

# A QuickGuide to Disaster Workforce Planning during the 2020 Hurricane-Coronavirus Pandemic Season and Beyond



This Quick Guide was developed with support from [USF Pandemic Response Research Network](#) and the [CONVERGE Network](#) to assist planners in recruiting and developing a disaster response workforce. Its contents were derived from review of the literature, existing guidance documents, and a series of working group calls with experts from diverse sectors.

## Key Considerations

- State, city, and county planners are trained to staff shelters under normal conditions, but not for sheltering under hurricane-pandemic conditions.
- Many disaster/emergency response workers have been activated for an extended period in 2020, increasing the risk of burnout, illness, or absenteeism.
- More shelters are needed, more staff and volunteers are needed to staff the shelters, while also minimizing on-site personnel to accommodate capacity restrictions
- Specialized training is needed for staff and volunteers. COVID-19-specific training and cross-training for multiple roles is essential.
- Key questions and issues remain regarding non- congregate shelter needs and staffing.
- Additional resources are needed to communicate with evacuees, protect staff and evacuees, meet demands of special-needs populations, and ensure the well-being of staff and evacuees

## Workforce/Staffing Capacity





- Planners should assess community needs and capacities in terms of populations, facilities, supplies, and human resources (workforce).
- It is helpful to identify and to categorize worker roles by COVID-19/disaster risk and skill levels

	High skill	Low skill
High Risk		
Low Risk		

- **Other considerations include:**
  - Staffing/scheduling models – Consider shorter shifts, two staff per shift, breaks between shifts, needs of workers balancing home responsibilities (e.g. child care).
  - Deployment – Pre-plan deployment schedules, prepare workforce prior to deployment.
  - Housing – Workers may need separate housing, shelter managers need quiet, protected space.
  - Ancillary support – Virtual/telephone support, supervision, and consultation may be arranged.
- Training – Consider offering all trainings, including just-in-time trainings to all workers.

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## Who is the disaster workforce?

	 <b>Pre-event</b>	 <b>General Population &amp; Special Needs Shelters</b>					 <b>Post-event</b>
First Responders Transportation	Transport to shelter, hospital	Transport to/from shelters, hospital. Address acute medical and behavioral health needs.					Transport from shelter, hospital
State, County, City Employees							
EOC Staff: Manager, Administrative Support, Supervisor, Essential personnel, Security staff	Pre-screening/Registration	Registration	Feeding	Dormitory Management	Logistics Support & Supplies	Safety & Security, including prevention, de-escalation, protection (IPV, Child Abuse, Exploitation, Crime)	Post-event Follow-up
Healthcare Providers – medical and behavioral healthcare	Pre-event planning/preparedness consultation	In-shelter support – on-site and telehealth					Post-event follow-up consultation
Volunteers: Retirees, Students, Church members, Civic groups	Information sharing – preparedness (bilingual and hearing impaired [HI] support) Help with environmental/home preparation, Pet care planning & foster care	Online, phone, in-person, bilingual and HI support	Pre-package food, incl. dietary restrictions	Information updates–multimedia	Organize, prepare, and solicit supplies	Promote diversity inclusion & tolerance, arts, prosocial activities, recreation (including age-appropriate for children, adaptive for disabilities), spiritual support (bilingual and HI)	Information updates, Health education, Post-event resources (bilingual and HI support) Debris cleanup assistance Pet services, including foster care
Social workers, case managers, family support workers	Pre-event planning/preparedness consultation	In-shelter support – on-site and telehealth/Warmline					Post-event follow-up consultation & referral

**This tool was informed in part by:**

FEMA Shelter Operations Guide: <http://www.co.burlington.nj.us/DocumentCenter/View/7630/Shelter-Field-Guide?bidId=>

Red Cross Emergency Shelter Operations: <https://crocog.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/American-Red-Cross-Sheltering-Handbook.pdf>

Collier County Emergency Shelter Operations Plan: <http://toolbox.naccho.org/api/ToolBlob?blobKey=32a0bb99-b5e2-4121-a11e-4c43d3a1bc5d&fileName=Collier%20SOG%2039%20Shelter%20Ops%20J4.pdf>

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## Additional resources

The following resources and documents were identified by participants in Workshop 5 or may be relevant to the discussion topics. Some are more localized than others. Additional resources can be found at [https://health.usf.edu/publichealth/erc/recruitment\\_and\\_outreach](https://health.usf.edu/publichealth/erc/recruitment_and_outreach)

- **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** COVID-19 Pandemic Operational Guidance for the 2020 Hurricane Season <https://www.fema.gov/news-release/2020/05/20/fema-announces-operational-guidance-2020-hurricane-season>
- **Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA)** COVID-19 Guidance for Nursing Home and Long-Term Care Facility Workers <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA4025.pdf>
- **Administration for Community Living (ACL)** Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) <https://acl.gov/COVID-19>
- American Flood Coalition (AFC) and American Public Health Association (APHA) Dual Disaster Handbook: Six Recommendations for Local leaders Responding to Floods during COVID-19 <https://assets.floodcoalition.org/2020/05/451ab8498c7012af81a15fb50f3a2898-American-FloodCoalition-Dual-Disaster-Handbook-5.19.2020.pdf>
- **Southeast ADA Center and Burton Blatt Institute (BBI) at Syracuse University** *The ADA and Face Mask Policies* <https://www.adasoutheast.org/ada/publications/legal/ada-and-face-mask-policies.php>
- **ContraCOVID** multilingual online resource guides (in English, Spanish, Haitian Creole, and Portuguese) compiled for several U.S. cities that may be useful. These guides are regularly updated. Although originally created for people to access social services available during the COVID-19 pandemic, and may be useful for evacuees. <https://en.contracovid.com/>

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