

MISSISSIPPI COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN (CEMP)

Volunteer and Donations Management Support Annex

Coordinating Agency

Mississippi Emergency Management Agency (MEMA)

Primary Agencies

Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service (MCVS)

Mississippi Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (MSVOAD)

Support Agencies

Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC)

Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration (DFA)

Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT)

Mississippi Information Technology Services (ITS)

Non-Governmental Organizations

American Red Cross (ARC)

Salvation Army (SA)

Federal Coordinating Agency

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Federal Support Agencies

Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Department of State (DOS)

Department of Transportation (DOT)

National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD)

General Service Administration (GSA)

US Agency for International Development (USAID)

USA Freedom Corps (US AFC)

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MISSISSIPPI COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN (CEMP)

Volunteer and Donations Management Support Annex

1. INTRODUCTION. The Volunteer and Donations Management Support Annex describes the coordinating process to ensure the most efficient and effective utilization of unaffiliated volunteers and unsolicited donations during disasters, including Incidents of National Significance.

a. Purpose. This Volunteer and Donations Management Support Annex aims to guide coordinating information and activities of voluntary agencies and local, state, tribal, and federal governments regarding effectively utilizing unsolicited donated goods and spontaneous volunteers when responding during a disaster.

b. Scope. This Annex guides the state's role in donations and volunteer management. Any reference to donations in this Annex refers to unsolicited donations unless otherwise specified. Unless otherwise specified, any reference to volunteer services in this Annex refers to unaffiliated volunteers. This guidance applies to all agencies with direct and indirect donations and/or volunteer responsibilities under the Mississippi Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP).

The Volunteer and Donations Coordination Team (VDCT) uses the Incident Command System (ICS) concepts to manage emergency/disaster responsibilities. The primary function of the Volunteer and Donations Coordination Team is to coordinate the utilization of affiliated and unaffiliated volunteers and the provision of donated goods to meet the assessed needs of the impacted area. The VDCT is comprised of representatives from voluntary organizations and state agencies. The VDCT will not be activated in all disasters but only in response to a verifiable need within the impacted area.

Upon activation of the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) during an emergency or disaster, a representative of the Mississippi Commission for Volunteer Service (MCVS) and Mississippi Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (MSVOAD) will report to the ESF #6 (Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Temporary Housing, and Human Services) Coordinator, who reports to the Human Services Branch Director and Operations Section Chief (OSC).

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) will be established and reviewed annually for each function in this Annex.

Resources from the AmeriCorps federal agency can be requested based on need and appropriateness of engagement. MCVS will make initial contact with AmeriCorps and determine the necessary resources. The appropriate body will make a formal request for assistance.

2. ORGANIZATION. MEMA is the coordinating organization for the state VDCT activities. Support agencies, volunteer groups, and individuals with local, state, tribal, and national affiliations are the primary avenues for effectively securing and distributing services, volunteers,

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and donated goods. The public and private sectors play a significant role in supporting the VDCT with volunteers and donations.

The MCVS and MSVOAD are the primary organizations for this Annex and, as such, will support volunteer management operations. This includes providing access to and technical support for any donation management systems utilized to coordinate unsolicited donations, coordinating and participating in VOAD meetings, and managing volunteers before, during, and following disasters.

All state and private agencies and organizations should expect to utilize their resources unless reimbursement is authorized in a mission assignment issued by MEMA.

a. Policies.

(1) MCVS, in conjunction with local, state, and tribal governments and the MSVOAD, has primary responsibility for unaffiliated volunteer services.

(2) Mississippi recognizes and supports those voluntary organizations that sign in at the Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) and/or check in with MSVOAD.

(3) The state requires individuals interested in volunteering personal disaster service to register with MCVS via a volunteer registration system, the Volunteer Hotline, a state-recognized VRC, or an affiliate of the MSVOAD.

(4) All activities, functions, and services are provided in accordance with existing federal and state statutes, rules, and regulations.

(5) Full use of existing non-governmental organizational volunteer resources is encouraged before seeking the assistance of the federal or state governments.

(6) Mississippi recognizes that voluntary organizations play a vital role in managing donations and assigns SEOC missions related to donations to those volunteer organizations through the Human Services Branch Director to MSVOAD, as appropriate.

(7) Unsolicited Monetary/Financial Donations:

(a) MCVS will take direction from the Governor and/or the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) regarding monetary donations.

(b) All activities, functions, and services are provided in accordance with existing federal and state statutes, rules, and regulations.

b. Notification.

(1) Upon notification by MEMA of a potential or actual event requiring a response by the VDCT, MCVS will notify all members of the VDCT by e-mail or telephone.

(2) All support agency contact persons will be instructed to notify their networks throughout the state to ensure all available resources are on standby.

(3) Other potential donated goods/services sources will be notified and asked to remain on standby.

3. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS.

a. Volunteer Management.

(1) Volunteer management operations may include the operation of a Volunteer Call Center functioning on the state level coordinated by MCVS with an approved mission assignment (MA) by MEMA. The MA may include reimbursement for all expenses incurred through the Volunteer Call Center and operational protocols.

(2) Through the state Joint Information Center (JIC), the MEMA External Affairs Office will manage coordinated media relations.

(3) MCVS will provide liaisons to other ESFs and a facilities management plan to include VRCs to coordinate unaffiliated volunteers.

(4) Requests for support under this Annex from local, state, tribal, and federal authorities are coordinated through the SEOC or a Joint Field Office (JFO).

b. Unaffiliated Volunteer Management Strategy. The state recognizes the value and challenges of working with unaffiliated volunteers. MCVS will assess the need for VRCs in disaster areas. The VRC will register and coordinate volunteer deployment to volunteer organizations in the impacted areas. The Unaffiliated Volunteer Management Strategy consists of the following:

(1) **Pre-Disaster.** MCVS will coordinate VRC training for volunteers and voluntary organizations.

(2) **During Disaster.** VRCs and an MCVS-approved volunteer registration system may be used as a means for individual unaffiliated volunteers to register to volunteer their services following a disaster. MCVS, in coordination with MSVOAD, will affiliate volunteers with organizations to match best their qualifications, skills, and services offered. A Volunteer and Donations Call Center will be established if needed, given that an MA is issued.

(3) **Post-Disaster.** MCVS will open and operate the Mississippi Volunteer and Donations

Call Center as defined in an MA if needed. The JIC will release the volunteer call center phone number to the public so volunteers know how to offer their services appropriately. MCVS, in concert with local volunteer hubs or other volunteer organizers and emergency management agencies, will assess the need for VRCs near impacted areas to manage unaffiliated volunteers. Local organizations, The United Way, Retired and Senior Volunteer Programs, and local government volunteer programs may participate in the operation of VRCs as needed and with the support of MCVS. Without a local organization trained to manage unaffiliated volunteers, MCVS will be prepared to train and assist local organizations until they can coordinate staffing assistance from a local volunteer pool.

c. Donations Management on Different Levels of Disaster.

(1) Large Disasters. *(Catastrophic events, such as a category 4 or 5 hurricanes or an earthquake)*

(a) State donations management assistance will be required.

(b) The decision to open a state donations warehouse must be authorized by the MEMA Director and determined by the impact of the disaster and the number of residents affected. MEMA will coordinate possible locations with DFA.

(c) The coordination team will work with MCVS, MEMA's Business Emergency Operation Center (BEOC), and the MEMA Public Information Officer (PIO) in communicating donation needs through the media.

(2) Medium Disasters. *(Category 2 or 3 hurricane or tornado outbreaks covering a wide area)*

(a) State assistance may be needed.

(b) A donations warehouse would most likely not be needed.

(c) In cooperation with MSVOAD, the coordination team would assist volunteer agencies in coordinating donations as necessary.

(3) Small Disasters.

(a) In small events, donation centers are mainly localized, such as churches, and state assistance is rarely needed.

(b) A virtual donations coordination system can be used for donors to make offers in any size event.

d. Unsolicited Donations Management Strategy. The state recognizes the value and challenges of managing unsolicited donations. MEMA and the VDCT will assess the need for various actions to manage and coordinate unsolicited donations.

The coordination team's Unsolicited Donations Management Strategy consists of the following:

(1) Pre-Disaster. The coordination team will:

(a) Provide, in coordination and consultation with ESF #15 (External Affairs), pre-scripted donation messages.

(b) Participate in exercises where the management of unsolicited donations is needed.

(2) During Disaster. The coordination team will provide, in coordination and consultation with ESF #15, appropriate donation-related messages concerning:

(a) How can donations be offered?

(b) What donations are needed?

(c) What donations are not needed?

(d) Work, in coordination and consultation with ESF #15, with local and state media regarding in-kind donation drives and other similar public activities.

(3) Post-Disaster. If needed, the coordination team will work with the State of Mississippi to operate a donations warehouse(s) supporting ongoing, long-term recovery efforts. This includes helping local communities or emergency management develop a local donations warehouse.

The donations warehouse, if activated, will serve as a central location for managing unsolicited and, in some cases, solicited goods (but not solicited from any state employee) to address the needs of local agencies equitably and effectively. Though one agency provides management, any agency approved by the coordination team may receive donated goods.

If requested, the coordination team will ensure that a donations warehouse is operational to distribute food, water, and other needed items. The coordination team will establish a Donations Management Team (comprised of MEMA's BEOC and DRs experienced in Logistics Management), which will manage the flow of donated goods into Mississippi by identifying needs and informing the public of the needs via the Volunteer and Donations Call Center, the Volunteer Mississippi Web site, social media channels, and by coordinating with ESF #15.

The Donations Warehouse Management Team will identify leadership through its internal staff and volunteers and provide training to coordinate the flow of incoming undesignated goods closely

with the coordination team. They will provide management of the donations warehouse and supervise local volunteers in receiving, sorting, packing, and inventorying donated goods; make available all donated goods to organizations through coordination with the coordination team. With the assistance of the state and county, they will identify a local agency to transfer the operation of the donations warehouse once it has been determined jointly by MEMA and the Donations Warehouse Management Team to do so.

4. OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES.

a. Preparedness Objectives.

(1) Maintain and distribute, as necessary, a roster of agency contacts and support personnel.

(2) Primary and support agencies will participate in disaster operations training.

(3) Conduct an annual review and update of the Volunteer and Donations Management Support Annex.

(4) Conduct an annual review and update of the VDCT Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs).

(5) Conduct annual or more frequent meetings of the VDCT.

b. Response Objectives.

(1) Inventory, update, and maintain a database of offers of services, goods, and monetary donations.

(2) Communicate with other ESFs regarding available donated resources.

(3) Maintain a daily log of activities and action plans, including scheduling staff and submitting information in the Human Services Branch Journal.

(4) Coordinate field activities related to unaffiliated volunteers and unsolicited donated goods and services, including the state Volunteer and Donations Call Center Line, the Donations Database, Donations Warehouse, VRCs, and volunteer/donations liaisons.

(5) Coordinate volunteer requests and assignments through MEMA Operations via the MA Coordinator.

(6) Register unaffiliated volunteers and assign them to recognized volunteer organizations.

(7) Communicate with other emergency support functions regarding available volunteer

resources.

(8) MCVS will request a donation warehouse based on the severity of the incident and needs from the DCT. The request will be forwarded to SEOC for the approval of the Governor's Authorized Representative (GAR). MCVS has limited staff and capacity regarding warehouse management. MEMA has offered to staff the donations warehouse with qualified logistics managers who are MEMA Disaster Reservists (DRs). If MEMA DRs are not available to perform these duties, MCVS will not have the capacity to manage the warehouse.

(9) Provide appropriate information intended for public distribution to ESF #15.

c. Recovery Objectives.

(1) The Donations Warehouse will continue to distribute donated goods expeditiously to relief agencies in the impacted area.

(2) The VRCs may be tasked with continuing to provide registration and coordination of spontaneous volunteers in the impacted area until the local community-based recovery entity can take over operations (or as determined by MCVS). Alternatively, the VDCT may be tasked with helping a local community establish a locally operated VRC to perform this function.

(3) MEMA staff and/or other support agency representatives will represent the VDCT at initial unmet needs coalition meetings in the impacted area.

d. Direction and Control.

(1) VDCT activities will be coordinated from the SEOC during activation. The VDCT will respond to message requests approved by the Human Services Branch Director and coordinate with the MSVOAD representative in the SEOC. Any requests that cannot be filled by items already available in the database or through solicitations made to or by participating support agencies will be returned to the Human Services Branch Director for reassignment. State employees will not initiate or conduct direct solicitations for donated goods. Discussion between The VDCT and the originating ESF will occur before message rerouting. Message updates will be made regarding the progress in acquiring donated items or services.

(2) Voluntary agencies remain operational when the State Emergency Operations Center is no longer activated. Activities may be coordinated from a JFO and involve limited Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) or Donations Warehouses participation.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES.

a. Mississippi Emergency Management Agency – Coordinating Agency.

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(1) Will coordinate with MCVS and MSVOAD as deemed necessary to utilize volunteer resources safely and efficiently.

(2) Will work with the Recovery office, the JFO, and the Long-Term Recovery Committees (LRTCs) to address the unmet needs of the impacted community.

(3) Will work to identify critical systems for virtual donations coordination, as required.

(4) Will work in collaboration with MCVS, MSVOAD, and other organizations to address the unmet needs of the impacted communities.

(5) In an overwhelming catastrophic disaster, MEMA may assume responsibility for donations management coordinated by the BEOC's State Donations Manager.

b. Mississippi Commission on Volunteer Service – Primary Agency.

(1) Will provide representatives to the SEOC during disasters as requested by MEMA Operations.

(2) Will coordinate the registration and assignment of unaffiliated volunteers during disasters to appropriate recognized volunteer organizations.

(3) Will assist in matching volunteers with volunteer needs requests in collaboration with the MSVOAD.

(4) Will organize the setup and staffing of VRCs if deemed necessary.

(5) Will work to address the unmet needs of the impacted communities.

(6) Field activities include but are not limited to:

(a) The Mississippi Volunteer and Donations Call Center will be activated, as needed, at a designated site. Volunteer service will be referred to volunteer agencies via the call center and other approved volunteer registration systems.

(b) The donations warehouse, if established, will coordinate response efforts with the coordination team.

(c) The Donations Call Center may be activated as needed at a designated site. Depending on size, donation offers will be logged in any active donations management systems and/or referred to an appropriate organization.

(d) If state resources are unavailable, the coordination team will coordinate donated goods through other entities, including the Mississippi Trucking Association.

c. Mississippi Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster – Primary Agency.

- (1) Provide a liaison to the SEOC.
- (2) Communicate State volunteer needs to national partners, including but not limited to National VOAD.
- (3) Partner with MCVS to assign unaffiliated volunteers to recognized response organizations through VRCs.
- (4) Coordinate with member agencies throughout Mississippi to determine disaster-related needs and resources.
- (5) Coordinate Post-Disaster Committee meetings to assess ongoing and unmet needs.
- (6) Represent affiliates at Unified Logistics meetings. Possibly include reference to other ESFs.
- (7) Partner with MCVS to coordinate any just-in-time training for unaffiliated volunteers through partners and MSVOAD members as needed.
- (8) Assign a representative to the VDCT.

d. Financial Management. All agencies will maintain logs and journals documenting all volunteer hours and expenses incurred in disaster relief activities and adhere to the following accounting and record-keeping guidelines:

- (1) All organizations receiving and utilizing volunteer services and/or donated items as their resources need to record all requested information in the database. All information will be kept confidential and used only for volunteer and donations management.
- (2) MCVS shall direct all volunteers to the appropriate voluntary organizations. The voluntary organizations become responsible for record-keeping, and final dispositions shift to them.
- (3) The person designated as the State Donations Manager should, whenever feasible, direct all donated durable/non-non-expendable items to the appropriate, approved volunteer organizations and faith-based groups. They then become the recipients rather than accepting it for the state government. The record-keeping and final dispositions shift to that organization.
- (4) Financial documents submitted must be in accordance with regulations and guidelines established by FEMA Public Assistance (PA) to be considered for reimbursement by FEMA or MEMA.

f. Support Agencies. The chart on the following pages shows the responsibilities of the individual Volunteer and Donations Management Support agencies. The list contains, but is not limited to, the core functions required:

| Agency | Functions |
|---|--|
| Mississippi Department of Corrections (MDOC) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide inmate support for donation staging area/warehouse operations; • Provide any other resources as needed; |
| Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide financial resource management and property management (if needed for warehousing); • Will secure warehousing location in conjunction with MEMA (if required); |
| Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in directing trucks to donation staging area/warehouse(s) at state lines; • Provide updated road condition information for better management of the delivery of goods; |
| Mississippi Information Technology Services (ITS) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide communications (voice and data) and other technology support; • Identify deficiencies in automation information and communications resources; |

6. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES. The procedures in this Annex are built on the core coordinating structures of the CEMP and references listed below. The specific responsibilities of each department and agency are described in the respective ESF, Support, and Incident Annexes, internal agency plans, policies, and procedures. See the CEMP Base Plan or the SEOC Human Services Branch for a comprehensive list of Authorities and References.

- a. Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Public Law 93-288, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq., and Related Authorities
https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/stafford-act_2019.pdf
- b. Mississippi Code of 1972, Title 33, Chapter 15, Emergency Management and Civil Defense
[Mississippi Code of 1972, Title 33, Chapter 15](#)

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- c. National Incident Management System, Third Edition, October 2017
<https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/148019>
- d. National Preparedness Goal, Second Edition, September 2015
<https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/25959>
- e. National Response Framework, Fourth Edition, October 2019
https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-04/NRF_FINALApproved_2011028.pdf
- f. State of Mississippi Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
[MEMA Downloads/CEMP](#)
- g. MEMA Response Framework, March 2021
[MEMA Downloads/MEMA Publications](#)

The MEMA reference repository, containing the CEMP base plan, associated annexes, appendices, and other supporting documents, can be found at [MEMA Downloads](#).

Most Mississippi emergency management stakeholders have access to the MEMA Downloads site. However, non-registered stakeholders may access the repository by submitting an e-mail request to preparedness@mema.ms.gov.

7. REVIEW AND MAINTENANCE. At a minimum, the Volunteer and Donations Management Support Annex Coordinating Agency will conduct an annual review of this Annex with all support agencies. Additional assessments may be performed if the experience with an incident or regulatory changes indicates a need. Recommended changes will be submitted to MEMA for approval, publication, and distribution. Submit recommendations via e-mail to preparedness@mema.ms.gov.

This Annex will be updated every two years, or as necessary, to incorporate new presidential or state directives, legislative changes, and procedural changes based on lessons learned from exercises and actual incidents. A re-write of this Annex will be completed every four (4) years.

This Annex applies to all state agencies, state boards, state commissions, and state departments assigned volunteer and donations management responsibilities and to all elements of local government in accordance with current law and Executive Orders (EOs).