobs will require extra orientation or training that will be provided by the agency to which you are referred.

Thank you for volunteering!



# Appendix N – Memorandum of Agreement between (Volunteer Center Name) and (Community Agency Name)

Purpose: To ensure the maximum participation and utilization of unaffiliated volunteer relief workers and to meet our community's need for the effective management of those volunteers in the event of a disaster within the hospital setting.

The Volunteer Registration Center agrees to provide:

- Orientation for Agency staff and volunteers on disaster volunteerism
- Review of Universal Precautions and Mask Fit testing for all volunteers
- Sample forms and letters to be used by (Community Agency) to encourage their volunteers to become disaster relief workers
- Periodic updates on local planning regarding disaster volunteerism
- Notification of training or exercises relevant to the operation of a Disaster Volunteer Registration Center
- Referral of unaffiliated volunteers, as available after a disaster, to (Community Agency) to meet the post-disaster needs

(Community Agency) agrees to:

- Identify the agency's potential post-disaster roles/needs for unaffiliated volunteers
- Send a letter to all agency volunteers explaining the organization's Memorandum of Agreement to support a disaster relief effort should the need arise
- Notify agency volunteers of training or exercises relevant to the operation of a Disaster Volunteer Reception Center
- Encourage interested volunteers to take pre-disaster training and become affiliated with a relief agency
- Encourage volunteers who are not interested in pre-disaster training but would help in a disaster to utilize the VRC to become involved in a relief effort
- Promote agency, staff and family disaster preparedness

This agreement will take effect upon the date it is signed by representatives of both organizations. This Memorandum of Agreement may be amended upon agreement of both parties or terminated by either party with 30 days written notice.

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Director, Volunteer Registration Center  
(Organization)

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Director, (Community Agency)