

Expectations for DSHR Members Assigned to Red Cross Disaster Relief Operations

Preparing our DSHR members to meet the challenges of disaster relief operation work is a key goal of Red Cross units at all levels. This information is prepared with you in mind. Take a few minutes to read through the information and become familiar with changes that will affect you, a valued DSHR member.

Preparation is the key...

Notify your chapter DSHR person of specific dates you are available for a DSHR assignment.

Recruitment is accomplished by “searching” the database for specific members meeting Staff Request criteria and marked as “available” during the dates being recruited. Don’t be left out of an assignment! Be proactive and let your chapter DSHR person know specific dates you are available!

Offer to help call other DSHR members and obtain their availability or offer to help enter availability in the DSHR system...no small feat, but “many hands make light work!” Pitch in and help!

Make sure your DSHR profile is up to date.

Double check your emergency contact information and make sure it is current. Make sure your proper, legal name is how you are listed in the DSHR System.

Really, really, really prepare yourself for what to expect of your recruitment, travel, and assignment.

We guarantee things often will not go as planned, after all, it is a disaster—that’s why you are needed. Make sure you can be flexible—with travel plans changing at the last minute, waits, chaos and personal inconvenience—all will be present from your recruitment call to the end of your assignment. Be prepared for it-- be flexible, stay calm and be nice. Expect the unexpected!

Sign up for CrossNet or arrange access to CrossNet postings through your Chapter.

A lot of pre-assignment information will be coming your way via CrossNet before you even leave home. The new Activity Handbooks, forms, Orientation, and pre-assignment information are all samples of information only delivered through CrossNet postings. Make sure you have access before you need it! If you can’t find it ask your chapter to help or have the chapter contact your service area!

Check out the new Hardship Codes found in the *DSHR Handbook* available on CrossNet or through your Chapter.

Know how the codes will affect YOU when you get to the disaster relief operation. If the area doesn’t have drinking water...YOU won’t have drinking water. If the area is hot and humid and no electricity...YOU will be hot, humid, and will not have air conditioning! Be prepared and ready! Hardship codes are associated with disaster relief operations to protect YOU, our valued relief worker. Take advantage of knowing and understanding what they mean to you *before* you arrive! Be prepared to not go at the very beginning if the hardship code associated with the disaster affects you negatively. Wait, and go on the next round when infrastructure and services are restored. Don’t take it personally; we really need you safe, healthy and able to work!

Obtain the Disaster Staff Card information and PowerPoint for Users available on CrossNet, or through your Chapter and be familiar with the procedures before you leave home.

Disaster Staff Cards have replaced cash advances on all nationally funded disaster relief operations with an infrastructure able to support them. Become familiar with the procedures associated with the Disaster Staff Cards by reviewing the information.

Review the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross Movement and the Red Cross Standards of Conduct for Disaster Relief Workers

Review and know them ahead of time. You are expected to support, embrace and emulate—or live by them while assigned to a disaster relief operation. The information is on CrossNet.

Check CrossNet for the Disaster Relief Operation Attire Kit information.

Make sure you meet identification standards for disaster relief operations. Know what clothes and supplies may be needed. Include a flashlight and batteries, all weather gear, appropriate and acceptable clothing, no open toed shoes, pack and plan ahead. Most airlines now charge \$25+ for baggage over 50 pounds. Over weight limit baggage charges are your responsibility and not reimbursable. Know how much you’re carrying ahead of time so you are prepared and within weight limits. A good rule is to pack only what you personally can carry.

Have appropriate and required identification and licenses ready to go. Your ID *must* match your *proper* name *and* your ticket.

Airlines, folks on the disaster relief operation and some communities, depending on the affects of the disaster, will need to see them, be

prepared! For Caribbean and Western Pacific island assignments a passport is essential. Make sure you have one. Your DSHR name and photo ID must match.

Bring your original license(s) with you.

Getting Ready...

Once you receive the call to accept an assignment (we already know you're available!) your chapter DSHR person will ask you the questions found on the Pre-Assignment Health Questionnaire.

This easy, non-medical questionnaire is designed to ensure only a healthy work force travels to the disaster relief operation. Check with your Chapter DSHR person ahead of time and become familiar with the questions. The Pre-Deployment Health Questionnaire is available on CrossNet.

If taking prescribed medications, make sure you have enough medication to cover a few days longer than your expected assignment and a method to re-supply medications if needed.

Do not accept assignments if you cannot be sure of your medicine supply.

Obtain the new Disaster Relief Operation Assignment Sheet available on CrossNet or from your Chapter.

This handy one page tool is for YOU, to make travel and preparation for your assignment easier, give you knowledge of the disaster before you leave, a few reminders and procedures, as well as preparing you for what lies ahead. Following the procedures noted when making travel plans and arriving at the disaster destination city will make travel smoother. Take advantage of this user friendly tool!

Obtain the Orientation materials from CrossNet or through your Chapter.

Orientation material will be published and available before you leave home, and updated frequently. Learning as much as you can about what is already happening in the disaster area and the chapter response will help in your personal preparation and decrease your in-processing time!

Obtain the new DSHR Member Registration (1492) from CrossNet and complete it prior to your assignment and stop by the chapter and pick up your Disaster Staff Card and Disaster Staff Card information!

Leave any and all weapons at home as weapons of any type (knives, guns, etc.) are not allowed on ARC property or property being used by Red Cross, regardless of your group and activity.

Arriving...

When you arrive at the disaster destination city, call the DR Info Line and get current directions, using your Disaster Relief Operation Assignment tool.

The DR Info Line is changed frequently during the beginning of an operation; make sure you have the number, check when you arrive. Listen carefully, and follow the instructions. Once you arrive in the disaster destination city, Staff Services on the disaster relief operation are your source of help and information. Make sure you write down the Staff Services phone number when listening to the recording. Be patient, others may be calling too! Even if you have to wait a few minutes, better service will be provided by contacting Staff Services.

In-processing...

Streamlined in processing exists for those prepared. If you have completed your review of the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross Movement, the Red Cross Standards of Conduct for Disaster Relief Workers, the DSHR Member Registration (1492), on line orientation and Pre-Assignment Health Questionnaire, drop the new 1492 off at Staff Services and obtain your lodging! If the above are not completed pre-arrival, complete them at in processing, see Staff Health and take the Orientation.

Pick up your written Assignment Description from your group and review your tasks and responsibilities! Be prepared-it may be different than what you thought you were recruited for....things change between your call and arrival, *be prepared to step up to the plate and tackle any assignment as requested.*

A few more new things to expect...

You may be proceeding direct to your work location!

If you were provided your work location prior to leaving home, your travel plans may have you proceed to your work location, the closest chapter or other work site. Don't think the information is "wrong" because you're not going to headquarters!

Be prepared for a new work force!

The new work force will consist of more local employees and volunteers and partner or company volunteers than in previous years. Your job is to strengthen the capacity and capability of the local Chapter by sharing your knowledge, coaching and developing, and making everyone feel welcome, a valued member of the team, wanted and useful! Include everyone, don't exclude anyone! Embrace the team to which you are assigned.

Treat your team members, co-workers and the community with respect and dignity at all times--like you want to be treated.

Remember, regardless of your group, activity or level of knowledge and experience, you ARE the Red Cross. Find the correct information and follow up—help people with the full array of the services we provide as we are ONE Red Cross, make us proud!

Remember your support systems... use them before a crisis erupts, they are there for you!

Your supervisor...provides guidance, answers and “how tos”
Your site manager...is a resource
Staff health services...if you become ill or injured
Staff relations...for personnel issues that you can't resolve
Staff support...for lodging, maintenance, information
Training...skill updates

Your lodging may be a little different than in previous years as many lodging alternatives will be explored. Expect staff shelters. Expect sharing a room. Expect commutes. Expect camps. Do not expect having a room to yourself with room service next to your work site.

Do not expect a vehicle to yourself on your day off. Do not expect your own vehicle. Expect to share a ride. ***You are required to be able to drive...night and day, anywhere, anytime. Expect it.***

Remember... Expect the unexpected! Be prepared for it-- be flexible, stay calm and be nice.

Upholding the values and integrity of the Red Cross is *everyone's* job.

If you suspect or observe theft, fraud, discrimination, harassment, misconduct or any action that would violate the Red Cross Code of Conduct, report it to your Direct Supervisor immediately. After allowing your Direct Supervisor time to address the issue, if you feel attempts to resolve the suspected inappropriateness are unsuccessful; call the confidential Concern Connection Line at 888-309-9679, available 24/7.

Know that theft, fraud, discrimination, harassment, misconduct or any action that violates the Red Cross Code of Conduct will not be tolerated and will be investigated thoroughly. Founded violations may result in termination of your assignment, removal from the DSHR and/or criminal prosecution.

Out processing...

Have a Disaster Staff Card? Check your balance and do not complete an Expense Reimbursement form (voucher)!

Did you obtain the new stream lined Staff Release/Transfer form before you left home or when you arrived? Good for you! Complete it and drop it off on your way out—from the closest work site. Complete your Exit Interviews at your work site location.

What do the affected community and Red Cross expect of you on a disaster relief operation assignment?

Preparation-you are prepared to personally care for yourself, to perform your assigned work, to be flexible and to uphold the mission and Code of Conduct of the Red Cross and support your co-workers and the directions of disaster relief operation management.

Flexibility-Prepared to personally and appropriately handle abrupt and unforeseen changes and chaos calmly and professionally—completing any assignment as requested.

Professionalism-Prepared to professionally, positively, and appropriately represent the Red Cross in all your actions; both on and off the relief operation. You must hold yourself to high standards of behavior.

Accountability- For yourself and *all* Red Cross assets and resources.

Mission driven- You are there 100% in support of the mission and our disaster constituents-clients, community, partners, donors and staff.

What you can expect from your coworkers on the disaster relief operation:

Respect- for you as a person, your knowledge, your contribution to the DRO team; being treated with dignity at all times, like you want to be treated.

Friendliness and inclusion as a valued member of the DRO team.

Timely feedback from your supervisor-good comments, and comments about what you can do better.

Zero Tolerance for misbehavior towards you

Fair treatment and prompt resolution of issues that may arise.

Correct and timely information that will help you do your job and answer your questions.

Thank you!