



Disaster Readiness Coordinator (DRC) Training Guide

www.TXCDR.org

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Revision History

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Organization	7
Welcome Message to Disaster Relief Coordinators	9
Meet Our Partners.....	11
Overview	13
Organizing Principles	15
CDR Response Focus.....	19
Engagement Levels.....	23
Response Teams.....	25
Response Organization Structures.....	29
Congregational Engagement Roadmap.....	35
The Role of the DRC	37
Purpose of the DRC	39
Mission/Serving our Community	43
Volunteers	45
Response Team Engagement.....	55
Detailed Description of Response Team Opportunities	57
Appendices	63
CDR Contacts.....	65
Texas and National Disaster Recovery Acronyms	67
Compassionate Care	69
Safe Conduct	73
Diversity and Sensitivity.....	77
Communications.....	79
NIMS/ICS	101



Organization

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Greetings!

Welcome to Texas Congregational Disaster Readiness, a comprehensive, collaborative, and coordinated action plan that will change the landscape of disaster relief. We remember well the outpouring of love after Hurricane Harvey as thousands of volunteers streamed from their houses of worship to help neighbors clean up after the flood. It was heartwarming to see so much goodwill, yet it was also frustrating because of the lack of planning, preparation, and organization. Because of your involvement in TXCDR, Congregations will enjoy a more productive effort, neighborhoods will recover more quickly, and vulnerable communities will not be left behind.

Many have contributed to this ambitious undertaking. We look forward to walking beside you as we implement this vision. Communities of faith are always stronger when we respond together. As we move forward, this program will become even stronger as we work together and think of new and exciting ways to serve our community better.

Your leadership as a Disaster Readiness Coordinator is vital to how your Congregation and our community can respond to a local disaster. Your Congregation's senior leadership is already heavily burdened. Coordinating the Congregation's efforts during a disaster response puts even more on their plate. Your capability to lead teams of trained volunteers to respond will be a blessing to them. The skills you develop as a DRC will also help your Congregation respond to local disasters that your Congregation can handle.

Communication, coordination, and execution are the most powerful predictors of success in disaster response. As a Disaster Response Coordinator, you play a pivotal role in speeding recovery to our disaster-stricken families by working together with other Congregations. Together we will avoid redundancy, save money, minimize disruption of services, and improve outcomes.

We wish you all the best and pray for God's blessing on you and yours!

TXCDR Leadership Team

Regional / National Collaborative Partners

- Harris County Homeland Security Office of Emergency Management
- Montgomery County Office of Emergency Management
- Houston's First Baptist Church
- SBP (Saint Bernard Project)
- Team Rubicon
- Texas NAACP Disaster Relief
- The American Red Cross
- The Salvation Army
- United Way of Greater Houston
- Volunteer Houston

Disaster Recovery Partners

- 4B Disaster Response
- Hope Disaster Recovery
- Houston Responds
- Katy Responds
- SHUR (Southwest Houston United Responds)
- The Restoration Team

Denominational Partners

- Catholic Charities
- ELCA - Lutheran Disaster Response
- ICNA (Islamic Circle of North America)
- JFS Houston
- Jewish Federation of Houston
- LCMS Disaster Relief
- Presbytery of New Covenant
- Texas Annual Conference - UMC
- The Episcopal Diocese
- UCC - South Central Conference

Organization

Congregational Disaster Readiness (CDR) is the culmination of the efforts of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), Disaster Recovery Networks, Denominational Networks, Recovery/Relief Agencies, and Congregations.

Mission

To expedite relief and recovery in communities impacted by a disaster.

Vision

A comprehensive, collaborative, and coherent action program for Congregations to effectively deliver essential relief and recovery services during and after a disaster.

Objective

To integrate and coordinate disaster relief and recovery efforts provided by Congregations.

Communication, coordination, and execution
are the most powerful predictors
of success in disaster response. which.....
diminish redundancy,
save money,
minimize disruption of services,
improve outcome, and
reduce liability.

As a faith-based disaster readiness organization, TXCDR draws its organizing principles from both the faith-based and disaster readiness worlds.

CDR Organizing Principles

Honoring God

We want to make sure that all the work of TXCDR gives honor to God. He is the reason we serve our neighbors.

Safety

We want to make sure every volunteer and every homeowner is safe during all of our activities. We embed best-in-class safety practices in all of our standard practices. We are committed to learning from our experiences and maintaining best-in-class practices

Serving all People

We endeavor to make sure that we serve all of our neighbors, especially the underserved and most vulnerable. We trust that Congregations will help their members and neighbors who are connected with their Congregation. Our call is to make sure that everyone in our service area, especially those who may not call a Church, or Synagogue, or Mosque home, are served

Compassionate Care

It is easy in a disaster to look past the people and try to clean-up and fix the material side of a disaster. Caring for those families whose lives have been disrupted is a higher priority. We take the time to love on the families, lend them a shoulder to cry on, or an empathetic ear to hear their frustrations. Disaster response is about caring for people first and “stuff” second.

Volunteer Experience

We want to make sure that our volunteers have a great experience: that signing up to volunteer was easy, that volunteers received the training and tools they needed to accomplish the work, and that they were able to serve with confidence. We want volunteers to understand the impact that they made on those they served and that they felt appreciated for the time they spent helping their neighbors.

Collaboration

Congregations do great work individually, but the payoff in TXCDR is the result of Congregations working together. By working together, we cover the community more efficiently and effectively and speed the time to full recovery.

Standard Service

We have standards for our services to ensure that the work we do is done correctly, efficiently, and effectively. We recognize that when the response work is handled correctly, it reduces the time required to complete the long-term recovery.

NIMS/ICS Organizing Principles

We adopt all fourteen of the National Incident Management System management characteristics. In particular, these six characteristics had a noteworthy impact on our approach to TXCDR.

Common Terminology

CDR uses common terminology for organizational functions, resource descriptions, and incident facilities that allow diverse groups to work together. The use of common terms promotes efficient and clear communication among all parties involved in managing an incident.

Management by Objectives

We endeavor to drive response activities with clear objectives, including:

- setting specific, measurable incident objectives;
- identifying strategies, tactics, tasks, and activities to achieve the objectives;
- developing and issuing assignments, plans, procedures, and protocols to accomplish defined tasks; and
- documenting results for the incident objectives.

Resource Management

Comprehensive Resource Management describes standard mechanisms to identify requirements, order and acquire, mobilize, track and report, demobilize, and reimburse and restock resources such as personnel, teams, facilities, equipment, and supplies. Activities include:

- resource identification and typing
- qualifying, certifying, and credentialing personnel
- planning for resources; and
- acquiring, storing and inventorying resources

Integrated Communications

Integrated communications are facilitated through the development and use of a standard communications plan and interoperable communication processes and systems that include voice and data links. The objective of integrated communication is to achieve situational awareness and to facilitate information sharing. The TXCDR approach to integrated communication includes a heavy reliance on AlertMedia.

Accountability

Effective accountability during a response is essential. TXCDR relies on each individual and organization taking personal accountability for their actions. We hold each other accountable for our successes and failures and learn from them.

Information Sharing

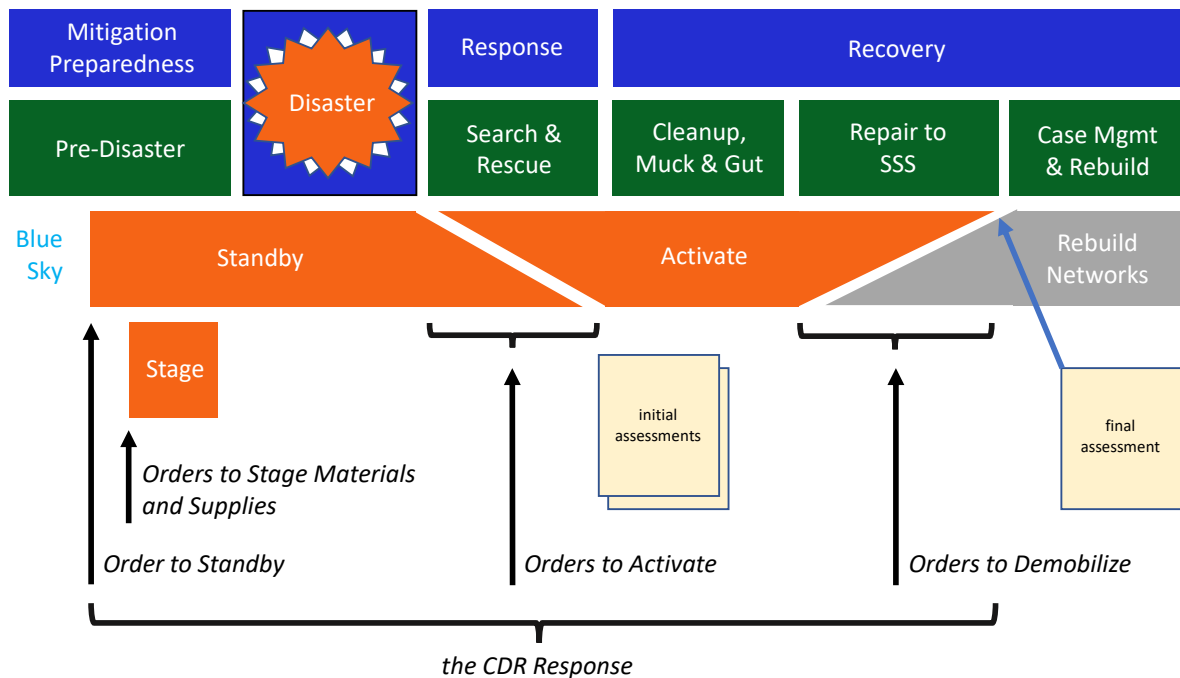
We share information freely between our teams and protect the privacy of the neighbors we serve. We speed recovery by making sure that information we discover during a response helps speed recovery by sharing it with organizations supporting medium and long-term recovery efforts.

CDR activities are focused during a particular time frame. FEMA recognizes four phases of a disaster: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. The following table highlights TXCDR activities during each phase of a disaster.

FEMA	CDR
<p>Mitigation actions are taken to prevent or reduce the cause, impact, and consequences of a disaster.</p> <p>Preparedness actions include planning, training, and educational activities for events that cannot be mitigated.</p>	<p>The TXCDR will work on Mitigation and Preparedness until the Office of Emergency Management or other authority requests that some portion of the TXCDR standby.</p> <p>The first phase of the TXCDR Response is the Standby phase. Response Teams prepare to deploy. Equipment is checked, and missing items are procured.</p> <p>Depending on the event, the TXCDR Coordinator may ask some Response Teams to Stage materials by pre-positioning supplies in safe areas, but closer to and more accessible to the expected disaster area.</p>
<p>The Disaster</p>	<p>Response Teams standby to activate when asked, and it is safe. Response Teams should not mobilize until it is safe.</p>
<p>In the Response phase, disaster plans are implemented, and actions are taken to protect life and property. Search and rescue are the responsibility of first responders.</p>	<p>Many TXCDR Response Teams will be inactive during this phase, as we do not want to interfere with the first responders' job.</p> <p>Some TXCDR Response Teams will be activated during the Response phase. For example, we may be requested to open shelters or provide support for first responders.</p>

FEMA FEMA recognizes four phases of Disasters.	CDR
<p>In the Recovery phase, damage caused by the event is repaired, and steps are taken to reduce vulnerability to future disasters.</p>	<p>CDR activity begins with an activation order based on the OEM and first responders' determination that it is safe to enter the impacted areas.</p> <p>Response Teams perform their function until the order is given to de-mobilize once the work is mostly completed.</p> <p>After an interim period during which FEMA and private insurance provide funds, we expect Disaster Case Managers to be funded to direct assistance to families that may not have the resources to complete their repairs.</p>

CDR Response Focus



Blue-Sky

CDR activities include the blue-sky actions of preparedness (and mitigation), and the period of response to a disaster, shown in orange. The activities and times frames of each vary with the kind of disaster, but the steps are mostly the same.

Standby

When a disaster is imminent, TXCDR may issue an order to Standby. During standby, Congregations check their supplies, make sure they alert their volunteers and generally prepare to go to work.

Stage

Depending on where supplies are warehoused, it may be appropriate to stage supplies in the expected disaster area. This activity occurs before the disaster strikes.

Disaster (Stay Safe!)

It is not expected that any TXCDR teams will be asked to be active during the disaster itself. First responders dominate activities during this phase, and we will endeavor to stay out of their way.

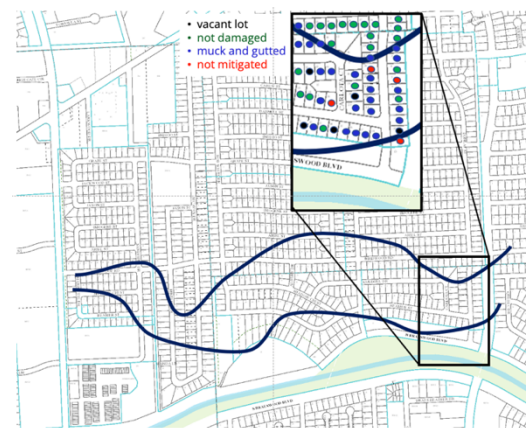
Activate

Following the disaster, we will begin the phased activation of TXCDR Response Teams. Expect early activation of American Red Cross Shelters and later activation of clean-up teams. The TXCDR Coordinator will make the call to activate Response Teams depending on their assessment of the situation. This phase is where the majority of our work will occur.

Demobilize

The final phase is demobilization. Again, this is a phased activity depending on the situation on the ground. Some operations will be demobilized early in the phase, and others will trail. At the end of the demobilization phase, we have defined milestones that we want to achieve, including:

- all occupied homes repaired to SSS;
- a final and comprehensive assessment of those impacted by the disaster and their neighborhoods that will feed the case management and repair process;
- an after-action report of TXCDRs performance and action items to improve the process for the next disaster; and
- activities to return the TXCDR to a state of readiness for the next disaster.



There are two levels of engagement that Congregations can choose when they participate in TXCDR. Engagement Level 1 for Congregations that are just beginning with TXCDR and are willing to support disaster response with Spontaneous Volunteer and Engagement Level 2 for those Congregations that are prepared to support one or more Response Teams

Engagement Level 1

What the Congregation will do:

- Appoint a DRC and an Asst DRC who will act as a liaison between the Congregation and the TXCDR

What TXCDR will do:

- Provide leadership training for DRC and Asst DRC
- Provide two AlertMedia accounts for the DRC and Asst DRC for communications
- Host quarterly TXCDR meetings
- Provide access to Response Team training and materials

What we ask the DRC and Asst DRC to do before a disaster occurs:

- Utilize AlertMedia for communications
- Attend quarterly TXCDR meetings
- Keep the Congregation and its senior leadership informed
- Prepare to recruit Spontaneous Volunteers
- Advocate for engagement with TXCDR

What we ask the DRC and Asst DRC to do during disaster response:

- Utilize AlertMedia for communications
- Keep the Congregation and its senior leadership informed
- Recruit "Spontaneous Volunteers" as needed to support TXCDR's Response Teams within TXCDR

Engagement Level 2

What the Congregation will do:

- Appoint a DRC and an Asst DRC who will act as a liaison between the Congregation and the TXCDR
- Commit to support and staff one or more Response Teams

What TXCDR will do:

- Provide leadership training for DRC and Asst DRC
- Provide two AlertMedia accounts for the DRC and Asst DRC for communications
- Host quarterly TXCDR meetings
- Provide access to Response Team training and materials
- Provide access to the Response Team Advisor
- Provide additional AlertMedia to support the Response Teams

What we ask the DRC and Asst DRC to do before a disaster:

- Utilize AlertMedia for communications
- Attend quarterly TXCDR meetings
- Keep the Congregation and its senior leadership informed
- Prepare to recruit Spontaneous Volunteers
- Advocate for engagement with TXCDR
- Work with Response Team leaders and the Congregation's leadership to recruit volunteers and build the Response Teams
- Ensure that all Response Teams follow TXCDR's best practices, standards, and safety guidelines

What we ask the DRC and Asst DRC to do during disaster response:

- Utilize AlertMedia for communications
- Keep the Congregation and its senior leadership informed
- Recruit "Spontaneous Volunteers" as needed to support TXCDR's Response Teams within TXCDR
- Support the Response Team fielded by the Congregation
- Direct the Response Teams fielded by the Congregation as requested by TXCDR
- Communicate team status and situational awareness reports to TXCDR as requested

Purpose

Response Teams are essential because there are many diverse skills needed to respond to a disaster; not anyone possesses all the skills and strengths required. People are much more likely to respond to a crisis and maintain long-term effectiveness when part of a team. Response Teams are trained before disaster strikes, so they are prepared to respond during a disaster event safely and effectively with confidence. Response Teams provide organization and leadership for “Spontaneous Volunteers.” TXCDR Response Teams:

- Respond with coordination and collaboration
- Operate on established, published standards
- Utilize best-in-class safety practices
- Benefit from standard training
- Meet minimum training standards
- Use common communication protocols and status reporting

Spontaneous Volunteers

Spontaneous Volunteers are volunteers who are motivated to volunteer their time by the immediate needs of a disaster response. They are essential to our overall ability to respond. By definition, a Spontaneous Volunteer is one who has not received TXCDR training in the particular area they will be serving and may not be familiar with TXCDR standards and processes. Spontaneous Volunteers, therefore, work at the direction of Response Team leaders and site supervisors.

While Spontaneous Volunteers have not had formal TXCDR training, some may possess advanced skills and experience in the area they will be serving. Other Spontaneous Volunteers may be unskilled and entirely without experience. The DRC/Volunteer Coordinator must assess their skills and experience and place them on teams where they have the supervision required to serve with confidence.

CDR Response Teams

Compassionate Care

Support and training for all Response Teams

Compassionate care is embedded in all our response teams.

Dedicated Compassionate Care Response Team

This Response Team is comprised of individuals from a single Congregation who offer emotional and spiritual support for the victims of a disaster and information helpful for planning their recovery.

Volunteer Disaster Case Management

The Volunteer Disaster Case Management response teams are staffed by volunteers from multiple Congregations and are managed by TXCDR. They are trained to fill the gap when disasters do not rise to the level of severity necessary to attract state or federal funding for formal disaster case management.

Sheltering

People Sheltering

The People Sheltering Response Team provides shelter for individuals displaced from their home by a disaster who need other living arrangements. A shelter may be open for as little as one to three days (short-duration) or weeks (long term shelters). All TXCDR Shelters are managed by Congregations to American Red Cross standards.

Out of Town Responders

Offering a place for out of town responders to sleep, eat, and shower.

Laundry

Supporting shelters by helping survivors wash their clothes. Pick up/drop off process.

Pet Sheltering

Help families in a shelter to care for their dogs and cats, providing kennels and food.

Support Transportation

Supporting shelters with non-emergency transportation for survivors to doctor's office, drug store, bank, etc.

Home & Property

Mucking/Gutting

Removing damaged contents and sanitizing the home, according to standardized processes.

Boarding/Tarping

Providing temporary waterproofing of damaged roofs by attaching tarps to protect from further damage. Boarding damaged openings in walls to minimize vandalism and water infiltration.

Chain Sawing

Cutting fallen trees and stacking of debris.



NOTE: With every Response Team it will be important to maintain a database of all survivors for appropriate follow up from your Congregation or designated distribution location. See individual Response Team Standards and Procedures for examples of data management forms.

Distribution

Distribution Centers

Collecting and distributing essential food and supplies to survivors.

Regional Warehousing

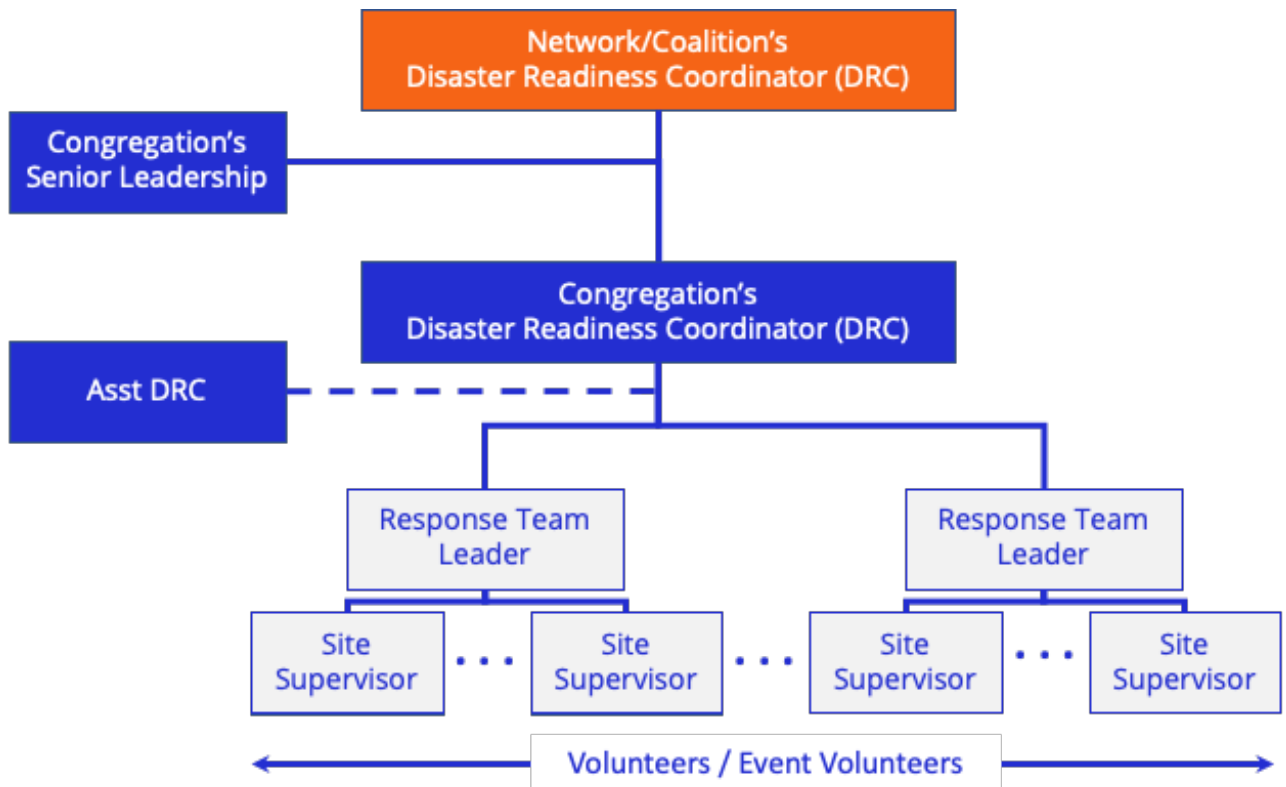
Procuring, storing, and distributing bulk supplies to distribution centers.

Congregation Organization Structure

There are two required positions for each Congregation – the Disaster Readiness Coordinator (DRC) and the Asst DRC. The DRC reports to the Congregation’s Senior Leadership when the TXCDR is not responding to a disaster.

During a one Congregation response to a local disaster, the DRC serves as the Response Director and reports to the Senior Congregational Leadership. If two or more Congregations are responding to a local disaster, the Congregation’s DRCs report to the Response Director, who is likely a member of the local network or coalition’s leadership. If two or more local networks or coalitions are responding, then the Congregation’s DRCs will report to the local network’s or coalition’s DRC, who will, in turn report to the Response Director.

In Engagement Level 2 Congregations, the Congregation will have one or more Response Team leaders that report to the DRC. Each Response Team leader may have one or more crews led by Site Supervisors reporting to them.



Response Team Organization – Congregation

Key Roles

DRC – Disaster Readiness Coordinator

The DRC is the primary liaison between TXCDR and the Congregation and the senior leadership of the Congregation. The DRC works closely with both.

During a disaster response, the DRC reports to the Congregations senior leadership if the Congregation is responding independently of other Congregations. If the Congregation is responding with other Congregations, they will likely report directly to the Network/Coalition's DRC, who will serve as the Response Director.

Asst DRC – Assistant Disaster Readiness Coordinator

Assists the DRC as directed by the DRC.

Response Team Leaders

Engagement Level 2 Congregations will have one or more Response Team Leaders reporting to the DRC. Each Response Team Leader supervises volunteers specific to the service provided. Volunteers may be divided into crews led by Site Supervisors.

The organization for each Response Team varies by the Congregation's needs and the requirements of the response service area. Each Response Team has different training requirements for the leaders and team members. For example, TXCDR requires that every member of a chain saw crew receive training before serving; however, for a muck/gut crew, it is strongly recommended that the leader have training before serving. The balance of the crew is comprised of Spontaneous Volunteers.

Site Supervisors

Site supervisors lead crews of volunteers on site. They are responsible for all functions of the response effort while the crew is working at a site.

Spontaneous Volunteer

An Spontaneous Volunteer is a volunteer who serves on a Response Team and has not previously received TXCDR training. They may be unskilled or skilled. The Site Supervisor (or Response Team Leader or DRC) will direct the Spontaneous Volunteers activities.

Response Director

The Response Director is the one person in a response organization responsible for the activities of the Response Organization. There is one and only one Response Director in any response organization.

Response Team Organization

The Response Team Organization is the portion of TXCDR that will be active during a response. The Response Director determines the organization structure for each response.

During standby and activation, the leadership of the Congregational Disaster Readiness (CDR) will determine which Congregations and Response Teams will be asked to respond. Their decision will be based on the:

- Size of the response needed,
- Nature of the incident,
- Geographic boundaries,
- Volunteer skills required, and
- Requests of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM).

Depending on the scope of response required the Response Director could be

- the Congregation's DRC, if the Congregation is responding independently of any other Congregation,
- the Network's/Coalition's DRC, if the Congregation is responding with a few Congregations in the Network's/Coalitions service area, or
- a TXCDR leader, if multiple Networks/Coalitions will be involved.

We encourage Congregations to use their TXCDR Response Teams to respond to local disasters and to collaborate on larger disasters.

Prioritizing Disaster Response



It will be essential for you to make sure that Congregation leadership and your Response Team(s) know the order in which to prioritize disaster response. TXCDR recommends:

1. Congregation leaders and first responders – freeing leaders to take care of their Congregations by taking care of their immediate needs
2. Congregation members - freeing members of the Congregation to share God's love with their neighbors by taking care of their immediate needs
3. Community

Scalability of the Response Organization

Scenario	Congregation's Role	CDR's Role
A member of your Congregation suffers wind damage during a thunderstorm	<p>Activate your Congregation's Response Teams to address the opportunity as requested by your Congregation's senior leadership.</p> <p>The Congregation's DRC serves as the Response Director.</p>	CDR's Response Team Advisors receive calls from Congregation's Response Team Leaders for advice
Local flooding damages homes in a local subdivision	<p>Activate your Congregation's Response Teams as requested by your local TXCDR network/coalition.</p> <p>The Network's/Coalition's DRC serves as the Response Director.</p>	Activate network/coalition led TXCDR to engage multiple Congregations
Massive flooding and windstorm damage over a wide area due to a Hurricane	<p>Activate your Congregation's Response Teams as requested by TXCDR.</p> <p>A TXCDR leader serves as the Response Director.</p>	Activate multiple network/coalition TXCDR efforts to engage multiple networks/coalitions and Congregations

In all cases, the call for volunteers will also be specific to the event. There will almost always be a call to DRCs to rally Spontaneous Volunteers (untrained volunteers) to serve on Response Teams led by trained leaders.

Lastly, when responding to the "community," consider how and if you will respond by determining how far away from your Congregation, the disaster occurs. Please make your disaster response plans based on the following:

- The immediate area, defined as your immediate community/Congregation
- Within a 1-hour drive of your community/Congregation
- Out of immediate area, but within a 1-day drive of your community/Congregation
- Out of the immediate area, requiring overnight stay

Examples of Response Organization Structures

The Response Director is the one person in a response organization responsible for the activities of the Response Organization. There is one and only one Response Director in any response organization.

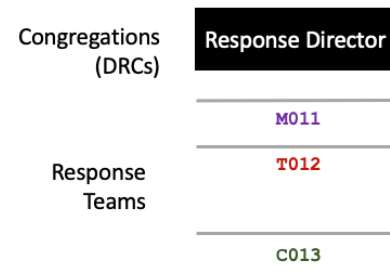
The choice of the Response Director and the Response Organization is based on the:

- Size of the response needed,
- Nature of the incident,
- Geographic boundaries,
- Volunteer skills required, and
- Requests of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM).

Case 1. Congregation Only

If the Congregation is responding to an event which they will handle working alone, the senior leadership of the church and DRC will appoint the Response Director. The Response Director could be the DRC or another member of the Congregation. All the Congregation's Response Teams report to the Response Director.

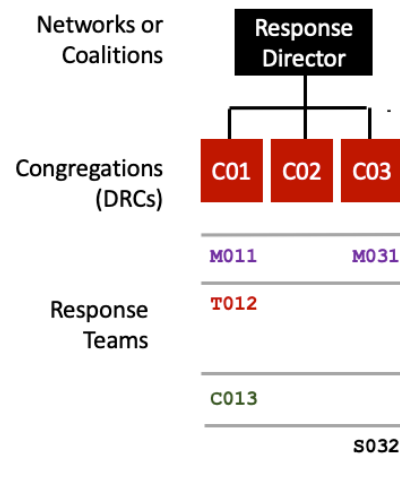
For example, the Response Organization could consist of the Muck and Gut Response team, M011, the Tarp and Board Response Team, T012, and the Chain Saw Team C013. All teams ultimately report to the Response Director.



Case 2. Multiple Congregations in one Network or Coalition

If two or more Congregations are responding to an event, the Network or Coalition that the Congregations work with will appoint the Response Director. The Response Director could come from the Network or Coalition staff or any of the participating Congregations. All the DRCs of the participating Congregations will report to the Response Director.

For example, the Response Organization could consist of the Muck and Gut Response team, M011, the Tarp and Board Response Team, T012, and the Chain Saw Team C013 from Congregation C01; and the Muck and Gut team M031, and Shelter Team S032 from Congregation C03. Congregations C01, C02, and C03 would all be asked to supply Spontaneous Volunteers.



Case 3. Multiple Congregations, multiple Networks or Coalitions

If two or more Networks or Coalitions are responding to an event, the TXCDR will work with the Networks or Coalitions participating in appointing a Response Director. The Response Director could come from the TXCDR leadership, the participating Network or Coalition staff, or any of the participating Congregations. All the Network DRCs of the participating Networks or Coalitions would report to the Response Director. Congregation DRCs will report to the Network or Coalition DRC.

For example, the Response Organization could consist of teams from four networks or coalitions, North, South, East, and West, and the organization would look like this

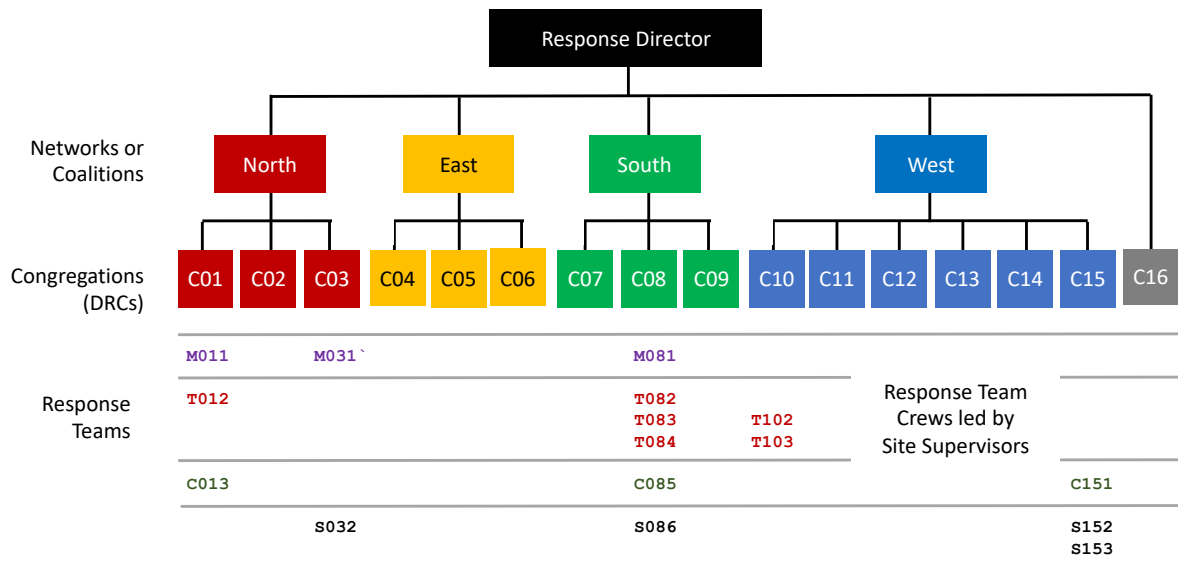


Figure 2. Response Team Organization – Major Event

Note that

- Networks/Coalitions North, East, South, and West report to and are accountable to the Response Director.
- Each Congregation reports to and is accountable to one Network/Coalition.
- Response Teams report to and are accountable to one Congregation.
- Some Congregations may elect not to raise Response Teams (such as C02). During a response, they will be asked to recruit Spontaneous Volunteers.
- Congregation C16 does not belong to any of the Networks or Coalitions and will communicate directly with the Response Director.

Response Team Advisors

A Response Team Advisor advises each group of Response Teams. In the example above, there would be Response Team Advisors for Muck and Gut, Tarping, Red Cross Shelters, and Chain Saw.

Roadmap for Congregational Engagement



Step 1: Congregation partners with TXCDR (Congregational Disaster Readiness)

Step 2: Appoint Leadership

- The Disaster Readiness Coordinator (DRC) will serve as the central point of contact for the Congregation. The DRC will be responsible for communicating and coordinating all disaster readiness/response efforts for the Congregation. The DRC will meet with Congregation leadership to make decisions on how the Congregation will be involved (staff, finances, facility, volunteers, etc.). The DRC will attend a DRC Training and participate in quarterly DRC meetings.
- Assistant Disaster Readiness Coordinator (Asst DRC) can be appointed by the Congregation leader or by the DRC. This person will serve as the assistant to the DRC.

Step 3: Develop Response Team(s)

- The DRC recruits Response Team(s) Leader based on the area Congregation leadership has determined that best meets the Congregation's mission, scope, and capabilities.
- The DRC works with Response Team(s) Leader to help them recruit and train their team.
- The DRC meets with each Response Team(s) Leader monthly to establish, update, and maintain vision, goals, and direction.
- The DRC and Response Team(s) Leader hold meetings four times per year for all who have an interest in serving in any capacity.

Step 4: Prepare to Respond

- The DRC and Response Team Leader(s) expand the volunteer base and encourages training for all.
- The DRC and Response Team Leader(s) assists Congregation leadership as needed in developing a Disaster Plan for the Congregation.
- The DRC and Response Team Leader(s) develops processes for recruiting other local and non-local volunteers (who may not be part of the Congregation) when disaster strikes.

Step 5: Responding

- Utilize AlertMedia for communication.
- Recruit "Spontaneous Volunteers" as needed to support Response Teams within TXCDR. (Spontaneous Volunteers are volunteers who have not had any previous TXCDR training.) They will participate in Response Teams under the direction of a TXCDR trained leader or one of our partners.
- Support the Response Teams fielded by the Congregation.
- Direct the Response Teams fielded by the Congregation as requested by TXCDR
- Communicate team status and situational awareness reports to TXCDR as requested.



The Role of the DRC

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The Disaster Readiness Coordinator (DRC) plays a vital role in TXCDR's disaster response. Every Congregation needs someone who can help lead in times of disaster response. Without an active DRC, the responsibilities fall upon the Congregation leadership, and that can be difficult, with all the other responsibilities Congregation leadership carry on an on-going basis.

The DRC fulfills multiple responsibilities, before and after a disaster, needing both tangible and intangible skills.

Please list tangible skills you might need: _____

Please list intangible skills you might need:

This DRC training will address these various aspects of this vital leadership role.

Characteristics of a DRC

- Servant's heart
- Ability to rally others to the mission
- Organized
- Ability to overcome challenges and find alternative solutions
- Focused
- Ability to devote 2-6 hours per month to this task

Why Readiness Matters

Disasters are on the rise on a global scale. Unfortunately, the majority of the Congregations are not prepared to handle major disasters. By coordinating and collaborating, you can meet the needs of your Congregation members and the needs of those in your community. Lives can be changed when you demonstrate your love and care for them in their time of need.

DRC Roles Before Disaster

The primary role of the DRC is focused on preparing themselves, their Congregation, and their community BEFORE disaster strikes.

DRC Roles After Disaster

The DRC plays a pivotal role in guiding the Congregation's efforts to expedite relief and recovery by ensuring an effective and efficient response and collaborating with other DRCs, agencies, and Congregational Disaster Readiness leadership.

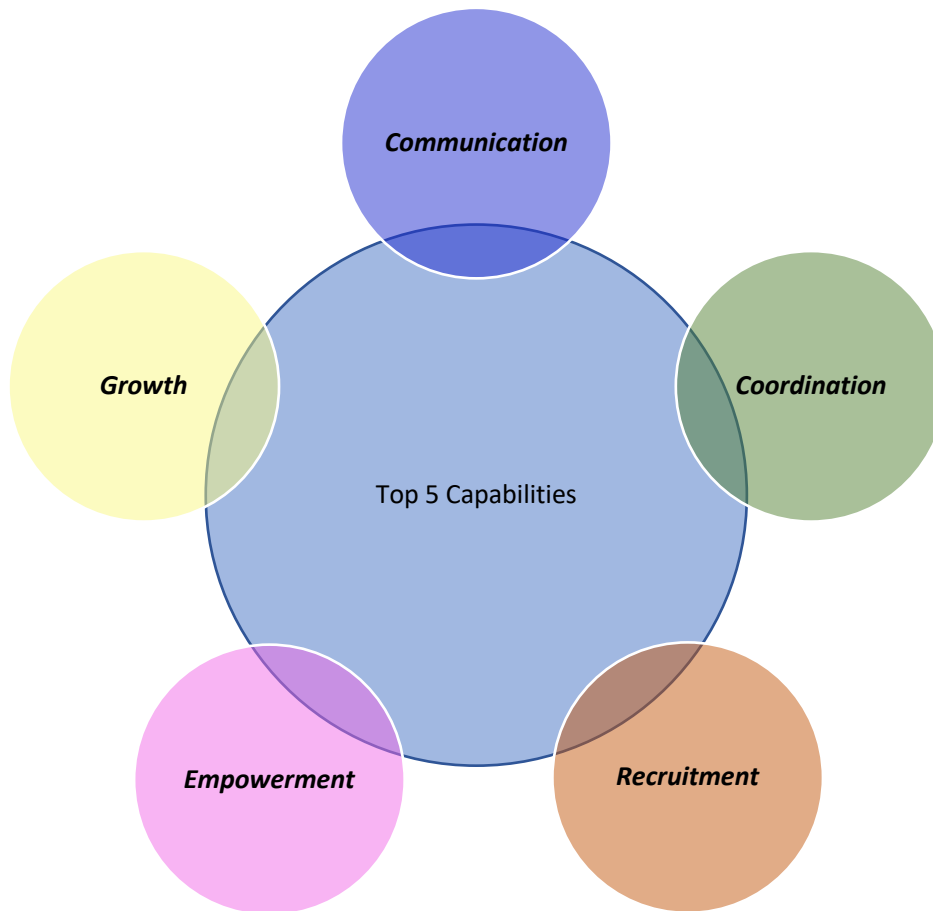
Additional Level 2: DRC Roles Before and After Disaster

Support Response Teams

- Recruit Response Team Leaders and team members
- Ensure all team members have proper PPE, equipment, and supplies
- Ensure Response Team leaders are trained
- Provide administrative support as needed
 - ✓ Ensure necessary documentation is completed
 - ✓ Ensure Congregational Background check procedure are enforced
 - ✓ Ensure appropriate Congregational insurance policy guidelines are followed
 - ✓ Ensure any additional Congregation policies are documented and followed

DRC Capabilities

The role of a DRC is a challenging combination of the practical and intangible, as well as the spiritual and the relational. A DRC must lead and serve a diverse team with varying skills. For a DRC, to strive to achieve the capabilities below will help ensure success.



Communication

- With senior Congregational leadership to keep them aware of decisions made and plans implemented. It will be necessary for leaders to receive regular status updates as well as to solicit their approval as needed on the progress/plans.
- With other DRC's to share ideas, successes, and challenges. The other DRC's may have valuable input for you and vice versa.
- With Response Team Leaders about status and plans moving forward.
- With other Congregation members and the community to encourage volunteering.

Coordination

- The DRC will be called upon to provide status updates/reports to Congregation leadership, TXCDR leaders, and others. It will be essential for you to coordinate this information so you can ensure clear communication to all.

Recruitment

Recruitment is a vital capability for the DRC. You will find that you may need to recruit additional leaders/volunteers. Additionally, you may find that as you expand the scope of disaster readiness within your Congregation, there may be the need to add more volunteers with different skill sets. It will be important for you to share the mission to inspire those who want to serve

Empowerment

- Part of being a great DRC is to empower your Response Team Leaders. The more they are empowered to make decisions and move forward (with your oversight), the more ownership they will have in the mission.

Growth

- A DRC should strive to grow personally in terms of practical skills and soft skills. Most of us step into the DRC role with strong skills in some areas while there may be other areas that could use some growth. Focusing on developing those skills that have room for improvement will ensure your continued growth.
- Striving to grow the relationships with your Response Team Leaders will help the overall mission and help ensure that all are on the same page and striving for the same goals.

Let's remember that we serve because our faith calls us to do so.

It is estimated that 60-70% of those impacted by disaster are not connected to any organized Congregation.

History has proven that disasters will happen in our area, and they will impact people who will need your help who are not members of your Congregation. One positive outcome of a disaster is that it allows us to show our love to our neighbors, regardless of race, economic status, religious or non-religious beliefs.

You will have the opportunity to demonstrate the love of God in your heart through your service to others, and you may, possibly, have the chance to share your faith. Be prepared to walk through that door of opportunity should it arise, however if that door does not open, you will have shown your love for them with your actions.

However, the main goal of disaster response is to expedite relief and recovery from the disaster





Volunteers! Basic truth....our Congregations could not respond to a disaster without volunteers.

You will be responsible for all areas of volunteer coordination. It is recommended that you recruit another person to help you with these tasks (Volunteer Coordinator).

If you have an Assistant DRC, they can perform the Volunteer Coordinator's duties or, you may ask another volunteer within your Congregation to lead this critical effort.

When thinking of Volunteer Coordination, it is important to know that there are individual stages of preparing for and responding to a disaster event.

Those stages are:

Blue Skies

During blue sky periods, there are no current disaster events and no indication of an impending disaster event. Volunteer Coordinators may be called upon by their Congregational DRC to help recruit or assist with the paperwork for Response Team volunteers.

Stand by

The DRC has gotten notification of an impending disaster event with a request that their Congregation is on standby to respond. The DRC will notify the Response Team leaders and senior Congregational leadership of the possibility of being called to respond. No further actions required at this time other than notification. There may or may not be any tasks for the Volunteer Coordinator at this stage.

During the Disaster

Be safe! This is for the DRC, Asst DRC, Volunteer Coordinators, and Team Leaders.

Staging

The Congregational DRC ensures the Response Team Leader(s) have the necessary volunteers, equipment, and supplies to perform the task(s). If more volunteers are anticipated, the Volunteer Coordinator should recruit as directed.

Activate

The disaster event has occurred, and a response is required. The Congregational DRC will dispatch their Response Teams as needed to respond within their Congregation/community. The Volunteer Coordinator may be called upon to recruit additional volunteers for their Response Teams or by TXCDR to recruit "Spontaneous Volunteers" (for those tasks that do not require prior training).

Demobilize

Teams will be instructed to demobilize as the Activate stage ends. The DRC will inventory tools and supplies and determine the following:

- What worked well or as planned?
- What did not work well or as planned?
- What steps can be taken to improve?

If your Congregation has Response Team Leaders, it will be important for you to seek their input. The Volunteer Coordinator should also be consulted for their input. Be prepared to report any findings to your Congregation and TXCDR.

Volunteer Coordinator Responsibilities:

- Communicating
- Recruiting
- Motivating
- Determining correct age level participation based on the task to be performed
- Screening: Who are the right people for the task?
- Performing Background Checks and Safe Conduct Training
- Training on Safety Awareness
- Completing documentation

Communication

Communication is one of the essential roles of the Volunteer Coordinator. For the Volunteer Coordination task of recruitment, many things will need to be answered before recruitment can begin. See below:

Volunteer Task Details

How many volunteers are needed?	
Briefly describe the task to be performed	
Where to report?	
To whom to report?	
When to report (date/time)?	
What specific training (if any) is required for this task?	
What safety gear/tools should be brought or acquired by the volunteer?	
Is a background check required for this task?	
Is there an age requirement?	
How physical is this task? Heavy lifting, prolonged standing, etc	
Does this task require a valid DL?	

Recruitment

Volunteer Coordinator may be called upon to recruit volunteers for the Response Teams and to recruit spontaneous volunteers for tasks.

It will be important for you to predetermine your recruiting resources (internally within your Congregation as well as beyond your Congregation).

Example Situation: The DRC or Response Team Leader asks you to recruit ten volunteers.

Where will you recruit from, and how?

Recruiting Within your Congregation:

- Who is your point of contact for specific volunteer recruitment?
- What processes do you have for recruiting? Email, website, social media, phone calls, etc.
- Are there groups within your Congregation that typically respond? Sunday school classes, life groups, youth groups, etc.

Recruiting Beyond your Congregation:

- Who are your points of contact for volunteer recruitment within other groups? Such as Rotary Club, Chamber of Commerce, Colleges, High Schools (HS Clubs), other community service organizations, Scouts (senior level), other affiliated Congregations, etc.
- What processes do they have for recruiting? Email, website, social media, phone calls, etc.
- Are there business contacts for recruitment? Such as grocery stores for Food/Supply Distribution, restaurants for meals in shelters, tree cutting services for Chain Saw Response Team, etc.

Motivation

Motivation may be needed to encourage an individual to volunteer, and often motivation will be required to keep individuals engaged.

Some thoughts concerning motivation are:

- Recognition. Don't forget to recognize those who are giving of their time and talents to help others. Most people like to hear about how much their efforts are appreciated. People do not generally help others for recognition, but it is good for them to understand that those efforts are appreciated.
- Help them to recognize the need. Don't assume that others have all the information about the level of need. It will be vital for you to "paint the picture" accurately, and images and videos are great when communicating the call to action needed.

Volunteer Age Requirements

The DRC and Team Leader should communicate the age requirements to the Volunteer Coordinator. The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for volunteer recruitment accordingly.

Screening: Who are the right people for the task?

The Volunteer Coordinator has the responsibility of matching volunteers with the appropriate task. It will be important to find out as much information as possible about what will be required of the volunteer. Volunteers come with varied passions, skills, personal experiences, and abilities. The information provided when the volunteer registers will help you to align the right people with the right tasks.

Background Checks and Safe Conduct

*This is an area where the Volunteer Coordinator and the DRC will need the guidance of the Congregation's leadership.

CDR has requirements for background checks to be performed for the following:

- Red Cross Training Volunteers (Red Cross performs these background checks)
- DRC, Asst DRC and any Response Team Leader including the Volunteer Coordinator
- Adult volunteers supervising minors
- Adult volunteers driving others (such as on the Transportation Support Team)

The Volunteer Coordinator should strive to follow whatever protocol has been determined for your Congregation and make sure this policy is communicated to all volunteers.

Safe Conduct Training (Working with Children/Opposite Gender).

Providing a safe environment is required for all volunteers and those they are serving. The Volunteer Coordinator and the DRC must solicit the input of the Congregation's leadership to determine your policy. *(You will find a reference guide in the Resources Section or feel free to use the policy your congregation has established.)*

Safety Awareness and Training

There is a list of safety awareness and training guidelines for each Response Team task.

It is the Response Team leader's responsibility to ensure the volunteers on their team follow the standardized procedures. However, the Volunteer Coordinator should ensure the Response Team leaders and all volunteers are following the procedures.

Standardized safety gear needed has been determined by the Response Team task to be performed. Again, the Response Team leader's responsibility is to ensure all safety gear is available and in working order. The Volunteer Coordinator's responsibility is to ensure that the Response Team leaders and volunteers follow all safety protocols (equipment and procedures).

Documentation

Preparing for a disaster event includes determining the documentation needed and how/who will be the retriever, documenter, and maintainer of information required to be recorded.

The documentation you will need:

- Volunteer Sign-up and Sign-in forms
- Background checks (authorization documents are provided by the company performing the background check)
- Safe conduct training; acknowledgment document
- Liability waivers. TXCDR requires all volunteers to sign a liability waiver. Volunteers under 18 (minors) must also have a guardian/parent sign their liability waiver.
- Response Team specific waivers/forms. (Some Response Teams will have wording specific to their team's tasks.)
- Data Collection (Response Teams will have data that will be collected and recorded.)

NOTE: We have samples of documentation needed above in the reference materials.

Finding a volunteer task for all who respond to the call to action

Often when you communicate the call to action, especially during the Activation stage, you will have many volunteers register to help as their hearts drive them to want to help others.

These volunteers will come with varied passions, skills, personal experiences, and abilities. The key for a Volunteer Coordinator is to match the volunteer with the task closely.

However, be prepared to have people register to help, who won't have the skills, physical ability, or meet the age requirement of the task at hand. For those, it will be important for the Volunteer Coordinator to find a place where they can serve.

A couple of common groups are the youth (too young to fulfill the tasks needed) and the elderly (not physically capable of fulfilling the functions required). Think in advance of the best ways to utilize these critical types of volunteers.

Youth Volunteer

Youth volunteers can be beneficial when placed in the right volunteer positions. It is important to encourage your youth to serve others at a young age, so consider alternative tasks for the younger volunteer.



Some suggestions for younger volunteers:

- Making thank you cards for adult volunteers
- Making welcome home or encouragement cards for survivors
- Assisting with supply distribution (a group of bilingual high school students can be a true blessing)
- Canvassing impacted neighborhoods handing out water, flyers, etc.
- Doing yard work or debris removal (use your best judgment as this can be a potentially hazardous environment, proper supervision will be mandatory)
- Responsible teens can provide childcare for very young children

The young are not the only group to consider when thinking in terms of the age of the volunteer. Many disaster response tasks may be physical, which could pose a challenge for the older volunteer. Home and Property clean up may not be the best fit for them, nor would a task that required prolonged standing. However, the older volunteer has excellent experience and wisdom.

Elderly Volunteer

Some suggestions for the older volunteers:



- Providing Compassionate Care
- Baking/cooking/assembling sack lunches for volunteers
- Providing/assembling welcome home baskets for survivors
- Assisting with supply distribution
- Assisting with the HOPELine
- Leading/supervising a group on non-skilled or younger volunteers
- Providing volunteer safety instructions
- Providing volunteer Safe Conduct training
- Assisting with volunteer sign-in tables
- Gathering/documenting paperwork
- Tracking inventory of supplies/food

Family Volunteer Teams

Many families will want to serve together, and that is encouraged. Consider the ages of the children when placing these family units on tasks.

You may also have adults with very young children volunteer to serve.

Very young children can often be distracting and a safety hazard, even when under the supervision of the adult volunteer. For these reasons, you may want to arrange childcare for those adult volunteers with small children. If this is not an option, please consider ways they can serve from home.

Lastly, expect to have the unexpected happen!

“The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry.” – Robert Burns

Your role as a DRC or Volunteer Coordinator will require you to adapt and overcome unexpected obstacles. The unexpected will happen; the question is how you will handle those challenges.

Your Congregation leadership has put their faith in you and entrusted you to be a leader in volunteer management.

They trust you to have the discernment to know when to seek their guidance and when to make the necessary decision.

As a Level 2 Disaster Readiness Coordinator (DRC), you are responsible for helping with recruiting Response Teams leaders and members. The relationships and trust the Response Team members develop in the Congregation's Readiness program are very important. As the Response Team leaders and members feel their contribution is meaningful and needed, this will strengthen the team and their efforts.

While vision can spark people's interest, it is the relationships formed, their sense of being needed, and confidence in their preparedness that will help them stay engaged. People also feel a greater sense of ownership if they have a voice, make sure you give the Response Team leaders this opportunity.

Steps to Engaging your Response Teams

- Coordinate training for your Response Team Leaders
- After initial training, once a month check-ins are recommended with the Response Team leader(s)

These can be via phone/Zoom or in person. The essential items to cover during the monthly check-ins are:

- ✓ Verify the leader has been trained and is comfortable with their responsibilities and expectations.
 - ✓ Verify the leader has the volunteers needed for their Response Team. Some teams require that all volunteer members are trained, and some teams only need the leader to be trained. Verify that all training requirements have been met.
 - ✓ Verify that the leader is proficient with the use of AlertMedia for communications.
 - ✓ Verify that all forms needed for the operation of the Response Teams are available to the Team Leader.
 - ✓ Some teams require safety gear, tools, etc. Verify that the leader has the items necessary to carry out the expectations of their Response Team.
- Two times per year, in-person meetings (if possible) are recommended for your Congregations Disaster Readiness Team.
These meetings should include the team leaders and any team members.
For those meetings, it will be essential to set an agenda. Some topic suggestions are:
 - Updates on any readiness information as communicated by Congregational Disaster Readiness (CDR) as well as any key information specific to your Congregation's readiness progress.

- Status of volunteers needed for the Response Teams. Have any volunteers moved or are no longer able to serve?
- Do the teams have enough volunteers to accomplish the goal of the Response Team?
- Do the volunteers feel comfortable with their responsibilities?
- If a disaster event has occurred since your last meeting, share what worked well, what needs improvement, and what should be done differently.
- Record any action items.
- For some of the Response Teams, “dry runs” can be useful.
- Verify the supplies and equipment you have available and ready for use.

This is an excellent opportunity for the leaders and the volunteers to share successes and to discuss challenges and brainstorm ways to resolve them.

Compassionate Care

There are two opportunities for Compassionate Care:

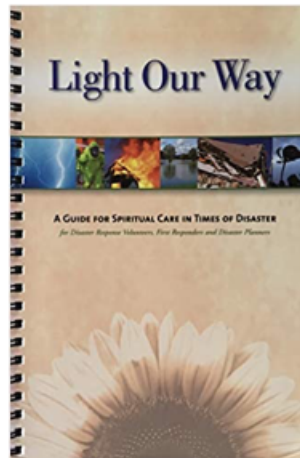
Dedicated Compassionate Care Response Team

This entire team will be trained on offering emotional and spiritual care to those impacted and will provide them helpful information on their long term recovery. This team may be called upon to serve on the HOPELine virtual call center for those who need to speak with someone. These compassionate care individuals may work alongside the Response Teams as required. They may also perform tasks such as canvassing to offer care and support to those in the disaster impacted areas. They may even begin to collect data about those impacted to pass along to the Volunteer Case Manager.

Volunteer Case Management

These volunteers will be trained to fill the gap for those impacted when disasters do not rise to the level of the severity necessary to attract state or federal funding for formal disaster case management. For those under-resourced individuals who are impacted, their need is just as great whether there were one or 10,000 affected by the disaster event. One of our guiding principles is that not one person is left behind; therefore, this team will help to provide a level of volunteer case management to those impacted. This team should know the resources in the local community, state, and federal levels to guide the people affected to long term recovery. At such time, state or federal funding for case management becomes available; the volunteer case manager would hand over the client to those organizations to care for the long term recovery.

COMPASSIONATE CARE



Light Our Way: A Guide for Spiritual Care in Times of Disaster for Disaster Response Volunteers, First Responders, and Disaster Planners Ring-bound – January 1, 2006

by [Kevin Massey](#) (Author)

<https://www.amazon.com/Light-our-way-volunteers-responders/dp/B0784H61VS>

Sheltering

People Sheltering

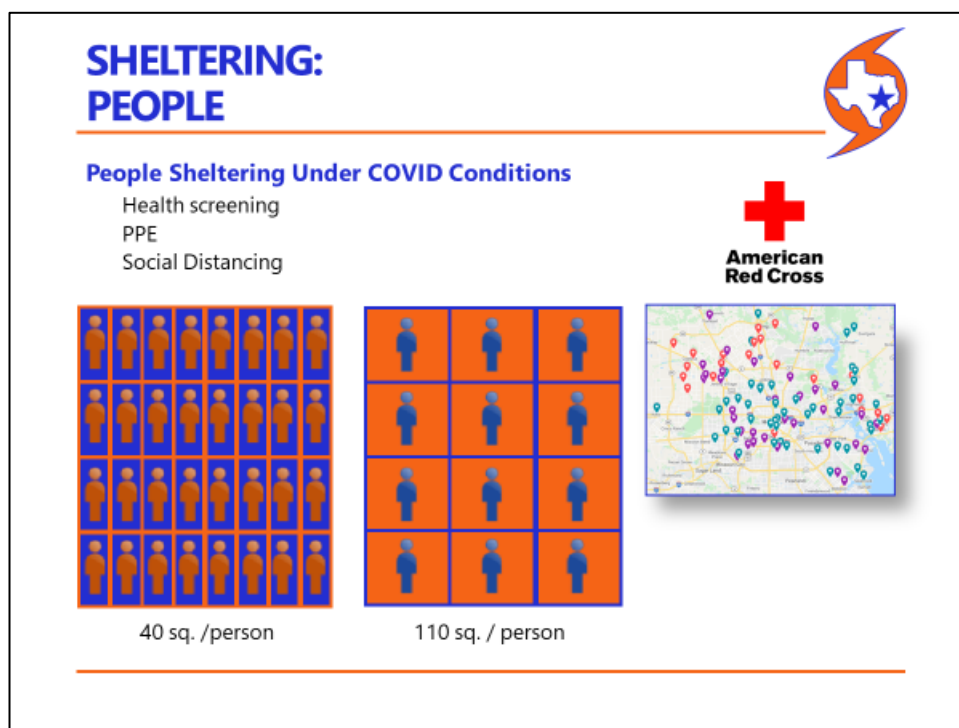
The American Red Cross will train all volunteers for sheltering. Background checks will be performed by The American Red Cross for all Red Cross Shelter volunteers.

This team will be responsible for helping to shelter those displaced from their residence.

Red Cross shelter facility opportunities include short term (less than two weeks) and long term (longer than two weeks). Key advantages to becoming a Red Cross Shelter facility include:

- They provide liability insurance
- They provide equipment such as cots, blankets, hygiene kits, etc
- They provide reimbursement to restore your facility to pre-shelter condition if needed

With consideration of infectious diseases, more people shelters will be needed primarily due to the social distancing required. See the graph below:



Sheltering Out of Town Responders

Large disaster events will trigger large groups of volunteers who desire to help with recovery. These groups could come from other faith-based organizations, other congregations, or other disaster relief organizations. They will have three basic needs: to have a place to sleep, food, and a place to shower. When considering if you can help with this team, think about the following:

- How many do you feel comfortable housing at any given time?
- Do you have multiple rooms to divide males and females, or will they be in one large open area?
- Can you help with food, and if so, how?
- Can you help with a place to shower and if so how?

Shelter Laundry Support

Often those who arrive at a shelter do so with little extra clothing. If they are staying in the shelter for more than a couple days they will need to launder their clothes. There are several ways this could be provided:

- Volunteers take the dirty clothing home and return it laundered
- Volunteers drive clients to public laundry facilities, schools, gyms, etc. and let them do their own laundry
- Congregations rent laundry trailers that can be parked at the congregation, thus allowing the clients to do their laundry on site

Pet Sheltering

Many people consider their pets four-legged family members, therefore they will not consider leaving their homes and seeking shelter without their pets. Not only does this put the individual in harm's way, but also the first responders who may have to rescue them when the situation turns deadly. This team helps to prepare a space and processes to enable the pet owners to feel secure in leaving their homes to seek shelter.

Transportation Support

Clients sometimes arrive at shelter facilities with no transportation. If they are staying longer than a day, they may have needs such as prescription pick-up, doctor's appointments, or banking needs. This team will be responsible for coordinating transportation for non-emergency needs. Transportation Support is performed by volunteers using their vehicles or by volunteers driving congregation owned vans or buses.

Home & Property

Mucking/Gutting

The most common of the cleanup phase tasks is mucking & gutting. This team will be responsible for removing damaged contents and sanitizing the home, according to standardized processes. While every member of this team doesn't need to be trained, it is our goal that at least the Response Team Leader and any Site Supervisors attend training. The purpose of standardized processes will help ensure that the impacted person does not suffer more unnecessary costs at a later date as they recover.

Boarding & Tarping

Before roofs, windows or doors can be repaired or replaced, the openings must be secured to prevent further damage from wind and water. This team's tasks will also help with reducing vandalism and theft. These tasks can be hazardous; therefore, every member of this team must be trained in the standard process.

Chain Sawing

Wind or high water can cause trees to fall on homes or onto needed access areas. When first responders have cleared the area for this team, they will be responsible for removing trees and stacking debris. These tasks can be very hazardous; therefore, every member of this team must have prior experience with chainsaw usage, and every member of this team must be trained in the standard process.

Distribution

Distribution Centers

One of the most common tasks performed by congregations is the collection and distribution of food, water, and supplies to the clients. This team would be responsible for setting up a collection/distribution process for the clients. Many unskilled volunteers may be able to help with this team; however, the team leader(s) must be trained in the standard process.

Regional Warehousing

Larger congregational facilities may be well suited for this team. It involves procuring, storing, and distributing bulk supplies to Distribution Centers. Those supplies may be in large pallets, so ample space is required as well as a parking lot that can accommodate larger trucks. Additional space will be necessary if a Distribution Center is collocated with a Regional Warehouse. Unskilled volunteers may be able to serve on this team; however, if they will be operating forklifts or other equipment, training would be required.



Appendices

www.TXCDR.org



Godfrey Hubert 281-433-1412 (cell)

Godfrey.Hubert@hopedrtx.org

Gary Flaharty 832-993-7743 (cell)

Gary.Flaharty@SHURhouston.org

Cathy Beasley 281-630-3963 (cell)

Cathy.Beasley@hopedrtx.org

Sonya Meyers 832-463-7554 (cell)

Sonya.Meyers@hopedrtx.org

Regional/National Resources

FEMA www.gov/national-preparedness-resource-library

Harris County Office of Emergency Management www.houstonoem.org

Harris County (Ready Harris) www.readyharris.org

Salvation Army www.salvationarmyusa.org

The Red Cross www.redcross.org

United Way www.unitedway.org

211 (www.211.org)

This organization is based in the US and Canada, and they are committed to being the first source of help for those who need it. People who have been impacted can call, text, or chat with their local 211 specialist who helps them find needs for things such as food and shelter/housing options.

Crisis Cleanup (www.crisiscleanup.org)

This organization's goal is to help volunteer disaster relief organizations help more people. This organization is activated for a period of time immediately following a disaster event to connect impacted homeowners with the volunteer organizations to help with clean up. Clean up activities generally include debris removal and muck & gut.

ARC	American Red Cross
CDC	Centers for Disease Control
CERT	Community Emergency Response Team
DAC	Disaster Assistance Center
DHHS	U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services
DHS	U.S. Dept of Homeland Security
DMAT	Disaster Medical Assistance Team
EMC	Emergency Management Coordinator
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
HUD	U.S. Dept of Housing and Urban Development
LDR	Lutheran Disaster Response
LTRC	Long-Term Recovery Committee
MDS	Mennonite Disaster Service
NEMA	National Emergency Management Assoc
NFIP	National Flood Ins Program
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NVOAD	National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster
OEM	Office of Emergency Management
SAR	Search and Rescue
SBA	Small Business Administration
SBP	Saint Bernard Project
SERC	State Emergency Response Commission

SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
STEAR	State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry
TBM	Texas Baptist Men
TDEM	Texas Division of Emergency Management
TSA	The Salvation Army
TWC	Texas Workforce Commission
UCC	United Church of Christ
UMCOR	United Methodist Committee on Relief
VOAD	Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster

Purpose

The purpose of Compassionate Care (CC) is to demonstrate the love of God by offering emotional and spiritual support to those impacted by a disaster. By purposefully interacting with homeowners compassionately, volunteers seek to help survivors of disaster become whole.

How it Works

Compassionate Care (CC) is embedded in every aspect of TXCDR response.

- Universally, CC is practiced by all response volunteers regardless of the activity or service they provide. Response Team Leaders receive basic training in CC so they can relate to homeowners on a more personal level, realizing they are not merely repairing a structure, but a home. The DRC will ensure all Team Leaders are applying CC standards and practices in all services they provide.
- A more robust form of CC is offered through dedicated Caregivers who serve on a CC Response Team, led by a Response Team Leader and Assistant(s). The leaders share the responsibility to recruit, schedule training, coordinate, and deploy Caregivers into disaster areas. A TEAM is comprised of two (2) or more Caregivers. Team Leaders are trained by TXCDR and attend regional TXCDR readiness meetings. Caregivers are also trained by TXCDR, and work under the supervision of these leaders.
- Volunteer Disaster Case Management (DCM) is yet another form of CC, in the event a disaster does not qualify for FEMA funded Case Management. Volunteer Case Managers are trained by TXCDR to assist survivors plan and implement recovery. Volunteer Case Management is activated by the County Office of Emergency Management.

What is Compassionate Care

"Compassion" comes from the Latin *com pati*, which means "to suffer together."

Compassionate Caregivers feel deeply and empathically for their Care Receivers and have a heartfelt desire to help them cope with their loss. By offering comfort, encouragement, and hope, Response Volunteers address the whole person's needs by including CC in every aspect of the service.

Who are Care Receivers

A Care Receiver has been impacted by disaster and welcomes Emotional & Spiritual Support in the early stages of their journey to recovery.

Who are Caregivers

A Compassionate Caregiver is a volunteer trained in the soft skills of providing one-on-one emotional and spiritual support.

What Compassionate Caregivers Do

Compassionate Caregivers meet Care Receivers in shelters, in their homes, or in the neighborhood to offer a safe place to voice their feelings by:



1. Being IN the moment IN their world
2. Being Interested --- NOT interesting
3. Listening Empathically
4. Offering understanding and validation
5. Sharing information & resources
6. Advocating for their needs when necessary

Survivors of disaster experience a wide range of emotions such as grief, pain, anger, discouragement, and loss of direction. Caregivers respect their feelings by listening non-judgmentally without censoring their feelings. While there may always be people with more difficult circumstances, the Care Receiver's difficulties will always be the worst they are experiencing at that moment. is facing will always be the worst they are experiencing at that moment.

Caregivers must remember that they are merely the Careiver, but God is the cure giver. Although we are faith-based, Caregivers recognize they are not there to convert people but to demonstrate God's loving presence. The Caregiver's role is not to bring people to God, but to bring God's love to people.



- Do listen patiently
- Do reflect and validate
- Do follow up
- Do follow through
- Do share information
- Do respect Boundaries
- Do advocate when appropriate



- Don't make promises
- Don't call them victims
- Don't enable
- Don't giver opinions
- Don't rescue
- Don't offer toxic positivity
- Don't chose sides in disputes

Safe Practices

It is incumbent upon the Congregation to take certain safety measures, including:

Background Checks

The Congregation shall perform background checks on all CC Team Leaders and Caregivers. If the Congregation cannot perform background checks, TXCDR will perform the required background checks. Additionally, the Congregational leadership shall screen and approve participants for service.

Insurance

The Congregation assumes all responsibility and liability for their CC operations. The Congregation's Disaster Readiness Coordinator (DRC) must verify that all volunteers have auto and health insurance, which are primary in an accident.

Safe Conduct

The Congregation must agree to enforce a Safe Conduct Policy. If the Congregation does not have a policy, it shall implement the TXCDR Safe Conduct Policy available on the TXCDR.org website.

Safety

The DRC and CC Team Leaders should develop policies and procedures to safeguard every volunteer and Care Receiver. Including but not limited to:

- Deploying two by two when possible, and only during daytime hours.
- Observing same gender assignments when visiting one on one.
- Visiting outdoors or in public view whenever possible
- Observing social and personal boundaries (4-8 ft)

Any incidents, including accidents, injuries, and conflicts, are reported to the Response Team Leader, the DRC, and TXCDR. The DRC must also report accidents and injuries that require medical attention to their Congregation's leadership.

COVID-19

All volunteers shall adhere to the most stringent COVID-19 guidelines posted by the CDC, local government, TXCDR, or Congregation. These should include instructing Volunteers to....

- Monitor their health and, if appropriate, isolate.
- Maintain safe social distancing.
- Wear N95+ masks, and if called for, goggles and gloves and to offer such to homeowners.
- Use hand sanitizers and handwashing stations.

- Report if they think they have come in contact with someone suspected of having COVID-19 (or other highly infectious diseases).
- Drive separately or with family members.

DRC Next Steps

- Schedule training of all Response Teams in primary Compassionate Care
- Determine whether your congregation will form a Compassionate Care Response Team.
 - Designate CC Team Leader(s)
 - Help Team Leaders recruit, screen and background check Caregivers (Use the Compassionate Care Application Form)
 - Assist with scheduling training provided by TXCDR
 - Help the Team Leader research community resources to assist in Caregiving.
 - Work with your Team Leader to determine what self-care practices you will provide to the Compassionate Care Team.

Additional Resources

1. Dr. Godfrey Hubert: godfrey.hubert@hopedrtx.org
2. Sonya Meyers: sonya.meyers@hopedrtx.org
3. Gary Flaharty: gary.flaharty@shur.org

To provide a safe and caring environment for everyone, especially children and youth (minors under the age of 18), all staff and volunteers who have contact with children and youth must adhere to these policies and guidelines. Faith calls us to create working and living environments that serve as sanctuaries, where everyone can feel safe. That means free from all hurtful, inappropriate, and insensitive interactions.

Child Protection Guidelines

These policies apply to all persons, including staff and volunteers.

Team Leader /Volunteers

There is safety in numbers; therefore, a minimum of two (2) adults should always be present when working with, supervising, chaperoning, or transporting minors, except when a parent is with their own children.

For overnight accommodations, we strongly recommend that at least two (2) adults be present in every room. Recognizing that accommodations may be restrictive in some cases, one leader could be adequate, provided that the adult is never alone with one minor.

Abuse

It is a Divine privilege to work with children and youth, and great care is required. Those who violate the child protection guidelines shall immediately be removed from contact with minors. If there is any suspicion of abusive behavior, the appropriate authorities must be called.

- As pertaining to protected interactions with minors, Congregations should apply all their customary protective measures, including membership requirements, references, background checks, etc.
- Adults who have been convicted of physical or sexual abuse must not be allowed to volunteer in any activity or program that includes children.
- Adult volunteers/staff should observe the “Two Adult Rule” - never be alone with a minor whenever possible – and adhere to the Code of Ethics and Rules established by your Congregation.

Response Plan

Volunteer/Staff should immediately report any claims or signs of abuse to the DRC who will report to the parents/guardians and the senior leader of the Congregation, who will determine the appropriate course of action. If abuse is alleged, Texas law requires that the Child Protection Agency be called by the one who received the information.

- The person suspected of abuse shall, for the safety and well-being of the child/youth, be removed with dignity from further contact with minors until the appropriate authority has conducted an investigation. The matter shall remain confidential.
- All communications shall be documented in detail, and shall include the following:
 - Name of the team leader/chaperone who witnessed or received the disclosure
 - Name of the alleged victim, age, and date of birth
 - Name of the person suspected of abuse, time and date of any conversation or any statement made by the person suspected
 - The time and date of alleged abuse
 - Time and date of any action taken by the leader/chaperone, describe action taken
 - Name, time and date of any other statements of others regarding this alleged incident

Definition of Abuse

Verbal Abuse: Any verbal communication that humiliates, degrades, threatens, or seeks to exploit a child or youth.

Physical Abuse: Any act that endangers the physical or mental wellbeing of a minor, including an intentional physical injury caused by a responsible adult or caretaker. Physical abuse may result from punishment that is injurious, excessive, or inappropriate to the individual's age or condition.

Sexual Abuse: Sexual abuse includes any communication that contains sexual content, propositioning, or touching for sexual pleasure. This includes, but is not limited to, 1) incest, 2) rape, 3) prostitution, 4) romantic involvement, 5) any sexual intercourse or sexual conduct, 6) behavior that communicates sexual interest and content.

Physical and Emotional Boundaries

Physical boundaries are most important in dealing with those who are vulnerable. While a hug or touch can be appropriate, be careful it feels and looks safe. Expressions of affection should be done in a safe and age-appropriate manner and always in the presence of others.

Screening Leaders/Chaperones

Congregations might screen all Team Leaders and Chaperones.

- Ask for references and conduct a review of those references
- Ask for a criminal background check*

****Persons with a criminal history of any of the following types of offenses shall not be allowed to serve in any capacity.***

- Child abuse, whether physical, emotional, sexual or neglectful
- Violent offenses, including murder, rape, assault, domestic violence, etc
- Person(s) having a criminal history of a drug-related conviction within the past five (5) years. NOTE: Any person(s) having a criminal history of DUI or DWI conviction within the past five (5) years shall not be allowed to serve as a driver.

Code of Ethics and Conduct

- Adults must serve as positive role models for youth and children by demonstrating respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, and maturity. Workers will be expected to act and react with love, maturity, and understanding in all situations.
- Consumption of alcohol products or illegal drugs is prohibited while serving.
- No adult should initiate or encourage inappropriate physical or intimate contact.
- Verbal reprimands shall not include destructive criticism, insults, offensive language, or screaming. Make every effort to avoid being alone with a minor.
- Volunteers and staff who transport minors must be fully insured and adhere to all traffic laws.

Sensitivity Issues

- Be respectful and be a polite guest and host.
- Be slow to speak and quick to listen.
- Respect the privacy of the client and avoid entering private spaces where you are not working.
- Avoid words or acts that can be offensive to others.
- Avoid wearing apparel or symbols that have a political message or connotation.
- Avoid wearing clothing that may be deemed revealing by certain cultures.
- Treat people of all races, religions, and cultures with respect and consideration.
- Avoid commenting on social values, finance, race, politics, and personal circumstances.
- Avoid the use of profanity.
- Avoid unsolicited conversations about religion. While faith is integral to all we do, forcing our brand or theology on others is not appropriate. It is ok, however, to politely invite the client to join the group in prayer before a meal, or to ask the client how you might pray for them when you go home. If the client expresses interest, you may consider inviting them to attend your place of worship, provided they are not active in another Congregation.
- Do not play music at a homesite. Music is a matter of personal taste, and often an expression of a particular culture or faith.

Diversity & Sensitivity

You must always remember to be respectful of all people and sensitive to all regardless as to economic status, race or religious status.

- When you serve in a person's residence, you are a guest and must conduct yourself accordingly. Also, the damage they have experienced is to their home and often their immediate way of life.... not just a residence.
- Be slow to speak and quick to listen. Listen to understand without giving unsolicited advice or being judgmental. It is sometimes a challenge to listen without giving advice, but often the clients just need you to listen. Some people will be emotionally distraught and simply need an empathic ear, not advice.
- Respect the privacy of the client and avoid entering private spaces where you are not working. Simple things like asking to use their restroom rather than assuming you have permission. Always remember you are in their residence as a guest.

You may be working in and with different communities other than your own.

- Avoid words or acts that can be offensive to others. Apply a heavy filter for your words or acts. What is acceptable to you may not be acceptable for all.
- Dress modestly and appropriately. More clothing covering is recommended for modesty and safety. For example: tank tops and shorts are not acceptable for males or females. In addition, for males, it might be tempting to go shirtless, however this can be offensive to others, so please avoid this while serving in a client's residence.
- Treat people of all races, religions and cultures with respect and consideration. All God's people are your brothers and sisters. You are there to demonstrate the love of God by serving them in their time of need.
- Avoid commenting on social values, finances, race, politics and personal circumstances. Any topic that could lead to controversy should be avoided, this includes wearing hats or clothing advocating any views on the topics above. Everyone on your team may feel the same way about a topic, but that does not mean it should be discussed in a client's home.

Honor God in all we do

- Avoid the use of profanity or colorful language/jokes. Again, we are guests in their residence and while certain language may be acceptable in your own residence and social circles, it may not be appropriate or acceptable to all.
- Avoid unsolicited conversations about religion. Our mission is to expedite relief and recovery from disaster, not evangelize.
- Be respectful of the client's beliefs (this includes nonbelievers).
- Faith is integral to all we do, however forcing our brand of theology on others is not appropriate.
- It is acceptable to politely invite the client to join the group in prayer. This could be a prayer at the beginning of the day, prior to a meal or at the end of the day. Always respect their answer to your invitation, especially if they decline. Be aware that you may be serving with other multi faith organizations as well. We encourage multi faiths to serve together, however please be sensitive to this when prayers are lifted.
- If the client expresses interest in your faith, you may consider inviting them to attend your place of worship. You are encouraged to step into any opportunity opened by the client to share your faith, however you should be respectful if the interest is not there.
- Do not play music at the client's residence without seeking their permission. Music is a matter of personal taste and often an expression of a culture or faith. You should always seek the permission of the client before playing any type of music. If they are open to music, you should ask if they have a preference on the type. Always respect their wishes.

Overview

The backbone of the Congregational Disaster Readiness (CDR) communications system is AlertMedia. This is the system that TXCDR leadership uses to communicate with Disaster Readiness Coordinators (DRCs, Response Team Leaders, and Site Supervisors while responding to a disaster. The system relies on multiple channels to send and receive messages, including voice, email, and text. As a DRC, you will need an AlertMedia account to initiate multi-channel notifications to your Response Team Leaders, to update event pages, and to provide status reports to your Response Director. Your Response Team Leaders will also need AlertMedia accounts to communicate with their Site Supervisors

You can access your AlertMedia account through the web on your desktop or through the AlertMedia app (iOS and Android). We recommend that you download the app on as many devices as you might use throughout the year, including your mobile phone, tablet, and even your spouse's mobile phone. The app is available for free from the AppStore and Google Play.

AlertMedia is a multi-channel and persistent communications platform.

- When we need to communicate DRCs, Response Team Leaders, and Site Supervisors can expect to receive messages simultaneously through all the channels they share, including voice messages, texts, emails, or alerts on the AlertMedia app.
- The system is persistent. It will keep attempting to reach you until you respond through one of the channels.

Assumptions

CDR assumes that during standby and response phases, most means of communications (landlines, cellular phone service, text, and internet applications) and the cloud-based AlertMedia system will be available. TXCDR is not planning to have any alternative means of communication.

An Example of a Response Organization Structure

For example, assume that the TXCDR leadership, OEM and Incident Command determine that we need to deploy Response Teams from four networks/coalitions (North, East, South, and West), including 16 Congregations (C01 through C16), and Response Teams for Muck and Gut (M), Tarp & Board (T), Chainsaw (C), and Shelters (S). The Response Organization Structure would look like this:

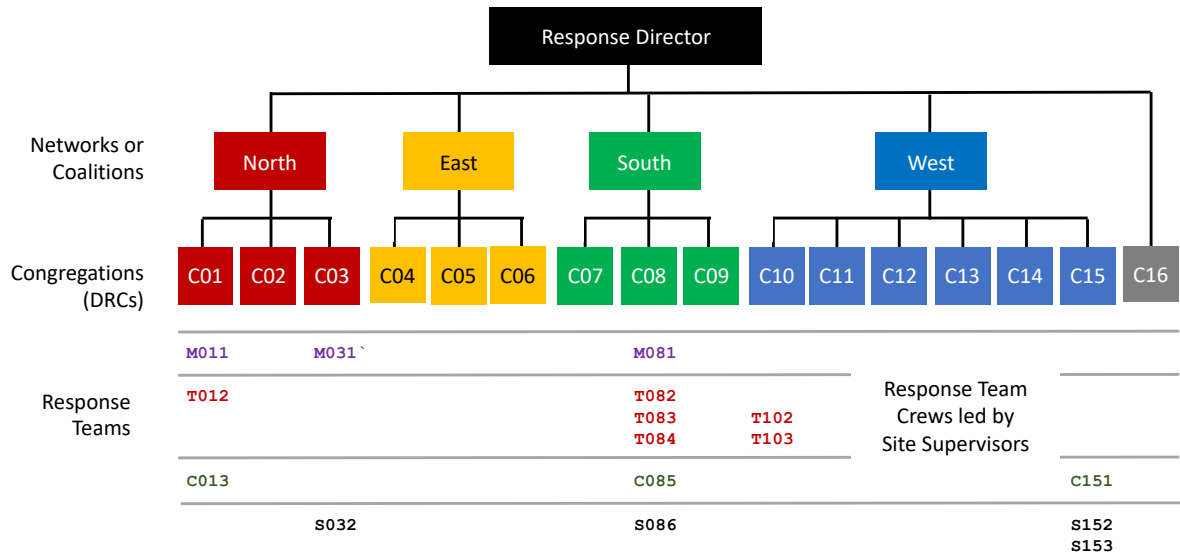


Figure 1. Response Team Organization

Note that

- Networks/Coalitions North, East, South, and West report to and are accountable to the TXCDR Response Director.
- Each Congregation reports to and is accountable to one Network/Coalition. (For example, C01, C02, and C03 report to the North Network/Coalition.)
- Response Teams report to and are accountable to one Congregation. (For example, M011, T012, and C013 report to Congregation C01.)
- Some Congregations may elect not to raise Response Teams (such as C02). During a response, they will be asked to recruit Spontaneous Volunteers.
- Congregation C16 does not belong to any of the Networks or Coalitions and will communicate directly with the Response Director.
- Each group of Response Teams is advised by a Response Team Advisor (not shown). In our example, there would be Response Team Advisors for Muck and Gut, Tarping, Red Cross Shelters, and Chain Saw.

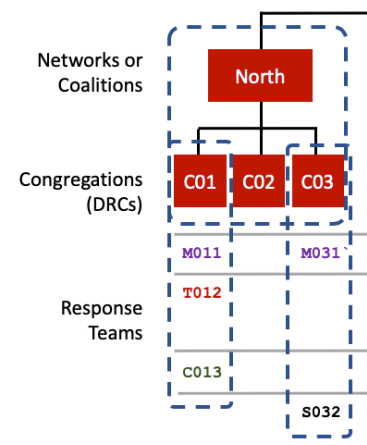
Groups

Within AlertMedia, the Response Organization Structure is reflected in AlertMedia groups. We have defined three types of groups to facilitate communication. The membership of each group is determined entirely by the Response Organization Structure.

The position of each organization/person in the deployment organization determines three types of groups to which a DRC will belong.

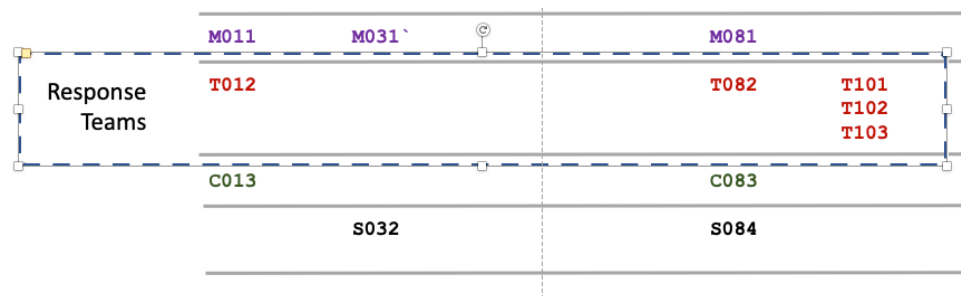
Direct Groups include networks/coalitions and the Congregations with direct reporting relationships and Congregations and their Response Teams.

- Congregation C01 and their Response Teams M011, T012, and C013 are a Direct Group. The North Network/Coalition and Congregations C01, C02, and C03 also comprise a direct group.
- The leader of a Direct Group in AlertMedia will be a Notify Admin and can create group notifications for their Direct Group.
- All DRCs with Response Teams will be Notify Admins for their direct groups.



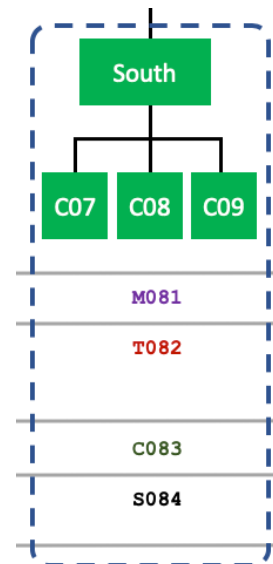
Response Advisory Groups consist of Response Team leaders and their Response Advisor.

- Response Teams T012, T082, T101, T102, T103, and the Tarp and Board Response Advisor belong to the Tarp and Board Response Advisory Group.
- The Response Advisor will be a Notify Admin and can send notifications to the members of their Response Advisory group.
- Response Advisory Groups exist to providing advice, share new learnings, and answer technical questions.



Monitoring Groups consist of all organizations that ultimately report into a network/coalition.

- Response Teams M081, T082, C083, and S084, and Congregations C07, C08, and C09, and network/coalition South all belong to the South Monitoring Group.
- A monitoring group allows the network/coalition leader to listen in on the communications of all their direct reports and their organizations. Monitoring Groups help the leader have situational awareness about the activities in their organization.
- Monitoring Groups tie organizations working in the same geography together.
- DCRs will be a member of at least the network/coalition monitoring group and the “everyone” group.



Using AlertMedia

Requesting an AlertMedia Account

All DRCs and Assistant DRCs will receive an email with instructions on how to request an AlertMedia account. Once you ask for an account, you can expect an email by noon the next business day, confirming that your account has been established and is ready for you to register your account and set your password. At this point, you will want to download the app onto your device(s) and complete setting up your account as instructed.

You will want to follow the instructions provided to you to ensure that AlertMedia notifications will reach you even if your device is in the Do Not Disturb or Silent mode. You will also want to subscribe to some third-party newsfeeds so that you are well informed during a response.

There are three user types in AlertMedia: Users, Notify Admins, and Admins. All users can receive notifications, but only Notify Admin and Admin users can log in to the system and send/manage notifications. Admin users have full access to all features and functions including reports, user profiles, and data management, and template creation and organization

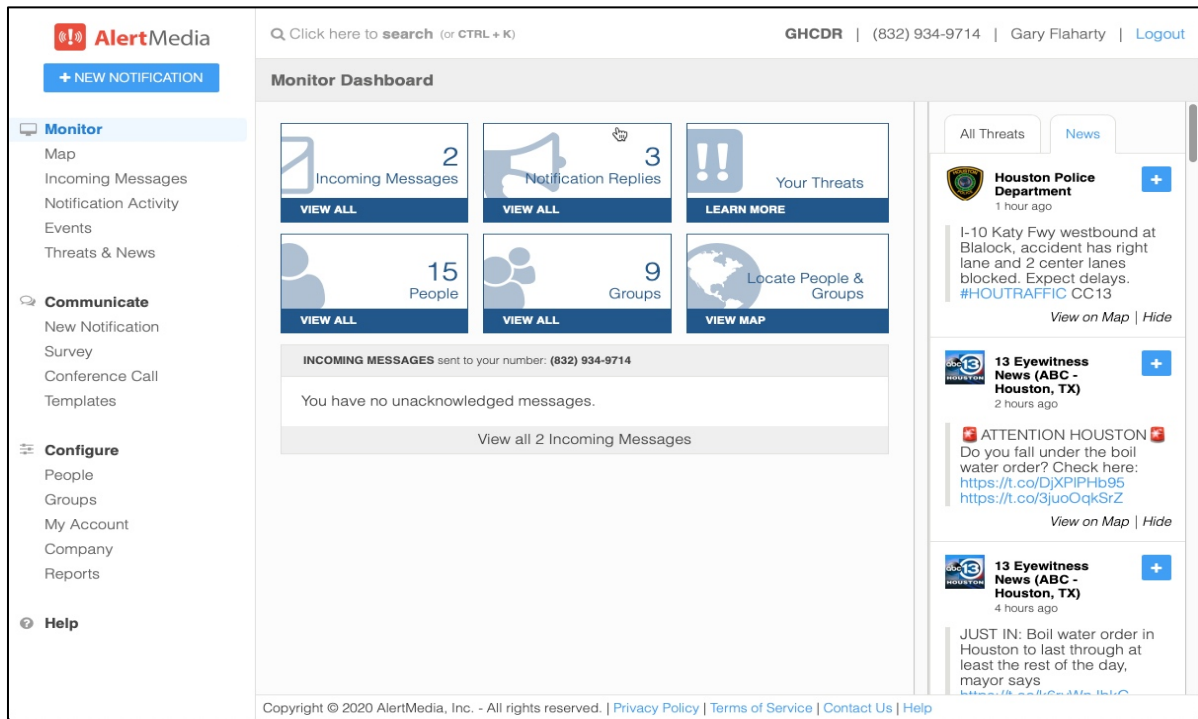
Monitor

Upon logging into the AlertMedia platform, the Monitor Dashboard gives you immediate access to all critical activity.

The Monitor Dashboard displays incoming messages and source event activity in real-time and presents the core function you can navigate to in the platform.

Core functions accessible from the Monitor section include

- Map,
- Incoming Messages,
- Notification Activity,
- Events, and
- Threats & Alerts.



Monitor | Map

View and track Incoming Messages, Groups, and mobile app users by location from the live map.

The map layers provide visibility of

- the location of mobile users (if location services is activated), incoming messages, groups, and CRD members addresses;
- threats
- radar and weather warnings.

The geofencing tool allows you to define a boundary around a location and send a notification to the users in the selected area.

AlertMedia | GHCDR | (832) 934-9714 | Gary Flaherty | [Logout](#)

[+ NEW NOTIFICATION](#)

Monitor

- Map**
- Incoming Messages
- Notification Activity
- Events
- Threats & News

Communicate

- New Notification
- Survey
- Conference Call
- Templates

Configure

- People
- Groups
- My Account
- Company
- Reports

Help

Map | Search for people, groups, and places

AUDIENCE

- Mobile Users
- Incoming Messages
- Groups
- User Addresses

MONITORING

- Your Threats
- All Threats

LAYERS

- Weather
- Radar
- Tropical Storms

Map | Satellite

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Monitor | Incoming Messages

Incoming Messages shows all the AlertMedia messages that you have received in real-time. These messages come in when a person leaves a voice message or sends a text message to your emergency phone number or signals for help from the mobile app.

Each message has an option to “View on Map” (If the member has turned on locations services.), “Mark as Read” or “Mark as Unread,” and “Archive.” The “+” button accesses a screen to forward the message to individuals or groups.

Admins and Notify Admins can choose to be notified of Incoming Messages and will automatically receive the content of the message and the user’s name via email or text message. Go to “My Account” and select the “User Preferences” tab.

The screenshot shows the AlertMedia web interface. On the left is a navigation sidebar with sections: Monitor (Map, Incoming Messages, Notification Activity, Events, Threats & News), Communicate (New Notification, Survey, Conference Call, Templates), Configure (People, Groups, My Account, Company, Reports), and Help. The main content area is titled 'Incoming Messages' and includes a search bar, filter tabs for 'Active Messages' and 'Archived Messages', and a list of messages. The messages list includes sender information, message content, actions like 'View on Map', 'Mark as Unread', and 'Archive', and a '+' button for each message. The top of the page shows the user's name 'Gary Flaharty' and a 'Logout' link.

Sender	Message Content	Actions	Time	Buttons
Gary Flaharty	Message	View on Map Mark as Unread Archive	14 hours ago	+ Read by Gary Flaharty
Gary Flaharty	What message?	View on Map Mark as Unread Archive	14 hours ago	+ Read by Gary Flaharty
Gary Flaharty - Re: Hello, Got it! Also received severa...	Check the Hyperlink for the twitter feed!	View on Map Mark as Unread Archive	2 weeks ago	+ Read by Gary Flaharty
Sonya Meyers - Re: Sonya, Would you be my guinea ...	Could not open attachment, but I think I was able to s...	View on Map Mark as Unread Archive	4 weeks ago	+ Read by Sonya Meyers
Gary Flaharty	View Media Attachment View Messages	View on Map Mark as Unread Archive	7 weeks ago	+ Read by Sonya Meyers

Monitor | Notification Activity

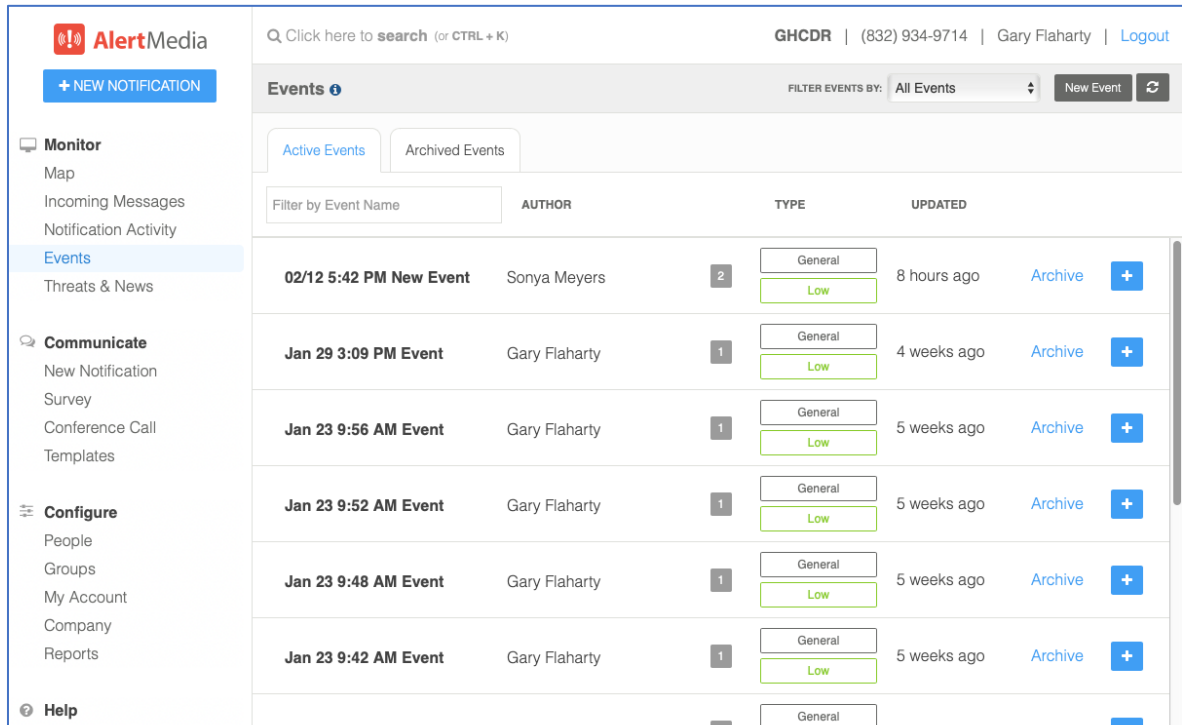
Notification Activity shows all the AlertMedia messages that you can access. It is searchable by keywords in the notification, by the author, and by the event.

The screenshot displays the AlertMedia Notification Activity page. The interface includes a search bar at the top, a navigation sidebar on the left, and a main content area with a list of notifications. The notifications are organized into a table with columns for message content, author, event type, and update time. The notifications are as follows:

Message	Author	Event Type	Updated
Pie	Gary Flaharty	General Low	15 hours ago
Hello. Got it! Also received sever...	Sonya Meyers	General Low	2 weeks ago
Hello. Just testing.	Sonya Meyers	General Low	4 weeks ago
Sonya, Would you be my guinea ...	Gary Flaharty	General Low	6 weeks ago
Wish Godfrey Happy Birthday!	Gary Flaharty	General Low	7 weeks ago
Happy Birthday	Gary Flaharty	General Low	7 weeks ago
Happy Birthday!	Gary Flaharty	General Low	7 weeks ago

Monitor | Events

The event is the reason we are responding. Each notification will be associated with an event name. Some examples of event names include “Harvey,” “Imelda,” “Plant Explosion,” “COVID-19”, “Tornado,” “Apartment Fire,” or any other situation. Each notification you send is either a new Event or an update to an Event already happening. Only administrators acting in specific roles should create a new event. If you have not been given this authority, please choose from the existing event(s). The event page is the place where we will post photos, videos, and other resources.



The screenshot shows the AlertMedia interface. On the left is a navigation sidebar with sections: Monitor (Map, Incoming Messages, Notification Activity, Events, Threats & News), Communicate (New Notification, Survey, Conference Call, Templates), Configure (People, Groups, My Account, Company, Reports), and Help. The main content area is titled 'Events' and includes a search bar, a filter dropdown set to 'All Events', and a 'New Event' button. Below this is a table of events with columns: Filter by Event Name, AUTHOR, TYPE, and UPDATED. The table lists several events, all with a 'General' type and 'Low' priority. The first event is dated '02/12 5:42 PM' and created by Sonya Meyers. The others are dated 'Jan 23' and created by Gary Flaharty.

Filter by Event Name	AUTHOR	TYPE	UPDATED
02/12 5:42 PM New Event	Sonya Meyers	General Low	8 hours ago
Jan 29 3:09 PM Event	Gary Flaharty	General Low	4 weeks ago
Jan 23 9:56 AM Event	Gary Flaharty	General Low	5 weeks ago
Jan 23 9:52 AM Event	Gary Flaharty	General Low	5 weeks ago
Jan 23 9:48 AM Event	Gary Flaharty	General Low	5 weeks ago
Jan 23 9:42 AM Event	Gary Flaharty	General Low	5 weeks ago

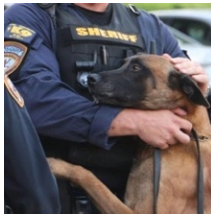
Monitor | Threats & News

In the sources section, you can track location-specific data sources you have chosen. Subscribe to sources you trust and care about in your area so we can alert you of potential dangers like severe weather, crime, and other urgent events.

The screenshot shows the AlertMedia web application interface. At the top left is the AlertMedia logo. A search bar contains the text "Click here to search (or CTRL + K)". The user profile "GHCDR | (832) 934-9714 | Gary Flaherty | Logout" is in the top right. The main heading is "Threats & News" with sub-tabs for "All Threats & News", "Manage Your Threats", and "Manage Your News". The "News" tab is active. On the left is a navigation sidebar with sections: "Monitor" (Map, Incoming Messages, Notification Activity, Events, Threats & News), "Communicate" (New Notification, Survey, Conference Call, Templates), "Configure" (People, Groups, My Account, Company, Reports), and "Help". The main content area has a "Search sources" input field and a "My Sources" list including "13 Eyewitness News", "Alief ISD", "CDC - Centers for Di...", "City of Houston Offi...", "Fort Bend County OEM", "Fort Bend ISD", and "George Bush Intercon...". The news feed shows three items: 1. Houston Police Department (1 hour ago) about an accident on I-10 Katy Fwy. 2. 13 Eyewitness News (ABC - Houston, TX) (2 hours ago) about a boil water order. 3. 13 Eyewitness News (ABC - Houston, TX) (5 hours ago) about a boil water order in Houston. A fourth item from Houston Police Department (7 hours ago) about a stalled vehicle on I-45 is partially visible. Each item has "View on Map" and "Hide" links. The footer contains copyright information and links for Privacy Policy, Terms of Service, Contact Us, and Help.

Recommended Subscriptions

Fire and Law Enforcement



Harris County Sheriff's Office Texas News
News and alerts from the Harris County Sheriff's Office



Harris County Sheriff's Office (TX) Emergency, Police Community news alerts and updates from the Harris County Sheriff's Department
Houston Police Department Emergency, Police HPD's local updates on crime and city news



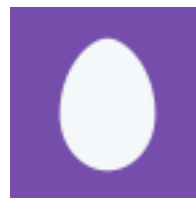
Houston Fire Department Emergency, Fire Houston Fire Department's emergency and local news updates



Local Media



KPRC 2 Houston News
News and alerts from KPRC 2 Houston



KPRC Local 2 (NBC - Houston, TX) Local
Breaking news alerts from KPRC Local 2 News



KPRC Local 2-Weather (NBC - Houston, TX) Local
Weather alerts from KPRC Local 2 News



KHOU 11 News (CBS - Houston, TX) Local
Breaking news alerts from KHOU 11 News



KHOU 11 News-Weather (CBS - Houston, TX) Local
Weather alerts from KHOU



13 Eyewitness News (ABC - Houston, TX) Local
Breaking news alerts from 13 Eyewitness News

Offices of Emergency Management



City of Houston Office of Emergency Management
 Emergency, City
 City of Houston Office of Emergency Management's city and weather alerts that affect a large portion of Houston



Houston Office of Emergency Management (TX)
 News
 News and alerts from the Houston office of emergency management.



Fort Bend County OEM
 News
 News and alerts from Fort Bend County OEM



Harris County OHSEM
 Emergency, Local, News
 Your official source for emergency management information in Harris County.



Homeland Security
 Government, Security
 The official emergency feed of the US Department of Homeland Security

School Districts



Alief ISD (Houston, TX)
 School
 General news, pictures, and emergency information from Alief ISD



Fort Bend ISD (Houston, TX)
 School
 General news, pictures, and emergency information from Fort Bend ISD



Humble ISD (Houston, TX)
 School
 DESCRIPTION
 General news, pictures, and emergency information from Humble ISD



Conroe ISD (Houston, TX)
 School
 General news, pictures, and emergency information from Conroe ISD



Goose Creek ISD (Houston, TX)
School
General news, pictures, and emergency information from Goose Creek CISD

Transportation



houstontranstar
News
News and alerts from houstontranstar



George Bush Intercontinental Houston Airport
Logistical updates and emergency alerts from George Bush Intercontinental Houston

Universities



University of Houston
Emergency Management
Emergency, University UHEMB alerts to improve the preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation against natural and manmade disasters



Houston Baptist University
University, News
General news, pictures, and emergency information from Houston Baptist University

Weather



National Hurricane Center - Atlantic Ops
Weather
Providing analyses, forecasts, and warnings of tropical cyclones and disturbances over the Atlantic basin.



NWS Houston
News
News and alerts from NWS Houston



The Texas Division of Emergency Management
Government, Emergency Alert feed for the Texas Division of Emergency Management

Other



CDC - Centers for Disease
Control
Government, Health
The official emergency feed
of the CDC and Prevention

Communicate

The Communicate Dashboard shows you a complete view of all notification types you can deploy to deliver a communication to your CRD.

From the Communicate Dashboard, you can send a Notification, Survey, Conference Call Bridge request, or create and save Templates to use regularly or in the future.

The screenshot shows the AlertMedia Communicate Dashboard. At the top left is the AlertMedia logo and a '+ NEW NOTIFICATION' button. Below this is a navigation menu with sections: Monitor (Map, Incoming Messages, Notification Activity, Events, Threats & News), Communicate (New Notification, Survey, Conference Call, Templates), Configure (People, Groups, My Account, Company, Reports), and Help. The main content area is titled 'Communicate Dashboard' and contains four cards: 'Notification' with a 'SEND NOW' button, 'Survey' with a 'SEND NOW' button, 'Conference Call' with a 'SEND NOW' button, and 'Templates' (showing 2 templates) with a 'CREATE TEMPLATES' button. Each card includes a brief description of the feature. At the top right of the dashboard, there is a search bar and user information: 'GHCDR | (832) 934-9714 | Gary Flaharty | Logout'. At the bottom, there is a copyright notice: 'Copyright © 2020 AlertMedia, Inc. - All rights reserved. | Privacy Policy | Terms of Service | Contact Us | Help'.

Communicate | New Notification

Use any blue "New Notification" button to create and send a Notification to People or Groups.

AlertMedia

Templates (Manage)

Search by name

TRAINING DRAFT: Deploy...

TRAINING - Status chang...

Create Notification

1 What type of notification is this?

Notification Read Confirmation Survey Conference Call

2 How would you like to send?

Text App Voice Email Social

3 What message do you want to send? [Switch to Advanced View](#)

4 Who do you want to send this to? [New Filter Group](#)

5 Is this for a new or existing event? [Preview Recipients](#)

Create Event Automatically or [Create Custom Event](#)

Select an Existing Event

EVENT OPTIONS

Include event page link [i](#)

Preview and Send Test Schedule Send Now

In the "Create Notification" screen, you have five steps to send your notification:

1. Select the type of notification to send. If you've selected "New Notification" or clicked on a blue plus sign next to a group or person, the notification will auto-populate with the corresponding item.
 - If you select the 'Read Receipt' button, you have the option to resend once, twice, or three times at five-minute intervals to recipients who have not confirmed the reception of that message.
 - If you select "Survey," you will be able to add custom survey responses in step three. You also have the option to allow recipients to change their responses and to send custom responses to survey participants.

2. Select the channel, or how the message will be sent: text message, app push notification, voice, email, and social media. You can edit each message format in the "Advanced Options" section.
3. Type the message you want to send. Select "Switch to Advanced View" to edit messages for text, voice, and email.
 - You can add an attachment to an email notification by clicking 'Switch to Advanced View'
 - You can also use one of the templates to populate your message that you can edit to meet your immediate needs.
4. Select the group(s), or recipients.
5. Choose to add an update to an ongoing event.

Help

AlertMedia has an extensive collection of articles and videos in their Support Portal which can be accessed at

<http://help.alertmedia.com/support/home>

AlertMedia

+ NEW NOTIFICATION

Monitor

- Map
- Incoming Messages
- Notification Activity
- Events
- Threats & News

Communicate

- New Notification
- Survey
- Conference Call
- Templates

Configure

- People
- Groups
- My Account
- Company
- Reports

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GHCDR | (832) 934-9714 | Gary Flaherty

Help

We want to help! We take customer support seriously at AlertMedia. Below we have provided ways to read more about our product, as well as provide paths to reach us directly by submitting a support ticket or by contacting us directly.

Knowledge Base

Go to [AlertMedia Support Portal](#) now to review our Knowledge Base and look for your answers online.

Submit a Ticket

Can't find your answer in the Knowledge Base or need to file a bug or feature request? [Submit a Ticket](#) and a support team member will get right on it!

Contact Us

Want to reach us directly? Contact support directly at support@alertmedia.com or call 1-800-826-0777

Tutorial

For a guided tour of AlertMedia, click [here](#). To watch a video overview, click [here](#).

Familiarity with the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Incident Command System (ICS) is essential to us as members of Congregational Disaster Readiness. NIMS and ICS are field-proven techniques for managing incidents or disasters. They draw from decades of experience in managing disasters. Teams from your Congregation will likely be serving with agencies that will be using the ICS/NIMS approach. It will benefit you, as a DRC, to understand the ICS/NIMS approach to incident management.

Incident Command System (ICS)

The **Incident Command System (ICS)** is a standardized approach to incident management. The ICS approach can be used to manage any incident, emergency, or planned event, regardless of their size, complexity, scope, or cause. The ICS standard approach enables coordinated responses between multiple jurisdictions or agencies by establishing a common process for incident-level planning and resource management. The ICS allows for the integration of facilities, equipment, supplies, and personnel within a common organizational structure.

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

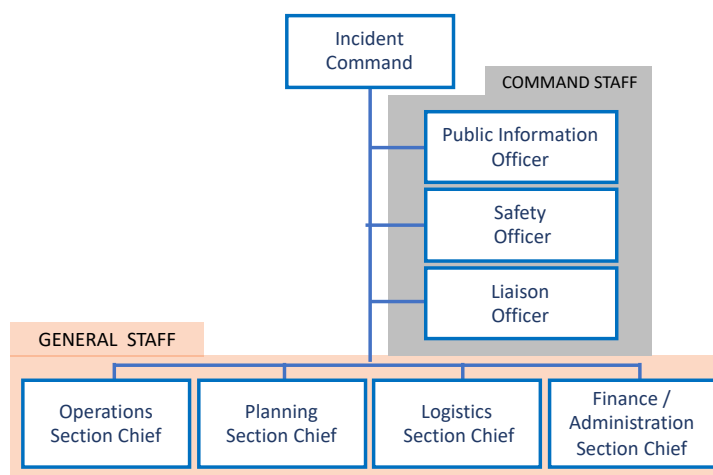
ICS is a component of the **National Incident Management System (NIMS)**. NIMS is a systematic and proactive approach to guide government, non-government organizations, and the private sector to work together to respond to and recover from the effects of incidents. NIMS includes three major components for.....

- Resource management,
- Command and control – including ICS, and
- Communications and information management.

ICS clarifies the chain of command and improves accountability. The ICS approach provides for an orderly and systematic planning process with a common, flexible, and predesigned management structure. ICS also helps ensure the safety of all parties, the efficient use of resources, and the achievement of incident objectives.

NIMS Management Characteristics Reflected in ICS

- The ICS establishes **common terminology** for organizational functions, resource descriptions, and incident facilities that allows diverse groups to work together. The use of common terms promotes efficient and clear communication among all parties involved in managing an incident.
- The ICS features a **modular organization structure** that can be expanded or collapsed by the incident commander based on the complexity of the incident. The only position that is always staffed in every incident is the Incident Commander. The organization might consist of one person, the Incident Commander, if the Incident Commander can handle all the roles. For more complex incidents, each section chief or officer might be staffed with multiple individuals.



- The Incident Commander (or Unified Commander) establishes incident objectives that drive incident operations. **Management by Objectives** includes:
 - setting specific, measurable incident objectives
 - identifying strategies, tactics, tasks, and activities to achieve the objectives
 - developing and issuing assignments, plans, procedures, and protocols to accomplish defined tasks; and
 - documenting results for the incident objectives.
 - Smart goals:
 - Specific (simple, sensible, significant) – answers the who, what, why, when, where, which resources questions
 - Measurable (meaningful, motivating) – Important for determining when the job has been completed.
 - Actionable (agreed, attainable, achievable) – the goal has to be reasonable given the resources and time available.
 - Relevant (reasonable, realistic, resourced, results-based) – Is the objective relative to the incident’s goal.
 - Time-Bound (time-based, time-limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive)

- An **Incident Action Plan (IAP)** is a concise, coherent means of capturing and communicating overall incident operational and support activities. The IAP includes incident priorities, objectives, strategies, tactics, and assignments. The Incident Commander or Unified Commander sets the IAP.
- A key to Incident Command Systems (ICS) effectivity is the number of individuals or resources a supervisor manages during an incident. The optimal **span of control** is one supervisor to five subordinates (1:5). However, effective incident management may require ratios significantly different from this. A manageable span of control on incidents may vary depending upon the type of incident, nature of the task, hazards and safety factors, and distances between personnel and resources. The Incident Commander or Unified Commander is responsible for setting the organizational structure.
- Depending upon the incident size and complexity, the need for various types of **incident facilities** may be established by the Incident Commander. Necessary incident facilities could include Incident Command Posts (ICP), incident bases, staging areas, and camps, mass casualty triage areas, points-of-distribution, and emergency shelters.
- **Comprehensive Resource Management** describes standard mechanisms to identify requirements, order and acquire, mobilize, track and report, demobilize, and reimburse and restock resources such as personnel, teams, facilities, equipment, and supplies. Activities include:
 - resource identification and typing
 - qualifying, certifying, and credentialing personnel
 - planning for resources; and
 - acquiring, storing and inventorying resources
- **Integrated communications** are facilitated through the development and use of a common communications plan and interoperable communication processes and systems that include voice and data links. The objective of integrated communication is to achieve situational awareness and to facilitate information sharing. The Congregational Disaster Readiness approach to integrated communication includes a heavy reliance on AlertMedia.

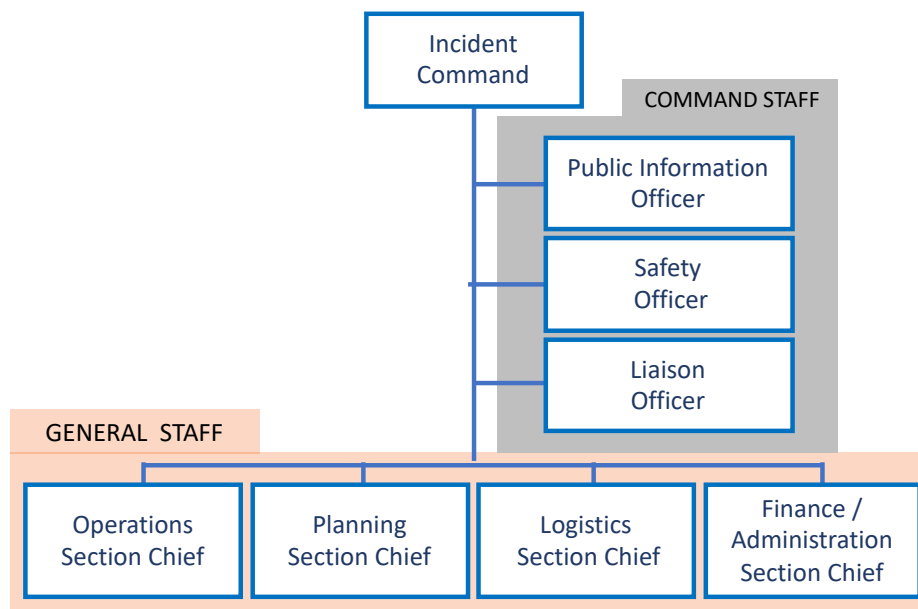
The next three characteristics deal with command. Command is the directing, ordering, or controlling by virtue of explicit statutory, regulatory, or delegated authority.

- The ICS (Incident Command System) allows for the **establishment and transfer of command**. The command function should be established at the beginning of an incident. The jurisdiction or organization with primary responsibility for the incident

designates the Incident Commander and the process for transferring command. When incident command is transferred, the outgoing Incident Commander briefs the Incoming Incident Commander.

- In a **Unified Command**, there is no single "Commander." Instead, the unified command manages the incident through jointly approved objectives. Unified Command allows agencies with different legal, geographic, and functional responsibilities to work together effectively without affecting individual agency authority, responsibility, or accountability.
- A **chain of command** is an orderly description of how authority flows through the hierarchy of the incident management organization. The chain of command allows an Incident Commander to direct and control the actions of all personnel on the incident. It requires that orders flow from supervisors to avoid confusion. Informal information sharing occurs throughout the ICS (Incident Command System) structure.
- Effective **accountability** during incident operations is essential. There are several principles everyone will need to adhere to:
 - Check-In/Check-Out. All responders must report in to receive an assignment. Checking out is just as critical as checking in.
 - Incident Action Planning. Response operations must be coordinated as outlined in the Incident Action Plan.
 - Unity of Command. Each individual will be assigned to only one supervisor.
 - Personal Responsibility. ICS relies on each individual taking personal accountability for their own actions.
- **Dispatch/Deployment** - Resources should deploy only when requested and dispatched through established procedures by appropriate authorities. Resources that authorities do not request should not deploy spontaneously - unrequested resources can overburden the Response Teams and increase accountability challenges.
- An **information and intelligence management** process for gathering, analyzing, assessing, sharing, and managing incident-related information and intelligence is essential to the response effort. One example might be gathering, analyzing, and evaluating information from the weather service. Another example might be damage assessment.

Major Functional Areas of ICS (Incident Command System)



ICS is usually structured to facilitate activities in five major functional areas. Regardless of the size of the incident, these functional areas are all required. These five are collectively referred to as the General Staff.

Incident Command

Sets the incident objectives, strategies, and priorities, and has overall responsibility for managing the on-scene incident. Every ICS organization has an Incident Commander. The Incident Commander is appointed by the jurisdiction or organization with primary responsibility for the incident. The Incident Commander or Unified Commander sets the modular organization.

Operations

Conducts operations to reach the incident objectives. The Operations Section Chief establishes tactics and directs all operational resources. Operations organizes, assigns, and supervises all tactical response resources and directs them to achieve the incident objectives.

Planning

Supports the incident action planning process by tracking resources, collecting/analyzing information, and maintaining documentation. Planning should establish an orderly and systematic planning process.

Logistics

Arranges for resources and needed services to support the achievement of the incident objectives. Resources can include volunteers, equipment, teams, supplies, finances, and facilities. Logistics is responsible for ensuring that assigned incident personnel are fed and have communications and medical support and transportation as needed to meet operational objectives.

Finance/Administration

Monitors costs related to the incident. The Finance/Administration Section Chief is responsible for accounting, procurement, negotiating and monitoring contracts, maintaining documents for reimbursement, time recording, capturing volunteer hours, and cost analyses.

Command Staff Functions

In addition to the five general staff functions, there are three command staff functions:

Public Information Officer

The Public Information Officer (PIO) interfaces with the public and media and with other agencies with incident-related information requirements. The PIO handles all media inquiries at the scene.

Safety Officer

The Safety Officer monitors incident operations and advises the Incident Commander on all matters relating to safety, including the health and safety of incident management personnel.

Liaison Officer

The Liaison Officer serves as the Incident Commander's point of contact for representatives of governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private-sector organizations. The Liaison Officer interfaces with other agencies to meet incident-related information requirements

Scalability of ICS

Your first impression of the Incident Command System (ICS) may be that it is a complicated approach.

Yet it is entirely scalable for any incident. In smaller incidents, you may find yourself playing virtually all the roles. If you lead a team to muck and gut a home, you may serve as the incident commander, and you may delegate some of these roles.

As a Disaster Readiness Coordinator (DRC), you may find yourself as the incident commander leading and delegating to a more extensive and more diverse team. You can and should use the ICS approach to manage these incidents even if you only run through these roles in your head.

Significantly, when Congregational Disaster Readiness (CDR) is engaged, you are unlikely to be the incident commander. Still, it helps to know how the process works, recognize that you have a specific role to play, and prepare yourself to play that role to the best of your ability.

Recommended free, online courses from FEMA:

ICS-100: Introduction to the Incident Command System

IS-700: National Incident Management System, An Introduction

<https://training.fema.gov/nims/>

The Congregation Leader reached out to you today. There is a single mom in the Congregation who has 20 feet of fence that blew over in a storm last night. She is very upset because she already has a note on her door from the HOA, giving her a deadline of this weekend to fix the fence without a fine, and her dogs have nowhere to go. Will you accept the opportunity to help? How will you organize?

Considerations

- How many leaders do you need?
- How many volunteers do you need?
- How are you building the team of leaders and volunteers? (Communication & Recruiting)
- What equipment and materials are needed? How will they be acquired/delivered?
- Do you provide food/drink for volunteers?
- What documentation is needed for volunteers and the homeowner?
- Does the homeowner have funding?

Which ICS team leaders are needed, write team leader name online, and how many volunteers needed)

	Name	Volunteers Needed
Incident Commander		
Safety Leader		
Public Information Leader		
Agency Liaison Leader		
Operations Leader		
Planning Leader		
Logistics Leader		
Finance/Admin Leader		

Determine begin operations date _____

Determine exit/stop operations date _____

Discuss your progress and the actions taken:



CDR (Congregational Disaster Readiness) reached out to you today. There is a subdivision in your community that has 25 homes with fences that blew over in a storm last night. This subdivision is an older subdivision with many residents who are elderly or low income. Will you accept the opportunity to help? How will you organize?

Considerations

- How many leaders do you need?
- How many volunteers do you need?
- How are you building the team of leaders and volunteers? (Communication & Recruiting)
- What equipment and materials are needed? How will they be acquired/delivered?
- Do you provide food/drink for volunteers?
- What documentation is needed for volunteers and the homeowners?
- Do the homeowners have funding?

Which ICS team leaders are needed (write team leader name online and how many volunteers needed)

	Name	Volunteers Needed
Incident Commander		
Safety Leader		
Public Information Leader		
Agency Liaison Leader		
Operations Leader		
Planning Leader		
Logistics Leader		
Finance/Admin Leader		

Determine begin operations date _____

Determine exit/stop operations date _____

Discuss your progress and the actions taken:



CDR (Congregational Disaster Readiness) reached out to you today. A widespread storm hit within 1 mile of your Congregation. The initial report is that there are as many as 200 residents with downed fences that blew over in a storm last night. Will you accept the opportunity to help? How will you organize?

Considerations

- How many leaders do you need?
- How many volunteers do you need?
- How are you building the team of leaders and volunteers? (Communication & Recruiting)
- What equipment and materials are needed? How will they be acquired/delivered?
- Do you provide food/drink for volunteers?
- What documentation is needed for volunteers and the homeowners?
- Do the homeowners have funding?

Which ICS team leaders are needed (write team leader name online and how many volunteers needed)

	Name	Volunteers Needed
Incident Commander		
Safety Leader		
Public Information Leader		
Agency Liaison Leader		
Operations Leader		
Planning Leader		
Logistics Leader		
Finance/Admin Leader		

Determine begin operations date _____

Determine exit/stop operations date _____

Discuss your progress and the actions taken:



Incident _____ Date _____

Describe the incident below (what happened, how many impacted, etc.):

Considerations

- How many leaders do you need?
- How many volunteers do you need?
- How are you building the team of leaders and volunteers? (Communication & recruiting)
- What equipment and materials are needed? How will they be acquired/delivered?
- Do you provide food/drink for volunteers?
- What documentation is needed for volunteers and the homeowner(s)?
- Do the homeowner(s) have funding?

Which ICS team leaders are needed (write team leader name online and how many volunteers needed)

	Name	Volunteers Needed
Incident Commander		
Safety Leader		
Public Information Leader		
Agency Liaison Leader		
Operations Leader		
Planning Leader		
Logistics Leader		
Finance/Admin Leader		

Determine begin operations date _____

Determine exit/stop operations date _____

Discuss your progress and the actions taken:
