

MASS CARE AND HUMAN SERVICES (ESF-6)

2025

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

To coordinate efforts to provide emergency shelters, feeding, water, disaster human services, and preliminary case management through Multi-Agency Shelter Transition Teams (MASTT).

B. SCOPE

Mass Care and Human Services will ensure the provision of accessible sheltering during a disaster by supporting county requests for shelter support and/or establishing State Operated Shelters (SOSs) when necessary. This support will include shelter wrap around services, such as mental health, and includes support for those individuals with access and functional needs, such as hearing, sight, or other physical restrictions, and limited and non-English speaking groups. The function will be to coordinate meals and essential water requirements for disaster survivors and emergency workers. This function is also responsible for coordinating relief efforts provided by volunteer and other non-profit organizations, as well as coordinating mental health counseling to disaster survivors.

II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. SITUATION

A significant natural or man-made disaster may cause severe damage to structures and may rapidly overwhelm the capacity of local government. Disaster survivors may be forced from their homes, depending on such factors as time of occurrence, area demographics, building construction, and existing weather conditions. Family members may be separated immediately following a sudden-impact disaster. Shelter registration, feeding, and provisions of water are fundamental functions necessary for the care of disaster survivors. Additional services, such as mental health and telemedicine in shelters, and coordination with pet sheltering partners, are also critical to ensuring disaster survivors can recover as quickly as possible.

B. ASSUMPTIONS

1. All coordination for sheltering will be accomplished through the State Emergency Response Team (SERT) in the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

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2. Sheltering is first and foremost a local responsibility. Support may be requested by the local jurisdictions to assist with existing local shelter plans.
3. The state may establish an SOS should shelter needs exceed local and State Coordinated-County Hosted Shelters (SCCHS) shelter capacities.
4. Local officials will relay mass care situation reports to the State EOC.
5. People who are care dependent have requirements that differ from other citizens. Local jurisdictions have the responsibility to provide adequate assistance to these individuals to meet their specific needs. State agencies will assist local jurisdictions as appropriate in meeting the needs of these individuals.
6. Shelters and feeding sites may need to be set up quickly with no advance notice.
7. Damage from catastrophic disaster incidents may cause extended displacement and damage to the infrastructure.
8. Some people may self-evacuate when advance warning of impending disaster is available.
9. Sheltering and feeding operations may be required for significant numbers of people.
10. Some survivors will go to public shelters while others will find shelter with friends or relatives. Many survivors will remain with or near their damaged homes.
11. Survivors of disasters often require mental health counseling to cope with the stress and uncertainty of the personal catastrophe.
12. Agreements exist between local governments and local volunteer organizations for assistance in mass care activities.
13. A significant influx of disaster workers may strain the resources of impacted areas.

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III. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

A. LEAD STATE AGENCY

1. NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY (NCDPS)

NORTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (NCEM)

- a. Provide assistance to counties as needed through field services personnel.
- b. Coordinate requests for mass care resources with all state and partner agencies.
- c. Coordinate and deploy Functional Assessment Support Teams (FAST) when requested.
- d. Provide operational direction to the MASTT.
- e. Work with mass care partners to establish SOSs and/or non-congregate shelters, when local and SCCHS capacities are exceeded or expected to be exceeded.
- f. Work with mass care partners to establish reception centers, as needed.
- g. Coordinate with the SERT Donations Management Branch and volunteer agencies to assist disaster survivors during shelter/mass care situations.
- h. Request necessary assistance with transportation of food to shelters and community feeding sites.

B. LEAD TECHNICAL AGENCY

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

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (NCDHHS) HUMAN SERVICES LEAD

- a. Serve as the designated State EOC lead for the DHHS Human Services team during activations.

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- b. Liaise with NCDHHS divisions, other SERT agencies, and volunteer organizations to ensure the effective integration of human services related resources. Support the NCEM Human Services Branch Manager as lead point of contact for NCDHHS tasking needs.
- c. Ensure the NCEM Human Services Branch receives necessary information to support operations.
- d. Coordinate and recruit shelter staff from within NCDHHS. Work with the NCEM Human Services Branch Manager to determine appropriate reception center and shelter facilities.

DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES (DSS)

- a. Assign a liaison to the State EOC as requested.
- b. Coordinate with mass care support agencies to support local sheltering operations.
- c. Obtain personnel rosters, sheltering listings, and number of shelter managers from county departments of social services responding in affected jurisdictions.
- d. Coordinate requests for assistance with support agencies.
- e. Assess situation and prioritize activities.
- f. Provide technical assistance and support to County Departments of Social Services (County DSS) by:
 - Respond to any requests from county DSS shelters and provide any assistance to facilitate shelter operations.
 - Coordinate with partners to answer questions from county departments of social services about accessibility in shelters.
- g. Track and report the status of shelter operations.
- h. Serve as the MASTT Coordinator.
- i. Coordinate all requests for spoken language and American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters.

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C. SUPPORTING STATE AGENCIES

1. NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION (NCDPI)

- a. Assign a liaison to the State EOC as requested.
- b. Support sheltering activities with personnel and facilities, specifically through contractual agreement between local boards of education, local governments, sheltering service providers, and/or NCEM.

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

DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH, DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES (MHDDSS)

- a. Assign a liaison to the State EOC as requested.
- b. Coordinate and direct assistance in mental health and crisis counseling matters.
- c. Coordinate with the NCEM Human Services Branch to determine where mental health services are needed in shelters and communities.
- d. Arrange for and support crisis-counseling service as needed.
- e. Coordinate with publicly funded managed care organizations to provide mental health services in shelter and community settings.
- f. Prepare required data for requesting federal crisis counseling assistance as necessary.
- g. Serve as a member of the MASTT.
- h. Support FASTs.

DIVISION OF AGING (DA)

- a. Assign a liaison to the State EOC as requested.
- b. Promote the exchange of technical and statistical information relevant to needs and outcomes of older adults and adults with access and functional needs from NCEM to area agencies on aging and county health and human services departments.

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- c. Collaborate with NCEM, DSS, and other human service agencies to assist local jurisdictions in meeting the needs of individuals requiring functional support sheltering services.
- d. Collaborate with NCEM, Division of Health Service Regulation, Office of Emergency Medical Services, and Division of Public Health for individuals needing medical support sheltering services.
- e. Support recovery efforts by assigning and deploying appropriate personnel to assist county departments of social services, area agencies on aging, and other local entities.
- f. Provide technical and statistical information on homeless services (emergency shelters, grants programs) and emergency services (weatherization assistance program and heating/air conditioning repair and replacement programs).
- g. Collect and compile data on suspended or altered feeding taking place through regional Meals on Wheels and Area Agencies on Aging.
- h. Serve as a member of the MASTT.

DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH (DPH)

- a. Conduct environmental health assessments of SOSs in advance of opening and provide mitigation recommendations where appropriate.
- b. Coordinate and assign public health nurses to staff local shelters as available according to requests from local emergency managers.
- c. Support Public Health nurses and collaborate with partners to facilitate referrals when shelter resident medical needs fall beyond the scope of the general population shelter health staff.
- d. Conduct disease outbreak monitoring in shelters or among evacuated populations and provide support for local health departments in monitoring infectious diseases.

DIVISION OF SERVICES FOR THE BLIND (DSB)

- a. Assign a liaison to the State EOC as requested.

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- b. Provide technical and statistical information concerning needs relating to required services for people who are blind.
- c. Provide assistance as needed at the State EOC and field sites.
- d. Coordinate with the NCEM Human Services Branch to assist as required.
- e. Ensure the NCEM Joint Information Center (JIC) is kept informed of any specialized resources, announcements, or programs required to assist in keeping the blind populations informed (Braille information, programs, etc.).
- f. Assist with MASTT activities.

DIVISION OF SERVICES FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING (DSDHH)

- a. Assign a liaison to the State EOC as requested.
- b. Provide technical and communication access information concerning needs relating to the required services for people who are Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing, including ASL interpreters and captioners.
- c. Provide assistance as needed at the State EOC and field sites.
- d. Coordinate with the NCEM Human Services Branch to assist as required.
- e. Ensure the NCEM JIC is kept informed of any specialized resources, announcements, and programs required to assist in keeping people who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, as well as DeafBlind, informed.
- f. Assist with MASTT activities.

DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES (DVRS)

- a. Assign a liaison to the State EOC as requested.
- b. Monitor and report disruptions to programs that promote employment and independence for state residents with disabilities.
- c. Serve as a member of the MASTT.

NORTH CAROLINA EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN (NCEOP)

ANNEX A | APPENDIX 3 | TAB E

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- d. Provide and/or coordinate for assistive technology and other durable medical equipment.

DIVISION OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY EDUCATION (DCDDE)

- a. Assign a liaison to the State EOC as requested.
- b. Provide technical and statistical information on childcare facilities statewide.
- c. Coordinate with the NCEM Human Services Branch as required.
- d. Approve temporary emergency childcare services established for disaster survivors and emergency workers as required.
- e. Assist with MASTT activities.

**DIVISION OF HEALTH SERVICE REGULATION (DHSR)
NC OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (NCOEMS)**

- a. Support health services in SOSs through coordination of medical staffing and medical supplies.
- b. Coordinate with partners to facilitate referrals when shelter resident medical needs fall beyond the scope of general population shelter health staff.

3. NC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY (NCDPS)

NORTH CAROLINA NATIONAL GUARD (NCNG)

- a. Assign a liaison to the State EOC to support mass care and human services as requested.
- b. Transport available feeding resources to displaced populations.
- c. Provide equipment and personnel to establish and operate field kitchens as directed by the SERT Leader.

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

- a. Assign a liaison(s) to the State EOC as requested.

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- b. Coordinate food, agriculture, and animal related concerns through SERT Human Services Branch via the AgEOC and NCDA&CS Incident Management Team.
- c. Support mass feeding operations through the NCEM Logistics Section by providing access to food commodities and distribution resources.

5. NC DEPARTMENT OF ADULT CORRECTION (NCDAC)

- a. Assign a liaison from the Special Operations and Intelligence Unit to State EOC as requested.
- b. Make institutions under its control available for shelters where practical.
- c. Support mass feeding activities.
- d. Provide law enforcement personnel to shelters.

D. SUPPORTING VOLUNTEER AGENCIES

1. AMERICAN RED CROSS

- a. Assign a liaison to the State EOC as requested.
- b. Support the management and coordination of accessible sheltering, feeding, supplemental disaster health and mental health services, spiritual care, emergency first aid, distribution of emergency supplies, and family reunification services to the disaster-affected population.
- c. Establish and operate mass care shelters and fixed and mobile feeding for survivors requiring these services.
- d. Provide casualty and illness information to appropriate authorities.
- e. Coordinate the recruitment and assignment of personnel for mass care operations.
- f. Coordinate registration of shelter residents.

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- g. Collect data from all open shelters for the National Shelter System (NSS) and coordinate with counties and DHHS for data collection on shelters operated solely by a county.
- h. Coordinate shelter information sharing and reporting with North Carolina Emergency Management.
- i. Report information on shelters, including access and functional needs and CMIST, to the Human Services Branch.
- j. Provide information and referral services to disaster survivors with disaster caseworkers and disaster case management.
- k. Serve as a member of the MASTT.
- l. Serve as a member of the Mass Care Feeding Task Force.

2. THE SALVATION ARMY (TSA)

- a. Assign a liaison to the State EOC as requested.
- b. Establish a Command Post in the affected area to coordinate TSA activities/personnel/equipment.
- c. Initiate TSA Mass Care Services, including but not limited to, mass feeding with mobile and/or fixed sites.
- d. Coordinate with other SERT Human Services agencies and organizations to address unmet needs.
- e. Deploy trained personnel to provide emotional and spiritual care (ESC).
- f. Provide information and referral services to disaster survivors as appropriate.
- g. Contingent upon available resources, assess the need to implement a program for emergency supply distribution of items needed by survivors
- h. As required and/or requested and based on available personnel, assign TSA Representation in Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) to provide assistance to disaster survivors.

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- i. In accordance with TSA's Memorandum of Understanding, provide additional support, within available resources and capabilities. (See Memorandum of Understanding between The Salvation Army (A Georgia Corporation North and South Carolina Division (TSA) and the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management (NCEM), Division).
- j. Serve as member of Mass Care Feeding Task Force.

3. NC BAPTISTS ON MISSION

- a. Assign a liaison to the State EOC as requested.
- b. Serve as member of the Mass Care Feeding Task Force.
- c. Coordinate with local churches and other non-profits to set up sites in affected areas to coordinate personnel/equipment for feeding and/or recovery.
- d. Provide mass feeding in coordination with the Red Cross/Salvation Army with mobile and/or fixed sites.
- e. Coordinate with other SERT Human Services agencies and organizations to address unmet needs.
- f. Deploy trained volunteers to provide spiritual care.
- g. Deploy trained volunteers to provide assessment of property for recovery purposes.
- h. Deploy trained recovery volunteers to assist homeowners.
- i. Deploy shower/laundry units as needed for community and volunteers.
- j. With available resources, distribute items needed by survivors that may include but not be limited to food, furniture, and household items.

4. NORTH CAROLINA VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER (NORTH CAROLINA VOAD)

- a. Assign liaison to State EOC as requested.

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- b. Maintain a listing of known volunteer organizations active in the disaster area.
- c. Within its agreements, coordinate the provision of relief efforts by all volunteer organizations actively engaged in aiding disaster survivors.
- d. Request assistance from member agencies and facilitate their involvement in the staffing and upkeep of shelters.
- e. Request and coordinate support from member agencies to provide water and other essential supplies at distribution points.
- f. Assist in the staffing and maintenance of shelters.
- g. Provide water and other supplies at distribution points.

IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. GENERAL

Requests for mass care assistance will be coordinated through the SERT. Primary and support agencies for mass care will have representatives in the State EOC for as long as necessary. Specific incident operational activities will be directed by the Mass Feeding Plan and Mass Shelter Plan developed by the NCEM Human Services Branch in coordination with appropriate SERT partners.

B. NOTIFICATION

Primary and support agencies for mass care will be notified by NCEM Human Services Branch and advised that a disaster has occurred or that the potential exists.

C. RESPONSE ACTIONS

1. INITIAL

- a. Verify available resources to determine adequacy of personnel, food, and water supplies for implementation of initial mass care activities.
- b. Deploy personnel and resources, as well as FAST notifications.

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- c. Establish communications with personnel in the field as well as with the Division of Social Services and American Red Cross personnel in local jurisdictions.
- d. Assess anticipated level of response by the American Red Cross chapters and other organizations during the initial response.

2. CONTINUING

- a. Support the opening and operation of county and SCCHSs.
- b. Open SOSs when needed.
- c. Open Reception Centers when needed.
- d. Work with the BEOC to coordinate non-congregate shelters when needed.
- e. Coordinate meals at fixed locations and mobile feeding.
- f. Coordinate with state partners to provide health and mental health services in shelters.
- g. Establish communications between SOSs, reception centers, and state-deployed feeding units.
- h. Monitor evacuation activities to ensure shelter operations are supported.
- i. Monitor shelter occupancy levels and ongoing survivors' needs, support consolidation as appropriate, coordinate with local emergency management, American Red Cross and federal agencies to determine continued shelter needs.
- j. Coordinate the provision of additional and relief staff and the replenishment of shelter supplies.
- k. Coordinate with the SERT Emergency Services Branch to ensure medical needs are addressed in an appropriate setting.
- l. Coordinate mass feeding locations with local and feeding partners.
- m. Assist in providing food for community members unable to go to mass feeding sites.

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- n. Establish MASTTs based on need and county requests.
- o. Assist with long term placement of disaster survivors where needed due to damage to their homes, with considerations for accessibility.
- p. Work with NCEM Individual Assistance and Recovery Support Functions to transition survivor cases from response to recovery.

V. DIRECTION, CONTROL AND COORDINATION

A. LOCAL

Mass care activities begin as soon as a local jurisdiction recognizes the need. For notice incidents, this may be hours to days before the incident takes place. For no-notice incidents, this will take place immediately after the incident occurs. Local governments will identify facilities for use as shelters. Decisions to open and close shelters are responsibilities of local governments. Local governments will coordinate the opening and closing of shelters with the DSS and/or American Red Cross.

B. STATE

Mass care activities will be coordinated through the State EOC. The lead and supporting agencies will provide support to the State EOC for the duration of the mass care activation. Each agency assigned to mass care activities will develop disaster plans that have been coordinated through the mass care lead state agency. These plans are to be operational in nature and will be used upon activation of mass care along with necessary supporting documents.

The SERT Human Services Branch will support the activities of all public shelters including shelters opened before, during, and after the disaster. They will monitor evacuation activities to ensure shelter operations are supported as needed as well as monitor county and SCCHS capacities to determine when to initiate SOSs. The SERT Emergency Services Branch will support any shelter requiring medical services and/or personnel beyond American Red Cross resource capabilities.

C. FEDERAL

When resources beyond those at the state and local level are required, assistance may be requested from federal ESF-6 partners. This will be accomplished through the State EOC.

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VI. REFERENCES

- A. NCEM Human Services Mass Feeding Plan
- B. NCEM Human Services Shelter Guide