

GOING ON A DISASTER ASSIGNMENT



**American
Red Cross**

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The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

The Fundamental Principles

Humanity – The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavors, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, cooperation, and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

Impartiality – The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavors to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

Neutrality - In order to continue to enjoy the confidence of all, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Independence - The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the Principles of the Movement.

Voluntary Service - It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

Unity - There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

Universality - The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all Societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.

The American Red Cross Mission

The American Red Cross, a humanitarian organization led by volunteers and guided by its Congressional Charter and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross Movement, will provide relief to victims of disaster and help people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies.

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Welcome

Thank you for giving your time and skills to work on a disaster relief operation (DRO) away from home. Are you excited, full of adrenaline and even a little apprehensive? If you are like most disaster workers, you may be having all of these feelings, as well as some uncertainty about what to expect. Preparing DSHR members to meet the challenges of disaster relief operation work and making sure workers know what is expected is a key goal of the Red Cross.

Purpose of this Booklet

The *Going on a Disaster Assignment* booklet provides information to help you prepare for and complete your disaster assignment. All of the information you need is in this booklet. Take some time to read through the information and become familiar with what it takes to have a successful disaster assignment.

PREPARING TO BE A DISASTER WORKER	
Update DSHR	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Enter the dates you are available for disaster assignments by filling in the date you can leave and the date you need to travel home. More frequent updates may be needed during hurricane season.2. Update your DSHR profile.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Make sure your phone numbers and email address are current.▪ Double check your emergency contact information and make sure your legal name is listed.▪ Make sure your Health Status Record has been updated within the past 12 months.
Access CrossNet	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Contact your chapter to arrange for access to CrossNet to be able to read postings describing the disaster relief operation.2. Some pre-assignment information, such as forms and activity handbooks are only delivered through CrossNet postings. If you need assistance finding the CrossNet postings, ask your chapter for help.3. Go to the Recruit, organize and deploy disaster workers page and review the information on these three links: DSHR Deployment, DSHR Membership and DSHR Resources.4. Print a copy of the Disaster Relief Operation Assignment Worksheet.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ This worksheet is a tool to help you organize your response to a DSHR assignment.
Hardship Codes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Check the Hardship Codes found in appendix E of the DSHR System Handbook available on CrossNet or through your unit of affiliation (chapter or NHQ)2. Be prepared and ready. Hardship codes are associated with disaster relief operations to protect you, our valued relief worker. Know how the codes will affect you before you get to the disaster relief operation. For example, if the affected area doesn't have drinking water, your drinking water may be supplied by Mass Care.3. Whether you are recruited for the DRO will be based on the condition of the disaster location and any hardship codes that apply to you.

<p>Read key documents</p>	<p>The documents you must read before accepting a disaster assignment are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hardship Codes from Appendix E in the <i>DSHR System Handbook</i> ▪ Disaster Relief Operation Assignment Worksheet ▪ Disaster Staff Card Brochure and Authority ▪ DSC Aug 1 2009 Card Holder Critical Update ▪ Community Information ▪ Pre-Assignment Health Questionnaire ▪ Community Living on a Disaster Relief Operation brochure ▪ Traveling by Air to a Disaster Relief Operation brochure ▪ Standards for Identification of Red Cross Workers from Appendix H in the DSHR System Handbook ▪ Job Induction Checklist ▪ DRO Worker Information ▪ DRO Work Performance Evaluation <p>These documents are available on CrossNet, or from your chapter and help prepare you for a successful disaster assignment.</p>
<p>Check identification documents</p>	<p>Ensure your identification documents (driver's license, passport) are current. The name on your ID must match the name on your airline ticket, DSHR profile and DSHR ID card due to new TSA (Transportation Security Administration) federal regulations for traveling.</p>
<p>Obtain a Disaster Staff Card</p>	<p>Read the Disaster Staff Card Brochure and Authority and the DSC Aug 1 2009 Card Holder Critical Update found on CrossNet. Make sure you fully understand the requirements and what is an allowable expense on the Disaster Staff Card.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain a Disaster Staff Card from your chapter. ▪ Complete and sign the Disaster Staff Card Authority form and leave this form at your chapter. Write down the access code and PIN and keep them in a secure place.
<p>GETTING READY FOR A DISASTER ASSIGNMENT</p>	
<p>Expectations of DSHR Members</p> <p>Expect the unexpected!</p>	<p>Be committed to the Red Cross while on a disaster relief operation assignment by being:</p> <p>Prepared</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is guaranteed there will be changes to plans while on your assignment, after all, it is a disaster – that is why you are needed. ▪ Personally care for yourself so that you can perform your assigned work. ▪ Support your co-workers and the directions of disaster relief operation management. ▪ Answer the public's questions. Carry and use the Community Information card so you can provide accurate information. <p>Flexible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Travel plans can change at the last minute; long waits and personal inconvenience are likely from your recruitment call to the end of your assignment.

<p>Expectations of DSHR Members (con't)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unforeseen, abrupt changes and chaos will occur while you are on a disaster assignment. A common change that occurs on disaster assignments is a change to a job or work assignment. ▪ Flexibility is needed to deal with these changes in a calm and professional manner. <p>Professional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Always hold yourself to high standards of behavior. ▪ Represent the Red Cross in all of your actions, both during and after work hours on the disaster relief operation. ▪ Find correct information and follow up. ▪ Help people with the full array of the services we provide—we are one Red Cross. Make us proud. <p>Accountable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For yourself and all Red Cross assets and resources. <p>Mission Driven</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All disaster relief workers are 100% in support of the mission and our disaster constituents: clients, community, partners, donors and staff. <p>Prepared for local community volunteers Remember, you are a guest in the community and your job is to strengthen the capacity and capability of the local chapter by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sharing your knowledge. ▪ Coaching and developing their employees and volunteers. ▪ Welcoming members of the community who want to help in their community (spontaneous volunteers). ▪ Making everyone feel welcome, wanted and useful. ▪ Being inclusive.
<p>Obtain information about the Disaster Operation</p>	<p>Check CrossNet and contact your chapter for information pertaining to your job assignment and the disaster relief operation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be prepared for community living by reading the Community Living on a Disaster Relief Operation brochure. If your lodging assignment is in a commercial facility (hotel/motel), you will be sharing a room or might need to stay in a staff shelter.
<p>Accept the disaster assignment</p>	<p>Once you have accepted a disaster assignment, your chapter DSHR administrator will ask you the questions on the Pre-Assignment Health Questionnaire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fill out the top section of the Disaster Relief Operation Assignment Worksheet with the disaster information you've collected. ▪ Print and read the information pertaining to your job assignment (activity handbook, assignment description and competency criteria) that is located on CrossNet.
<p>Make travel arrangements</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with your chapter to determine how you will travel to the DRO in a timely and cost effective manner. This may be car pooling in a rental vehicle, individual rental vehicle, ARC vehicle, POV (personal owned vehicle) or by air. 2. Fill in the middle section of the Disaster Relief Operation Assignment Worksheet with the information given to you about your travel.

<p>Make travel arrangements (con't)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. If you are flying, call Carson-Wagonlit Travel (CWT) to arrange travel plans related to your disaster assignment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow the steps written in the Traveling by Air to a Disaster Relief Operation brochure. 4. Give your travel and assignment information to your family and emergency contact. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If you and your emergency contact are deploying to a DRO, please change at least one emergency contact to someone who is not deploying. 5. For any problems while traveling, contact the Staff Deployment Center (24/7) at 1-800-533-3747 for assistance.
<p>What to take with you</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medications (prescribed and over-the-counter). Bring enough to cover the amount of time you will be on assignment plus a few extra days. 2. Disaster Staff Card - Check with your chapter to ensure the card is loaded with the appropriate dollar amount for your disaster assignment. 3. Essential work and personal items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pack appropriate clothing and supplies for disaster relief work. Use the Standards for Identification of Red Cross Workers from Appendix H in the DSHR System Handbook as a guide. <i>Note: closed toe/closed heel footwear is required.</i> ▪ Include a flashlight, batteries and all weather gear. <i>Note: overweight limit baggage charges are your responsibility and are not reimbursable.</i> 4. Driver's license or Passport <i>Note: for assignments in the Caribbean and Western Pacific island territories, a passport is required.</i> 5. Red Cross DSHR System Member ID 6. Original of your current professional license, if applicable. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Copies will not be accepted, and you may be assigned to another activity. 7. <i>Going on a Disaster Assignment</i> booklet and all documents describing the work you have been assigned to do on the disaster relief operation (activity handbook, assignment description and competency criteria). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review this information again, prior to arriving on the disaster relief operation. 8. Disaster Relief Operation Assignment Worksheet (the one with the top and middle sections completed) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have this form with you when you arrive at the destination city.
<p>ARRIVING ON THE OPERATION</p>	
<p>Upon arrival at the destination city</p>	<p>Call the DR Info Line at 1-888-673-8395 as soon as you arrive in the destination city to get current directions on how to proceed to the disaster relief operation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The information changes frequently during the beginning of an operation that is why it is important to wait until you arrive. ▪ Make sure you write down the Staff Services phone number; it is your source of help and information. ▪ Fill in the bottom section of the Disaster Relief Operation Assignment Worksheet with the information from the DR Info Line.

<p>Upon arrival at the destination city (con't)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follow the instructions regarding rental vehicles or shuttle services given on the DR Info Line.
<p>In-Processing at DRO headquarters or at your job site</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proceed to Staff Services for in-processing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have your DSHR number and Red Cross DSHR System Member ID ready. ▪ Receive your lodging assignment. ▪ Make sure you sign the Red Cross sign-in sheet at the hotel/motel. Print your name clearly and include your DSHR number. <i>Note: ERV drivers must sign in using their legal name, not the ERV number.</i> 2. Attend the DRO operational orientation to get the most current information about the disaster relief operation. 3. Register your vehicle with Logistics/Transportation (even your POV). 4. Report to the group or activity for which you were recruited for your work assignment and job induction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bring your Job Induction Checklist and the DRO Worker Information sheet. ▪ During your job induction, fill in your Job Induction Checklist and the appropriate phone numbers on the DRO Worker Information sheet. 5. Obtain and read the tasks and responsibilities in your assignment description. If there is a change in assignment, be flexible, tackle the new assignment and embrace the team to which you are assigned.
<p>WORKING ON THE OPERATION</p>	
<p>What you can expect from the Red Cross</p>	<p>The Red Cross provides support systems to help you resolve issues, clarify information and answer questions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your direct supervisor provides expectations, guidance, answers questions, gives the “how to’s” and assigns your work. ▪ Your site manager is another resource for guidance and questions. ▪ Staff Wellness assists you if you become ill or injured. ▪ Staff Relations is available for personnel issues that you can’t resolve. ▪ Staff Planning and Support is your resource for lodging, Disaster Staff Card maintenance and information. Be proactive and request additional funds on your Disaster Staff Card before you run out of funds. ▪ Training supports you with orientation and any skill updates you may need. ▪ The DRO Worker Information sheet provides the phone numbers and web sites you will need while on the operation.
<p>Use of Red Cross vehicles</p>	<p>Vehicles are shared by workers who must also share filling the gas tank.</p> <p><i>Note: Your travel expenses incurred on days off, or for any personal items or activities, are not allowable expenses on your Disaster Staff Card. Whether or not a vehicle is available on your days off depends on the needs of the relief operation. You must secure permission to use a staff car for travel within the area on your day off, and it cannot be taken more than 50 miles from the relief operation.</i></p>

<p>Use of personal electronic devices</p>	<p>Usage of personal cell phones, computers and other electronic devices during your assignment is at your own risk.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Costs will not be reimbursed by the Red Cross. ▪ If you need a cell phone or computer to complete tasks associated with your assignment, submit a request to your activity manager. ▪ Electronic devices are obtained through the Disaster Services Technology activity on the disaster relief operation.
<p>Out-Processing</p>	<p>When you have completed your disaster assignment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check the balance on your Disaster Staff Card and make sure you have enough funds to return home. If you need additional funds to return home, go to Staff Planning and Support. 2. Schedule and attend your performance review with your supervisor. Sign and make a copy of your <i>DRO Work Performance Evaluation</i> and give the original to Staff Services. 3. Attend your exit interviews at your work location. 4. Return any equipment (cars, trucks, phones, chargers, computers, air cards, etc.) that were given to you to use during the operation to Transportation and Disaster Services Technology. 5. Coordinate your return travel plans with Staff Services and Logistics/Transportation to determine where rentals will be returned, if you will be car pooling home, etc. 6. If you are flying home, make your reservation through Carlson Wagonlit Travel and schedule transportation to the airport. 7. Complete the out-processing at Staff Services. <p>Congratulations, you have successfully completed a disaster assignment. Have a safe trip home.</p>

Thank you again for giving your time and skills. If there is anything else you need, be sure to let your chapter know. Also, please call or go to the chapter when you return from your assignment. Good luck.



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