

Appendix M: Shelter Management Guide

SHELTER OPERATION

This material is planned to serve as a guide and check list for the individual responsible for opening a school, public building, church, or other facility to be used for the reception and care of disaster victims.

The Shelter Manager should be someone familiar with the building to be used: its size, facilities, and day-to-day level of supplies. If the shelter is a school, the principal or a designated member of the staff may serve under agreements in effect between the school board and the American Red Cross. Authorization for use of the school as a shelter should be made through normal school district channels.

The regular staff working in the building- faculty as well as office, cafeteria, and maintenance staff - should be the primary resource for personnel to operate the shelter, as they have the most complete knowledge of the facility and can best safeguard against damage and misuse. The Shelter Manager may receive additional support from the local ARC chapter to provide needed equipment, supplies, and additional staff. The ARC may – under specific, locally identified circumstances – pay for food and other supplies on hand that are used in the shelter as well as additional supplies required.

Mass Care shelters are generally intended to operate for a limited time-one to four days. In most instances, shelter residents are able to return to their homes within a short time or to locate other housing. The remaining families can be assisted by Family Service workers in solving this problem. While in operation, the shelter must meet a multitude of human needs both physical and psychological under adverse conditions. The young, old, ill, employed, and unemployed all have special needs to be met through recreation, medical services, transportation, maintenance, and social work services available through the shelter.

DUTIES OF THE SHELTER MANAGER

A. Pre-Disaster Planning

The American Red Cross chapters are responsible for identifying and planning for shelters, and pre-designated Shelter Managers would participate in this activity. Such preparedness comprises:

1. Developing a plan for the operation of the buildings to include:
 - a. A survey of the building.
 - b. A floor plan of the building and grounds, and use of space.
2. Estimating the resources and supplies necessary to operate the shelter base on its capacity:
 - a. Type and quantity of supplies such as soap, towels, and cleaning equipment.
 - b. Food and cooking equipment.
 - c. Provision for bedding and medical and first-aid supplies.

3. Estimating additional staff needed for actual operations including support staff for other disaster committees.
4. Planning a method of registering each person housed in the shelter. (Last name first, pre-disaster home address.)

Note: The Shelter Manager may appoint one or more assistants for any of the above duties. However, they are all ultimately the responsibility of the Shelter Manager.

B. At a Time of Disaster

After being officially notified to open a building for the shelter, the Shelter Manager should:

1. Proceed immediately to the building.
2. Establish and maintain contact with Red Cross disaster headquarters.
3. Alert basic staff and activate the building.
4. Arrange the building for operation, and inventory supplies and equipment. Prepare rooms for receiving people and for other purposes.
5. Order supplies and equipment from Red Cross disaster headquarters and report any need for support such as medical services.
6. Recruit additional personnel. (Disaster victims in the shelter may be recruited.)
7. Begin feeding beverages and snacks as soon as the shelter opens, and begin regular meal service as soon as possible.
8. Keep in constant touch with the Shelter Chairman at disaster headquarters, giving progress reports and a daily count of persons housed and fed.
9. Arrange for the care of pets, if necessary.

C. Shelter Reception and Registration

1. The Shelter Manager is responsible for ensuring that a simple record is kept of every person who is housed in the shelter. The Shelter Manager may delegate this responsibility to one or more assistants as needed.
2. At the reception desk, the family or individual should be assigned to an appropriate lodging area. They should proceed to the registration desk before going on to their lodging area.
3. Shelter registration cards (ARC Form 5972) should be used if available. If not, plain 3 x 5 inch cards may be used for this registration. The following information is needed:
 - a. Last, first, and middle names for husband and wife (include wife's maiden name).
 - b. Names and ages of all family members.
 - c. Any health problems.
 - d. Pre-disaster address.
 - e. Date arrived in the shelter; date departed.
 - f. Post-disaster address.
4. Registration cards should be made in duplicate. One copy is for the Shelter Manager's files, and one copy is sent to disaster headquarters for the Welfare Inquiry section. If it is not practicable to make cards in duplicate, an alphabetical list of shelter occupants can be submitted.

5. When victims move from the shelter, it should be so indicated on the registration cards, and disaster headquarters should be notified.

Note: It is important that people be registered as soon as they arrive in the shelter, or as soon as practicable. (This is not to be confused with registration of families for individual assistance, i.e., Family Service.)

D. Food

In general, feeding for shelter operation falls into one of two categories: (1) feeding within the shelter, where cafeteria facilities already exist, and (2) the arrangement to feed persons in a nearby commercial establishment. (In some instances, it may be feasible to create temporary kitchen and feeding equipment within the shelter.)

1. The Shelter Manager is administratively responsible for feeding people housed under his/her management. The Shelter Manager may have the use of staff that normally operate the cafeteria, or may have to rely on food delivery by other units of the Mass Care function.
2. The Shelter Manager is responsible for maintaining a daily count of people fed within his/her shelter and reporting this information to Red Cross headquarters.
3. The person in charge of feeding will arrange for someone to receive, store, issue, and keep records of supplies.
4. Shelter occupants can assist as cooks' helpers and servers, and can serve on the clean-up crew.
5. Hot meals should be provided twice a day. Additionally, a midday lunch should be provided for children, the aged, expectant and nursing mothers, workmen, and disaster victims doing heavy work.
6. Special diet problems will be handled as recommended by medical and nursing staff on duty at the shelter.
7. Menus will be planned in terms of foods available, with perishable foods being used first. Sufficient food should be prepared to provide second servings. USDA foods may be available, subject to approval by appropriate government agencies (e.g., school administration) and Red Cross authorities.

E. Medical and Nursing

1. The Red Cross is responsible for providing adequate medical and nursing services in all Red Cross-operated shelters to care for the sick and injured, protect the health of residents, and supervise the sanitation at the shelter.
2. The Red Cross chapter is responsible for providing competent Disaster Health Services staff in each shelter. If such staff are unavailable, the Shelter Manager should assign someone with knowledge of first aid to provide limited care. In the absence of qualified medical staff, all medical problems would be referred to a local emergency room or physician. In such an event, the Shelter Manager must retain records of individuals – a description of their ailment or injury and the medical facility used.

F. Child Care

If a shelter remains open for more than a day or two, a child-care facility should be considered in order to ease the burden on parents.

1. The Shelter Manager will designate someone to be responsible for childcare.

G. Recreation

If large numbers of persons are housed in the shelter, and if the shelter operation is prolonged, it is advisable to provide recreation facilities.

1. It is the Shelter Manager's responsibility to decide when and if recreation is needed. He may appoint one or more persons to develop appropriate recreational activities.
2. The Shelter Manager may call upon resources at disaster headquarters for assistance such as films, newspapers, equipment, games, and television sets.

H. Shelter Maintenance

The Shelter Manager will designate someone to be responsible for building maintenance and upkeep. The staff normally responsible for the facility may be available for this purpose. Shelter residents should, however, be asked to assist. Necessary activities include the following:

1. Acquire additional supplies and equipment such as furniture, safety and cleaning equipment, and tools.
2. Arrange for daily janitorial service.
3. Arrange for the installation of additional temporary facilities such as showers and toilets.
4. Move furniture as necessary.
5. Prepare and supervise the use of the grounds and yard for parking and recreation, if necessary.
6. Maintain a system of record keeping to facilitate returning the building to its original condition upon closing, and document any damages and related expenses.

FLOOR PLAN AND SPACE ALLOCATION

A. In the allocation of space, consideration should be given to the following needs:

1. Manager's office.
2. Emergency medical care.
3. Feeding area.
4. Reception and registration.
5. Storage of food and supplies.
6. Possible storage of occupants' belongings.
7. Child care.
8. Rest room for staff (in larger shelters).
9. Family Service interviewing areas.
10. Some guidelines to use in planning:
 - a. One toilet per 40 persons (6 for 200, 14 for 500).
 - b. Forty to sixty square feet of sleeping space per person.

- c. One quart of drinking water (minimum) per person per day.
- d. Five gallons of water per person per day (all uses).
- e. Twenty-five hundred calories per person per day (approximately 3.5pounds of unprepared food).

Staffing. The following staff will be needed for actual operations:

1. Shelter Manager
2. Assistant Manager
3. Nurse
4. Registration
5. Food preparation
6. Building maintenance and sanitation

Equipment and Supplies. Shelters designed and constructed to the criteria in this manual are intended to provide safe refuge from an extreme-wind event. These shelters serve a different function from shelters designed for use as long-term recovery shelters after an event. Shelter managers may elect to provide supplies that increase the comfort level within the short-term shelters. Table M-1 lists suggested equipment and supplies for community shelters.

Shelter Maintenance Plan. Each shelter should have a maintenance plan that includes the following:

- Inventory checklist of the emergency supplies (see Table M-1)
- Information concerning the availability of emergency generators to be used to provide power for lighting and ventilation
- Schedule of regular maintenance of the shelter to be performed by a designated party

Such plans will help to ensure that the shelter equipment and supplies are fully functional during and after tornadoes and hurricanes. The Shelter Maintenance Plan should be included as part of the applicable shelter plan.

Table M-1: Shelter Equipment and Supplies (Recommended)

TYPE	EQUIPMENT/SUPPLIES
Communications Equipment	NOAA weather radios or receivers for commercial radio broadcasts if NOAA broadcasts are not available
	ham radios or emergency radios connected to the police or the fire and rescue systems
	cellular telephones (may not operate during a storm event and may require a signal amplifier to be able to transmit from within the shelter)
	battery-powered radio transmitters or signal emitting devices that can signal local emergency personnel
	portable generators with uninterrupted power supply (UPS) systems and vented exhaust systems
	portable computers with modem and internet capabilities
Emergency Equipment	public address systems
	a minimum of two copies of the Community Shelter Operations Plan
	flashlights and batteries
	fire extinguishers
	blankets
	pry-bars (for opening doors that may have been damaged or blocked by debris)
	trash receptacles
	trash can liners and ties
First-Aid Supplies	tool kits
	heaters
	adhesive tape and bandages in assorted sizes
	safety pins in assorted sizes
	latex gloves
	scissors and tweezers
	antiseptic solutions
	antibiotic ointments
	moistened towelettes
	non-prescription drugs (e.g., aspirin and non-aspirin pain relievers, anti-diarrhea medications, antacids, syrup of Ipecac, laxatives)
	smelling salts for fainting spells
	petroleum jelly
	eye drops
	wooden splints
thermometers	
Water	adequate quantities for the duration of the particular storm
Sanitary Supplies	towels
	toilet paper
	moistened towelettes
	paper towels
	personal hygiene items
	disinfectants
	chlorine bleach
	plastic bags
Infant and Children Supplies (As Necessary)	portable chemical toilet(s), when regular toilets are not contained in the shelter
	disposable diapers
	powders and ointments
	moistened towelettes
	pacifiers
blankets	