

NORTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN (NCEOP)
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VOLUNTEER AND DONATIONS MANAGEMENT
2024 (Pre-Helene)

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of this appendix is to ensure the most efficient and effective use of volunteers, organizations, and donations to support all Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) during incidents of significance in North Carolina that require a state response.

B. SCOPE

This appendix provides guidance on the state's role in supporting the management of affiliated/unaffiliated volunteers and solicited/unsolicited donations. Affiliated volunteers include those that are trained and rostered by their organization, as defined in the NCEOP. Unaffiliated volunteers, also known as spontaneous volunteers, include individuals who offer to help or who self-deploy to assist in emergency situations without coordinating their activities. They are considered "unaffiliated" because they are not part of a disaster relief and/or emergency response organization. The guidance in this appendix also ensures the effective and efficient acceptance, management and delivery of solicited and unsolicited donations including goods, materials, services, personnel, financial resources, and facilities.

II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. SITUATION

During and following an incident, requirements for goods, materials, services, personnel, financial resources, and facilities may exceed local and state capabilities. Volunteer and donations management may play a major role in meeting these needs. However, the SERT will need to provide leadership and direction to organize and streamline efficient use of resources. Special actions may be required to avoid unsolicited volunteers and donations becoming a burden to response and recovery operations.

B. ASSUMPTIONS

1. Local volunteer resources will be inadequate to deal with the incident; state and possibly federal, assistance will be required.
2. Individual volunteers and/or groups of volunteers will go to the affected area and offer assistance; an organized volunteer disaster response effort will be required.

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3. Individuals and relief organizations from outside the disaster area may begin to collect materials and supplies to meet the needs of the survivors.
4. NCEM will not directly receive donations but will provide appropriate public messaging on volunteer and donation opportunities.
5. VOAD member organizations may receive and allocate volunteers and donations.
6. Unsolicited donations may arrive unsorted or with minimal packaging from local, national, or international organizations. Unneeded or unwarranted donations may arrive such as unsorted or dirty clothing, used mattresses, or perishable food. These donations should not be accepted.
7. The amount of donations and services may increase with the amount of media attention the disaster receives.
8. Resource gaps tied to medical supplies and pharmaceuticals will be addressed through the NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), Division of Public Health (DPH) first.
9. All available means will be used to education the public, emergency management community, elected officials, and the media on the strategy and principles for managing donations

III. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

A. LEAD STATE AGENCY

1. NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY (NCDPS)

NORTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (NCEM)

- a. Support the efforts of SERT partners associated with volunteer and donation management.
- b. Assist in the arrangement for transportation that might be required during the receipt, movement, and distribution of donations.
- c. Determine if resources offered can support any needs requested.
- d. Coordinate resource requests with private sector assets and capabilities when local and state resources have been exhausted.

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- e. Coordinate donated facilities with appropriate stakeholders.
- f. Provide telephones, computers, and other equipment/supplies necessary for the operation of NC 211.

B. SUPPORTING STATE AGENCIES

1. OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

**NC COMMISSION ON VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMUNITY SERVICE
(VOLUNTEERNC)**

- a. Manage, coordinate, maintain, and control unsolicited volunteers, AmeriCorps volunteers, and cash donations on behalf of the state.
- b. Coordinate activities with the SERT and FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaisons (VALs).
- c. Coordinate with partner agencies to determine available resources and needs.
- d. Remain cognizant of the activities and needs of VOAD member organizations through collaborative efforts with the SERT.
- e. Activate online tools used for the recording and management of donated goods and volunteer services.
- f. Create and execute an incident-specific media messaging campaign for donated goods, volunteers, and donated cash in coordination with the Joint Information Center (JIC).
- g. Manage the NC Disaster Relief Fund should it be activated by the Governor. Once activated, record and manage financial donations.

2. NC DEPARTMENT OF ADULT CORRECTION (NCDAC)

- a. Coordinate available offender labor as needed.

3. NC DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION (NCDOA)

STATE PROPERTY OFFICE (SPO)

- a. Provide information of any state-owned facility that might be needed.

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4. NC DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES (NCDA&CS)

- a. Coordinate the use of the State Fairgrounds in Raleigh and other NCDA&CS owned facilities.
- b. Arrange for the transport of donated food items if needed.
- c. Conduct inspections of potential suspect food donations.
- d. Provide a liaison to coordinate donation activities for animals.

5. NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (NCDHHS)

- a. Inform the SERT of identified needs within DHHS divisions and/or offices that could be satisfied by offers of donations or volunteer services.
- b. Assist the SERT in the management of donated pharmaceuticals.

DIVISION OF HEALTH SERVICE REGULATION (DHSR)

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (OEMS)

- a. Inform the SERT of any disaster response activity by NC Medical Reserve Corps units.
- b. Collaborate with the SERT on any donated medical supplies.

C. SUPPORTING AGENCIES

1. AMERICAN RED CROSS

- a. Coordinate with appropriate agencies to identify any needs of survivors which could be met using donated goods or the services of incident-based volunteers.
- b. Inform the SERT of identified needs for products that might be donated.
- c. Provide organizational donation phone numbers to NC 211 for reference.
- d. Accept assignment of spontaneous volunteers through VolunteerNC to support incident-specific volunteer needs of the organization.

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2. THE SALVATION ARMY (TSA)

- a. Provide a liaison to the SERT to assist in the state's process for accepting/refusing offers of donations.
- b. Inform the SERT of the status of TSA distribution efforts and TSA needs.
- c. Provide organizational donations management and/or volunteer coordination information to NCEM and/or the JIC.

3. FOOD BANKS OF NORTH CAROLINA

- a. Provide a liaison to the SERT to assist in the state's process for accepting/refusing offers of donated food.
- b. Prepare procedures to accept unsolicited donations of food and other appropriate products when received through the state's web-based donated goods system.
- c. Provide organizational donation phone numbers to NC 211 for reference.
- d. Inform the SERT of any identified needs of survivors which could be met using donations or the services of spontaneous volunteers.
- e. Accept assignment of spontaneous volunteers through VolunteerNC to support incident-specific volunteer needs of the organization.

4. NC BAPTISTS ON MISSION

- a. Provide a liaison to the SERT to assist in the state's process for accepting/refusing offers of donations.
- b. Provide organizational donation phone numbers to NC 211 for reference.
- c. Inform the SERT of any identified needs of survivors which could be met using donations or the services of spontaneous volunteers.
- d. Accept assignment of spontaneous volunteers through VolunteerNC to support incident-specific volunteer needs of the organization.

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5. METHODIST DISASTER RESPONSE

- a. Provide organizational donation phone numbers to NC 211 for reference.
- b. Inform the SERT of any identified needs of survivors which could be met using donations or the services of spontaneous volunteers.
- c. Accept assignment of spontaneous volunteers through VolunteerNC to support incident-specific volunteer needs of the organization.

6. UNITED WAY OF NC

- a. Provide the information and referral service, NC 211, a public information portal for residents to obtain real-time communications and resources related to a disaster.
- b. Provide trained call specialists to staff the NC 211 call center to provide information and referrals on available resources within their community in addition to eligibility requirements and intake information.
- c. Collaborate with the SERT and the Office of the Governor by serving as the fiscal agent for the NC Disaster Relief Fund, if activated.

7. GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISPANIC/LATINO AFFAIRS

- a. Translate or interpret emergency information into Spanish to support volunteer and donations management efforts.

8. NC PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (NCPA)

- a. Provide NC 211 with mental health professionals to support the personal needs of operators.
- b. Respond to callers who may need assistance.

9. CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE (AMERICORPS)

- a. Collaborate with VolunteerNC and FEMA to task AmeriCorps programs and members in North Carolina.

10. COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS (CERT)

- a. Assist with sheltering operations, light search and rescue, damage assessments, sandbagging operations, disaster medical operations, animal rescue and sheltering, communications, and commodity points of distribution.
- b. Assist in local/county/state Emergency Operations Centers.
- c. Coordinate with local volunteer, community, and religious organizations to manage and operation local distribution sites.

11. TRIBAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

- a. Prepare plans to accept offers of donations and volunteer services.
- b. Identify local volunteer coordinators who will match spontaneous volunteers with local organizations or agencies that need volunteers after an incident.
- c. Identify a receiving and distribution point to be used in times of disaster.
- d. Identify an alternate distribution point for contingency purposes.
- e. Assess local needs for donations and volunteers and communicate the needs through NCSPARTA.

12. FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA)

- a. Support volunteer and donation management activities as formally requested by the state.
- b. Provide a VAL to support the State Voluntary Agency Liaison.

IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. GENERAL

The state manages affiliated/unaffiliated volunteers and solicited/unsolicited donations through NCEM's Office of Partnership Engagement (OPE). During a SERT activation, NC 211 operates a hotline used to receive all offers of donations/services and direct them as needed. NC 211 call specialists will provide callers with emergency information such as shelter locations, feeding sites, and road closures, along with intake information and eligibility

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requirements. The SERT will provide NC 211 with priority emergency information and instructions necessary for electronically capturing donor information related to goods, volunteers, and cash.

The SERT JIC will implement a public information campaign at the onset of the incident to encourage donations of money and specific goods and services needed to address the particular nature of the disaster. Initial speeches by the Governor and senior state officials will inform the public of the donations policy and how the public can best contribute. The SERT will continue the public information effort throughout disaster operations by coordinating with the Governor's Press Office and the Joint Information Center.

The SERT will expand the volunteer and donations coordination effort as needed.

CONCEPT FOR AFFILIATED AND UNAFFILIATED VOLUNTEERS

Affiliated volunteers are those that are trained and rostered by their organization and can be requested through NCSPARTA. Requests from state agencies, local government, or private volunteer organizations for volunteers to assist in affected jurisdictions that are received in NCSPARTA. This does not preclude direct coordination with private voluntary organizations by local jurisdictions.

Unaffiliated volunteers, also known as spontaneous volunteers, include individuals who offer to help or who self-deploy to assist in emergency situations without coordinating their activities. They are considered "unaffiliated" because they are not part of a disaster relief and/or emergency response organization. While the state recognizes the value of unaffiliated volunteers, they are discouraged from going directly into any disaster site but can register through VolunteerNC.

CONCEPT FOR SOLICITED AND UNSOLICITED DONATIONS

The SERT coordinates the acceptance and management of solicited and unsolicited donations including donated goods, materials, services, personnel, financial resources, and facilities. Unsolicited donations are those that arrive but have not been requested by an agency. Solicited goods are those which are advertised as needs.

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If an unsolicited donation is accepted, the SERT manages and coordinates the donation to fulfill a need using NCSPARTA. Donors may be asked to hold their donation until the product or services is needed and an organization has agreed to accept the goods. The SERT does not solicit donations unless otherwise directed by the Governor or designee.

Donated goods that are determined to be a health hazard or unsuitable for use by any organization involved in the disaster operation will not be accepted. Pharmaceuticals and medical supplies are generally not accepted from the general public. However, in a large-scale or catastrophic incident when pharmaceuticals and/or medical supplies may be needed, the SERT will coordinate with appropriate stakeholders.

When a donor specifies a donation for a specific use, this is a designated donation and will be coordinated with the appropriate SERT partner. The organization accepting or receiving the donation will follow its own logistics policies and procedures. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis, but only for those items most desperately needed.

B. NOTIFICATION

Notification requirement for activation of web-based systems for donated goods and volunteer services includes informing the President of NCVOAD, the Governor's Press Office, the JIC, VolunteerNC and United Way of NC (fiscal agent for the NC Disaster Relief Fund).

C. RESPONSE ACTIONS

1. INITIAL

- a. Several response activation decisions are required initially, including the soliciting for volunteers and donations and establishing NC 211. The NC Disaster Relief Fund may also be activated.
- b. Gaps are identified and reported to respective functional leads.

2. CONTINUING

- a. To ensure continuity in the operation of the hotline, continue to develop staffing patterns for future shifts.
- b. Document and share information and resource gaps by participating in NCVOAD conference calls and communicating with NCVOAD leadership and local emergency management coordinators.

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- c. Facilitate the fulfillment of resource requests and share unsolicited volunteer and donation information with appropriate stakeholders.
- d. Process financial donations for the NC Disaster Relief Fund, if activated for the disaster. Financial contributions are distributed to vetted NCVOAD member organizations that are engaged in long-term recovery efforts by repairing or rebuilding homes that were damaged or destroyed by the disaster. Funds are distributed via a documented and tested Request for Proposal process.

V. DIRECTION, CONTROL AND COORDINATION

1. LOCAL

Local governments and volunteer agencies will be encouraged to develop and implement volunteer and donations management plans.

2. STATE

NCEM OPE will lead volunteer and donations management functions. The state will use NCSPARTA and other tools to facilitate volunteer and donations management. Emergency information will be dispersed related to donated goods, spontaneous volunteers, and cash donations.

The state will primarily collaborate with NCVOAD member organizations that have established structures to coordinate volunteers and donations. Rather than donations of food, clothing or other items, the state will encourage donations of cash to established NCVOAD member organizations that are providing services to disaster survivors or to the NC Disaster Relief Fund if activated for the incident.

The decision to activate the NC Disaster Relief Fund is made after discussion between NCEM and the Office of the Governor. The decision to activate the web-based tool for volunteer management is made by VolunteerNC.

3. FEDERAL

OPE communicates and coordinates with the FEMA VALs who are deployed for the disaster. When requested, the FEMA VAL will support the fulfillment of volunteer and donation resource gaps as identified by the SERT.