Great Volunteer Management System

Managing Volunteers During Times of Crisis

Presented by New York Cares
December 17, 2020
Today’s Agenda

- **Preparing Your Organization**
  - Organizational Disaster Preparedness
  - COOP Planning

- **Disaster Volunteer Management**
  - Who Are Disaster Volunteers?
  - Should My Organization Engage Disaster Volunteers?
  - Activity: Engaging Volunteers Post Disaster
  - Managing Disaster Volunteers
  - Communication During Disaster

- **Best Practices**

- **Questions**
In the event of a disaster, how would your organization utilize volunteers?

How has your organization utilized volunteers during COVID-19?
**Phases of Disaster**

**Preparedness** – Planning how to respond to a disaster and increasing resources available to respond effectively.

**Mitigation** – Activities that prevent, eliminate, or reduce the effects of a disaster.

**Response** – Activities to provide emergency assistance to victims of the event and reduce the likelihood of secondary damage.

**Recovery** – Short-term recovery returns vital life support systems to minimum operating standards; long-term recovery returns area to normal or near-normal conditions.

Modified from Corporation for National and Community Service.
Organizational Disaster Preparedness

• Ensure that your staff is prepared both **personally and professionally**

• Create a **plan to communicate** with staff during disaster

• Develop a **Continuity of Operations plan (COOP)**.

• **Staff safety is key.** Advanced disaster planning and preparedness discussions will make sure you are ready to engage disaster volunteers, should you choose to do so.
Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan: 4 Parts

- Introduction
- Preparedness
- Essential Functions
- Considerations
Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan: Introduction

• Start with your plan’s purpose.

• **Focus on “If/Then” statements** to clearly define how and when your plan will activate.
  – For example, “*If* a local emergency occurs that disables our office location, *then* we will activate specific aspects of the plan.”

• **Include key organizational definitions and terminology.**

• **Outline important relationships or partnerships** that you have established pre-disaster that will be critical in continuing your operations.
Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan: Preparedness

• **Outline staff roles and responsibilities**, including if and how those responsibilities change during disaster.

• **Define your pre-established best practices**, so staff is prepared and understands how things should happen.

• **Provide a regular schedule** for training of staff and reviews or updates to the plan.

• **Hold annual exercises** with staff to review the procedures and make sure everyone knows what to do.
Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan: Essential Functions

- Prioritize what is essential to your work.

- Create a numbered list in order of importance.
  - Below is an example. Keep in mind: priorities for your organization may be different.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Essential Functions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Ensure Staff Safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Communications and Technology</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Accounting and Human Resources</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Existing Programs</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Citywide Response Plan and New Response Programs</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Fundraising</td>
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Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan: Considerations

• **Writing a COOP is a lengthy process!**

• **Develop a working group** of staff members from all levels and departments.

• **Include essential information** that all staff should have access to.

• **Provide a copy to new staff** and review when they start.

• **Update the plan annually, or as your organization changes.**
Who Are Disaster Volunteers?

• May have limited or no experience as a volunteer

• May not be informed about your organization

• Have a strong desire to help the impacted community in response to crisis
Should My Organization Engage Volunteers Post Disaster?

• Disaster volunteering is not right for every organization.

• Consider whether the volunteer work is aligned with your organization’s mission.

• The decision to engage volunteers may depend upon the location of the affected area.

• Think about your own organization’s ability to function.

• Consult your Board of Directors regarding any financial or risk management implications.
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Should My Organization Engage Volunteers Post Disaster?

If Your Answer Is Yes:
• Consider seeking external funds.
• Begin planning to manage the surge of volunteers.
• Make plans for dedicated staff to manage volunteers.

If Your Answer Is No:
• Find out what local organizations are currently recruiting or managing disaster volunteers.
• Post messaging on your website or social media to direct volunteers where they are needed most.
Activity: Engaging With Volunteers Post-Disaster

Ask yourself the following questions when considering your organization’s readiness to manage disaster volunteers:

1. **Organizational Readiness**
   - Do you have a plan for your office and staff is an emergency were to happen during business hours?
   - Does your staff have a check-in plan to contact you if an emergency were to happen outside of business hours?
Activity: Engaging With Volunteers Post-Disaster

Ask yourself the following questions when considering your organization’s readiness to manage disaster volunteers:

2. Volunteer Engagement
   - How would you reach out to volunteers if an emergency occurred? Who is responsible? How and what would be communicated?
   - What critical programming do you run that would still take place during a disaster?
   - Do you have a plan to prioritize programming during disaster? If so, what is the plan? How is it communicated to your staff? To your volunteers?
   - Do you have additional volunteer needs during a disaster? How would you recruit for them? Do volunteers know their role might be different?
Managing Disaster Volunteers
Managing Disaster Volunteers

• Set clear expectations from the beginning.

• Volunteers may expect to work directly in affected areas or with victims, but this isn’t always possible - make sure they know and understand that.

• Make sure volunteers understand the impact of their work.
# Managing Disaster Volunteers

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<tr>
<th>Safety</th>
<th>Self-Care</th>
<th>Burnout</th>
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<tr>
<td>Establish safety</td>
<td>Make a plan for volunteer self-care, especially for long-term volunteers.</td>
<td>Recognize signs of burnout and rotate volunteers as needed.</td>
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Volunteer Safety

• In partnership with the city's Volunteer Coordination Task Force, we are actively enforcing updated safety requirements on our projects. You can find this information at [www.nyc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.nyc.gov/coronavirus)

• If any of the following conditions apply to you, stay home and DO NOT SIGN UP to volunteer:
  – You are sick
  – You are over 65 years old or have chronic health conditions, including chronic lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, cancer or a weakened immune system
Volunteer Safety

While volunteering during COVID-19 we require the following:

– Wear a face covering.
– Wash your hands often, including at the start and end of your volunteer opportunity. Use soap and water and scrub for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
– Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when sneezing or coughing. Do not use your hands.
– Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
– Do not shake hands.
– Monitor your health more closely than usual for cold or flu symptoms.
– Do not gather in large groups.
– Keep at least six feet between you and others.
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Communication During Disaster

• Respond to volunteers promptly, and give them as much info as possible,

• Even as you are still mobilizing and gathering information, keep volunteers in the loop.

• Be open and honest about your needs and how quickly it will take your staff to mobilize
Questions
THANK YOU!