

Support Annex  
Volunteers & Donations Management

<b>COORDINATING AGENCY:</b>	Guernsey County Emergency Management Agency
<b>PRIMARY AGENCY:</b>	Salvation Army Guernsey County Senior Citizens Center
<b>SUPPORT AGENCIES:</b>	American Red Cross Guernsey County Citizen Corps Council Community Emergency Response Teams Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) Southeast Ohio Disaster Relief Network Mennonite Disaster Services United Way of Guernsey/Noble County Feed My People Guernsey County Senior Citizens Center Habitat for Humanity Helping Hands Senior Citizens Center Area Churches

**I. Introduction**

During emergencies, unplanned deliveries of donated goods and services to a disaster site can jam distribution channels, overwhelm volunteer agencies, and hamper life-saving operations. The need to unload and sort goods into more manageable and deliverable units can compete with the personnel and resource demands of other emergency response activities. Careful planning for donations management will reduce or eliminate problems associated with unsolicited donations. In addition, the distribution of donated goods and the use of volunteers will necessitate cooperation with other county ESF(s).

**A. Purpose**

1. This Support Annex is designed to direct donated goods and services to designated staging areas away from the disaster site. This allows the goods to be sorted, organized, and eventually sent to the disaster site based upon specific criteria and priorities set by on-scene personnel who assess and provide for the unmet needs of disaster victims.
2. This Support Annex also outlines the handling of spontaneous volunteers during a disaster.
3. This Support Annex also describes the collection and shipment of goods donated by the people of Guernsey County to victims in other areas.

**B. Scope**

1. A Donations Management Coordinator will be located at the Guernsey County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in order to facilitate the delivery of donations based on need. This individual designated by the Director of the Guernsey County EMA will facilitate the identification of unmet needs, identify and coordinate contributions and assist in the delivery of county support to the donations management effort.

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**C. Policies**

1. The Guernsey County EMA will solicit donations to address specific unmet needs in coordination with volunteer organizations and the Guernsey County EMA PIO.
2. County donations management activities will be activated by the Director of Guernsey County EMA based upon the probability of unmet needs of disaster victims and will be deactivated based upon the diminished needs of disaster victims.
3. The Guernsey County EOC will identify, activate, and operate a County Donations Warehouse where Voluntary Agencies can pick up donated goods and deliver them to the site of the emergency.
4. Guernsey County EMA will not accept cash donations, but will encourage cash donations to organizations during emergencies.
5. Persons offering to donate unsorted goods will be directed to charitable organizations of their choice.
6. Shipments of donated goods from outside of the county must be coordinated through the Donations Management Coordinator (DMC) in the Guernsey County EOC.
7. Persons volunteering services will be directed to the Volunteer Reception Center (VRC).
8. Persons and organizations volunteering services are responsible for their own logistical support.
9. Donated goods may include basic resources for life and health, equipment, construction materials, services, and a wide range of supplies and capabilities.
10. The Donations Management Coordinator will actively address donations management requirements in the Guernsey County EOC and at the site of the emergency.
11. A Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) will be established to serve as the coordination point for unaffiliated volunteers, to develop partnerships with community and responding agencies, to identify volunteer opportunities, and to fill staffing needs.

**II. Situation & Assumptions**

**A. Situation**

1. During an emergency situation in the County local resources and capabilities may become quickly exhausted. In many situations, volunteers and donated goods and services will become essential to the recovery process.
2. Managing the established needs for donated goods and services for the surrounding communities and coordinating the receipt, sorting, prioritizing, and distribution is best accomplished at the County level.
3. Churches, fire stations, the Salvation Army, and other volunteer agencies may successfully serve as satellite collection points for donated goods and services to fulfill immediate needs in the County.

**B. Assumptions**

1. Historically, persons not directly affected by an emergency/ disaster are eager to render aid to disaster victims through donations of money, goods, and services.
2. Lack of an organized system of management for establishing needs, and receiving, sorting, prioritizing, and distributing donations could result in chaos.

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3. Local distribution sites should be reasonably convenient to the affected populations.
4. Unless pre-planned for, adequate number of personnel to manage donated goods and services may not be available.
5. Volunteer organizations such as the American Red Cross, Church groups, Salvation Army, United Way, and other locally established volunteer groups are the best-trained, enthusiastic, and appropriate organizations to support this ESF.
6. The timely release of information to the public regarding needs, and collection points is essential to the management of donated goods and services.
7. The collection and distribution of donated goods and services must be matched with the established needs.
8. Monetary donations, staple goods, and items specifically requested best serve the needs of victims.
9. Donations of unsolicited, non-useful, and unwanted goods can be expected. These include loose, unsorted clothing, worn out items, and extremely perishable items.
10. People unaffected by the disaster may seek to receive donated goods; and those affected may seek more than their fair share by various means.
11. Some donors will seek to bypass the distribution system established by the County.
12. An aggressive public information effort will expedite the collection and distribution of goods as well as limit an influx of unwanted goods.
13. It is inevitable that there will be a surplus of some donated goods, which will require disposal.

### **III. Concept of Operations**

As the coordinating agency, Guernsey County EMA will coordinate with the primary and support agencies to evaluate the needs of disaster victims and determine if all or portions of this Annex will be activated.

- A. Activation of this annex is dependent on the type and level of assistance needed. In many cases the level of assistance needed will not necessitate activation, since some donation and volunteer needs during disasters may be handled by agencies as part of their normal disaster operations.
- B. When cash donations are offered or solicited, donors will be encouraged to contribute to a charitable organization. Cash donations are not accepted through Guernsey County EMA or the EOC.
- C. Any time that the Annex is activated, in whole or part, close coordination with the Public Information Officer is essential to ensure donation needs, information on the availability of donated goods and pertinent information on the donations and volunteer management program is provided to the media for dissemination to the public.
- D. Volunteers may be requested to staff telephones at the EMA office for the purpose of providing information on acceptable and needed donations. This information shall include, but will not be limited to location of drop off points and times open, items needed, how to donate money, location of volunteer reception centers, etc. This information will also be provided to the news media by the PIO and be updated on a regular basis.

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E. Receipt of Donated Goods for Guernsey County

1. The Salvation Army will serve as the lead agency for the reception and distribution of donated goods.
2. The magnitude of the disaster and the severity of local need will dictate the amount of space and personnel required for the reception and distribution of donated goods.
3. Ideally, a central reception and sorting center for donated goods should be established, and separate locations convenient to the affected areas of the County should be utilized as distribution centers. Location of reception centers for donated goods will general be volunteer organizations facilities.
4. The Salvation Army will coordinate with other relief agencies working on the disaster to ensure needs are met without duplication of effort.
5. Operational personnel will be solicited from the Volunteer Coordinator's list of available personnel resources.
6. The Public Information Officer will coordinate public information regarding distribution sites, needed goods, volunteers, and other pertinent matters.
7. Requests for needed goods and re-supply of needed goods will be channeled through the State EOC.
8. Upon receipt, donated goods must be sorted and packaged in a manner suitable for distribution.
9. When identified as not needed, unwanted goods should be refused.
10. Surplus donated goods will be sold or otherwise disposed of in a manner consistent with the donor's apparent intent.

F. Collection and Shipment of Donated Goods to Other Counties/States/Localities.

1. An attempt will be made to identify the needs of the intended destination prior to collection of goods.
2. A systematic method will be established for collection of the donated goods to be shipped
3. Goods will be sorted and packaged in an appropriate manner prior to shipment to accomplish the following:
  - a. Timely and undamaged arrival at the destination
  - b. Proper identification of contents
  - c. Minimal need for repackaging/sorting
  - d. Ease of loading and unloading
  - e. Elimination of inappropriate/unwanted goods
4. Shipments of donated goods will be coordinated with the receiving destination prior to departure from the County.
5. Suitable means of transport will be arranged for delivery of the shipment in a timely manner.
6. When appropriate, shipments of donated goods should be coordinated with the Ohio Emergency Management.

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**IV. Roles & Responsibilities**

A. Coordinating Agency

1. Designate Donations Management Coordinator.
2. Designate Spontaneous Volunteers Coordinator.
3. Develop and maintain Donations Management Standard Operations Procedures.
4. Assist in identifying personnel and resources to support this ESF.
5. Maintain a list of volunteers, by name, address, telephone number, and if applicable special capabilities, that may assist with emergency operations in the County, when needed.
6. Set up a registration point in the County, when activated, for registration of additional volunteers (that are not members of volunteer organizations already registered with the County) that wish to donate their services in support of emergency operations in the County.
7. Coordinate the deployment of volunteers in support of emergency operations to the County.
8. Coordinate Amateur Radio support to the County Receiving Point, staging areas, and distribution points, as necessary and available.
9. Request outside assistance to support this ESF, when required.

B. Primary Agency

1. Activate volunteer organizations during emergencies as directed by the EOC.
2. Solicit specific resources from donors that are needed by disaster victims.
3. Identify and activate Donations Management personnel.
4. Coordinate Donations Management in the Guernsey County EOC.
5. Coordinate with the Guernsey County EMA PIO for county-level press releases related to donations management.
6. Conduct daily meetings of volunteer organizations during activation.
7. Deactivate county-level donations management operations as directed by the Director Guernsey County EMA.

C. Support Agencies

1. American Red Cross
  - a. Consistent with internal policies and capabilities, assist in the County Resource Manager in carrying out the provisions of this ESF, to include establishing needs; and collecting, sorting, and distributing donated goods during an emergency situation in the County.
  - b. Maintain a list of volunteers that are available to assist in support of this ESF.
  - c. Keep accurate records of donated, stored, and distributed goods; or expenditures in support of this ESF.

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2. Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Coordinator
  - a. Actively recruit, train, and assign CERT members to support County emergency operations in accordance with the CERT volunteer mission.
  - b. Be prepared to quickly assimilate volunteers into the CERT mission.
  - c. Coordinate CERT volunteer support to County emergency operations from the County EOC, when activated.

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Appendix 1: Establishing a Volunteer Reception Center

I. Introduction

Large numbers of people volunteer their services after an emergency in an effort to aid response and recovery operations. Although the public is encouraged to affiliate with voluntary agencies before an emergency, unaffiliated volunteers will inevitably offer to help.

A. Purpose

Following an emergency, the number of unaffiliated volunteers who arrive on-scene can overwhelm an agency that is not prepared to manage them. This appendix is for the process of establishing a Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) to manage unaffiliated and convergent volunteers following an emergency. If managed effectively, unaffiliated volunteers can be a valuable resource during an emergency.

II. Concept of Operations

A. Establishing a Volunteer Reception Center (VRC)

1. The Guernsey County Citizens Corps Council will be the lead agency in the establishment of the VRC.
2. The VRC should be established immediately following a large-scale emergency. This will provide a location for unaffiliated volunteers to gather and be processed.
3. It also allows volunteer managers to register and track volunteers throughout their time of service.

D. VRC Site Requirements

1. The Guernsey County EMA will identify multiple locations to establish a VRC within the county.
2. The VRC site will vary depending upon the size of the operation and amount of volunteers. Some general VRC site requirements include:
  - a. **Adequate space:** Preferably a large indoor room with smaller adjoining rooms for training or waiting area. The VRC location should be large enough for several different staging areas for the volunteer process.
  - b. **Access to tables and chairs:** Several tables will be needed for each stage of the process. Extra chairs will be needed for a large waiting and reception area as well as for training rooms.
  - c. **Signs:** All stages and locations should be marked clearly with signs. Signs should also be placed outside the VRC and on the roads to help direct people to the site.
  - d. **Parking availability:** A VRC location should be able to accommodate a large number of cars with spaces to park without hindering traffic or blocking roadways.
  - e. **Accessibility and proximity to affected area:** A VRC center should be located away from the disaster site, although in close proximity so as to allow for easy travel to and from assigned volunteer locations.

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E. Volunteer Center Processing Stages

All volunteers who arrive at the VRC should be processed through a series of stages. Processing areas include:

1. Intake or Registration

The first area that volunteers should see when they arrive at the VRC is the registration table or intake area. Staff at the VRC should inform volunteers about the process and instruct them to fill out a registration form with important contact and personal information. An intake form should collect information from the volunteer such as:

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| a. Name                        | f. Skills (languages, computer, medical, heavy equipment) |
| b. Address                     | g. Previous emergency training/certification              |
| c. Phone number/fax            | h. Task preferences                                       |
| d. Email address               | i. Location preferences                                   |
| e. Availability, time and days | j. Current phase of emergency                             |

2. Interviews

Following initial registration, a VRC staff member should conduct a brief interview with each volunteer in order to make appropriate referrals based on the candidate's skills and interests. The interviewer should be sure to make any notes on the candidate's registration form about any special or needed skills. The candidate is then given a referral form and should be ushered to the data coordination area.

III. Coordination Area

The staff at the coordination area matches volunteers to open positions at voluntary agencies. When the volunteer arrives at the coordination area with their referral form, the VRC staff should record the referral and inform the voluntary agencies that the position has been filled.

IV. Identification and Credentialing

- A. Credentialing volunteers is the responsibility of the agency for which they will be working.
- B. After the referral has been recorded and communicated to the agency, the volunteer should be credentialed according to that agency's policies.
- C. There are various ways that a volunteer agency can assign identification to each volunteer, including wristband, photo ID cards, etc. Any volunteer ID or credential should include the following information:
  - 1. Volunteer's name;
  - 2. Agency or site referred to; and
  - 3. Dates that the volunteer is authorized to work.



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V. Training

Following the credentialing, the volunteer should report to the safety training area of the VRC to receive a basic, safety briefing and specific job training.

VI. VRC Support Functions

There are several areas within the VRC that do not work directly with the volunteers at the VRC. These areas should be in a separate area of the VRC so as not to interrupt the flow of the volunteer processing.

A. Phone Bank

The VRC phone bank's primary function is to communicate with unaffiliated volunteers seeking more information on how to volunteer and with the voluntary organizations concerning their volunteer needs. A process for taking and recording calls should be included in the donations management plans. Information from calls should be directly communicated to the data coordination area within the volunteer process.

B. Data Entry

VRC data-entry staff record all volunteer needs requests from the voluntary organizations into a database so that the personnel who make referrals can determine whom best fits the agencies volunteer needs. The VRC data-entry staff is also responsible for entering all volunteer intake forms into the VRC database to manage and track the volunteers.

C. Public Information

The Public Information Officer (PIO) should be assigned to work with the VRC. The PIO should be the only member of VRC staff that communicates needs or operations updates to the media. The PIO should coordinate his or her efforts with the County PIO at the Joint Information Center or the County EOC.

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