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New England Annual Conference (NEAC)  
Disaster Response Plan

Importance of a Conference Disaster Plan

No region of the NEAC is immune to natural or human-caused disaster. Pain, suffering, and death are, and will be, a reality in our world until Christ returns. As Christians, part of our task is to alleviate these conditions as much as possible by responding with the love of Christ and bringing resources to bear with efficiency and effectiveness. The resources available to the local church (i.e. volunteers, money, expertise, etc.) are limited and the need for the connectional system to support and undergird these efforts to alleviate human suffering is necessary. This will occur by using our God-given wisdom to be prepared in the event of a disaster and by working in unity as the Body of Christ when disasters occur.

The best organizations are those which prepare for bad times when times are good. Far from being a waste of valuable resources, preparing for a disaster of any magnitude is time well spent. While planning does not guarantee a trouble-free experience, the NEAC will most certainly have a worse time without a disaster plan. It is not a case of “if,” but “when.” This plan concerns responding to disasters within the conference. If invited by another conference, the NEAC may respond with United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)-trained disaster response teams, both Early Response Teams (ERTs) and United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) teams for long-term recovery.

Disaster Response ministries present us with the challenge of being the church in the midst of chaos, loss, and pain. But they also offer us unique opportunities. The opportunity to be present, as the church, in the midst of chaos, loss, and pain; to be part of the healing and recovery effort for individuals and communities; to engage local churches in a unique and meaningful form of outreach; and to offer those outside the church the opportunity to participate in hands-on ministry.
Plan Overview

Purpose of the Plan
To have in place, when a disaster strikes within the conference, a structure that clearly explains who does what and when and under which circumstances. The conference disaster response plan provides guidelines, suggestions, and where appropriate, specific assignments for various personnel who will be involved with the implementation of activity in response to a disaster.

1. To identify resources and equip local United Methodist churches and districts as they assist their communities and individuals to prepare, respond to and recover from disaster.
2. To identify guidelines for providing immediate relief for acute human needs caused by any kind of disaster.
3. To provide the structure to enable local churches, districts, and the conference to work cooperatively with the appropriate conference / jurisdictional / general units, as well as interdenominational agencies, in the identification of, advocacy for, and assistance with ministries for disaster response.
4. To improve effectiveness and efficiency in disaster preparedness and response in the NEAC, eliminating where possible redundancy and confusion.

 Appropriateness of our response – what is our role in a disaster?
What is the role of the church in a disaster? What is our role as the New England Annual Conference? That largely depends on the type of disaster, location, extent, needs, the appropriateness of a church response, and the capabilities and available resources of the annual conference to respond. For example, events such as September 11 or Sandy Hook did not require typical UMVIM assistance, but needed persons trained in disaster spiritual and emotional care. A pandemic outbreak would require space, volunteers, and supplies to house and care for affected persons, but not a typical UMVIM response.

As an annual conference, we need to determine our capabilities and where to best place our resources and development for the coming years. These focus areas are suggested:

- Early Response Teams for affected disaster areas, both within, and beyond the annual conference
- The continued development of an effective conference disaster emotional and spiritual care team(s)
- Appropriate, but limited, and skilled, long-term recovery teams
- Local church presence before, during and after a disaster (i.e., “Connecting Neighbors”)
- Direct support of existing organizations/agencies
What is a Disaster?
According to the UMCOR/UMVIM guidelines, “A disaster is a severe disruption of personal and community life, involving a significant number of people and causing spiritual, emotional, physical, and social crises to which the church can respond with God’s love and help.” (p. 59, UMCOR Disaster Training Manual)

A disaster may be:

❖ **natural** (tornado, flood, earthquake, hurricane, ice storms),
❖ technical (careless, accidental or intentional abuse of the environment, such as a chemical spill),
❖ economic (sudden loss of income due to shifts in the local economy),
❖ civil (riots or civil disturbances in a community),
❖ an accident (traffic accidents, fire or other tragic occurrences), or
❖ other (pandemics, war, terrorism).

This disaster preparedness plan will focus primarily on **natural** disasters, because that is what our UMCOR disaster response training prepares us to do. Many of the principals outlined, however, will be useful in other disaster types.

There are 4 levels of disasters:

❖ **Low Level**: Involves a limited number of households. Assistance provided by local churches and districts/regions with notification to District Superintendent. (Conference Disaster Response Coordinators and Conference Disaster Response Team members are informed.)
❖ **Medium Level**: Involves an entire community or several scattered communities. Assistance provided by organizing state response through the Regional Disaster Coordinator and the District Superintendent. (Conference Disaster Response Coordinators and the Conference Disaster Response Team are involved.)
❖ **High Level**: Involves a wide area and requires a massive response by state and national agencies. The New England Annual Conference Disaster Response Team is responsible for organizing a conference-wide response to the crisis and assists districts and local churches.
❖ **Catastrophic**: “Murphy” is in charge; Haiti earthquake is an example because even the government ceased to function.

Declared and Undeclared Disasters
The type of “declaration” a disaster receives determines the amount and variety of government assistance available. Faith-based resources are supplemental and are not a substitute.

**Undeclared** disaster means a community is not eligible for government assistance. Assistance comes from varied voluntary agencies (Red Cross, VOADs, faith-based organizations, etc.) that get involved.

**Declared** disaster means the government provides support and assistance to the community. If a disaster meets the requirements of the Stafford Act, then a presidential declaration can be made.
Phases of Disaster Response

Our United Methodist disaster-response effort is a ministry of caring. This multifaceted ministry has theological, material, mental health, advocacy, and social-service components. They are designed to provide for the spiritual, emotional and physical recovery of disaster survivors and for the well-being of their caregivers.

“UMCOR seeks to provide relief for acute human needs that might otherwise go unheeded. This assistance may come in the form of cash allocations, specialized services, volunteer ministries, or other avenues of mission service.” (p. 59, UMCOR Disaster Training Manual). The five phases through which UMCOR and disaster response teams can guide conferences are:

❖ **Readiness** – Disaster response planning, education, mitigation (any activities that prevent an emergency, reduce the chance of an emergency happening, or reduce the damaging effects of unavoidable emergencies - buying flood and fire insurance for your home is a mitigation activity.)

*Note: Mitigation, while not a phase of a disaster itself, is an ongoing activity to build disaster-resistant communities and reduce the high cost of recovery.*

❖ **Rescue** – Emergency phase for first responders (local, state and federal authorities) to ensure all persons are accounted for, the danger of continued destruction ends and shelter is available for survivors. Community or church respond to help those who need emergency shelter, food and water, clothing, help contacting family & friends, be a *disaster information center* (in cooperation with local emergency management authorities) and provide spiritual support.

❖ **Relief** - Usually lasts 10 times longer than the rescue phase. Time of intense media coverage. Residents return home or begin to assess damage, interfaith alliances are formed, Early Response Teams dispatched to help homeowners assess damage, safely remove debris, perform mud-outs, tarp roofs, cut out water-damaged sheetrock, remove mold, dry out wet spaces to stabilize homes, prevent further damage and make homes safe, sanitary and secure.

❖ **Recovery** - Usually lasts 10 times longer than relief phase and begins the repair and rebuilding phase – this is the time in which churches become more involved with survivors. In large, federally declared disasters, long-term recovery committees, consisting of community-based, interfaith organizations, are formed, the conference disaster response “staff” provides rebuilding, advocacy, resource development, housing plans and long-term planning for unmet needs and activates UMVIM teams.

❖ **Review-Aftermath** – the conference disaster response ministry and participating agencies come together to discuss what worked well and what needs improvement for the next phase - review should be done after each phase - or the next event, in the case of a disaster response concluding.

The New England Annual Conference is committed to providing assistance following disasters. Disaster response requires a commitment from individuals at all levels in our conference. We must all know our roles.

**Individuals or Groups Involved with the Implementation of the Conference Disaster Plan**

These are the individuals or groups of the conference involved with the implementation of a disaster response and their involvement will depend upon the level of the disaster and activity needed at each phase of a disaster.

❖ Local Clergy
❖ Local Church
❖ District Superintendents
❖ District Disaster Response Coordinator
❖ Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (CDR Coordinator)
❖ Conference Staff Liaison to Conference Disaster Response Team
❖ Conference Disaster Response Team (CDRT - like a conference committee on relief)
❖ Conference Treasurer (especially in a case where an UMCOR grant is received)
Disaster Response Functions
Before and after a medium- to high-level disaster, the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church will help organize the following disaster response functions, preparation or trainings:

- Connecting Neighbors Training
- Early Response Teams & Training
- Volunteer Management
- Logistics Team
- Case Management Team
- Spiritual & Emotional Care Teams & Training
- Communications Team
- Volunteers in Mission Teams & Trainings

The teams are organized using the Incident Coordination System (ICS). (See explanation of ICS on pages 21-24.)

Disaster Response Fund Administration
There are several categories of conference funds associated with disaster response.

- Domestic Missions Funds (can be used for expenses not associated with any particular disaster, materials and equipment used for disaster relief, in general, and disaster training)
- Disaster Response Fund (for preparation and immediate use, in case of a disaster)
- Special conference appeal or request for conference church donations for a particular disaster

In addition, the bishop may request an UMCOR grant (to be used for a specific disaster). The CDR coordinator and conference staff disaster ERT & mission coordinator are responsible for preparing the UMCOR funding request and overseeing distribution and recordkeeping. All UMCOR grants are provided with the understanding that conference money will be used first, before UMCOR money is expended. It is also assumed that UMCOR funds are needed only if projected recovery costs will exceed funds available within the affected conference, including any money raised through special conference appeals for the disaster. See more detail about conference fund administration and UMCOR funding guidelines beginning on page 19.
The Conference Plan

This plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of those involved in disaster response in the New England Annual Conference, as well as processes to ensure the seamless flow of information and assistance to those affected by disaster.

It is the desire of the United Methodist Church to work from local to general in responding to a disaster. The basic flow always begins with the local church. If some sort of disaster has occurred the local church pastor should, if possible, contact the district disaster response coordinator, if one has been identified, or the district superintendent (DS). If the scope of the disaster is beyond the local church’s capability to respond, the district disaster response coordinator (DDRC)/DS will contact other district churches to seek assistance.

If the disaster is beyond the district’s ability to respond, the district superintendent will go to the conference disaster response coordinator to seek further assistance. If the conference is overwhelmed, the bishop may turn to UMCOR and UMVIM for further help. The local church has the greatest knowledge of, and investment in, the local community and so should be the primary responder. Using the local to general approach allows the impacted areas to take the leadership in, and ownership of, the relief and recovery process.

Plan by Phases

During the first few hours of an unanticipated or even an anticipated disaster, the predetermined disaster management plans for the conference must be set in motion. The individuals responsible for implementation of a conference plan must be prepared and trained to promptly make the necessary decisions and take the necessary actions to assure an expeditious relief and recovery, and set and manage expectations of the local churches and districts. The conference disaster plan provides guidelines, suggestions, and where appropriate, specific assignments for the various conference personnel who will be involved with the implementation of activity in response to a disaster.

The Conference Disaster Response Team (CDRT) is responsible for:

- Developing policies, procedures, training and administration for disaster relief
- Reviewing and recommending the collection and the disbursement of disaster funds
- Setting up a disaster recovery ministry and emergency operations center (EOC) in the event of a significant or declared disaster

The CDRT and the conference disaster response coordinator (CDRC) who serves as chair of the CDR team, are directly accountable to the director of connectional ministries of the New England Conference with reporting accountability to the conference board of global ministries. The CDR team membership is recruited and trained by the conference disaster Response and mission coordinator and the existing conference disaster response team. This team will expand during an active, declared disaster to include:

- Conference Director of Connectional Ministries (DCM)
- Conference Director of Communications
- Conference Treasurer

The team may invite other attendees as the situation warrants. The CDR Team generally meets twice yearly for administrative and training purposes.
Readiness/Preparedness Phase
This is a most critical, and often overlooked, stage. Effective preparation allows a quick, effective, and organized response. It is difficult to “jump start” a response.

Conference Disaster Response Coordinator chairs the conference disaster response team (CDRT) and oversees administration, training and funding, promotes disaster preparedness in non-disaster times, helps recruit district team members and who will recruit one or several volunteers who can provide disaster assessment and site coordination during active disasters. See CDRC Flow Sheet on page 30.

- Serve as chair of CDR team
- Oversees the preparation and response of the CDR teams
- Updating and maintaining the conference disaster response plan
- Develop and resource effective and functioning district-based disaster response committees
- Encourage district disaster response coordinators & committees to take online, Homeland Security incident coordination system (ICS) trainings – see list under Agencies & Resources at the end of this plan
- Plan for setting up an emergency operations center (EOC) at the conference office or back-up location, if the conference office is affected
- Represents the conference as a member of VOAD; familiarity with or participation in activities of offices of emergency management (OEM) agencies & other primary response groups (w/ other volunteers, as conference covers 6 states)
- Helps coordinate the work of other conference boards and agencies in planning for disaster responses
- Facilitates procedures for extending grants and financial assistance to survivors
- Makes sure the conference staff is informed and prepared to follow established protocols when a disaster occurs
- Raise awareness about church and member readiness and developing specialized volunteer teams, including ERTs, with a minimum of 1 ERT team in each district.
- Train specialized volunteer teams, including periodic ERT training events, and re-certifications
- Collaborate with local churches for location of supply depots and distribution and collection sites. (both)
- Develop an up-to-date listing of available conference-wide resources, including housing for volunteers, emergency responders, and survivors; and maintain list of disaster supply collection sites and HUBs for disaster supplies;
- Develop/update a plan for the coordination of volunteers.

Conference Disaster Response Team The responsibility of the CDRT is to assure that the conference has a clear and workable disaster response plan and procedures relative to potential disaster that might occur in the conference. The team is charged with providing training and preparation of personnel who will respond at any level of disaster. See CDRT Flow Sheet on page 32.

Resident Bishop/DCM
- Advocates the development and implementation of a conference disaster response plan: See Bishop/DCM Flow Sheet on page 28.
- Encourages district superintendents, pastors, and churches to be familiar with the plan
- If the conference center/headquarters area is to be affected and evacuation is recommended, move and set up a temporary office in a building/church away from the disaster area.
**District Superintendent and District Disaster Coordinator**

- Be familiar with the conference disaster response plan and how it will be implemented in her/his district: See *DS Flow Sheet on Page 26*.
- Create a similar district disaster plan
- Involve local pastors and churches in planning disaster response, relief and recovery
- Encourage training and maintain of a core group of 30 persons in your district to respond in the event of a disaster with the assistance of the CDR teams
- Encourage churches to implement UMCOR’s Connecting Neighbors (Preparedness Training) and designate some in the congregation to secure other response trainings (ERT, UMVIM, Disaster Spiritual & Emotional Care, ICS, etc.)

**Local Clergy**

- Become familiar with the conference disaster response plan: See *Local Clergy Flow Sheet on Page 21*.
- Work with membership in the congregation to create a disaster plan for the local church (Helpful resource: UMCOR’s Connecting Neighbors preparedness training).
- Secure the church: the board of trustees should secure the church and church property, remove swinging signs, board or shutter windows, and secure church records

**Local Church**

The local church personnel will develop a local disaster response plan (Helpful resource: UMCOR’s Connecting Neighbors preparedness training). See *Local Church Flow Sheet on page 23*.

**The Board of Trustees**

- Review insurance coverage
- Inventory church property
- Provide safe repository for valuable records
Rescue/Emergency Phase

Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC)
- Monitor emergency management agencies in affected area and affected VOADs
- Monitor the media for updates
- Make sure she/he is available for contact by team members, district superintendents, local church staff, and conference staff
- Contact emergency response team members and put them on alert, if a disaster occurs
- Be prepared to go or activate an assessment team, if a disaster occurs
- Notify the director of connectional ministries, and director of communications, and keep them informed of her/his whereabouts

Conference Disaster Response Team
Each member of the team will monitor the progress of storms or other events that may affect the conference, regardless of the area of expected impact. If it is apparent that a disaster is imminent in any area of the conference, the member will contact the conference disaster coordinator of the potential location. The coordinator will contact the director of connectional ministries and the resident bishop advising them of imminent disaster. If an evacuation is ordered, notify the conference disaster response coordinator. Each should keep a journal, since it will be invaluable both during and after the disaster. (See Annual Conference Disaster Communication chart – next page.)

District Superintendent
- Monitor the media for updates
- Prepare for possible action by local clergy and local churches
- Keep conference disaster coordinator and bishop’s/DCM’s office informed about damage and needs in affected areas
- When safe and cleared by first responders, coordinate with local churches to tour affected areas and report findings to conference

Local Clergy
- Monitor the media for updates
- If told by local authorities to evacuate, contact and report to District Superintendent
- Notify law enforcement or rescue workers of shut-ins and those who need assistance to be evacuated

Local Church
- Monitor the media for updates
- If the church is certified to assist in a disaster (sheltering, etc.), follow the instructions of the emergency agency in charge

Resident Bishop/DCM
- Monitor the media for updates
- Contact the CDR Coordinator and Director of Communications to prepare for possible action
Relief Phase

Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC)

- Contact all district superintendents or their designated disaster response coordinators (DDRC) in the affected district(s) to obtain a status report
- Contact all ERT leaders and obtain information on their status and ability to accept assignments
- Alert the team leaders to the place and time of a team leader’s meeting or phone call to brief them on situation.
- Communicate to the director of connectional ministries, the bishop, the director of communications, and the conference leadership about the known extent of the damage and status of response, and a preliminary recommendation on possible team action
- Opens the conference emergency operations center (EOC), including establishing an emergency call-in number and activating a set of accessible, yet hidden, conference web pages pertaining to disaster response
- Organize an assessment team to conduct a disaster site visit
- If there is damage to several sites, set up additional assessment teams to cover other sites
- Alert the director of connectional ministries as to the need and where and when teams are to report
- The coordinator will serve as an ongoing communication link with UMCOR, CWS, state VOAD, CDR team, governmental and non-governmental relief agencies

Conference Disaster Response Team

All team members should monitor the disaster situation and prepare to meet as a team. The initial planning of the team will take place as soon as a suitable location is found in the vicinity of the damaged area or via conference call. The agenda will be to:

- Determine needs
- Set up response teams
- Set initial grant amounts to release to survivors
- Determine whether to recommend an Episcopal Appeal for funds and/or to prepare a draft grant request to UMCOR
- Advise affected church leaders about what steps to take
- As necessary, the conference disaster response coordinator will assign team members additional response duties

- Begin preliminary coordination for response teams to be deployed into the affected areas

Resident Bishop/DCM

- Continue to monitor status of disaster and work with CDRC and director of communications on messaging for internal and external public information and media releases
- Request assistance – financial or personnel – from UMCOR if needed
- Make an Episcopal Appeal for funds, if necessary

District Superintendent

- Monitor the damage to her/his district through media reports and reports directly from district clergy & district disaster response coordinator
- Contact the conference disaster response coordinator (or have DDRC make this contact)
- Prepare for a visit by initial assessment team and tour with them
- Organize and meet with clergy in the affected area & if requested, contact other district churches or district to seek help in response.
- Assist, but not interfere, with emergency relief efforts

Local Clergy

- Assess the welfare of parishioners and special needs populations within the community.
- Work with board of trustees to determine if church property is damaged and report to the district superintendent
- Determine whether disaster is beyond the local church’s/community’s capability to respond, if so contact district disaster response coordinator (DDRC) or DS for help
- Let local emergency personnel and law enforcement manage volunteers

Local Church

- The local church personnel will activate its disaster response plan or the Connecting Neighbors plan.
- Note: An ecumenical effort may be necessary. Emergency living expenses are handled by the American Red Cross. Survivors can receive vouchers for temporary housing, food, and clothing. If the local church is involved in the clean-up, do not do any repairs until government and insurance companies have assessed the damage and take photos of any damage before clean-up, preferably with church officials in the shot at damaged church or homeowners in the shot at a home. If the disaster is federally-declared, FEMA will open a disaster recovery center in the area.
Recovery Phase

Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC)
- Report damage of church property to the conference treasurer
- Supervise and account for disbursement of any funds or material, as well as donations received
- Assist residents in establishing their own long-term recovery program with VOAD partners
- When a very large disaster happens, may hire staff in cooperation with VOAD partners
- When needed, contact and coordinate dispatching UM volunteers in mission teams

Conference Disaster Response Team
- Coordinate volunteer work teams:
  - Assessment Team
  - Volunteer Management Team
  - Early Response Team (ERT)
  - Logistics Team
  - Case Management Team
  - Spiritual and Emotional Care Team
  - Communications Team
  - UM Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM)
- Coordinate UMCOR resources and training
- Work with districts on joint recovery efforts

District Superintendent and District Disaster Response Coordinator
- Keep in touch with the conference disaster response leadership
- Make periodic visits to the disaster area
- Encourage unaffected churches to share their facilities and furnish leadership and volunteers for recovery
- Let congregations know how much their pastor’s work is appreciated
- If the pastor’s work load is excessive, consider requesting pastoral help (possibly a retired minister)

Local Clergy person will:
- Be an active part of the local religious community’s long-term response
- Focus on things her/his church can do
- If grants are needed, work with applicants and promote offerings for disaster relief

Local Church
- Promote offerings for disaster relief in response to any Episcopal appeal, channeling funds to the New England Conference and the UMCOR Advance #999895 designation disasters.
- Organize volunteer teams to assist in the recovery work.

Resident Bishop/DCM
- Continue to assess the extent of the disaster – think long range since recovery may take several years
- Monitor the progress of recovery by keeping in touch with the CDR Coordinator.
- Encourage the agencies of the conference to cooperate and help as needed
- Consider appointing retired pastors as temporary assistants to pastors and district superintendents
- Make further financial appeals to the conference and to UMCOR as needed
- Make periodic visits to the disaster area
Review-Aftermath Phase

Conference Disaster Response Coordinator (CDRC)
- Convene the aftermath review meeting(s)
- Assure that all facets of the disaster at all phases are reviewed and included in close-out report
- Prepare a report with the conference treasurer
- Submit the report to the bishop, the director of connectional ministries and the conference treasurer for approval and signature; then if funds used from UMCOR, send report to UMCOR

Conference Disaster Response Team
- Review the disaster response after the last requests for assistance are completed. The aftermath meeting(s) should include all key personnel at all levels of the relief and recovery effort to review how the effort went and how the response could be improved in the next disaster.
- Assist the CDRC in compiling a statistical review and final report, which should include:
  - Assets on hand, assets raised, overview of grants, and numbers of households assisted
  - A section on lessons learned, covering significant successes and failures, analyzing the reasons for each, and recommending changes to the plan, policies and courses of actions for future disasters

Resident Bishop/DCM
- Publicly acknowledge workers and work done
- Possibly plan for a service of praise a year from the date the disaster struck

District Superintendent and District Disaster Response Coordinator
- Determine when assistance to the district can be terminated
- Meet with the CDRC to evaluate how the district plans worked
- Publicly acknowledge workers and work done
- District disaster response coordinator will submit a report to the CDR team and district superintendent explaining all that has occurred in the district, which will be included in the final close-out report

Local Clergy
- Advise the district superintendent when disaster-related assistance has been completed, and there are no further needs
- Provide an assessment of procedures followed and services utilized during the disaster

Local Church
- Provide an assessment of procedures followed and services utilized during the disaster
- Revise church disaster response plan accordingly
Organizing for Disaster Relief Operations

Some people serving on the CDR team may have the desire, skills, and time to give to the early response and recovery effort. However, the group, as a whole, composed of specialists and top-level conference leaders, will probably not have the time nor be necessarily suited to perform or manage well the daily disaster operations. The CDR team’s purpose is to set policy and monitor progress as it supervises and supports response operations.

Incident Coordination System

The Assessment Team – the first UMC team to respond to a disaster – is under the direction and leadership of the conference disaster response coordinator or the senior conference official on the team that is available to respond. The UMVIM early response teams (ERTs) in the relief stage, and recovery phase UMVIM teams are considered to be “operational” teams and are organized using the emergency-management-recognized incident coordination system (ICS) model.

ICS is a widely-used (by first responders and government emergency managers) management tool to organize personnel, facilities, resources, and communications in a disaster. The system establishes prompt coordination of various functions and can be used in any disaster regardless of size, complexity, or duration. ICS is a system for delegating specific assignments. Its flexibility permits the insertion of additional resources as the incident grows or shrinks in complexity. It allows the orderly transfer of personnel into and out of the disaster site. ICS depends on function, not people. Over time, several people may be rotated into the disaster team to perform a particular role, while others are rotated out for rest or to return to their normal duties. In a low-level disaster, one to three people may perform all of the functions. In medium- and high-level disasters, it may be necessary to have more than one person per functional area.

The Operations Team

Under the ICS design, the management for a team is divided into five functions:

1. Team Leader or the Incident Coordinator
2. Logistics
3. Operations
4. Communications
5. Planning and Training

In addition to these five functions, there will be (even in low-level disaster) need for a variety of support functions. In medium- and high-level disasters, additional support personnel may need to be employed to assist, not only at the conference level, but also at the district or local level. Persons selected for operations teams should be broadly trained in disaster response and also specifically trained in one or more of the operations team functions. Since ICS is based on function and not on personnel, one person may provide the leadership and services in a small disaster. But, as that one person faces larger and more burdensome responsibilities, she/ he must delegate functional areas to other persons. Basic ICS principles applied to disaster response recognize the importance of having all functional areas represented in the effort, whether combined in one person or handled by several.

1. Team Leader/Incident Coordinator*

The team leader is called the incident coordinator. All tasks are performed under the overall direction of the Incident coordinator. The individual working as the incident coordinator may change during the relief or recovery response, but
at any given time there should only be one person in charge of the team. An IC may be the conference disaster response coordinator, although others may be needed if the disaster covers several sites and personnel are rotated out for rest.

*The "senior official" at an emergency response is the most senior official on the site who has the responsibility for controlling the operations at the site. As trained and previously designated New England Conference incident management officials arrive, the position is passed up the line of authority, which has been previously established.

Primary responsibilities of the incident coordinator are:

- Strategy
- Tactics
- Resource allocation and coordination
- Conference and inter-agency relations
- Overall team management (in consultation with the CDRT)

2. Logistics
This function is responsible for:

- Locating, organizing, and providing facilities for the team
- Team safety
- Equipment readiness

3. Operations
Persons functioning in this area are responsible for performing the operational tasks of the team. These tasks, depending upon the phase of the disaster, include:

- Debris clean-up
- Limited building repair (to make homes safe and stop further damage only)
- Casework
- Caring ministry for children, youth, and adults
- Volunteer management
- In-kind donations management

The number of individuals assigned to the operations function will vary with the extent of the disaster. These individuals will serve under the leadership of an operations or volunteer coordinator.
4. Communications
The communications function must be coordinated with the conference staff. This function includes responsibility for:

- Documentation of the incident
- Communication with the media
- Inter-agency communications
- Serving as the official contact point for:
  - All who wish information about UMC involvement with a disaster
  - Those who wish to make contributions
  - Any other questions

5. Planning and Training
The responsibilities of this function include:

- Training the team
- Orientation of volunteers joining the disaster response effort
- Providing information for realistic goal setting
- Helping plan the ‘next step’
- Collecting, evaluating, and documenting the evolution of the incident
- Overall training plans are coordinated with the CDRT.

Other Support Functions
Support personnel are important and become even more essential as the complexity of the disaster increases. The most common support personnel working with the disaster response coordinator on behalf of the disaster response effort include:

- Team chaplain:
  - Keeps the group focused on who they are and what they are to do
  - Provides spiritual care to the team
  - Debriefs team members
- Administrative Assistant:
  - Keeps files for legal, analytical, and historical purposes
  - Provides copy service
  - Records offers to help and in-kind donations
- Financial Assistant:
  - Works under the direction of the treasurer and director of administration
  - Keeps documentation of funds received and expended on behalf of the disaster
  - Maintains a record of the financial costs on all aspects of the disaster
  - Processes approved requests for grants
- Some teams may also need:
  - Technical advisors
  - Translators
  - Toxic substances expert
  - Computer resource technicians

Expanding and Contracting Teams
The use of the ICS model, where organization is based on function and not on personnel, allows a few people to provide the leadership in a small disaster. However, in large disasters where responsibilities expand, more people will be involved with each functional area. It is important in the training phase that all persons understand the ICS model and what is included and excluded in each of the major team functions.
MANAGEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

General Information Regarding Volunteers

The role of volunteers is to assist people in the devastated area rebuild their lives, often through rebuilding damaged structures. This work should be done so as to reduce the trauma and chaos of the situation as much as possible. The primary concern should be the survivor!

The conference disaster response coordinator, or designee, in conjunction with the conference UMVIM coordinator, makes all management and deployment decisions for volunteers (including early response teams - ERTs).

Volunteers should:

- Be flexible!
- Be willing to listen and assist survivor in obtaining a range of disaster-related services.
- Be ready and willing to go when their skills are needed and their team can be accommodated.
- Be caring, understanding, sensitive, and nonjudgmental.
- Be willing to do the tasks assigned.
- Know and understand the disaster stages and timelines.
- Not go unprepared, unannounced or uninvited!
- Contact their own Conference UMVIM Coordinator/Disaster Response Coordinator to see when and how they can offer assistance.
- Have received work assignment from local disaster-site coordinator or authorities before arriving.

- Communicate so adequate time is available to prepare work assignments for skills of volunteers and the time they have to serve.
- Leave the affected area for sleeping and other personal needs like housing, gasoline and food.
- Do only work assigned by the appropriate coordinator (Unauthorized repairs can prevent owners from receiving insurance payments or federal assistance).
- Attend appropriate training and leaders should carry an up-to-date New England Conference ERT badge.

Volunteer teams should:

- Be led by a trained ERT/UMVIM team leader.
- Appoint a leader or liaison to coordinate with local response group and supervise their work.
- Plan on being self-sufficient - providing needed materials (or funds to purchase before arrival) for clean-up or rebuilding.
- Provide own transportation (even gas), meals, bedding and first aid.
- Set aside time for sharing group experiences, rest, and worship.

Remember: Volunteers are guests and have come to serve!
Procedures Related to Disaster Response Funding

Prior to a disaster, the New England Conference Disaster Response Team (CDRT) will encourage churches to participate in the special Sunday offering set aside for One Great Hour of Sharing, which is the only source of funding for the administration of the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), allowing 100 percent of donations to the UMCOR’s United States Disaster Response Advance #901670 to go directly to relief efforts. Donations can also be made to Material Resources Advance #901440 to support programs that provide emergency response and disaster relief supplies to survivors.

The churches will also be encouraged to donate moneys for disaster-response needs before and after a disaster. Unless specified, the moneys collected will be placed in a conference disaster-response fund and administered by the conference ERT & mission coordinator with the approval of the assistant to the bishop/director of connectional ministries.

Large disasters may generate significant amounts of donated money from within and outside the conference, most of it arriving during the first one or two months following the event. In such cases, the conference treasurer will assign an accounting number for these designated funds and may open a separate bank account.

The conference ERT & mission coordinator or a designee who keeps the conference treasurer informed, will keep a record of each specific disaster-related expenditures based on purpose of expense (i.e. materials/furnishings, utilities, contractor services, etc.). District disaster response coordinators (DDRCs) requesting funds are expected to keep a record of moneys spent (with receipts) on forms provided by the conference disaster response coordinator in a disaster response under their leadership. DDRCs shall provide monthly expenditure reports to the conference ERT & mission coordinator who acts as the conference disaster response coordinator on the forms provided.

Requests for money from the disaster-response fund will follow rules governing check requisition as set forth by the conference. Requests go first to the conference ERT & mission coordinator who coordinates with the conference disaster response team, and who then approves funds for which appropriate documentation of need and how funds will be spent is provided.

Because of the nature of disasters, we have to disburse funds during the relief phase in a timely manner. Paper trails and good accounting are essential for all transactions, but quickly launching disaster operations requires considerable flexibility in disbursing money. In most instances, once-a-week disbursements work well. The conference treasurer is not responsible for spending decisions for a disaster; this responsibility rests with the conference ERT & mission coordinator who acts as the conference disaster response coordinator, in consultation with assistant to the bishop/director of connectional ministries and the conference disaster response team.

Church funds are needed most during the recovery phase, long after contributions have dwindled or stopped completely. For this reason, it is necessary to let government and other agencies spend their money during the relief phase while church or UMCOR funds are conserved. Special circumstances may make it necessary to provide small amounts of emergency assistance to a few survivors during the relief phase. Any assistance should
be based on documented need, and pre-set equal amounts should not be provided to survivors. Wait until case management is in place to set priorities for unmet needs before dispensing most funds.

As soon as possible following a disaster, the NEAC disaster response team may suggest using the network of the conference and district leadership to notify congregations of the need for money with the approval of the bishop. A conference communication to congregations, e-mail to pastors and the conference website may be used to inform churches of disaster relief needs and ask that an offering be taken during Sundays following the disaster. Congregations will be asked to help while the news is fresh. A special issue of the conference electronic newsletters may be most appropriate. Any delay may cause members to assume the church is not involved in the response, and they may donate to other agencies.

It is important that we vigorously generate local funds for local disasters, including reminding congregations that they can support their local early response teams (ERTs) who are supposed to be completely self-sufficient while they serve (buying their own materials, bringing their own tools, supplying all their own meals, transportation and, if necessary, finding their own housing or at least bringing their own bedding and linens to sleep on church floors). UMCOR expects a conference to spend conference-generated funds first—before denominational money is used. (See section on UMCOR funding guidelines.)

Overview of UMCOR Funding Guidelines

Part I—Relief Phase—Request for funds must come from the bishop’s office & may be coordinated by the director of connectional ministries (DCM).

- To meet immediate emergency needs—food, clothing and shelter.
- To begin to set up a response organization.
- To assist local churches with added burdens caused by the response needs.
- Relief phase request may not to exceed $10,000 per disaster incident.

Part II—Recovery Phase—Request for UMCOR grants must be accompanied by preliminary budget and be signed by the bishop. Assistance and format for this procedure is provided by the conference ERT & mission coordinator who acts as the conference disaster response coordinator.

- To provide direct assistance to clients.
- To pay salary of conference-hired staff for recovery organization.
- To help set up the disaster-recovery organization.
- To cover administrative costs, this should be less than 20 percent of the total grant request.

A small percentage (less than 10%) of funds may be used to repair disaster damage (not deferred maintenance) to church-owned property, if insurance funds are not sufficient, but this should be reserved for unmet needs relating to resuming missions in the community that require the use of the church building and plans to use these funds should be included in the original UMCOR grant request. UMCOR funds cannot be used to enhance facilities. The conference ERT & mission coordinator has a complete guide to the UMCOR funding and reporting process.
Flow Sheet for Local Clergy

in the Event of a Disaster

Preparedness Phase

- Develop a local, church-specific disaster response plan (Helpful resource: UMCOR’s Connecting Neighbors preparedness training).
- Inventory church property and store inventory off-site
- Provide safe repository for valuable records
- The board of trustees should secure the church and property, remove swinging signs and board or shutter windows, and secure church records.
- If told by local authorities to evacuate, contact and report to DS.
- Organize volunteer teams to assist in the recovery work and identify a trained UMVIM team leader (contact the DS or district disaster response coordinator for help).
- Direct any volunteers to a local emergency management volunteer system until the conference determines the need to set up volunteer management.

Rescue/Emergency Phase

- Monitor the media for updates.
- Secure your safety and the safety of your family first. Make sure you are safe, secure, and that you have shelter.
- If the church is damaged, notify Church Mutual Insurance at 800-554-2642, and take pictures!
- Assess the safety of your faith community members by following your church’s disaster plan.
- Notify your district superintendent (DS) within 48 hours in a disaster that overwhelms your community’s ability to recover and request assessment by conference disaster response coordinator or designee. Ask the DS to notify the district disaster response coordinator.
- Notify law enforcement or rescue workers of shut-ins and those who need assistance to be evacuated.
- If the church is certified to assist in a disaster, follow the instructions of the agency in charge.

Relief Phase

- Assess the welfare of the parishioners and special-needs populations within the community.
- Work with board of trustees to determine if church property is damaged and report to DS.
- Let local emergency personnel and law enforcement manage volunteers.
- Direct people to the appropriate services, if an ecumenical effort is necessary. Emergency living expenses are handled by the American Red Cross. Survivors can receive vouchers for temporary housing, food, and clothing.
- If the local church is involved in the clean-up, do not do any repairs until government and insurance companies have assessed the damage.
- If the disaster is federally-declared, FEMA will open a disaster recovery center.
- Request that the DS contact conference or district disaster response teams, such as ERTs, Spiritual and Emotional Care, etc., if disaster is beyond the affected communities’ ability to recover on its own.
Recovery Phase
• Be an active part of the local religious community’s long-term response.
• Focus on things your church can do.
• Promote offerings for disaster relief in response to any episcopal appeal, channeling funds to the New England Conference disaster response fund and also promoting donations to the UMCOR Advance funds for disaster - United States Disaster Response Advance #901670 to go directly to relief efforts and UMCOR’s Material Resources Advance #901440 to support programs that provide emergency response and disaster relief supplies to survivors.
• United Methodist volunteers in mission (UMVIM) will respond to a request for teams under direction of the conference disaster response coordinator.
• Organize volunteer teams to assist in the recovery work and if your team doesn’t have a trained UMVIM team leader, contact the district office to identify a leader or a team your volunteers can join.

Review-Aftermath Phase
• Advise the district superintendent when disaster-related assistance has been completed, and there are no further needs
• Provide an assessment of procedures followed and services utilized during the disaster

Who to call at the conference in the case of a disaster

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Flow Sheet for Local Churches

in the Event of a Disaster

Preparedness Phase

- Develop a local, church-specific disaster response plan (Helpful resource: UMCOR’s Connecting Neighbors preparedness training).
- The local church personnel will develop a local disaster response plan (Helpful resource: UMCOR’s Connecting Neighbors preparedness training).
- Organize volunteer teams to assist in the recovery work and identify a trained UMVIM team leader (contact the DS or district disaster response coordinator for help).
- Direct any volunteers to a local emergency management volunteer system until the conference determines the need to set up volunteer management.

The Board of Trustees

- Review insurance coverage
- Inventory church property and store inventory off-site
- Provide safe repository for valuable records
- Secure the church and property, remove swinging signs and board or shutter windows, etc.

Rescue/Emergency Phase

- Monitor the media for updates.
- Secure your safety and the safety of your family first. Make sure you are safe, secure, and that you have shelter.
- If the church is damaged, notify Church Mutual Insurance at 800-554-2642, and take pictures!
- Assess the safety of your faith community members by following your church’s disaster plan.
- If the church is certified to assist in a disaster (sheltering, etc), follow the instructions of the agency in charge.

Relief Phase

- The local church personnel will activate its disaster response plan or the Connecting Neighbors plan.
- Assess the welfare of the parishioners and special-needs populations within the community.
- Work with board of trustees to determine if church property is damaged and report to DS.
- Let local emergency personnel and law enforcement manage volunteers.
- If the local church is involved in the clean-up, do not do any repairs until government and insurance companies have assessed the damage and take photos - with permission - of any damage before clean-up, preferably with church officials in the shot at damaged church or homeowners in the shot at a home (& give copy on thumb drive to homeowner, district office and get a waiver to enter and work on home (see form at end of the Addendum section).
  - Note: An ecumenical effort may be necessary. Emergency living expenses are handled by the American Red Cross. Survivors can receive vouchers for temporary housing, food, and clothing. If the disaster is federally declared, FEMA will open a disaster recovery center in the area.

Recovery Phase

- Be an active part of the local religious community’s long-term response.
• Focus on things your church can do.
• Promote offerings for disaster relief in response to any episcopal appeal, channeling funds to the New England Conference disaster response fund and also promoting donations to the UMCOR Advance funds for disaster - United States Disaster Response Advance #901670 to go directly to relief efforts and UMCOR’s Material Resources Advance #901440 to support programs that provide emergency response and disaster relief supplies to survivors.
• Organize volunteer teams to assist in the recovery work and if your team doesn’t have a trained UMVIM team leader, contact the district office to identify a leader or a team your volunteers can join.

Review-Aftermath Phase
• Provide an assessment of procedures followed and services utilized during the disaster
• Revise church disaster response plan accordingly

Who to call at the conference in the case of a disaster

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Top ten questions for a local church to ask in creating a disaster response plan

1. How will you contact your membership, particularly if power or phone service is disrupted?

2. How will you help yourself and your congregation evacuate or prepare if the storm threatens your area?

3. How will you secure and back up your church records?

4. How will your church be a “mission station”?

5. How will you partner with neighboring churches?

6. How will you tell your story?

7. Do you have adequate insurance for all church facilities, including parsonage, and do you know how to contact your insurance carrier?

8. Clergy, is your personal emergency contact information (including your cell number and your e-mail address) up-to-date with the conference and your district office?

9. Do you know the list of emergency items and essential supplies to request/collect before and following a storm? (Hint: No clothes!)

10. How are you and your congregation preparing for the next disaster?
Flow Sheet for District Superintendent in the Event of a Disaster

Preparedness Phase
- Be familiar with the conference disaster response plan and how it will be implemented in her/his district
- Create a district disaster plan relating to the conference disaster response plan
- Involve local pastors and churches in planning disaster response, relief and recovery. Encourage training and maintain a core group of 30 persons in your district to respond in the event of a disaster with the assistance of the CDR teams
- Encourage churches to develop a local, church-specific disaster response plan (Helpful resource: UMCOR’s Connecting Neighbors preparedness training).
- Encourage churches to inventory church property and store inventory off-site & provide safe repository for valuable records
- Organize volunteer teams to assist in the recovery work and identify a trained UMVIM team leader (contact the DS or district disaster response coordinator for help).
- Direct any volunteers to a local emergency management volunteer system until the conference determines the need to set up volunteer management.

Rescue/Emergency Phase
- Monitor the media for updates.
- Secure your safety and the safety of your family first. Make sure you are safe, secure, and that you have shelter.
- Prepare for possible action by local clergy and local churches
- Keep conference disaster coordinator and bishop’s/DCM’s office informed about damage and needs in affected areas
- When safe and cleared by first responders, coordinate with local churches to tour affected areas and report findings to conference

Relief Phase
- Monitor the damage to her/his district through media reports and reports directly from district clergy
- Contact the conference disaster response coordinator
- Prepare for a visit by initial assessment team and tour with them, if possible
- Organize and meet with clergy in the affected area
- Assist, but not interfere, with emergency relief efforts
- Request district/conference disaster response teams, such as ERTs, Spiritual and Emotional Care, etc., if locals have indicated the disaster is beyond the affected area’s ability to recover on its own.

Recovery Phase
- Keep in touch with the conference disaster response leadership
- Make periodic visits to the disaster area
- Encourage unaffected churches to share their facilities and furnish leadership and volunteers for recovery
- Let congregations know how much their pastor’s work is appreciated
- If the pastor’s work load is excessive, consider requesting pastoral help (possibly a retired minister)
Review-Aftermath Phase

- Determine when assistance to the district can be terminated
- Meet with the CDRC to evaluate how the district plans worked
- Publicly acknowledge workers and work done
- District disaster response coordinator will submit a report to the CDR team and district superintendent explaining all that has occurred in the district, which will be included in the final close-out report

Who to call at the conference in the case of a disaster

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Flow Sheet for Bishop/Director of Connectional Ministries
in the Event of a Disaster

Preparedness Phase
- Be familiar with the conference disaster response plan and how it will be implemented
- Advocates for the development, implementation and updating of a conference disaster response plan
- Encourages district superintendents, pastors, and churches to be familiar with the plan and use it as a reference in developing their own plans in preparing for disasters
- Advocates for United Methodist volunteer teams to assist in disaster relief and recovery work
- If the conference center/headquarters area is to be affected and evacuation is recommended, move and set up a temporary office in a building/church away from the disaster area

Rescue/Emergency Phase
- Monitor the media for updates.
- Secure your safety and the safety of your family first. Make sure you are safe, secure, and that you have shelter.
- Contact the CDR Coordinator and Director of Communications to prepare for possible action

Relief Phase
- Continue to monitor status of disaster and work with CDRC and director of communications on messaging for internal and external public information and media releases
- Request assistance – financial or personnel – by applying for UMCOR grant, if needed
- Make an Episcopal appeal for funds, if necessary

Recovery Phase
- Continue to assess the extent of the disaster – think long range since recovery may take several years
- Monitor the progress of recovery by keeping in touch with the CDR Coordinator.
- Encourage the agencies of the conference to cooperate and help as needed
- Consider appointing retired pastors as temporary assistants to pastors and district superintendents
- Make further financial appeals to the conference and to UMCOR, as needed
- Make periodic visits to the disaster area
Review-Aftermath Phase

- Publicly acknowledge workers and work done
- Possibly plan for a service of praise a year from the date the disaster struck

Who to call at the conference in the case of a disaster

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Flow Sheet for Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
in the Event of a Disaster

Conference staff disaster response & mission coordinator chairs the conference disaster response team (CDRT) and oversees administration, training and funding, promotes disaster preparedness in non-disaster times, helps recruit district team members and who will recruit one or several volunteers who can provide disaster assessment and site coordination during active disasters.

Preparedness Phase

• Serve as chair of CDR team
• Oversees the preparation and response of the CDR teams
• Updating and maintaining the conference disaster response plan
• Develop and resource effective and functioning district-based disaster response committees
• Encourage district disaster response coordinators & committees to take online, Homeland Security incident coordination system (ICS) trainings – see list under Agencies & Resources at the end of this plan
• Plan for setting up an emergency operations center (EOC) at the conference office or back-up location, if the conference office is affected
• Represents the conference as a member of VOAD; familiarity with or participation in activities of offices of emergency management (OEM) agencies & other primary response groups (shares this duty with others, as conference covers 6 states)
• Helps coordinate the work of other conference boards and agencies in planning for disaster responses
• Facilitates procedures for extending grants and financial assistance to survivors
• Makes sure the conference staff is informed and prepared to follow established protocols when a disaster occurs
• Raise awareness about church and member readiness and developing specialized volunteer teams, including ERTs, with a minimum of 1 ERT team in each district.
• Train specialized volunteer teams, including periodic ERT training events, and re-certifications
• Collaborate with local churches for location of supply depots and distribution and collection sites.
• Develop an up-to-date listing of available conference-wide resources, including housing for volunteers, emergency responders, and survivors; and maintain list of disaster supply collection sites and HUBs for disaster supplies;
• Develop/update a plan for the coordination of volunteers.

Rescue/Emergency Phase

• Monitor the media for updates.
• Secure your safety and the safety of your family first. Make sure you are safe, secure, and that you have shelter.
• Monitor emergency management agencies in affected area and affected VOADs
• Make sure she/he is available for contact by team members, district superintendents, local church staff, and conference staff
• Contact emergency response team members and put them on alert, if a disaster occurs
• Be prepared to go or activate an assessment team, if evacuation is ordered
• Notify the director of connectional ministries, and director of communications, and keep them informed of her/his whereabouts

Relief Phase

• Contact all district superintendents or their designated disaster response coordinators in the affected district(s) to obtain a status report
• Contact all ERT leaders and obtain information on their status and ability to accept assignments
• Alert the team leaders to the place and time of a team leader’s meeting or phone call to brief them on situation.
• Communicate to the director of connectional ministries, the bishop, the director of communications, and the conference leadership about the known extent of the damage and status of response, and a preliminary recommendation on possible team action
• Opens the conference emergency operations center (EOC), including establishing an emergency call-in number and activating a set of accessible, yet hidden, conference web pages pertaining to disaster response
• Organize an assessment team to conduct a disaster site visit
• If there is damage to several sites, set up additional assessment teams to cover other sites
• Alert the director of connectional ministries as to the need and where and when teams are to report
• The coordinator will serve as an ongoing communication link with UMCOR, CWS, WIVOAD, CDR team, governmental and non-governmental relief agencies

Recovery Phase
• Report damage of church property to the conference treasurer
• Supervise and account for disbursement of any funds or material, as well as donations received
• Assist residents in establishing their own long-term recovery program with VOAD partners
• When a very large disaster happens, may hire staff in cooperation with VOAD partners
• When needed, contact and coordinate dispatching UM volunteers in mission teams

Review-Aftermath Phase
• Convene the aftermath review meeting(s)
• Assure that all facets of the disaster at all phases are reviewed and included in close-out report
• Prepare a report with the conference treasurer
• Submit the report to the bishop, the director of connectional ministries and the conference treasurer for approval and signature; then if funds used from UMCOR, send report to UMCOR

Who to call at the conference in the case of a disaster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who to Call</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference Center</td>
<td>978-682-8055</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT/Western MA (CWM) District Office</td>
<td>860-871-7149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central MA (CMA) District Office</td>
<td>508-853-1895</td>
</tr>
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<td>781-861-0249</td>
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<tr>
<td>NH District Office</td>
<td>603-225-3455</td>
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<td>Mid-Maine (MME) District Office</td>
<td>207-395-4080</td>
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<td>207-862-8089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI &amp; SE MA (RIM) District Office</td>
<td>401-246-1100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tri-State (TRI) District Office</td>
<td>978-682-7775, ext 270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont (VMT) District Office</td>
<td>802-485-4724</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Disaster Response/Disaster Response &amp; Mission Coordinator</td>
<td>203-470-1539 (cell) 978-682-8055, ext 135 (o)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Connectional Ministry</td>
<td>978-682-8055, ext 251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Communication</td>
<td>978-682-8055, ext 150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer/Director of Administrative Services</td>
<td>978-682-8055, ext 110</td>
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Flow Sheet for Conference Disaster Response Team
in the Event of a Disaster

Preparedness Phase
• Assure that the conference has a clear and workable disaster response plan and procedures relative to potential disaster that might occur in the conference.
• The team is charged with providing training and preparation of personnel who will respond at any level of disaster.
• Be familiar with the conference disaster response plan and how it will be implemented

Rescue/Emergency Phase
• Monitor the media for updates.
• Secure their safety and the safety of their families first. Make sure you are safe, secure, and that you have shelter.
• Prepare to meet as a team. The initial planning of the team will take place as soon as a suitable location is found in the vicinity of the damaged area or via conference call. The agenda will be to:
  • Determine needs
  • Set up response teams
  • Set initial grant amounts to release to survivors
  • Determine whether to recommend an Episcopal Appeal for funds and/or to prepare a draft grant request to UMCOR
  • Advise affected church leaders about what steps to take
  • As necessary, the conference disaster response coordinator will assign team members additional response duties
  • Begin preliminary coordination for response teams to be deployed into the affected areas

Relief Phase
• Continue to monitor status of disaster
• Coordinate volunteer work teams:
  o Assessment Team
  o Volunteer Management Team
  o Early Response Team (ERT)
  o Logistics Team
  o Case Management Team
  o Spiritual and Emotional Care Team
  o Communications Team
  o UM Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM)
• Coordinate UMCOR resources and training
• Work with districts on joint recovery efforts
(Much of the supervision and carrying out of this work will be led by the district coordinator, if there is one.)

Recovery Phase
• Review the disaster response after the last requests for assistance are completed. The aftermath meeting(s) should include all key personnel at all levels of the relief and recovery effort to review how the effort went and how the response could be improved in the next disaster.
• Assist the CDRC in compiling a statistical review and final report, which should include:
  o Assets on hand, assets raised, overview of grants and numbers of households assisted
  o A section on lessons learned, covering significant successes and failures, analyzing the reasons for each, and recommending changes to the plan, policies and courses of actions for future disasters

Review-Aftermath Phase
• Publicly acknowledge workers and work done
• Possibly plan for a service of praise a year from the date the disaster struck

Who to call at the conference in the case of a disaster

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Addendum

Basic Terminology

The purpose of this section is to establish basic terminology that will be used in this plan, which provides guidance for United Methodist churches, districts and the conference in response to disasters in New England.

Agencies and Individuals involved in Disaster Response

There are many private and faith-based groups, as well as state and federal agencies organized to respond to disasters. Explanations of the following acronyms will help disaster response workers understand the scope of work of the more common organizations and agencies involved in disaster response.

American Red Cross (ARC): The ARC center manager is the person in charge of the Red Cross Service Center. The ARC job manager directs specific projects.

Church World Service (CWS): This is the relief arm of the National Council of Churches. It is also an umbrella for the disaster work of participating denominations. CWS provides some emergency supplies and trained volunteer consultants to assist in the formation of interfaith recovery agencies.

Conference Disaster Response Team (CDRT): This is the administrative, policy-making, recruiting and training body of the New England Conference for disaster response activities. The team is comprised of:

- conference disaster response coordinator (CDRC) chairs the conference disaster response team (CDRT) and oversees administration, training and funding, promotes disaster preparedness in non-disaster times, helps recruit district team members and who will recruit one or several volunteers who can provide disaster assessment and site coordination during active disasters.
- past UMVIM/ERT coordinator (conference volunteer)
- conference UMVIM coordinators (conference volunteers)

This team will expand during an active, declared disaster to include the conference treasurer, director of connectional ministries and the conference director of communications. The team may invite other attendees as the situation warrants.

Disaster Recovery Center (DRC): The center is where survivors can go in person to apply for federal or state assistance. DRCs have been largely replaced by a toll-free telephone application process. Some agencies present are the Social Security Administration, Small Business Administration, Department of Agriculture, Internal Revenue Service, and the affected state’s Department of Human Services.

District Disaster Response Coordinator (DDRC): This position functions similarly to the conference-level disaster response coordinator, but on a district level.

Office of Emergency Manager (OEM): The emergency management office coordinates effective response and recovery relating to natural and technological disasters efforts on town or county level and supports local communities and their citizens. Know the emergency manager or representative in your county or state.

Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA): A program of the U.S. Department of Labor that provides unemployment benefits to people who became unemployed because of a declared major disaster.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): coordinates the federal response plan, which brings together federal agencies with responsibility for disaster assistance to state and local communities. Most help is for the repair of infrastructure (i.e. bridges, roads, and river channels). Assistance to homeowners is in the form of low-interest loans administered by the Small Business Association. The Individual and Family Grant program (IFG) also awards some grant money to victims and is a program shared between federal and state
governments. FEMA can only come to a state’s aid at the invitation of the state’s governor and with the approval of the president in the form of a disaster declaration. A declaration is subject to the Stafford Act, which requires that damage be at certain levels to warrant Federal participation. The FEMA disaster field office (DFO) is the main office. Direct victim assistance is not normally available here.

Interfaith agency: a community-based, nonprofit, long-term recovery agency consisting of representatives from local faith groups and largely funded by their denominations.

Long-Term Recovery Committee, Organization or Group (LTRC/LTRO/LTRG): Formerly called the Unmet Needs Committee, then the Resource Coordinating Committee. This committee is a gathering of representatives, usually case managers of the various recognized agencies on site, to share resources and prevent duplication. The FEMA Voluntary Agency Liaison (VAL) sometimes calls this group together.

Small Business Administration (SBA): An arm of the federal government charged with providing low-interest disaster loans to businesses and homeowners. Most governmental disaster assistance to individuals and families is in the form of a loan. Applicants must apply for a loan and be turned down before they are eligible for many federal benefits, which is confusing to many people affected by disasters. We can help spread the word for affected homeowners NOT to throw away communications and loan applications from the SBA, thinking they don’t apply to them.

The Salvation Army: A non-profit organization whose international arm is noted for its feeding, casework, warehouse management, and other relief efforts. The Salvation Army is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church and very much a part of the Wesleyan heritage.

United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR): Formed in 1940, UMCOR is the avenue through which United Methodists work in disaster response, refugee relief and resettlement, world hunger and poverty programs in over 120 countries. In disaster response, UMCOR is recognized as leaders in case management and providing volunteers (ERTs and UMVIM teams), as well as training community groups in disaster management protocols. UMCOR runs two relief-supply depots, UMCOR Sager Brown in Baldwin, Louisiana, and UMCOR West in Salt Lake City, Utah. They also coordinate with a network of United Methodist relief-supply depots across the United States (closest to New England is Mechanicsburg, PA - Mission Central is the mission warehouse of the Susquehanna Annual Conference). Congregations can send or drop off kits and supplies at one of the NEAC drop-off locations or UMCOR HUBs nearest to them, assured that their donations will be accounted for and distributed by UMCOR. A list of those locations is on the conference website at www.neumc.org/umcorreliefsupplydropofflocations

United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM): A program of the church that links volunteers with projects worldwide. UMVIM and UMCOR have developed a partnership for Early Response Teams (ERTs) and other longer term recovery efforts in disaster response.

Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD): This group of voluntary agencies (not governmental), including many faith-based groups, guided by the core principles of the 4Cs — cooperation, communication, coordination, and collaboration and organized in some counties and at most state levels (CT VOAD, MA VOAD, ME VOAD, NH VOAD, RI VOAD, VT VOAD) and the national level (NVOAD). They are designed to work cooperatively to reach the most people, make the most effective use of limited resources and eliminate, where possible, a duplication of effort. Most member agencies have agreements of membership indicating what kinds of services they can offer in a disaster. VOAD groups meet periodically.

And there are many denominational organizations not listed here that may partner with the conference in one way or another.
Disaster Response Leadership Team

Conference Disaster Response Team
This is the administrative, policy-making, recruiting and training body of the New England Conference for disaster response activities. The team is comprised of:

- conference disaster response coordinator (CDRC) chairs the conference disaster response team (CDRT) and oversees administration, training and funding, promotes disaster preparedness in non-disaster times, helps recruit district team members and who will recruit one or several volunteers who can provide disaster assessment and site coordination during active disasters.
- conference UMVIM coordinators (conference volunteers)
- past UMVIM/ERT coordinator (conference volunteer)

This team will expand during an active, declared disaster to include the conference treasurer, director of connectional ministries and the conference director of communications. The team may invite other attendees as the situation warrants.

Conference Disaster Response Coordinator
- Oversees and coordinates New England Annual Conference disaster response with Disaster Response Team in collaboration with UMCOR, VIM, and VOAD
- Leads the disaster response team meetings
- Oversees, coordinates, and manages New England Conference disaster response in collaboration with other organizations involved
- Serves as first conference contact in event of disaster and initiates implementation of conference disaster response plan
- Assesses scope of needs
- Informs director of connectional ministries and bishop of needs; indicates when to involve UMCOR
- Opens, manages and resources the conference emergency operations center (EOC), including establishing an emergency call-in number and activating a set of accessible, yet hidden conference web pages pertaining to disaster response
- Informs, activates and deploys disaster response teams, as appropriate
- Assures coordination of information, conference representation, and resources between areas of disaster
- Sets up disaster ministry web pages, manages content and develops online volunteer registration system
- Serves as UMCOR representative to the New England Conference Board of Global Ministries
- Sets and manages disaster response budget, including use of:
  - UMCOR monies
  - Disaster offering funds
  - Advance Special funds
- Serves as New England Conference representative to VOAD, unless local church volunteer is identified
- Coordinates and supervises all volunteer leaders involved in disaster response and their teams
- Recruits team leaders in areas of:
  - Spiritual and emotional care
  - Communications
  - Logistics
  - Early response
  - Volunteer coordination
  - District disaster response teams
  - Case managers
  - Assessment
- Provides for training of disaster leaders and teams (UMCOR trains conference leadership, who train others)
- Tracks and coordinate all teams
- Tracks and monitors all training
- Assures background checks for all volunteers

Authority
- Coordinates budget with New England Conference liaison to disaster response team
- Must be kept informed monthly of budget and disaster response activity

Support
- Receives supervision from New England Conference liaison
- Takes available training through conference and UMCOR

Skills and attributes
- Coordinator of disaster response
- Able to deal with and prioritize responses to conflicting needs
- Effective in working with teams
- Coordinator of disaster response teams
- Displays excellence in working with volunteers
• Effective in working with teams

District Disaster Response Coordinator
See each phase of disaster for responsibilities.
Volunteers in Mission

United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) is a missionary movement within the United Methodist Church designed to provide an official channel whereby Christians, both lay and clergy, may offer their skills and talents for Christian service at home and around the world on short-term assignments at their own expense. Their work includes construction and renewing of mission facilities, teaching, witnessing, conducting medical clinics, conducting Bible study or Bible school for children, and serving in disaster relief & recovery efforts around the world. They can serve as an ERT, on a long-term recovery team or both. Volunteers need to be in relatively good health, complete an application form, be willing to pay their own way or help to raise team funds, and agree to attend training sessions conducted by the team leader prior to departure. UMCOR provides ERT & team leader training conducted by conference trainers.

Early Response Teams

Each team member should be trained and credentialed by UMCOR

Team Leader

- Leads her/his early response teams (ERTs) at the worksite
- Understands the role of the ERT
- Relates directly to the conference early response team or volunteer coordinator
- Directs the work team

Assistant Team Leader

- Serves as a backup to the team leader
- Takes over the responsibility of directing the team if it is necessary for the team leader to leave the worksite

Logistics

- Responsible for helping the team find needed supplies, for transportation of the team and is responsible for site safety
- Checks out a site before the team walks into the area to make sure there is no danger to the team where they are to work and that the team has the equipment and ability to do the job assigned (may need MMSD sheets)

Base Camp Manager

- Responsible for organizing the team’s in food, cooking, water and place to sleep, if it is necessary for the team to spend the night.
- If the ERT is totally self-sufficient, shops for food and creates a schedule of who cooks, cleans, etc. so that the work load is shared.
- Works alongside the team during the day.

Equipment Manager

- Responsible for keeping any equipment that the conference may own as a part of an equipment trailer in good working order – “as needed” role, but should also accompany the team to the disaster site and work alongside the others.

Safety Officer

- Responsible for each individual team member’s safety
- Checks that the proper personal safety equipment is being used and that all team members are performing at optimal efficiency.
- When a team member starts to tire, the safety officer pulls that person out to rest or hydrate as necessary

Listener/Team Recorder

- Designated to be the listener to the survivors (is not the ONLY listener, however – role is shared by everyone).
- Keeps the records and forms for the team and refers the survivor’s needs to members of the conference disaster response team.

**NOTE:** It is important that any person who would serve on an Early Response Team possess a spiritual commitment.

UMVIM Long-Term Recovery Teams

Each team leader should be trained by UMCOR and shall orient their team about what to expect, how to prepare and be self-sufficient, cultural sensitivities, work to be undertaken, the need for flexibility and the requirements of the local recovery organization.
Disaster Spiritual and Emotional Care Team

United Methodist disaster spiritual and emotional care teams (care teams or DSEC) are faith-based, ongoing teams that provide spiritual and emotional care to persons affected by disasters – small or large scale. Reaching out from the faith community, closely connected to their United Methodist conference disaster response organization and with standardized structure and UMCOR training, care teams offer peer-to-peer listening and support to help disaster survivors connect with their personal, community, spiritual, emotional and basic life resources.

While care teams do not provide traditional individual or ongoing counseling, their purpose is:

- To show the church cares and offer a trained and background checked listening presence
- To reduce the terrible aloneness disaster survivors feel
- To connect disaster survivors with long-term disaster recovery systems, gather information and provide support and information about the disaster recovery processes and services

Volunteer Management Team

Site Manager/Orientation Leader
- Greets teams upon their arrival
- Shares the story of the work being conducted at this site; the disaster, its effect on this community, and its effect on this church
- Explains how the day goes at this site and what responsibilities the team will have
- Collects forms and fees
- Escorts the team to their accommodations

Volunteer Coordinator/Work Scheduler/Phone Bank Coordinator
- Monitors up online registration system
- Shares accurate information with teams calling to schedule times
- Schedules teams according to need and ability for work sites
- Advises teams on supplies needed and what services are available on site
- In collaboration with the assessment person & site manager, assigns locations for teams to work and stay, and assigns team responsibility to host site
- Works with teams to get the most work done with the skills available (splits teams if needed)
- Provides team with work-related, site-related and job information, including necessary forms
- Takes work requests and assesses applicants’ personal needs, give assistance and advice on resources available

Assessment Team
- May be combined with site manager role
- Ensures the homeowner signs an access to property form
- Goes into the field to determine needs with the goal of taking necessary steps to prevent further damage
- Advise clients of services available from governmental agencies and what UMVIM and UM disaster response organizations can and cannot do for owners
- Assesses potential for safety issues for teams
- Advises on safety equipment needs for teams
- Determines need for permits, rules for debris removal, possible tool list for teams, etc.

Data Entry/Record Keeper
- Keeps accurate records, which can be a financial windfall in some disaster situations
- Records all volunteer hours, locations, and donations
- Files all forms for teams, unless submitted with online registration
Case Management Team

Case Manager

The Case Manager, in a long-term recovery after-disaster situation, identifies survivors’ needs and connects them to resources – while working with the long-term recovery committee and acting as an advocate on behalf of the client to help them return as near to a pre-disaster state as possible. The case manager works with survivors to make an in-depth assessment of their disaster-related needs and assists in the development of a recovery plan. She/he fosters a relationship with survivors; the development of such a relationship is a key first step in successful case management. In some cases, the case manager may be the same person as the site manager in volunteer team management.

Time Commitment: Effective case management in a large disaster requires a commitment of part-time effort over a period of 18 to 24 months or longer.

Reports to: Case manager supervisor

Employee Status: volunteer, (no compensation), unless hired part-time in a very large disaster

Essential Tasks:

- Attends training sessions to learn to identify, validate and collaborate on solutions to meet survivor needs
- Receives and undertakes assignments given by the case manager supervisor
- Consults with the case manager supervisor to prioritize cases and set objectives
- Makes contact with survivors as soon as possible; safety factors should be kept in mind, including a team approach for home visits
- Secures and maintains appropriate release of information for each client
- Helps clients review all that has happened and all the assistance they have received
- Identifies any unmet urgent needs, and refers to proper resource
- Enables clients to take responsibility for their recovery; acts as advocate and facilitator, as opposed to rescuer
- Keeps detailed records of every case, every home visit, every referral and every contact with resources on client’s behalf
- Remains in contact with the client until the disaster-related needs are met and/or the case is closed
- Relays all information to case manager supervisor at regular briefings; keeps detailed records of these meetings
- Networks with other agencies to stay informed about services and resources
- Presents individual cases to the long-term recovery committee, when appropriate
- Respects confidentiality at all times – at home, in public, in committee meetings and in consultations
- Follows up with other agencies to assure that assistance commitments have been met
- Takes time for closure with the family once it is determined that the case should be closed or referred

Qualifications:

- High school diploma or equivalent
- Ability to thoroughly document conversations and actions regarding case management
- Ability to communicate effectively with creditors and vendors to negotiate bills and advocate for discounts, extended payment schedules, or write offs
- Good interpersonal skills and empathy
Essential Characteristics of a Case Manager:
A case manager does not necessarily need a background in social work to be a highly effective case manager. If there is experience in a helping profession, or if the person embodies many of the characteristics listed below, the conference encourages them to consider becoming trained as a long-term recovery case manager:

- Respects the beliefs of others.
- Cares deeply about people and their welfare.
- Respects cultural, racial and social differences.
- Genuinely likes people.
- Is empathetic and an effective listener.
- Is patient with people and circumstances.
- Is flexible.
- Is supportive and noncritical of other agencies, fellow workers, or clients.
- Has an outgoing personality and a good attitude.
- Has a good sense of humor.
- Perseveres through adversity.
- Is able to put personal goals behind those of others in need.

- Is creative and resourceful.
- Is observant and objective.
- Is respectful of the privacy of others.
- Able to respect and maintain confidentiality.
- Takes directions willingly.
- Enjoys problem solving.
- Enjoys detail work.
- Is realistic.
- Has good stress coping skills.
- Is able to be self-directing in your work.

This person's attitude toward clients will be the most important key to being successful. Attitudes, unlike skill sets, generally can't be taught. If the person believes in the shared humanity of all people, is willing to go the extra mile for someone in need and give him/her benefit of the doubt, can treat each person as an individual and help foster a return to independence, they are encouraged to consider becoming trained as a volunteer case manager.

Background Check:
All case manager applicants must complete a satisfactory background check.

Communications
The communications function must be coordinated with the conference disaster response staff. It includes responsibility for:

- Documentation of the incident
- Communication with the media
- Serving as the official contact point for all who wish information about UMC involvement in disaster

Logistics
This function is responsible for:

- Locating, organizing, and providing facilities for the team
- Team safety
- Equipment readiness

*NOT to be confused with the Early Response Team logistics person*
Connecting Neighbors: A “Disaster Ready Congregations” Curriculum of the United Methodist Church

This curriculum is intended for broad use by dedicated volunteers willing and able to facilitate workshops and webinars with the goal of inspiring congregations and communities to be better able to minimize disaster-caused harm to people and property and to respond to our neighbors in helpful, cooperative and caring ways on behalf of the church and in the spirit of Jesus Christ. The New England Conference Disaster ERT & Mission Coordinator offers training that will equip participants to teach the courses in their own churches and communities.

Church disaster preparedness is a priority for UMCOR! Encouraging church leadership to embark on disaster preparation will require passion and commitment – nothing less. We can only respond to our neighbors out of strength. When the local church’s members are reeling from the impact of disaster (or the arrival of evacuees from a U.S. disaster) is NOT the time to figure out how to respond. NOW is the time. With your help, United Methodists across the nation will be empowered to prepare for their own disaster needs and to BE the church in the midst of a hurting community.

The curriculum has three modules and a disaster ministry overview that helps participants understand how our United Methodist structure enhances the local church’s capabilities for disaster readiness and response.

**Module 1: Ready Congregants** focuses on preparing individuals and families to be disaster-ready.

**Module 2: Ready Churches** emphasizes the importance of protecting church property and the people within the property, before and immediately following a disaster, and of appropriate use of church property in disaster response. *The target audience for this module is primarily church leaders* including, but not limited to, pastors, trustees, Sunday school superintendent, lay leader, missions coordinator, treasurer and finance committee members, young adult and youth representatives, and others.

**Module 3: Ready Response** encourages churches to explore their capacity for various disaster response ministries and to consider *ways to engage community partners*. This module helps churches identify at least one disaster ministry their church might be willing and able to implement before and/or after a community disaster; and (2) initiate a preliminary plan to engage the church and to cooperate with other households of faith and the community in order to be prepared to respond in the event of a disaster. *The target audience is everyone interested in disaster-ready congregations and communities,* particularly mission and outreach personnel, lay leaders, United Methodist Women, United Methodist Men, youth ministry leaders, lay servants and Stephen’s Ministers.

**Suggested Incident Coordination System (ICS) courses:**

This Homeland Security/FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute site [https://www.training.fema.gov/is/](https://www.training.fema.gov/is/) offers these and other independent-study, online courses free of charge for those wanting to understand state, local, as well as federal, emergency management and disaster response structures.

- IS-100.a Introduction to Incident Command System (ICS)
- IS-700.a National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction
- IS-800.b National Response Framework, An Introduction
Early Response Team

Those with 8 hours of training in the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)’s Early Response Team (ERT) process are a valuable community resource. While teams don’t need training to respond in their own community suffering from a disaster, training and certification by an emergency-management-recognized authority, such as UMCOR, is required to enter a disaster area outside one’s own community. An invitation is also required. These are just a few vital things, along with the importance of understanding disaster response structures, chains of command and phases, what should and should not be done during each phase, how to approach survivors, building and equipping a team, the types of help offered to survivors (mud-outs, tarping, debris removal, mold clean-up, etc.) that a participant will learn in ERT training. Recertification required every three yrs (course is 2 ½ to 3 hours).

UMVIM Team Leader Training

This United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) training covers such topics as determining where to go on a mission journey or what to know to respond in disaster recovery, who to talk to, logistics, administrative procedures, funding, insurance, international teams, team orientation and training, cultural awareness, and safe sanctuaries. This is also an excellent opportunity to find out what UMVIM is all about and see if this opportunity to serve is for you.

Disaster Emotional & Spiritual Care/Care Team Leader Training

This course, offered by the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church in partnership with the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), will show how care teams fit into overall UM disaster response and provide a “ministry of presence” for disaster survivors, survivor caregivers, and congregations alike.

The basic 7-hour introductory module provides

- basic information about Disaster Spiritual and Emotional Care, training for meeting and responding to the spiritual and emotional needs of individuals, congregations, and communities following disasters and strategies for disaster responders’ self-care.
- training for development of Care Teams, which are faith-based, ongoing teams with standardized training that provide spiritual and emotional care following disasters.

The 4-hour DSEC Care Team Leaders module equips participants with tools and skills to lead care team members during and following deployment.
Agencies and Resources

The following is a list of some helpful resources and contacts. The chart on the last page of this document can be used to record local and state agencies in your area that each church, district and conference official may need to contact in an emergency. It is suggested that you introduce yourself to these officials before a disaster and let them know that you have a disaster response plan in place, as well as the support of a district and regional (the conference) structure.

United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) – www.umcor.org
Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) - http://www.nvoad.org/ (Each state also has a state VOAD and the conference disaster response coordinator has contacts with each state VOAD in the conference.)

Find “Points of Consensus” documents (http://www.nvoad.org/resource-center/?mdocs-cat=mdocs-cat-62&att=null) agreed to by a coalition of 56 of the nation’s most reputable national organizations (faith-based, community-based and other non-profit organizations), including UMCOR, and 56 state/territory VOADs, which represent local/regional VOADs and hundreds of other member organizations throughout the country. Topics include disaster case management, volunteer management, and disaster spiritual care, among others.

NEAC State Emergency Management Agencies
RI Emergency Mgmt Agency - http://www.riema.ri.gov/
FEMA (NEAC is in FEMA Region One) – for disaster declarations
https://www.fema.gov/region-i-ct-me-ma-nh-ri-vt

Emergency Operations Plans for Houses of Worship

CERT – Community Emergency Response Team – A program under FEMA, CERT educates individuals, usually associated with local emergency management agencies, about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT volunteers can assist others in their community following a disaster when professional responders are not immediately available to help. Typical roles during disasters: Residential / neighborhood checks, evacuating individuals with disabilities and others with access and functional needs & staffing emergency operations centers (EOC)
https://www.fema.gov/community-emergency-response-teams

Red Cross Winter Storm Safety Checklist and other disaster preparation information
- www.redcross.org

Information about how El Nino affects weather systems
Salvation Army - http://disaster.salvationarmyusa.org/
New England Conference
United Methodist Church
Homeowner Release of Liability
Permission to Enter Your Property

Date: / /
Daytime phone: ( ) ______________________________

Night phone: ( ) ______________________________

Name
______________________________________________

Address
______________________________________________

City Zip

(I/We), ________________________________________, (am/are) the owner(s) and occupant(s) of the above listed property. (I/We) give permission to volunteers from The New England Conference of the United Methodist Church to work on (my/our) property for the purpose of cleaning out, removing debris, and/or making repairs to (my/our) home due to the recent disaster. I understand that these are volunteers, not professionals working for profit, and that no warrant is made as to the quality of work done.

In consideration of the volunteer services to be rendered to (me/we) or on (my/our) property by the volunteers, (I/we), the undersigned, release and agree to hold harmless the volunteers, The New England Conference, and any related agency, from any liability, injury, damages, loss, accident, delay or irregularity related to the aforementioned volunteer services.

This release covers all rights and causes of action of every kind, nature, and description, which the undersigned ever had, now has, or but for this release, may have. This release binds the undersigned and his heirs, representatives, and assignees.

Head of Household

Signature: ______________________________ Date: ________________

Spouse

Signature: ______________________________ Date: ________________