The Volunteer Reception Center
Managing Volunteers in Disaster
DEFINITION

**DISASTER:** When the \textit{resources available} are \textit{exceeded}; or an event \textit{located in time and space} in which a \textit{community} undergoes \textit{severe danger} and \textit{incurs losses} so that the \textit{social structure is disrupted} and the fulfillment of all or some of its \textit{essential functions are prevented}. A \textit{disaster situation} is comprised of multiple \textit{incident sites}. 
WHAT IS A VRC?

- VRC stands for Volunteer Reception Center. VRC is a concept, not a location. It is used to manage and organize the unaffiliated volunteers during a disaster.

- These volunteers are processed at the VRC to determine their skill-set and then tasked with assignments where their skills can be utilized for the disaster relief effort.
Why a Volunteer Reception Center?

Disasters result in chaos and confusion

- People want to help, but don’t know where or how.
- People acting “on their own” may find themselves in dangerous situations.
- Anxious volunteers may overwhelm traditional response organizations.
- Potential volunteers may get in the way of trained responders.
Purpose of the VRC

- Provide face-to-face interviews with volunteers.
- Process and refer volunteers appropriately.
- Provide identification to volunteers.
- Provide registration and orientation.
- Data coordination and record keeping related to the contribution of volunteers.
A Disaster Strikes!!

County Emergency Manager determines if there is a need for a VRC following a disaster.

Upon activation of VRC, the “Go-Team” is contacted, briefed and deployed to VRC.

The County PIO informs the public on VRC activation, location, contact information and hours of operation.
Community organizations that are active in disasters will send their volunteer requests to the VRC.

These requests can be entered on-line, by phone or fax.

VRC remains active as long as the disaster recovery effort requires volunteers.
“Go-Teams”

“Go-Team” – A team of volunteers of county staff that have been formally trained for operating the Volunteer Reception Center.

“Go-Kits” – A container that contains all necessary materials required to operate the VRC, with or without power.

“Go-Teams” must complete VRC training exercise to understand VRC operations and staff station positions.
Registration Area (Station 1): Volunteers will complete a Registration Application form and proceed as directed to an Interviewer at Station 2.

Interview Area (Station 2): Interviewer will take your Registration Application, get to know your skills and give you a Referral to an agency needing your help. Runner takes Registration Application to data entry.
Agency Coordination Area (Station 3): Coordinator will record and initial your Referral Form so that you will have access to the disaster site. Runner takes Referral Form to data entry.

Identification Card (Station 4): You will receive an ID bracelet that will allow you to enter disaster restricted areas during the day(s) written on your I.D.

Safety Briefing Area (Station 5): You will be given special instructions on safety, security and directions to Referral Site.
VRC JOB LISTINGS

- VRC Director
- Data Entry
- Greeters
- Host/Hostess
- Identification Coordinator
- Interviewer
- Master Data Coordinator
- Notifications/Scheduling Team Member
- Phone Bank Staff
- Runners
- Safety Trainer
- Shift Manager
WALK-THROUGH

Volunteer Reception Center Floor Plan

Station 1
Registration

Station 2
Interviews

Station 3
Data Coordination

Station 4
Identification

Station 5
Safety Briefing

Volunteer Entrance

Volunteer Exit

WAITING AREA

Supply Area

Phone Bank and Data Entry

PC & Outgoing Phones

PC & Incoming Phones