

# Disaster Services Unit

## State Service Commissions In Disaster



### OVERVIEW AND ROLE OF STATE SERVICE COMMISSIONS

State Service Commissions receive AmeriCorps State funding from the Corporation for National and Community Service. The 52 State Service Commissions are typically either governor-appointed public agencies or nonprofit organizations. State Service Commissions work closely with state and local government, nonprofits, and faith-based organizations to address critical needs within in their state. State Service Commissions are uniquely positioned to support communities before, during, and after disaster.



Twenty-five State Service Commissions are included in their states' emergency management plans as the lead for volunteer and donations management during times of disaster. Others are responsible for coordinating disaster preparedness education programming for their state, donations or provide communities with disaster preparedness information. State Service Commissions work with their networks to support disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation in their states. They provide:

- Tracking of volunteer hours for FEMA matching funds requirements
- A skilled network of background-checked and disaster-trained AmeriCorps members
- Experience working with vulnerable populations and the organizations that support these communities.

### EXAMPLES OF STATE SERVICE COMMISSIONS IN DISASTER

#### North Carolina Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service

The Commission is the lead agency for volunteer and donations management for the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management. Through their multiple statewide leadership roles, they help people and communities in North Carolina prepare for, and recover from, disasters. They

- Participate in activations of the State Emergency Response Team
- Provide staffing at the State Emergency Operations Center
- Lead the state's effort for collecting and distributing items to meet the needs of survivors after a disaster
- Partner with volunteer centers, AmeriCorps programs and community volunteers to affiliate spontaneous volunteers with the agency or organization in most need of assistance
- Manage the Governor's Emergency Information Bilingual Hotline
- Manage the North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund
- Coordinate with members of North Carolina Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster
- Serve in co-lead role for ReadyNC, the state's ongoing emergency preparedness initiative
- Manage North Carolina Citizen Corps by providing opportunities for individuals to volunteer to make more resilient communities and individuals
- Provide guidance and training to local emergency management agencies, AmeriCorps programs, and nonprofit organizations to enhance local capacity for managing donations and volunteers in disasters.

## **Volunteer Florida**

Volunteer Florida is proud to be the lead agency for volunteer and donations management for the Florida Division of Emergency Management, coordinating volunteers and donations in a disaster. Along with their partner organizations and countless volunteers, Volunteer Florida helps Floridians when disaster strikes.

They:

- Coordinate with Florida Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) and local and state government emergency management agencies to meet volunteer and donation needs
- Operate the Florida Volunteer and Donation Hotline and web-based Florida Donations Portal
- Provide staffing during activation of the State Emergency Operations Center and support local disaster response and recovery operations
- Collect data on voluntary agency activities for statewide reporting and dissemination
- Provide training and presentations on volunteer and donations management
- Provide fiscal and program management for federal, state, and privately funded programs.

## **Volunteer New Hampshire**

Volunteer New Hampshire is a key support agency to the New Hampshire State Emergency Operations Plan, supporting volunteer and donation management, mass care and sheltering, and resource support and agriculture. They also have responsibility for some recovery support functions. Volunteer New Hampshire oversees the New Hampshire Disaster Animal Response Team and New Hampshire Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD). They:

- Develop and maintain strong partnerships with New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management, New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Medical Reserve Corps, Public Health Networks, the Red Cross and many more
- Serve as the State Citizen Corps Council
- Coordinate the New Hampshire CERT program which provides organizing training for citizens, builds local and regional teams, and provides critical support to first responders
- Partner with FEMA to deliver Student Tools for Emergency Planning (STEP), a program that teaches 5th grade students life-saving skills, how to deal with common emergencies, and build communications plans among family members. This program is delivered by trained Volunteer New Hampshire volunteers, most of whom belong to local Community Emergency Response Teams.

*For more information, contact the CNCS Disaster Services Unit at [DSU@cns.gov](mailto:DSU@cns.gov) or visit: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/contact-us/state-service-commissions/>*